

THE GOALS OF COMMUNICATION

- Accurately convey our ideas, feelings, and needs
- Respect the ideas, feelings, and needs of the other person
- Send a clear, unambiguous message
- Invite (rather than discourage) a response
- Allow the other person both time and space to respond



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

THE BENEFITS

- Provides a strong foundation for building trust and respect
- Offers the key to developing and maintaining intimacy
- Is a lifelong gift worth giving

POTENTIAL BARRIERS

- No good time or place
- Inability to put feelings/thoughts into words
- Concerns about upsetting the other person
- Embarrassment
- Avoidance of painful issues
- Mood and/or cognitive changes that interfere

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING

DO'S

- Find a quiet place
- Listen actively/confirm what you've heard
- Maintain eye contact to focus attention
- Pay attention to your body language (eye rolling, smirking, finger jabbing, doing something else at the same time)
- Use a short-hand signal (e.g., "ouch!" if your partner says something hurtful; put up your hand if your partner is talking too fast or has confused you in some way)

DON'TS

- Interrupt
- Jump to conclusions – if you're not sure what someone is feeling/thinking, ask!

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE TALKING

DO'S

- Make time for talking when neither of you will be distracted
- Talk at a pace that works for the other person – take time to confirm that the person is keeping up with you
- Acknowledge difference in coping/communication styles
- Use "I" statements that are less likely to put the other person on the defensive
- Give the other person time to think and respond
- Confirm that the other person has heard and understood

DON'TS

- Over-generalize
- Engage in finger pointing
- Engage in magical thinking – No one can read your mind no matter how much they love you