

5 Basic Skills in Communication

P.A.U.S.E.

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. -Viktor Frankl

P is for presence through listening

1. Pretend listening: listening gestures (nodding and murmuring "mm-hm"), your mind is somewhere else
2. Selective listening: semi-listen, searching for bullet points on how to respond when it's your turn.
3. Careful listening: paying more attention to the other person than yourself, but also having a conversation in your head at the same time.
4. Deep listening: aware of others, being "in their shoes", have crossed a bridge to see them from their point of view

A is for accepting the "and" instead of "but"

Two things can be true at once

"But" negates whatever precedes it:

"It's great being with you, but..."

"I love you, but..."

"You did a great job, but..."

"I want to get in shape, but..."

"And" instead gives more direct and constructive feedback

"And" validates others

"And" helps you share your opinion without dismissing another person's needs

Words that don't negate:

However

Yet

Nonetheless

U is for undefended communication (responding, not reacting)

Is Caused by Nature/Nuture

- Can be a sign of perceived danger or rigidity
- Creates a reciprocal cycle
- Reduces humor, affection and communication
- Being defensive is a result of feeling ashamed, hurt, guilty, attacked
- Defensiveness is an automatic psychological mechanism

How to Manage It

- Practice the pause
- Be careful not to criticize yourself for being defensive
- Acknowledge your reaction
- Refrain from counter-criticism
- Practice curiosity instead of judgement
- Separate your being from your doing

S is for speaking with skill and intention

How you begin a conversation determines the outcome (soft start)

The intensity of your need to talk is not necessarily connected to wisdom of having the talk

Manage yourself first

You need timing, non-threatening body language and non-verbals, and a receptive listener

E is for emotional intelligence

The ability to understand and manage your own emotions, as well as recognize and influence the emotions of those around you. -Daniel Goleman

Self-regulation

Awareness and empathy for others

Self-motivation

Knowing and managing triggers

Awareness and self-soothing

Three Types of Conflict:

1. Solvable (situation, no deep meaning)
2. Perpetual (differences in personality, needs, and styles)
3. Gridlock (perpetual conflicts that have been mishandled)