How Do We Make Communication Work

Most of you rarely think about how you communicate with loved ones. However, family communication is so important. It determines relationships with each other and sets the tone for family living. Family communication is NOT simple. Communication is more than what you say and do. Your messages depend on how you think the other person will react, so you may communicate differently with each member of the family. Each person has several different family communication patterns that develop over time, depending on who is being communicated with, the setting, the timing, and other factors.

You have something you want to share when you communicate with another family member. Using words is the most common way to express thoughts and feelings, but you also send nonverbal messages with your eyes, facial expressions, and body movements. Have you ever known anyone in your family to stomp out of the room without saying a word? That is a nonverbal message.

Another important part of communication is LISTENING. A good listener sends a nonverbal message of care and concern even if he or she does not agree with the message being sent. Thoughtful listening builds relationships.

A family member can tell when you are listening by noticing your eyes, facial expressions, and body movements. Part of listening may be as simple as saying, “yes,” or “I see,” or nodding your head. Remember that family members sometimes want a listening ear without advice or judgment. Think about body language. What massage are you sending? Are you fidgeting? Rolling your eyes? Smiling sarcastically? Think about your body position. Are you facing the speaker without being too close or too far away? Are you sending a message that you are truly listening?

COVID-19 can be a struggle, but the whole family has to work together to make it work.

Families that enjoy each other build strong family relationships. Often a family will find it hard to have fun and enjoy each other when they are fighting all the time. Time spent playing together provides a relaxed way for family members to bond with each other. This helps reduce arguments. When family members are having fun, they are calmer and behave more naturally. Having fun can be especially helpful for families who are struggling financially or are suffering other severe stresses. Good times build powerful memories.

You often think you cannot stop and make time for fun with your busy lives, but fun can come in simple and everyday ways. We have seen in recent days of social distancing that your family could have the opportunity to spend more quality time together.

Get some games out and play with the whole family. Could provide lots of fun and laughter. Maybe even help bond you’re relationships. Next time you get a chance, bring out the cards or games and have some fun! Bring out the old Twister game. That should get some laughs.

Enjoy the family!