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How To Communicate With Your Partner – Part 1

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There's been a bit of a theme happening over the last few weeks ... relationships! We've talked about the 10 most common relationship myths, and things NOT to say to your partner in an argument ... and I thought this naturally leads to "How to Communicate With Your Partner". And it's such a big topic, that this week is part 1, with part 2 to follow next week. Communication is generally the downfall of relationships ... specifically when we don't talk. And I'm not just hinting at "How was your day, darling" or "What's for dinner, sweetheart"!! I'm talking about relevant, honest, and heart centred communication that glues a relationship together. No, it's not easy (and in some cases we've never been taught how), but it is worth it.

Read on for this week's top 4 ways to enhance your communication with your partner ... and hopefully, in turn, enhance your happiness, love, and maybe even intimacy! And stay tuned for the final 5 ways to enhance your communication with your partner ... coming up next week.

1. Communicate from your head AND your heart and say what you're thinking and feeling, and ask for what you want.
Why? Because your partner has no way of knowing what you're really thinking or feeling, or what you really want if you don't tell them. Just because we're in a relationship with someone and we love them, it doesn't mean they think like us, feel like us or behave like us. So they won't just 'know what you want'.

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Instead : Agreed, this is scary, but it's oh so worth it too! So tell your partner honestly (don't forget tactfully too) how you're feeling, what you're thinking, and what you'd like. This may be in relation to work, family, or friends, but most importantly, make sure you talk about how you're feeling in the relationship, what you're thinking and what you'd like. This is a great way to build or enhance connection, trust, and intimacy within your relationship.

2. Listen to what your partner says (that means turning the T.V. off, putting down the Smart Phone or Laptop, or not doing three things at once). Stop what you're doing so that you can really listen (this also works well for children, other family members and friends).

Why? Because research shows that when we do more than one thing at once, we don't do both (or more) of those things well. And if your partner is taking a step toward you and your relationship by being open and honest about what they're thinking or feeling, or what they want, the respectful thing to do is devote your attention to them. And I'm pretty sure that nothing infuriates your partner more than when they have to repeat themselves, remind you of something, or that you miss something you should have done or been at.

Instead : Take the time to truly pay attention to what your partner is saying, maybe ask some questions or clarify what they've said, and in turn you've got a much better chance of remembering what they've said. And I'm guessing your partner will appreciate being heard too.

3. Don't assume you know what your partner is thinking or feeling, or that you know 'why' they're doing what they're doing!

Why? Because more often than not you'll be wrong (even if you've been together forever, you think you know your partner so well, and in every other similar situation they've thought, felt or acted the same way). It's Murphy's Law!

Instead : Ask questions, or if you've got a

hunch about what your partner is thinking or feeling, or why they're doing what they're doing – be curious and inquire "I'm wondering if you're ..." – it might just lead to a deeper conversation, or to your partner feeling heard and validated.

4. Does this sound familiar? Partner #1, "I thought you were cooking tea tonight." Partner #2, "Well, I thought you were cooking tea tonight!" Partner #1, "I asked you what was for tea first." Partner #2, "Well that doesn't mean I was going to cook it!" Don't assume that your partner will automatically get what you mean by these suggestive questions, hinted at answers, or hidden meanings.

Why? Because unfortunately we're not mind readers (yep ... it's true), and it's a sure fire way to start an argument.

Instead : Be clear in your communication. A better way of having a conversation could be "What's for dinner tonight? And are you cooking, or is it my turn to cook?" That's if you don't burn water, or set the kitchen alight when you cook!

So say what you're thinking, how you're feeling or why you're doing what you're doing; really listen to your partner; don't assume; and be clear in your communication. And stay tuned for 'Part 2' of 'How To Communicate With Your Partner' next week.

If you think you're saying and doing all the right things and you would like some further support, or you're not saying and doing these things and you'd like to know how you can introduce them into your relationship, please contact us on 0488 954 195, amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au or [click here](#)

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