

POLY COMMUNICATION CONCEPTS

Developed by Natalie Davis & Robert Merciless from the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) principles of Marshall Rosenberg. <https://www.cnvc.org/>

TALK: Open and honest communication is the goal.

Talk - Words are better than silence. Don't stew in angry silence.

Details Matter - Your partners & metas are not mind-readers. Details show where you're coming from.

Take Risks - Don't lie or remain silent to avoid conflict.

Don't Assume "No" - Avoid thinking: "I can't possibly tell/ask my partner that! They will freak/cry/run!"

RESPECT OTHERS: It is not just what you say, but how you say it.

Avoid swallowed emotions or lies by silence - Don't say: "Fine," "I don't care," "Do what you want"

Assume Good Intentions - Your partner is not trying to hurt you / make you mad / trap you

Own Your Own Stuff - Take personal responsibility for your own emotions and actions.

Be Constructive - Add to the solution rather than just being the problem.

Recognize Agency - Don't treat people like things.

Fight Fair - No insults, name calling, ad hominem attacks.

RESPECT YOURSELF

Want vs. Need - Figure out the difference between what you want versus what you need.

Prepare Yourself - Be prepared not to get what you want; focus on a path to get what you need.

Write It Out - Might be easier than speaking it at first and helps to organize your thoughts.

Wait a Bit - Time is your friend. Sit with it a while. Not everything has to be worked out TONIGHT.

Self-Care is Important - Recognize where you head is: It is okay to say, "I am not in a good place to talk /listen/hear right now. Let's talk after dinner." Or: "I need some space to think/ process before we talk."

THINGS TO SAY

- Use "I" statements, not "You" statements. "I felt left out" NOT "You left me out."
- "When you [action/words], I feel [feeling]."
- Use positives rather than negatives. ("I like it when you ___" is better than "Don't ___; I hate it.")
- Commiserating / Empathizing: "That's rough." "That sounds terrible." "I hear you."
- Ask: "Am I helping [solve a problem], or am I listening [to you express/vent]?"

ACTIVE LISTENING

- Say: "I hear you." "Tell me more about that." "What else do you want to share?"
- "What I hear you saying is ____"

HELPFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What is it that you would like me to do?
- What would make you feel loved / secure / etc.?
 - 5 Love Languages as possible answers: Affirmations, touch, service, gifts, quality time <https://5lovelanguages.com/> Gary Chapman
- "How would you feel about ___?" "What if ___?"
- "What does [safe/loved/happy/respected/valued/heard/satisfied] look like to you?"
- "Really?"