

Listening With Your Body

1. Maintain eye contact.
2. Move closer or lean slightly forward.
3. Nod or interject a “yes” or an “uh huh.”
4. Smile or frown in sympathy with what is being said.
5. Keep your posture open, facing your partner, arms unfolded and uncrossed.
6. Actively move away from distractions. Turn radio/tv down, put down magazine/newspaper, and so on.

Reciprocal Communication

When you are the speaker:

1. Explain your point of view briefly. Be clear and concise. Mt. 5:37, 1 Cor. 2:1
2. Talk in terms of yourself and your experience. Use “I” statements to express your thoughts, feelings, wants, and needs.
3. Avoid blame and name-calling: no “you” statements about your partner’s failings.

Stop after five minutes. Your partner now summarizes what you just said. Let your partner know if there anything is left out.

When you are the listener:

1. Pay close attention to really understand your partner’s feelings, opinions, and needs.
2. Don’t disagree, argue, correct, or talk back.
3. You may ask questions for clarification only.

(Drive Through Communication Handout)

Pick a non-threatening topic and practice this process at home. Each take a turn at being the speaker and the listener.