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***Good Communication***  
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**Good communication makes all the difference in families and workplaces.**

**Communication comes from the Latin word “communio”, which means “to be together”.**

**Good communication brings people together; poor communication drives people apart.**

**When many of us think about communication, we first think of speaking: being clear, making our point, being heard.**

**Many of us forget that without listening, there is no communication, no being heard.**

**Many marriage, family and workplace problems are solved by first listening (then responding, not reacting).**

**Stephen Covey, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, asserts that to be effective in relationships, we need to foster the discipline and skill of listening (seek first to understand, then to be understood).**

**Dr. M. Scott Peck, in The Road Less Traveled, remarks that learning to really listen to our spouse, co-worker or teenager is the essential element of any meaningful relationship.**

**Many couples and families that I have counseled throughout the years say that learning to be attentive and listening empathically and listening actively has “made all the difference in the world” in resolving problems.**

### **The 8 Non-Building Blocks of Listening**

**Jud Morris, In the Art of Listening, identifies the 8 most common obstacles to listening. As you read**

**these, see if you recognize what your way of being an effective listener-communicator (then ask “How can I change and be a more effective communicator?”)**

1. Judging and planning our reaction, rather than listening
2. Jumping to conclusions, rather than asking questions to better understand
3. Closed mind: if we do not agree, we just tune someone out
4. Letting our minds wander
5. Prejudice: hearing what we want to hear; because of fear of an idea or speaker, we write them off
6. Dominating the conversation
7. Interrupting
8. Not clarifying what the speaker means by certain words/terms

**Simple Skill: Empathic Listening: Next time you feel like reacting, take a deep breath, count to 10, ask “Can you help me better understand what you meant when you said \_\_\_\_\_?”**

**Simple Skill: Active Listening: “When you said \_\_\_\_\_, is this (\_\_\_\_\_) what you meant?”**