

healthy body, healthy mind – communication

Communicating Well at Home.

Being stuck at home with your loved ones may have been bearable for the first couple weeks, however due to the pandemic's restrictions the tension and conflict in our homes might be increasing.

Communicating with family, partners or friends can get more challenging as time goes on, and at headspace Glenroy we acknowledge that establishing healthy habits in the way we communicate can help in making this tough period just that little bit easier.

Step 1: It is never too late.

Sometimes our communication methods or our reactions can or have already backfired to cause more emotional strain, HOWEVER, realising that there is a barrier in your communication, is the first step to regain those relationships

Some people use a tool called the '48 hour rule' where if you are still angry/upset about the issue after 2 days, then it is worth discussing. With the heightened unease at the moment, little things may cause you to tick, and it's about allowing yourself the time to step away from the issue for a day or two and reflecting on whether this is a battle worth fighting. If this isn't for you, try checking out <https://au.reachout.com/articles/conflict-with-family> for more help and tips :)

Step 2: Practise mindfulness.

Patience and deep breaths are really important when relaying important information at home. When you are calm, you are able to get your message across in a manner that is clear. Let's be real - yelling at your parents/siblings will never get your point across. It's all about being mindful of your own emotions, as well as those around you, and then speaking in a way where the tone (or attitude) is more settled and sincere.

This can also include body language. Just being aware that sometimes our stance or lack of, can affect the clarity of the message you're trying to get across. Sitting upright in a respectful manner is more convincing than laying on the couch not looking someone in the eye. It's the little things that you do not always notice that can change the outcome of your message.

Step 3: Listen & Ask Questions

The best way to communicate, believe it or not, is to sometimes say nothing at all and just listen. Dedicating a portion of your time just to hear someone else's concerns and asking questions for clarification is one of the best forms to display care and affection when at

home. It really is as simple as saying 'How are you, really though?' and actively listen to their response. With the climate of everyone's mental health at the moment, a little bit of extra care or affection can go a long way and can also solidify those relationships at home.

Step 4: Be honest & Use 'I' statements.

If something is bothering you at home, big or small, do not bottle it up. Be honest. Own it. Using 'I' statements are a great way to assert your feelings without necessarily hurting someone else. 'I' statements or 'I' messages is a tool where you bring the focus on to your own personal issues, such as 'I feel, I like/dont like, I would rather'

Here's an example:

'When I'm the only one always cleaning, I just feel so much pressure and responsibility and its a bit more then what I can handle.'

As opposed to:

'You don't help me clean, you expect me to do it all and you have no idea how it affects me'.

To take it a step further, you can also offer some sort of resolution.

I feel... (so much pressure and responsibility)

because it hurts me... (when im the only one cleaning)

and when ...(i feel this way it is too much to handle)

what I need is... (for everyone to do their part and I would feel much less stress.)

Try this method out and see the huge difference in the way you talk to your loved ones. No one likes to hear what their doing wrong, so changing the 'you's' to 'i's' is really effective.

Step 5: Compromise & keep an open mind.

Conversations at home will not be pleasant if you do not keep an open mind and compromise on issues. At the beginning, i used to struggle with talking to my mum and just yelling and getting nowhere. Now that i have more of an open mind, when we begin to discuss problems at home, if I practise the steps above, it will come naturally that you and your loved ones will reach an agreement wherever everyone is happy with the outcome of the conversation.

Good luck and I hope some of these tools can help you with healthy communicating :)