

Communication, Building Resilience, Reducing Stress



Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group
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Welcome!



Objectives

- Increase awareness of communication styles
- Learning how our bodies react to stressful situations
- Learn about ways to improve coping and reduce stress
- Get a chance to practice a few communication and stress reduction techniques

Books for Communicating in Close Relationships

- And In Health: A guide for Couples Facing Cancer Together by Dan Shapiro
- Intimacy After Cancer: A Woman's Guide by Sally Kydd and Dana Rowett
- It's In the Bag and Under the Covers: Stories of Dating, Intimacy, Sex and Caregiving About People with Ostomies by Brenda Elsagher
- Man Cancer Sex & Woman Cancer Sex by Anne Katz
- The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work by John Gottman
- This Should Not Be Happening: Young Adults with Cancer by Anne Katz
- We Carry Each Other: Getting Through Life's Toughest Times by Eric and Sharon Langshur

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Communication



Layers of Relationships



- Partner/spouse
- Loved ones/family
- Extended family
- Friends/neighbors
- Co-workers
- Spiritual/clergy
- Healthcare providers
- Acquaintances
- Service and business
- Total strangers

Ways of Communicating

- *Passive*

- Not asking for what you want or need
- Avoiding conflict
- May not be clear to others

- *Aggressive*

- Demanding what you want or need
- Seeking conflict
- May seem disrespectful of others

- *Assertive*

- Standing up for yourself in a direct way
- Being clear about what you need or want
- Being respectful of others
- Calm but direct
- Rarely creates conflict

The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said.

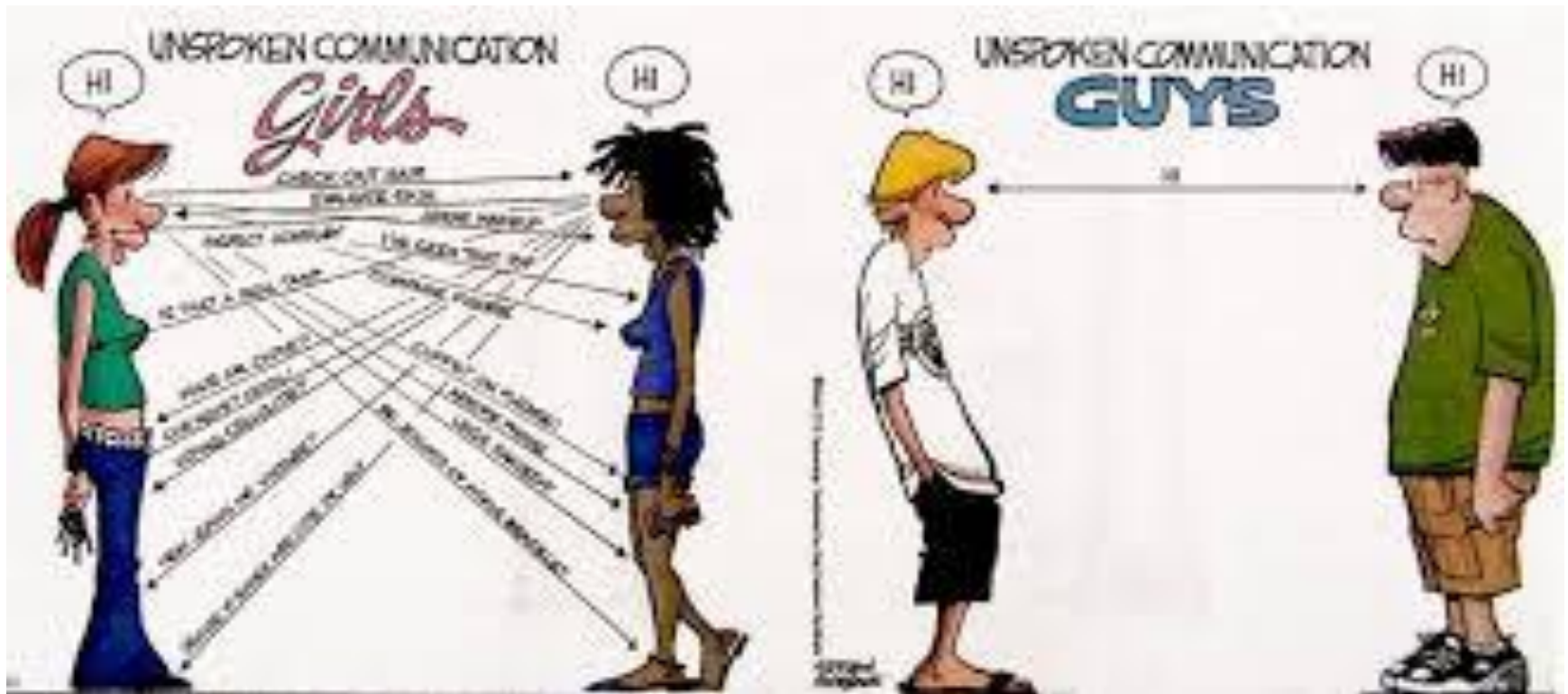
Peter Drucker



Group Participation

- Move into small groups of ~3 – 5
- Be able to see the front of the room
- Say “hello” and share first names around your group

Just for fun, while you are shifting



Group Participation:



- Take a look around your group and notice **body language** (including your own).
- What body language makes you feel **welcomed**?

Group Participation:

Think of a situation when someone was communicating with you and their **words** and **body language** did not give the same story.

Share a few brief stories in your group

The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.

George Bernard Shaw

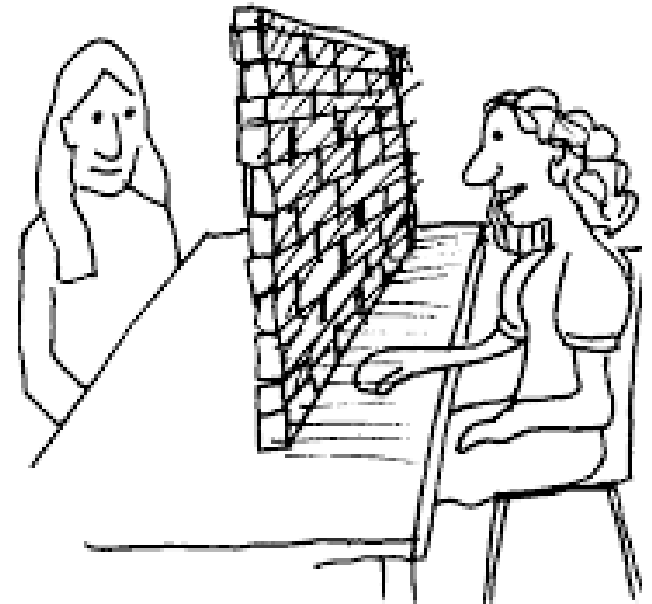


Group Participation:

- Think about a recent *miscommunication* with a friend or loved one
- Think about a recent *miscommunication* with a healthcare provider
- Share briefly in your small group

Communication in Conflict

- Stay focused
- Know what you want, or how you want things to turn out
- Try to see their point of view, or what they want to have happen
- Find mutual goals
- Maybe look for compromise?



Techniques that Help

- Own what's yours – admit if you are wrong, unrealistic, tired, confused, angry...
- Use “I” messages
 - *I want, I need, I hope, I feel*
 - *when _____ happens I feel _____*
- Take time out, refresh your perspective
- Get help if you need it
- Respond to criticism with empathy – ask “*what is behind the words*”?

There is only one rule for being a
good talker – learn to listen.

Christopher Morley



Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?



Stress: What's the big deal?

- What is “stress”?
 - A state of mental tension and worry
 - Something that causes strong feelings of worry or anxiety
 - A physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation

- Merriam-Webster

When we are stressed...

- Pupils dilate
- Respiration increases
- Heart rate increases
- Blood pressure increases
- Blood flows away from organs
- Sweat glands stimulated
- Sugar and fatty acids released into blood
- Adrenal gland releases adrenaline and noradrenaline

Stress just keeps going and going.



Autonomic Nervous System

Sympathetic

- Prepares the body for intense physical activity
- ‘Fight or flight or freeze’ response to stress
- Prepares us to ‘act’
- Speeds up the heartbeat, increases blood pressure, suppresses immune system

Parasympathetic

- Relaxes the body, inhibits or slows many functions
- ‘Rest and digest’
- Prepares us to heal
- Slows down heartbeat, lowers blood pressure, activates immune system

Stress Reduction

Or, How do I access my parasympathetic nervous system?

Art

Music

Prayer

Yoga

Breathing

Singing

Sleep

Talking it out

Giving back

Exercise

Writing

Gratitude

Reading

Focus on strengths

Laughter

Accepting help

And many more...

Mindfulness Exercise



Resilience

- Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.



- Resilience is "bouncing back" from difficult experiences.

Resilience

- Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone.

2015 American Psychological Association

Developing Resiliency

- Being able to experience both positive and negative emotions in distressing situations
- Being willing to learn from hardship
- Participating in kindness (giving and receiving)
- Practicing self care (physical and mental)
- Finding humor

Scholl

Self Care: Some things to try

Yoga



Tai Chi & Qigong



The 7 C's of Resilience

- Competence – focus on strengths
- Confidence – belief in ability (not false praise)
- Connection – sense of security, close ties
- Character – morals and values
- Contribution – opportunities to give back
- Coping – lack of shame, trying strategies
- Control – knowing consequences of choices

American Academy of Pediatrics

And an 8th “C”: Compassion

- “It turns out that self-compassionate people are much less likely to be anxious, depressed, and stressed on a day-to-day basis than those who are self-critical.”

Kristen Neff

Self-Compassion Builds Resilience

- Practice:
 - Self-kindness (not self-indulgence)
 - Recognizing our common humanity
(resist isolation)
 - Mindfulness (acknowledging the current moment)

Self-Compassion Practice



Thank You!

