

The Vow
Part II: Keys to Effective Communication
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I. Introduction

- a. Effective communication is important because as with any relationship of two people, there will always be conflict.
- b. The key to effective communication is being able to navigate conflict successfully.

II. Biblical Tips to Effective Communication

- a. Be quick to listen.
- b. Be slow to speak.
- c. Be slow to anger.

James 1:19 [NIV]

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

Ephesians 4:29 [NIV]

²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

III. Examples of Unhealthy Communication

- a. It is important to remove any identified examples of unhealthy communication in our relationships.
 - i. Having a short fuse or being easily irritated.
 - ii. Shutting down or refusing to communicate.
 - iii. Head in the sand or being oblivious to what is going on in the spouse's life.
 - iv. Keeping secrets or withholding information from the spouse.
 - v. Nagging or constant criticism of the spouse.
 - vi. Threatening to leave the spouse.
 - vii. Being a ticking time bomb or holding grudges against the spouse.
 - viii. Making assumptions that something will be done instead of asking.

IV. Keys to effective communication

- a. Focus on understanding more than being understood.
- b. Ask clarifying questions.
- c. Ask confirming questions.

- d. Don't try to “win” the argument.
- e. Remove the distractions.
- f. Ask for ways to improve.
- g. Give each other support not just advice.
- h. Be vulnerable about feelings and insecurities.

V. Parameters of Healthy Communication

- a. It is important to take the time to intentionally do the following:
 - i. Eat together.
 - ii. Talk every night before bed.
 - iii. Weekly family meetings with the following:
 - 1. Agenda
 - a. Last Meeting
 - b. Kids
 - c. Finances
 - d. Sex
 - e. Spiritual Lives
 - f. Upcoming Events
 - 2. Set day and start time
 - 3. Speak in the sandwich method
 - a. Talk about areas of improvement between two good topics.
 - 4. Prayer
 - 5. Next Steps of action and improvement items until the next meeting.