

## Communication

Pick the right times and right tones to talk about important issues. Don't do it when either of you are tired, distracted, hungry, upset or in a hurry.

There are 3 parts to communication: expressing, listening, and responding.

### *Expressing*

- take one issue at a time, don't pile too much into the conversation
- one person speaks at a time, don't interrupt
- be specific and clear, don't be cryptic or vague

### *Listening*

- pay attention to what is said and what isn't being said
- look at each other and do not be distracted, be courteous

### *Responding*

- be sure you understand what each other is saying; play the message back to be sure you understand it the way it is intended to be expressed
- ask questions to clarify
- Identify the heart of the matter and agree on action, *if needed*. A discussion on a difficult topic doesn't always have to lead to a conclusion. Sometimes the expression and understanding of the issue, without pressuring for immediate action, is the best result

## Managing Conflict

Remember that husband and wife are a team and are partners.., not rivals or each other's enemy. Disagreements are natural and can be handled in a healthy way. They are often the pathway to greater understanding and intimacy.

Discuss as unemotionally as possible, if the pitch increases..., politely end the discussion and ask to take it back up at another time.

Do not simply say your piece then walk away in a huff.

Do not use personal attacks such as *you always....* or *you never....*

Describe how the issue affects you and how it makes you feel. Feelings are something that can't be ignored or argued against.

Be prepared to say "*I am sorry..., will you forgive me*". Be prepared to offer forgiveness if it is asked of you.