

LET'S GET TALKING

Mrs. Pasoni had resolved not to talk to her husband again after his comment that she lacks common sense, because she kept pressing the toothpaste tube in the middle, instead of from the bottom as he had repeatedly taught her. One thing led to another and there was a breakdown in communication. Now things have grown worse.

Various problems, sometimes insignificant, make many marriages mixtures of crosses, sparks, frictions, conflicts and cold wars, often leading a spouse to apply the cold shoulder and silent treatment to the other. Experience has shown that breakdown in communication in homes has been the ruin of many broken homes. It is very necessary to understand the issue of getting along by talking and be ready to put whatever it takes into it no matter what happens. The man who gets ahead is the man who does more than is necessary – and keeps on doing it. Do not allow breakdown in communication; for it breaks the bonds of love. You must keep the channel open. Talking to one another is a way of revealing or conveying one's mind or intentions well. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal (by action or body language). The essence of talking is to make yourself clear, removing every wrong assumptions and suspicions in the other's mind, in order to enhance understanding and healthy relationship. Most conflicts in homes will disappear if couples will learn to speak "right words" "gracious words", "sound words", "pleasant words", "words of the wise" and words that are seasoned with salt (Job 6:25; Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 16:24; Colossians 4:6). Deliberate effort must be put into talking to each other clearly, concisely and completely with care and concern for the partner. James 3:13 says, "***Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.***"

Communication means sharing of minds, hearts, information, feelings etc., one with another. If our conversation is positive and good, we know it by spelling the word **communicating** thus:

- C** Commence with communing with and committing yourself to God – because life is fragile and must be handled with prayer.
- O** Observe and obey God's word as it concerns marriage relationship – Husband love your wife; wife submit yourself unto your own husband as unto the Lord.
- M** Mind and moderate your speech – "***. . . Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath***" (James 1:19).
- M** Manifest and maintain love for one another. "If slighted, slight the

slight and love the slighter.”

- U** Understudy and understand your spouse’s language to avoid misunderstanding him/her.
- N** Note and Nurture the strength of your partner – It is usually best to be generous with praise, but cautious with criticism.
- I** Ignore and intercede to God on behalf of your spouse’s weaknesses.
- C** Consider and consent to your spouse’s suggestions and ideas. This is stooping to conquer.
- A** Advice and admonish one another with the word of God ***“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16).***
- T** Tenderly touch and tease him/her, tempering your talks with a good doze of smiles and laughter, giving treats and pat on the back, etc.
- I** Intelligently initiate communication with your spouse by discussing things of interest with him.
- N** Never neglect settling scowls or grudges before sleeping; for the heaviest thing a person can carry is a grudge.
- G** Genuinely give your time to listening to your spouse.

Communication pitfalls to avoid

1. Do not hurry into any conversation before saying a word or two in prayer to God. If you hurry, the probability of his misinterpreting you is high.
2. Do not delay apology when necessary.
3. Do not allow distractions, wondering thoughts or absent-mindedness.
4. Avoid bringing past offenses into present situation in your speech.
5. Avoid self-defense, self- glorification and self-justification.
6. Avoid unrestrained criticism and condemnation when you speak.
7. Don’t be insincere but speak the truth in wisdom.
8. Avoid personal attacks or shifting blames.
9. Avoid answering questions with questions.
10. Avoid explosion, silent treatment or communication breakdown.

You must get on talking and talking right.

(Culled from Christian Women Mirror June 2006)