

Effective Communication

KAITLIN HENNESSY: Hello, everyone. And welcome to Effective Communication. My name is Kaitlin Hennessy. I'm the program coordinator at Global Connections. And at Global Connections, our goal is to provide co- and extracurricular programming for online students that brings the resources and faculty knowledge to you wherever you are.

And tonight's presenter is Sara Wynne. She is from the WSU health and wellness services, and she's a health educator at health and wellness services. And tonight, as many of you are already doing, please do use that chat box to discuss content, as well as to make questions for the presenter. Throughout the evening, Sara will be posing questions to you all, or asking for discussion points, or might have polls.

And please use that chat box to answer those. And if you have any technical difficulties, please let myself or Kristen, who's also an event moderator this evening, know in the chat. And we'll do our best to help you. All right. Thank you for coming. And I'm going to hand it over to Sara.

SARA WYNNE: Great. Thanks for that introduction, Kaitlin. Hello, everyone. Nice to see you, or your words, this evening. So just before we get started here, I would love-- I see some people have already said hello in the box and started chatting. If you could just type in what your name is, and where you're joining us from this evening, and also what's one thing you're hoping to get out of tonight's presentation, that would be a great little introduction to see what are y'all interested in learning about.

Christina says, I communicate a lot in my work and would like to know if there's anything I can change or adapt to do it better. So some workplace communication, wonderful. Anyone else have one or two things they're hoping to get out of tonight's presentation?

Holly says, communication's an evolving skill. It's true. It's something you can always work on. Workplace communication again. Family communication. The changes towards e-communication and texting, emailing. All right.

Being able to listen well. Yeah, listening is a really important part of communication. Professional and public type speech. All right. Great. That's helpful for me to get kind of a background as to what we're looking for today. And hopefully I can cover some of those points, although maybe not all of them.

So before I get started here, I just want to give you a little introduction to myself and why I'm talking to you today. So as Kaitlin said, my name is Sara Wynne. I'm a health educator with health and wellness services. And so basically that means my job is to run a whole bunch of different presentations and programs for the student population here at Washington State University in Pullman.

And so I do programs that are mandatory for students to attend, things like sexual assault prevention and alcohol safety. I also run a series of programs on other health topics, so things like stress management or self-care or communication, things that are related to health and overall health outcomes. And the way I got into health education is a little bit roundabout.

So I was a teacher for a number of years, teaching English as a second language. And then I came to Washington State University to do my master's of education. And I was looking for a graduate assistantship. And so health and wellness services was hiring a health educator. And I applied for the job, saying, well, I don't have any health background, but I do have a really strong education background. And I'm a really strong presenter and facilitator.

And so they hired me on. I learned all those health topics. And then I really worked with the team over in health promotion to develop more of their curriculum, some of the program planning side. And I was able to bring my strong education and facilitation skills to that job. So here I am now. It's been a couple of years.

And I've discovered that the skills that I've built as a teacher-- learning how to communicate in front of a class, how to gain people's attention, and how to be a really engaging speaker-- has really served me in a lot of different ways. And that's a skill that I've taken from one job to another job. And I know that's a skill that I can draw upon again in other careers if I choose to change that career again in the future.

So I kind of just fell into health education, but I really love it. So I'm happy to share some knowledge with you all today. All right. So let's get to it. Today, we're talking about effective communication. And I have some goals for our workshop here.

So we're going to identify the different roles that you have in your life and how we need to communicate a little bit differently for each of those roles, which I've seen some people talk about already. We're going to recognize some communication differences that can lead to conflicts that we have. Because people communicate in different ways for different reasons, so how can we recognize those differences?

We'll talk a little bit about how to communicate more assertively. This is great for communication at work, but also any time in your life. And then we're going to practice solutions for common problems that we see people having-- things that happen again and again that are communication errors in their relationship, a work relationship, a family relationship-- and what we can do to kind of combat those. So that's a little bit of what we're going to cover today, and we're going to get into it.

So the first thing that we're going to talk about is the different roles that you play within your life. And I have a few examples up here. So you might be someone's friend. You might be a roommate, a supervisor, a girlfriend or boyfriend, or husband or wife, or partner to a person. And these are all different roles, or relationships, that we have with different people.

So what I would like to see from you is, for each of those four roles that I put up there, what's the number one character trait that you're looking for in that individual? So let's start with friend. If you can just type into the chat box, what's the number one characteristic or character trait you look for in a friend?

So Heather says trustworthiness. Nicole says kind. No needless drama. We have trust again. Great. Honesty. Funny. Common interests. Nonjudgmental. Great. What about in a roommate? What's the number one character trait that you look for in a roommate? What do you really value?

Reliability. Responsible. Trust. Respect of space and property. I agree with that too. I like to have my own space. Respectful. Responsible. Respectful. I see some themes happening here. Great. Responsible again. What about number three, a supervisor? What's the number one thing that you would value in a supervisor?

Doesn't challenge my integrity. Supportive. Communication. Approachable. Honest. Fair. Integrity. All of those. Yeah, that sounds great. I agree. And what about our last role here? What do you value most in your significant other, your partner, your husband, your boyfriend, your girlfriend?

Being there for all the moments, not just the good ones. Give and take. Faithfulness. Listening. Trust. Communication again. Helpful. Supportive. Trustworthy. Great. Trust is coming up in a lot of these different ones.

All right. That's wonderful. Thanks for sharing those answers. So we can see that some of the values that we have in those relationships are the same. So trust came up again and again. And supportive came up in several of them.

But also, some of the things that we value in those people are really different. So I want my friend to have common interests and be funny, as well as trustworthy and supportive. But I want my roommate to be really respectful and respect my space and my privacy. And I want my supervisor to be supportive and approachable.

And so the things that we value in those different roles can be a little bit different depending on who that person is. Now this becomes really difficult when I'm just one person, but I'm all of those things. So I'm simultaneously someone's friend, and I'm someone's roommate. And I'm someone's supervisor, and I have a supervisor. And I'm also someone's wife. And how can I be all of those values, be all of those characteristics that people want, when I'm only one person-- and when sometimes those characteristics can conflict against each other?

And so it's helpful sometimes if I'm having a communication issue-- or just if I want to communicate really clearly-- to think about, what's the role that I'm playing right now? In this situation, as I'm communicating, what roles are we having? And so maybe I need to

communicate right now as a supervisor, and not as someone's friend, even though I'm friends with them outside of work.

Or maybe right now, I need to communicate with someone as their roommate, and not as their friend. Or I need to communicate with someone as a classmate who needs some work done, and not as a boyfriend or a girlfriend. And so it can be helpful to separate those out, to really think about, what are the needs that I have?

And so if you are having issues with people, it can be helpful to state that as well, to come at someone and say, you know, I really appreciate you as a friend. But as your roommate, I need you to clean the dishes. Or to say, you know, I know that we work together, but right now I really need a friend. Can I talk with you?

And then I've said clearly that I'm asking for you to be more supportive right now than maybe I would ask my coworker to be. And so if I can differentiate those different roles, then I can really tie into, well, what types of values am I trying to get out of this communication and out of this relationship? And sometimes those are all of the same, and sometimes we have to separate them a little bit.

And that ties in to the next topic that we're going to talk about here, which is boundaries. And so often when we think of boundaries, we think of the hard line things that I can't cross. And sometimes we think of just physical boundaries, and those ones are pretty easy. They're things like personal space or hugging and touching.

Are you someone who hugs your friends, or is that not for you? Or borrowing clothes or food from people. Is it OK for your roommates to borrow clothes? Is it OK for your coworkers to take your milk out of the fridge and put it in their coffee? So those are some physical boundaries that we might have.

But there's other types of boundaries as well we don't always think about. So there's emotional boundaries. This might be sharing personal information. How much do you want to talk about what's going on in your life outside of work? Or how much detail do you want to share about that date that you just went on?

Different types of humor. So the humor that I use with my best friend is going to be different than the humor that I use at work, which might be different than the humor I use at work with my supervisor. And so that's a type of boundary that we have as well.

And then there's technological boundaries, so things like phone security. Are you willing to leave your phone unlocked around this certain friend? What are you willing to share on Facebook? Will you add your coworker on Facebook? Will you add that stranger on Facebook? How much are you uploading photos? And so we have to think about all of those different types of boundaries that we have.

Often we don't consider boundaries ahead of time. And I only know that I have a boundary when it's been crossed, when someone does something that I think, oh, I don't like that. That doesn't make me feel very good. And then I get a bit upset, and maybe I don't know why I'm upset. But I know that something was wrong there, and I just didn't appreciate it.

And so if I can take time ahead of time to really think about, well, what are those boundaries that I have? It can help me communicate what the issues might be. So I want you to take a moment right now. You can write things in the chat box, or you can just think about it in your own head.

What are some boundaries that you have? And how do those change for your family, or your friends, or your significant other? Because the boundaries that I have with all of those individuals and the relationships that we have will be different as well.

So I'm going to give you a couple examples here. And we can brainstorm how to communicate through this. So for example, I have a shared kitchen at work, and we have a shared coffeepot. We all put in a little bit of money every month for this coffeepot. But I have my own little container in the fridge.

And let's say that I had this one coworker who always just borrows a splash of milk for his coffee. But he does this every day. He didn't ask me. And this is really one of my boundaries for me. I don't appreciate that. It's rankling me. How can I communicate that with my coworker? Go ahead and write your ideas in the chat box.

So Holly says, I typically keep work at work and family at home. I don't like to participate in drinks with coworkers, et cetera. I don't like to share food. My husband always says I need more boundaries with my siblings. Yeah.

Leave a note on the fridge. So maybe I could just say, hey, you know, the milk in the fridge only belongs to me. Please don't drink it. Let him know it bugs you and suggest he buy the next container if he wants to share. Maybe you can switch off. So maybe I can talk with him directly and say, hey, you know, that's my milk. Would you mind chipping in some money for it?

Kindly ask him to note the milk use, or if he wants to buy the next container. Great. Lots of people say kind of speak directly with him. Say, it would be nicer if you would buy the milk as well. Writing names on containers usually solves that problem. So just saying, Sara's milk, and then it's pretty obvious.

All right. So some people I can see already took a more passive approach where we're just putting a note on the fridge. And some people said, you know, talk with him about it. So there's some different options out there for how we can communicate it.

All right. And then I have another example for you, which someone touched on already. So let's say that I have a friend at work who's really outgoing. She's always inviting me out for drinks.

She's always talking about what she did on the weekend, and the plans that she got up to, and crazy stories when they went out drinking.

And I'm not really comfortable with that. I don't really want to share that level of my own life with my coworkers. So how would I navigate that relationship?

Christina says, I tend to be passive. If you just ignore somebody, then you should get the hint. So just don't engage in that conversation. They'll stop asking over time. Holly says, I had a coworker like that once. I finally started saying, oh, you know, TMI, too much information. Now you're making me feel old. All right. So kind of making it a joke.

Probably just not go out for drinks with those coworkers. Sure. I would stop hanging out with them. Only participate in work events. You could let her know that you're a private person and just not comfortable sharing. reminding her not to take it personally. Just don't engage. Hope it goes away. So I can see we have some different ideas for how we could interact with this person, how we could navigate that situation.

So one thing that I always like to suggest is really communicating those boundaries with people. I can't expect the people around me to be mind readers and to know what's OK with me and what's not OK with me. But if I can communicate that upfront, it really helps solve those issues ahead of time, before someone might get a little upset. So if I say to my coworker who's borrowing my milk, hey, you know, I bought that milk. And I would appreciate if you could buy your own, or maybe we could switch out. Plan that in advance.

Same with this coworker who's always sharing information on the weekends. I can say, you know, I really like to keep my family and my work separate. And I'm happy to have tea at lunch- - or whatever that is, the level of relationship we're willing to have with her-- but say, you know, I really like to keep my private life private. Hope you don't take offense.

So by just communicating what my boundaries are, then people are more able to respect them. If people don't know what my boundaries are, they're more likely to overstep it without knowing. So if I can be upfront about that, get ahead of the problem, I'm less likely to have those issues in the future.

So let's talk a little bit about communication gender differences. And this is something that you might see in a woman's magazine. Men are from Mars. Women are from Venus. But there's actually a lot of sociology behind it. And so there's some really good sociolinguistic research that's been happening for over 50 years that's showing that men and women really do communicate differently for different reasons.

I'm just going to take a step back and answer a question here. So Holly says, if you communicated with them but they're still being crossed, how do you handle it without confrontation? So if you're communicating your boundaries but they're still being crossed. That's a great question. We're going to get up to it a little bit later in this presentation, where

we talk about how do we deal with those problems and how do we manage conflict. So hold on to that question, Holly.

All right. So going back to communication differences, what we find-- and first of all, these are going to be really generalized ideas that I'm sharing with you. So individually, a man and a woman can communicate any way. And so not every man that you know will fit into this, and not every woman you know will fit into this pattern. But when we look at culture, and we can make some generalizations about that culture. So this is more at a population level, less the individual level.

So we find that women tend to speak more indirectly. They'll add a lot more details about something. They'll talk about extra things about what was happening and kind of circle around an issue before getting to it. And the reason for that is because the goal of women's speech is to build rapport, to build relationships.

And so if a woman was talking about how her day went at work, she might describe the outfit that her coworker was wearing, and how she commented on it, and it was really cute. And maybe she's describing how she got to work that day and how she was feeling throughout the day. And the goal of that is for people to chime in and say, oh, that sounds great. Oh, you know, I take that bus as well. And find similarity between those things and start building a relationship there.

Men, however, are more likely to speak directly because the goal of the communication is to report what happened, to get things done, and to find a solution. So a man would say, yeah, nothing important happened today. I don't have anything to report. Or maybe they would get directly to the issue. Yeah, this thing happened, and so I had to talk with my boss. And here's the resolution, or here's what I have to do next.

So it's more systematic because they're trying to find that solution, to find the answer to it. They're less likely to try to build that rapport. And this can come into conflict because then the goals of the communication are different.

So when-- let's say a husband and a wife are talking about, hey, you know, what happened today? How was your day? The wife is looking to build those similarities and build that relationship, whereas the man's saying, hey, I don't have anything to report. Or, this information that you're giving me, it's unnecessary. Get to the point.

We see this pattern even with really young children. So if you look at children on the playground, age three or four, little girls are more likely to say, you know, I really like playing with dolls. Another girl would say, I like playing with dolls too. I have a doll with brown hair. I have a doll with brown hair. And they're finding these similarities, and they're building this relationship.

Boys are more likely to say, I've got a ball. I've got a ball too. Let's go play ball. And there they're making another plan. They're less likely to try to build those relationships by finding similarities. And so what we can do to try to counteract these gender differences is get to the point of what someone wants out of a conversation.

And so I really liked this piece of advice that I found. If someone is sharing something with me-- they're sharing a story, and I'm not really sure how to respond. I can think to myself, OK, do they want empathy? Advice? Both? Or neither?

Meaning if they want empathy, are they just trying to get a sympathetic ear? They want to vent about their day and for me to say, oh, you know, that's too bad. But yeah, keep talking. I'm here for you. Really building that relationship.

Or are they telling me about their problem because they want me to give them advice? They want me to help solve the problem for them. Or are they looking for both of those things? Wow, that really sucks. You know, you could try-- or maybe they don't want any of those things. They just want me to listen.

And listening is a really important part of communication in relationships. Sometimes the best way that you can build a relationship is just being that active listener and not inserting yourself into the conversation. This can be difficult to do because very few people would go into a conversation and say, well, do you want empathy or advice right now? And having a really direct question like that.

But instead, you can try to suss out, hey, you know, do you want me to give you any feedback on that? And so I can offer some feedback or advice. But no, maybe that person is going to say, I'm good. I just want to vent. I just want someone to listen to me. And then now I know my role is just to be an active listener and to listen with empathy.

So I have a couple examples of this on the next slide. We're going to watch a couple of videos. All right. So this first video is from the popular TV show Friends. All right. So for those two different conversations, what was the goal of the girls' conversation? And what was the goal of the guys' conversation? You can go ahead and write your answers in the chat box.

So Sue says details versus reporting. So we can really see that the women were sharing a lot of details to really build that relationship. So they could feel with each other, and they could say, wow, oh, my goodness, like this, tell me more. And they're really sharing that experience together. The girls wanted to know and experience it. The guy was just delivering a message.

Nicole says, women wanted every detail. The guys just wanted to know about the event, state the facts. So we can see this is kind of an obvious example of those two different goals for styles of communication. So I have another video to show you here.

All right. So what did the woman want out of that conversation? Did she want empathy, advice both, or neither? Go ahead and write it in the chat box. She wanted to be heard, Heather says. She just wanted empathy. And so this can cause some conflicts in relationships. When I'm having a conversation with someone, they're really trying to solve the problem for me, when what I want is active listening.

And so there's two ways to solve that problem because there's two people involved in the relationship. And so if what I really need out of a conversation is just empathy and active listening, I need to communicate that to someone and say, hey, you know what? I'm really struggling right now. Can I talk with you? I don't really want any advice. I just need someone to listen.

So I'm stating ahead of time what I really want out of this. And then the other person can listen in to those cues and then ask before they try to solve the problem. Hey, do you want any feedback on this? Do you want any advice? Because something that everyone universally hates is unwanted advice. So if we can just avoid giving that, we're going to have some better communication.

We're going to do a little communication styles quiz. It's only three questions long. And so just keep the answers in your head as we go through here. So I'm going to give you a situation and then three possible answers. And I want you to think about, how would you respond in this situation?

So for the first situation, you are a customer waiting in line to be served. Suddenly, someone steps in line ahead of you. What do you do? A, let the person be ahead of you since he or she is already in line? B, pull the person out of line and make him or her go to the back? C, indicate to the person that you are in line and point out where it begins?

So just think about it to yourself. Which one of those ways would you respond? All right. Second situation, you're in the middle of watching a very interesting television program, your favorite show, when your roommate comes in and asks you for a favor.

Do you A, pause the program immediately and do the favor, and then return to finish your program later? Do you B, say no and just watch your program? Or do you C, ask if it can wait 20 minutes until the program's over, and if so, do it then?

So just think about which one of those answers feels most like you. Last situation here, a friend drops in to say hello but stays too long, preventing you from finishing an important school project. Do you A, let the person stay and finish your work another time? B, tell the person to stop bothering you and get out? Or C, explain you need to finish your work and request that he or she visit another time?

Great. So you might have already gotten the theme here. We had three different types of communication expressed in that quiz. And maybe you had mostly As or mostly Cs. Or maybe

you were a little bit mixed, one A and one B. That's fine. But we can kind of think about some different communication styles that were exhibited in that.

So if you had mostly A answers, chances are you're a pretty passive communicator. And so passive communicators tend to be easy to get along with. But they really let that anger and frustration simmer under the surface. And so it can create a lot of stress.

Passive communicators can feel like people just walk over them and that they don't know how to say no to things. So they might be more easily taken advantage of. And this can cause them to create more distance in relationships between other people.

Because they're worried if I let this person get too close, then I might not be able to say no to them. Or they might ask me to do things that I can't communicate otherwise. And so that can cause a lot of anxiety for those passive communicators.

B is more aggressive communicators. And so these are people who tend to get what they want. But they don't always consider how it affects other people. And aggressive communicators can be really suspicious of other people's motives.

So they're saying, why would you ask me that? What are you trying to get out of it? And so that can create some antagonism in a relationship as well. Aggressive communicators tend to create stress and tension in relationships. And so they often don't work out quite as well.

And then the last one, C, those are our assertive communicators. And assertive communicators stand up for their rights, but are also sensitive to other people. So they're honest. And they have relaxed, open interpersonal relationships where they're able to communicate their own boundaries without feeling guilty. And they're able to stay calm under pressure.

So assertive communicators are more likely to be able to give constructive feedback as well as receive constructive feedback. Because they're saying, well, how can we come to a compromise here? I see a lot of people in the box saying, you know, I had mostly assertive answers, mostly Cs. But I still feel like I'm passive sometimes.

And a lot of people felt that way as well. So I was thinking those assertive answers, but I don't feel very assertive. Well, that's OK. We're going to talk about how can we be more assertive. How can I stand up for myself and feel really confident in that?

So here's some steps that you can do to communicate more assertively, to stand up for your boundaries and say, what do you need out of this relationship? So one thing that assertive communicators do is they clearly explain the problem without laying blame. And so assertive communicators are able to say, here's an issue that we need to solve. Not, it's your fault. Not, it just happened. I don't why-- someone. But they're saying, hey, here's a problem, and here's how it affects me.

Assertive communicators use I statements instead of negative language. So I feel like-- this is a problem, and I think this. How is it affecting me? If I just say, you know what? All the dishes are dirty. OK, well, all the dishes are dirty. Why is that a problem for you?

Hey, all the dishes are dirty, and it's making me feel really anxious. Or all the dishes are dirty, and I feel like I'm usually the one doing them. So I'm talking about how is this affecting me-- not, you never do the dishes. You're a slob. So using those I statements to communicate what's the problem and how is it affecting me.

Holly says, I started using I statements when my husband and I disagree. It's improved our communication and avoided disagreements becoming fights. Heather says she's found the same.

So if I'm talking about my side of things, people are less likely to say, no, that's not true. Because this is how I feel. And people can't argue with that as much. It also helps communicate, well, what's the real problem here?

Assertive communicators also ask more questions. So trying to find the other side, trying to find the other perspective. But all the dishes are dirty again. It's making me feel stressed. It's making me feel like I'm the one that's always doing dishes. So I have to communicate this issue.

But now I can ask, hey, how come you're not doing dishes? Do you not have enough time? Are you too stressed? What's your side of this perspective here? And I'm also asking questions about, well, how do you feel about this? I told you how I feel. I want to know your perspective here.

And then what are some possible solutions that we can find together? Then we want to try to find that compromise. So what's a solution that we can both agree on, both parties involved? And so rather than me just saying, you know, here's the problem. Dishes aren't done. I feel like it's making me feel stressed. You need to do the dishes.

That becomes less assertive, more aggressive. So instead, we have to talk together, ask some questions to find a compromise. And so maybe that is you're going to do the dishes next time. Maybe we have another system.

A great example was when people were talking about that milk example I gave earlier. And maybe I could talk with my coworker and say, hey, can you buy the milk next time? And we can just alternate. Or can you chip in a couple dollars? So giving some options to try to find a solution that will work for all people involved.

And assertive communicators always share their boundaries. So they're able to say, this is bothering me, and here's why. Or this is a boundary I need you to know. This is something that's making me uncomfortable. And if I can communicate that boundary, that makes it easier for me to say, no, I'm not OK with that. And here's why.

We don't have to apologize for saying no. We're allowed to have boundaries. Everyone does. So this allows me, in that relationship with my coworker who shares too much information, to say, you know what? I really like keeping my personal life separate from work. So happy to chat with you about work stuff, but I'm not really comfortable talking about myself.

That's an assertive way to communicate what my needs are. And this can be difficult for people to do because we feel like we need to apologize for stating what a boundary is, when really we just need to put it out there. And then we can trust the other people in our lives are going to respect those boundaries once they know what they are.

So I'm going to give you an example. Let's say that last week I was making dinner for a few close friends. So I was just having three of my friends over. They've been friends since we were in college together. I was really excited to see them. And then when it's 6 o'clock, my friends start coming over.

My friend Carol brings over this guy who I've never met before. Didn't know he was coming. And I was a little upset about this. So I could have just silently stewed about it. I could have been passive aggressive to Carol the next time I saw her. Or I could communicate it in an assertive way.

So first, I have to clearly explain the problem. Hey, Carol. I didn't know that you were bringing this guy. And I only planned to cook for three people plus myself. So I didn't have enough food for him, and I just wasn't prepared.

I'm going to use those I statements. You know, it made me feel like you weren't really respecting my space and my house. I didn't appreciate that. So I'm going to ask some questions. You know, why did you bring him by? Is he an important guy to you? Is this a relationship that we need to build on in the future?

And next time, can you just let me know if you're bringing someone else over in the future? Or can you tell me ahead of time? So we're trying to find a compromise from there. So I have to explain how is this really affecting me, and then asking questions to try to keep that relationship going.

So we're going to do a little bit of practice now. I have some common communication errors in some example sentences that might be more negative. And we're going to try to reframe these sentences-- explaining what the problem is, using those I statements-- to make this communication flow a little bit better.

So let's start with number one. You're always late. I'm sure we have that one friend who's always late. How can I reframe this problem to communicate what the problem is to my friend? Use some I statements. Maybe ask some questions there. Go ahead and type your answer in the box.

So Holly says, it really makes me feel like you don't respect my time when you're late. Would planning for a different time be easier for you? [INAUDIBLE], I wish you could be more punctual. Heather says, I know it can be difficult for you to be on time, but I would really appreciate it if you would try harder in the future.

So I really like Holly's example of, you know, it makes me feel like you don't respect my time. And it's making me feel negative about this relationship. Christina says, I feel like you have a hard time showing up on time. Nicole says, because of my busy schedule, I really need you to try to be on time or let me know if you can't make it.

Do we need to schedule a different time for you to be here? Great. So asking those questions to try to find a compromise. You know, if this is a really hard time for you to meet, can we schedule a different time there?

But I think that it's helpful to say, you're late. Well, this person knows they're late. But why is it affecting you? So it's affecting me because I don't feel respected. Or I'm really busy, and I don't have time for this. Now if I can communicate how it's affecting me, that person's more likely to respond in an empathetic manner.

All right. So let's look at number two. You're such a drama queen. I can't talk to you when you're being this emotional. Just calm down. We all know that when you tell somebody to just calm down, it works 100% of the time. So how can we reframe this sentiment in number two? What would be a more effective way to deal with this-- or assertive way to deal with this situation?

Holly says, I can tell that something's bothering you right now. Would you like to talk about it in a few minutes when you've had a moment to catch your breath? Great, Holly. I like that. Britney says, oh yeah, my husband knows how effective it is to say calm down. Heather says, I don't feel as though we're communicating effectively right now. Can we talk about this later when we're both less emotional? Great.

I can tell you're stressed out. It's making me kind of anxious watching you. Can we talk about this later when you're calmer? Great. I love all of those suggestions. So rather than saying, you know, you're really wiggling out right now. You have a problem. Say, hey, you know what? Things are getting a little heated. Let's take a break. You can always come back later.

If that even feels like it's too forward for you, you can say, hey, you know what? I think that we're both getting a little emotional right now. I need a break. Can we come back in five minutes? Because you do need a break if you want that to be effective.

And like a few of you were saying, hey, you know what? This communication's not really effective. That's a great thing to say as well. Why is this a problem? Why is it affecting you? And so this isn't being really effective. Let's come back. We can talk again later.

All right, the last example here. You should have told me you had friends coming over. Now I won't be able to study. So maybe I had a big exam the next day. My roommate brings some friends over. It's really loud. And now I can't study. How can I more assertively communicate with my roommate in this situation?

Holly says, I didn't realize you had friends coming over tonight. I had been planning on getting some studying done. Would you mind keeping it down for a few hours until I'm finished? Maybe we can catch a movie later together.

Christina says, I'm going to the library to study. But maybe next time you plan to bring people home, you can let me know. Nicole says, it's really hard for me to study tonight. In the future, if you plan to have friends over, can you let me know? Maybe I can make a plan to head to the library, or we can pick a better night.

Great. Great suggestions, people. Yeah. So a lot of you were saying, you know, we'll try to find a compromise tonight. And then lets communicate this more in the future. So realizing that, well, this wasn't a boundary that I'd set with my roommate. So let's set that boundary now. Hey, sometimes I need to study. Can you let me know if you're having people over? And then we can plan for this better in the future.

So those are some great assertive answers. I'm going to play you one more video clip. And then we'll do a little summary of what we've talked about this evening. So let's watch this last video clip here.

Great. So this video really shows a lot of those errors we were talking about earlier. And the solutions were things that you came up with on your own in the chat bar there. So really communicating using those I statements.

Explaining your feelings. Respecting each other. Avoiding blaming other people and taking some ownership for that as well. And then taking a break if you need one to say, hey, you know what? We're not being very effective. Let's come back a little bit later.

If I look back at our three communication errors that we were looking at earlier, these really show some of those common problems that were discussed in the video. So the first one, you're always late. This is a form of criticism. So rather than criticizing other people, we really need to be communicating how does this affect me and use I statements.

The second one, you're such a drama queen. Well, that's showing some contempt there. And so instead, I really need to be respectful of people around me and say, you're going through a rough time. Let's work through this together.

The third one, you should have told me you had friends coming over. Now I won't be able to study. Well, this is defensiveness. It's laying blame on someone else when really I had a part of the problem. I was part of the problem here.

And then I saw a few of you in the chat saying defensiveness is your big downfall. And I think that's true for everyone. And so a great tip is that if you're having a communication problem, take that break like we were talking about. And consider, how am I playing a part in this? What's my role in this issue that we're having? And how can I communicate more clearly?

And sometimes you'll say something in defensiveness. And then you have to come back a little bit later when you've had some time to think and say, you know what? You were right. I was doing this thing. I apologize for that. Let's work through it now.

So taking a break to realize, hey, you know what? That thing that I said, that wasn't really fair when I said it in the moment. This isn't your problem. Maybe it's my problem. So let's rectify that, and let's move on in taking ownership for that.

So in some summary here, conflict is pretty inevitable. How you handle it is what matters. So we want to try to resolve conflict, not just win the argument. So coming to a mutual resolution is the goal here, not being right.

We want to bring empathy to a conversation. I don't have to agree with someone in order to be empathetic. And so even if I don't think that person's right, I can say, hey, you're struggling. And I realize that right now you're feeling frustrated. And I know what it feels like to be frustrated. So I'm going to try to work through this with you.

Asking those questions to find the other perspective. And then holding yourself accountable for your role in that conflict. And the video is really focused on romantic relationships, but this is true for any relationship. So you see all of these things happening even in the workplace.

Maybe you kind of make those sarcastic remarks with one of your coworkers behind another coworker's back. Or maybe you're really defensive when that other person talks to you during staff meetings. And so we can consider, how am I responding to these things when they're happening? And how can I be more assertive and more open in my communication to make the whole work atmosphere better? To make the communication across work better?

So it's not just an interpersonal, romantic relationship thing. These are skills that we can use in all relationships. So some people in the chat are saying, it's really hard to take a break when you're in a conversation. You just want to keep going down that fight. And that is a really difficult thing to do.

And so it's great if you can just check into yourself and say, is this effective right now? Is the conversation that we're having being effective? And if it's not, then something needs to change. And if I'm too worked up right now to figure out what needs to change, taking a break would be a great first step.

And so just that practice of checking in. It's a mindfulness practice of, where am I at emotionally? How effective is this? And do I need to change something here? I really like this comic strip that I've shared with you here from Lunarbaboon about giving positive feedback.

So in order to have feedback be taken really well, it needs to be positive. What's a step that we can take? Not stop doing this, rather start doing what. It needs to be specific. Not here's a problem, I'm angry with you, but what is that problem? What's a solution? And then giving that next step. So if we can rope those things into our communication when we have that conflict, we're more likely to resolve it in a way that both people agree to.