



Effective Communication

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There is an art form to healthy and effective communication. It is similar to painting a picture, consisting of many colors, shades and forms. It can be raw, crude, or filled with wisdom and thought.

As a human being, the way in which you communicate is universal. The techniques used are the same for every person. Communication skills are so natural that we do not even realize how it affects our environment.

It is important to remember that the words you choose to use have immense power behind them. You may not realize it, but through verbal and non-verbal communication, you can nurture or destroy situations or relationships.

When having a conversation with someone, it is important to be fully present. Do not formulate conclusions in your head. Be objective, be present and listen without bringing your own agenda into the conversation.

Here are a few suggestions to communicate more effectively:

Create a space of integrity. This will help you have a clear commitment to the issue at hand. It is not only important to have integrity with your words, but using mindfulness and wisdom will take you a long way.

Relate to the other person. It is important that you do not make them feel wrong in the way they think or feel. The minute you give the attitude that “my way is right and your way is wrong,” you have destroyed the dialogue.

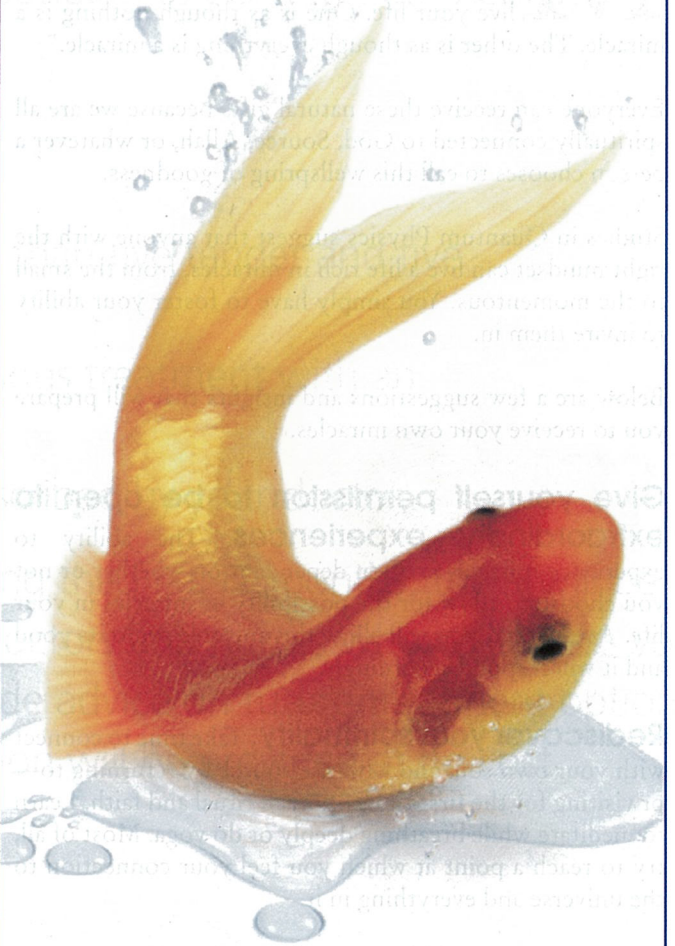
Be committed to the goal of the conversation. Always step back, assess and be willing to ask open-ended questions that are related to the topic.

Put yourself in the other person’s shoes. Listen to their side and why they are thinking and feeling a certain way. Never assume. Give the other person room to express their thoughts and feelings, without judgment.

Remember, your goal is to have a dialogue not a monologue.

“WHEN I HAVE AN
ASTHMA ATTACK
I FEEL LIKE A FISH
WITH NO WATER.”

—JESSE, AGE 5



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