



## **Family communication**

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We start from the assumption that communication is always an encounter between people, a going out of oneself to find the other, so that one experiences sharing his life with that of the other. As Viktor Frankl says, "the door that gives entrance to happiness always opens by pulling it out", because the communication of each one enriches the communication of the other, which in some way leads to mutual happiness.

For this we must be available to welcome and allow the words of the other to penetrate us; it is necessary to attend to them, accept them and love them as their own, so we see how in communication there is much more wealth than it objectively seems. Sometimes we talk to talk, but our words have a meaning, something that belongs to me, my privacy, which is not only for me but to share, because the language does not make sense but is for others. Because with each spoken word there is something of oneself: a worry, a joy, a sadness, illusions, memories, etc. My words are the best gift for others.

Nowadays we see that the need for dialogue is one of the things we talk about the most. We need to explain ourselves, that someone understands us, needs to be understood or even feel understood. And is that one of the most common failures of some marriages today is the progressive lack of communication: two get married, isolate themselves from their old friends and companions, they become voluntarily sterile, they ignore their elders and they lock themselves, etc. We see many marriages in which the communication is taken for granted, the personal colloquium is suppressed and the problems are silenced or avoided. The empty spaces are then filled by television, newspaper, the internet, telephone, etc. This is what Kierkegaard called "loneliness of two in the company".

Sometimes the problems of communication lie in the same differences that are found between men and women: men expect women to think, communicate and react as they do, and women expect men to feel, communicate and respond in the same way in what they do. But love is not magic, good intentions are not enough. We have to grow in love, day by day, knowing our differences and working on them.

And for this it is convenient to follow some guidelines for good communication in the couple:

- 1.- Above all active listening, because listening is not the same as listening, because listening is paying attention, showing interest, placing oneself in the spouse's place to understand them better, adopting a positive attitude at all times, being patient and not interrupting.
- 2.- Exchange more clear and direct forms of communication to express opinions, thoughts, feelings, and desires in a way that speaks of oneself, avoiding accusations or references to the other.
- 3.- Let each member of the couple explain their ideas. The spouse should think about what the other said, not what he or she meant.
- 4.- Clarify the message received before responding.
- 5.- Do not give unsolicited advice to solve a conflict.
- 6.- Avoid generalizations. Absolute terms of all or nothing, always or never suffocate the communication responding to a mood of anger.
- 7.- Share conversation topics. Talking about what the goals help redefine and evaluate them. What makes the couple happy and what can be changed. Listen to each other's fears without making fun, laughing or minimizing them.
- 8.- Caring for the non-verbal aspects of communication. As Watlawick, one of the main theorists of communication would say, it is impossible not to communicate in this sense; gestures and tone of voice are essential and you have to take care of them.
- 9.- Reserve moments to dedicate to each other. The couple must search and reserve certain moments that can be dedicated to each other without interruptions. These times may be shorter or longer but their frequency is important.

As we see, communication is of vital importance in relationships, being a fundamental instrument for coexistence, social adjustment, personal and conflict resolution. Likewise, research indicates that there is a positive correlation between

communication and marital satisfaction since it is an excellent means for husbands to reach out to make their two lives as one; to achieve a tune without shadows or secrets that allows them to look together towards the future based on a past and a shared present.