

# CLEAR COMMUNICATION

## With Your Partner

Communication is the cornerstone of every strong relationship. You will not always agree with your partner, but if you have a foundation of respect and clear communication it will be much easier to resolve any conflicts that arise. Answer the questions below to help assess how you and your partner communicate:

**How frequently do you have a conversation and/or make eye contact with no distractions, including television, driving, children, etc.?**

**Do you understand your partner's needs... On a day to day basis? When they are struggling with stress? In different situations, like traveling, at parties, etc.?**

**Does your partner understand your needs?**

**When was the last time you both shared what you appreciate most about each other and the relationship you are in?**

**Do you express what you would like to improve in the relationship?**

**What decisions do you and your partner agree should be made together?**



Creating an intimate and long-lasting relationship takes work. If having an intimate partner is a high priority for you, you can begin to build the foundation by considering the above questions and answering them for yourself. What are your needs? How can you put aside time every week to actively listen, without judgement, to your partner?

If you build these healthy communication skills into your relationship from the beginning, you will be well-equipped to address problems that arise. You and your partner will know the boundaries and expectations of the relationship, and be respectful of one another through clear communication. Here are some tips on how to build basic communication skills in your relationship:

**Set the precedent early and make communicating fun. For example, establish a weekly date night and take turns planning. It could be as simple as a picnic in the park, or something new and adventurous, like a rock climbing class!**

**Practice acknowledging when your partner goes beyond the call of duty, even for little things, like doing that chore you hate to do.**

**Speak honestly about any actions that make you feel hurt, stressed, guilty, or bad in any way, but avoid blaming, shaming, or isolating your partner. Listen to one another and have a productive conversation.**

**Be open and share your strengths, weaknesses, pet peeves, and preferences.**

**Create a safe, judgement-free space for your partner.**

**Practice eye contact when speaking, and rephrase what's being said to be sure you understand each other's perspective.**