

Communication Skills

Sometimes you have difficulty speaking to certain people. It is especially hard if you are upset by something someone said or did, and you want to let the person know how you feel. It is important to tell the person how you feel or you may start to feel resentment (hard feelings). This can lead to stress, anger, or self-abuse.

If you practice these simple tips, you may find it easier to communicate. Start with finding a private spot to talk.

- Ask one question at a time. Be specific about what you want to know and what you want the person to do.
- Make eye contact with the person.
- Be aware of your tone of voice. Do not sound loud or angry.
- Be aware of your body language. For example, do not stand with your hands on your hips.
- Tell the person what he or she did or said that has upset you. Focus on the behaviour that upset you, not the person's character.
- Tell the person how you feel by using "I" statements. "You" statements are accusing and make people feel defensive (on guard).
- Listen carefully to the person's response.
- It is also important to give positive feedback when someone has done or said something nice.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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