

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting



Personal Communications

June 2021

In our last Tools for Life Health Meeting, we talked about social connections and how they keep us physically and mentally resilient. To have good social connections, we need healthy relationships. Healthy relationships are dependent on good communications. When we understand our kids, our spouse, our friends and co-workers, we tend to feel connected as well as physically and mentally well. When we feel physically and mentally well, we are less susceptible to stress, anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts/behaviors. We are more resilient and able to help others who may be struggling with stressful situations.

How we talk to each other to share our thoughts, feelings, hopes, disappointments and criticisms is a major factor in the strength of our relationships. Since we primarily learn our speaking style through our parents and is usually a part of the culture we belong to, we don't always learn to use our words in the most effective way possible. Often times many people struggle to communicate in healthy supportive ways. Here are some tips to improve personal communications:

- Share feelings honestly
- Ask for what you need from others.
- Listen to others without judgement or blame. Be caring and empathetic.
- Disagree with others respectfully. Conflicts should not turn into personal attacks. Focus on the problem not the person.
- Avoid being overly critical, angry outbursts, and violent behavior.
- Expect others to treat you with respect and honesty in return.
- Compromise. Try to come to agreements that work for everyone.
- Protect yourself from violent and abusive people. Set boundaries with others. Decide what you are and aren't willing to do. It is ok to say no.

HEALTH REMINDER: When conversations heat up, be persuasive, not abrasive.

Discussion Points / Question:

1. What factors if any have influenced the way you speak to your family.
2. Do you use a different speaking style with your family versus your co-workers?
3. What are some ways you can improve workplace communications? What effect do you think that would have on your workplace culture?