

Appreciative communication



**Let's get to know
each other**

A note on communication

Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place, person or group to another.

- Every communication involves (at least) one sender, a message and a recipient. This may sound simple, but communication is actually a very complex subject.
- The transmission of the message from sender to recipient can be affected by a huge range of things. These include our emotions, the cultural situation, the medium used to communicate, and even our location.

Read more at: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/what-is-communication.html>

A note on communication

Different categories of communication may include:

- Verbal communication
- Non verbal communication
- Written communication

- **An effective communicator understands their audience**, chooses an appropriate communication channel and encodes the message effectively to reduce misunderstanding by the recipient(s).
- They will also seek out feedback from the recipient(s) to ensure that the message is understood and attempt to correct any misunderstanding or confusion as soon as possible.
- Effective communication involves minimising potential misunderstanding and overcoming any barriers to communication at each stage in the communication process.

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/what-is-communication.html>

- Effective communicators encode their messages so that they fit both the channel and the intended audience. They use appropriate language, conveying the information simply and clearly. They also anticipate and eliminate likely causes of confusion and misunderstanding. They are generally aware of the recipients' experience in decoding similar communications.
- Once received, the recipient needs to decode the message. This will depend on their experience and understanding of the context of the message, how well they know the sender, their psychological state and how they feel, and the time and place of receipt.
- The final part of a communication is feedback: the recipient lets the sender know that they have received and understood the message through both verbal and non-verbal reactions. Effective communicators pay close attention to this feedback as it is the only way to assess whether the message has been understood as intended, and it allows any confusion to be corrected.

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Activity

Challenges of communication

- Traps
- Limitations
- Bias

BIAS

The term 'bias' is typically used to refer to both implicit stereotypes and prejudices and raises serious concerns in counselling. Psychologists often define bias broadly as 'the negative evaluation of one group and its members relative to another for example. We all agree that a patient should not expect to receive a lower standard of care because of her/his/their race, age or education or any other characteristic. In addition to affecting judgements, implicit biases manifest in our non-verbal behaviour towards others, such as frequency of eye contact and physical proximity. Implicit biases explain a potential dissociation between what a person explicitly believes and wants to do and the hidden influence of negative implicit associations on her thoughts and action.

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5333436/>

How to avoid bias in a professional environment?

- Be **aware**. Be aware of what it is and how it can affect others.
- Question others and yourself. To **reduce** the effects of unconscious **bias**, question **biases** in yourself and raise awareness in others. ...
- Create **inclusive** meeting practices. ...(staff meetings, staff supervision etc.)
- Invest in good **communication** and **empathy**

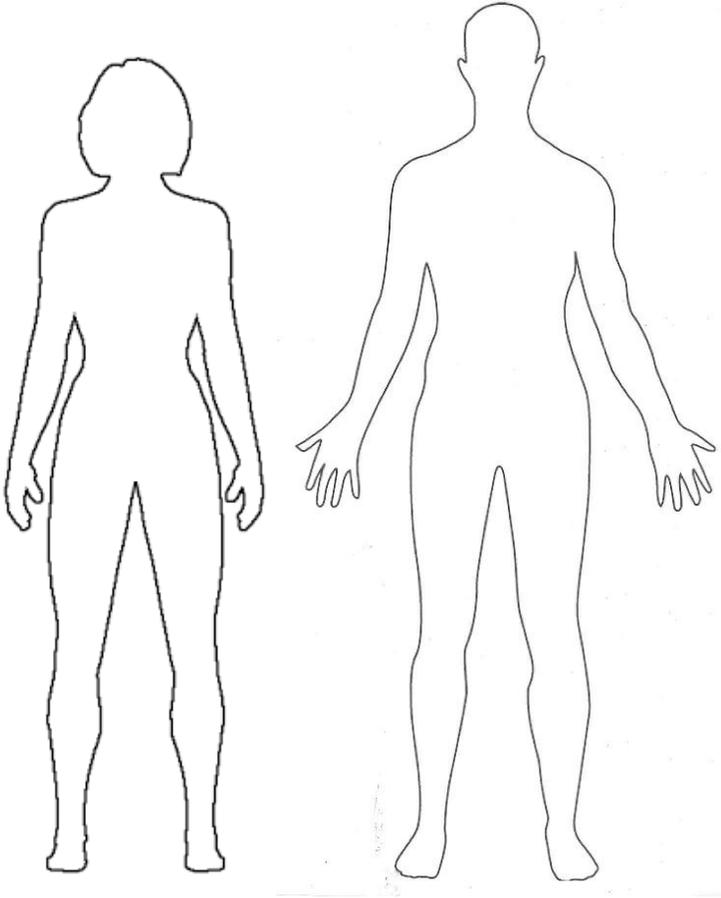
Traps in communication

- Being condescending: „It’s hard for you to understand...” , „ That’s not really the way we do things here...”
- Criticising instead of giving feedback
- Sarcasm, mockery, name-calling, rolling eyes, laughing
- Lack of empathy
- Lack of attention, interest
- Using wrong tone of voice
- Making assumptions/using stereotypes

Limitations in communication

- Conflict of interest („they will take away my job”)
- Personal bias (gender, ethnicity, religion, status in a work place etc.)
- Differences in perception and viewpoints
- People may be unclear of their role in the communication process and therefore not know what is expected of them

Stigma and discrimination



Disturbed, Nuts, Dumb, Loony bin, Brain dead, Mental, Demented, Thico, Freak, Retard, Screw loose, Gone in the head, Spastic, Spaz, Nutter, Hand fed, Crazy, Oddball, Twisted, Deranged, Loser, Lunatic, Reject, Downy, Empty, Mong, Schizo, Muppet, Fruit cake, Weird, Weirdo, Wacky, Wally, Veg, Thick, Junky, Druggie, Addict, Crackhead, Pillhead, Beggar, Bum, Derelict, Drifter, Floater, Hobo, Domestically challenged, Urinal cake, Curb jockey, Boxman

The impacts of Stigma

Driving People into the Margins

Stigma and taken-for-granted assumptions about people who use drugs, suffer from mental illnesses or are homeless directly feed discrimination and social exclusion.

Since peers often experience stigma it is crucial to eliminate that kind of language in professionals – to-peers communication.

<https://www.unodc.org/>

Person-first language

People-first language (PFL), also called **person-first language** (PFL), is a type of linguistic prescription which puts a **person** before a diagnosis, describing what a **person** "has" rather than asserting what a **person** "is,"

<https://en.wikipedia.org/>

Person-first language in drug addiction

Person-first language is proven to reduce stigma (<https://www.shatterproof.org/>)

- It's not about being sensitive, or polite, or politically correct. It's about access to quality interactions.
- Person-first language doesn't define a person based on any medical disorder they may have. It's nonjudgmental, it's neutral, and the diagnosis is purely clinical.
- So what's the person-first language that we should use to talk about addiction? [The Office of National Drug Control Policy](#) recommends these terms and phrases as a starting point.

Reccomendations? www.shatterproof.org

Words to avoid	Words to use
Addict	Person with substance use disorder
Alcoholic	Person with alcohol use disorder
Drug problem, drug habit	Substance use disorder
Drug abuse	Drug misuse, harmful use
Drug abuser	Person with substance use disorder
Clean	Abstinent, not actively using
Dirty	Actively using
A clean drug screen	Testing negative for substance use
A dirty drug screen	Testing positive for substance use
Former/reformed addict/alcoholic	Person in recovery, person in long-term recovery
Opioid replacement, methadone maintenance	Medications for addiction treatment

Almost there....

To summarize:

- Good professionals – to – peers relations = Skillful communication
- Remember that communication is the key
- Non-verbal communication is as important as the verbal one
- Don't let the bias towards peer counselor rule your behavior
- Get to know your limits and the limits of professional relation
- Effective communication requires an understanding of self and a detailed awareness of the impact of oneself on others