

## The five types of communication

This activity will help you to understand how people communicate so you can consider your own style.

Most people think that the primary communication is verbal. But there is so much more going on. Studies have proven that over 90% of communication is not actually what is said. This activity will help you understand the five types of communication and reflect on how these are present in your relationship.

### How to use this tool

1

Consider how the five different types of communication are present in yourself and in your partner.

2


Share your responses with your partner - and ask them to share their responses with you.

3

Look at the areas where you have similarities and the areas where you have differences.

4

Use this knowledge to consider what actions you need to take - both individually and jointly.



## Verbal

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Verbal communication occurs when we engage in speaking with others. It can be face-to-face, over the telephone, via Skype or Zoom, etc. Regardless of the type, it is not just about the words, it is also about the complexity and emotional attachment of those words, how we string those words together to create an overarching message, as well as the intonation (pitch, tone, emotion and volume) used while speaking.



## Listening

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Listening is perhaps one of the most important types of communication because if we cannot listen to the person sitting across from us, we cannot effectively engage with them. Without listening, it is impossible to assess what is being said, the meaning behind the message along with what is not being said. It is important to remember to 'listen to learn' rather than to 'listen to reply'.



## Written

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Whether it is a text, WhatsApp message, Facebook post or letter, when you communicate in writing it is important to think about how those words will come across to the person reading them. Will they seem hurtful, loving, thought-provoking or a trigger for an argument. Do you include emoji's, kisses or always finish with the same wording? If so, what happens in those times that you don't include them? Does that cause problems? These elements are as important as the words used.



## Non-verbal

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What we do while we speak often says more than the actual words. Non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, posture, eye contact, hand movements, and touch. For example, if you're engaged in a conversation with your partner about something that is frustrating you, it is important to pay attention to their nonverbal cues to see if they indicate that they are comfortable, in agreement or are feeling angry or emotional.



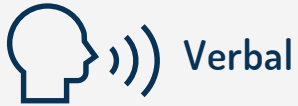
## Visual

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We are a visual society - televisions are running 24/7, social media is full of memes, videos and images, and imagery to sell ideas. The images we post on social media are meant to convey meaning - to communicate a message. Are the images you are sharing agreed by you both? Does it cause problems in your relationship? It is important to set boundaries about what can be shared, how it can be shared and when. How you visually show your relationship to others is important. If there is an unspoken imbalance in public displays of affection, this can cause difficulties and insecurities. It is important to talk these areas through together.

## Your communication

Use this space to think about how you communicate as an individual, how your partner communicates and how you communicate together.





## What have you learnt?

Has anything surprised you? Has anything disappointed you? Have you spotted any unknown strengths or positives? Write down what you learnt.



## What do you need to do or change?

Write down a few actions that you need to take, either individually or together.

In partnership with

