

# LifeSkills

## Communicating your feelings of love and affection

*Although love and affection are strong emotions, people often experience difficulty communicating these feelings to one another. Here are some suggestions that may help you communicate love and affection better.*

### Have you thought of this?

Being silent about your feelings may be interpreted as an expression of the absence of those feelings.

### Strategies to adopt and adapt

Here are some strategies to help you convey your love and affection. Some focus on verbal communication, spoken or written, but there are other ways to let the person you care about know that you care. We suggest you personalize these strategies, and hope our examples will help you generate some ideas of your own.

### Talk about your feelings

Speaking is the most direct way to convey your feelings.

*Your feelings for the person you love are simple and not complicated, so you can put them into simple words.*

For example, "I love you," or "I love being with you and doing things together."

No doubt you experience these emotions frequently. Try giving voice to these feelings at least half the time you experience them. Be assured, the person listening will not tire of hearing them!

### Sometimes actions speak louder than words

Caring behaviors are as important as caring words. Paying careful attention to the person you love is an example of caring behavior.

*Take an interest in the other person's daily life, what happened at work, or his or her relations with friends or family.*

Listen to what he or she has to say. If the other person has a problem, you needn't feel you have to solve it for them. It is your understanding and sympathy that really matters.

*Real listening means paying attention so that you can sum up what the other person has said.*

A real listener looks at the other person while he or she is talking.

### Talk, listen, and touch

Touching matters as much as talking and listening. Holding hands, hugs, kisses, all work very well as unmistakable signs of your love and affection. They are hard to overdo.

### Some other ideas that work well

- Phone your loved one at work just to say hello.
- Write your loved one a note and put it on the fridge or in his or her briefcase.
- Do things together; a walk in the rain, a trip to the museum, a weekend in the country.
- Plan something special for your loved one's birthday and/or your anniversary!
- Take enough time to make your gifts personal. This means going beyond the usual box of chocolates, necktie, or new frying pan.

Persist

Remember, there's more than one way to deliver your message. Try some strategies and observe the consequences. Doing so will help you progress successfully towards communicating your love and affection.

However, if you have tried these suggestions and you find it difficult to apply the strategies or would like more ideas, you might benefit from professional help.

La version française de ce document sera disponible sur Internet sous peu. Vous pouvez vous la procurer en composant le 1-800-668-4125.

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