

MAKE A RELATIONSHIP-SAVING CHOICE TODAY:

Practice connecting with others when you talk.

By Paula Holland De Long CPCC, ACC

Many of my clients come to me for help with personal or professional relationships. Often, no matter what the situation, their concerns and feelings come from misconceptions and assumptions they've created for themselves and/or those in their lives. They're not communicating on the same page.

I help them **create a "nobody gets to be wrong" environment** where everyone can share their emotions and opinions in a healthy way. Here are a few tips on how you can learn to communicate successfully with others.

- Look at situations from the other person's perspective. Don't judge, just observe or experience it. Share your appreciation and understanding of their viewpoint, even if you disagree.
- Ask for what you want clearly and specifically, without making others wrong or defensive. Assuming they "should" know what you need or want is unfair and unrealistic and sets you up for disappointment.
- Don't be afraid to tell the truth. Acknowledge the elephant in the room. Facing the truth is much less stressful than convincing yourself it isn't real.
- Learn to listen and make the other person feel heard. Sometimes we need to release our emotions and we just need someone to listen. We don't need any judging or fixing, and we don't want to talk about how what we're experiencing relates to the other person.
- Consciously choose to share the gift of your time and total attention with people in your life, or ask for that gift yourself. You'll be surprised how good you feel afterwards.

Connected communication fosters honesty, trust, comittment and intimacy in any type of relationship.

The true beauty of connected communication is the mindset that it is not all about me, you, him, or her. It's about what we can do to make each other the best we can possibly be. The ability to communicate effectively helps create the freedom to be yourself and to accept others as they are.

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Cancer survivor, professional life coach, author, and inspirational speaker Paula Holland De Long offers wisdom, advice, and tools that promote health and healing for cancer survivors and their loved ones. Her coaching work encourages thriving during and after cancer using complementary, holistic, and spiritual coping tools that transform fear into hope and choice. **What's Next For My Life, Inc.** workshops and support products are offered at cancer treatment centers, support organizations, and via teleconference. Her first book, the *What's Next For My Life? Companion Journal for Cancer Patients* has just been published and her second book about creating a new life after cancer is forthcoming.

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