

WELCOME!



Communication = Connection:

Values
into action Tips for Communicating with Friends

This project is funded by the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council.



Special thanks to the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council for funding this project!



Learning Session Agenda

- Background and Introductions
- What is Communication?
- Starting with the Person
- The Many Ways We Communicate
- Less is More
- Tips and Tricks
- Tool Time!

Introductions

Values
into action



Values
into action

Our values underpin everything we do:

Adapting with you to live your life, your way

Respecting you and your choices

Dedicated to you and your ambitions

Kind to you without exception

Transforming services with you

Open minded to you

Accountable to you and yours

True Friendships – Purpose

About True Friendships Project:

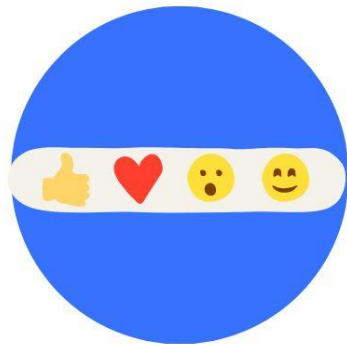
True Friendships hopes to make it easier for people with disabilities to make and keep friendships. The True Friendships project is focused on creating opportunity and capacity for friendships for all.

True Friendships– Project Partners

- Temple University, Institute on Disabilities
- Disability Pride PA
- PA's Education for All Coalition, Inc. – PEAC
- Open Future Learning

Let's Zoom!

How to Use Zoom Features



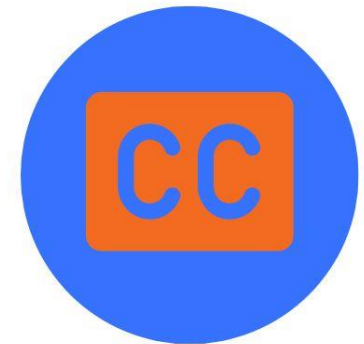
Reactions

Like or agree with something that was said or on a slide? Leave a thumbs up or clapping emoji using Zoom Reactions on the bottom of your Zoom screen! Use the Raise Hand emoji if you want to speak! We want to hear from you!



Chat

Feel free to add your thoughts, ideas, or questions to the chat throughout the module! We can help bring focus to the chat as needed! :)



Closed Captions

You can enable Closed Captions by clicking "show captions" at the bottom of your Zoom screen.

Why We are Here



Communication is the foundation for all human relationships. We use communication as a tool to share with others, understand, resolve conflicts, collaborate and build warm and trusting relationships.

What is Communication?



Communication is...

A two-way street

It requires us to receive and express:

- Information
- Feelings
- Experiences

What is Communication?

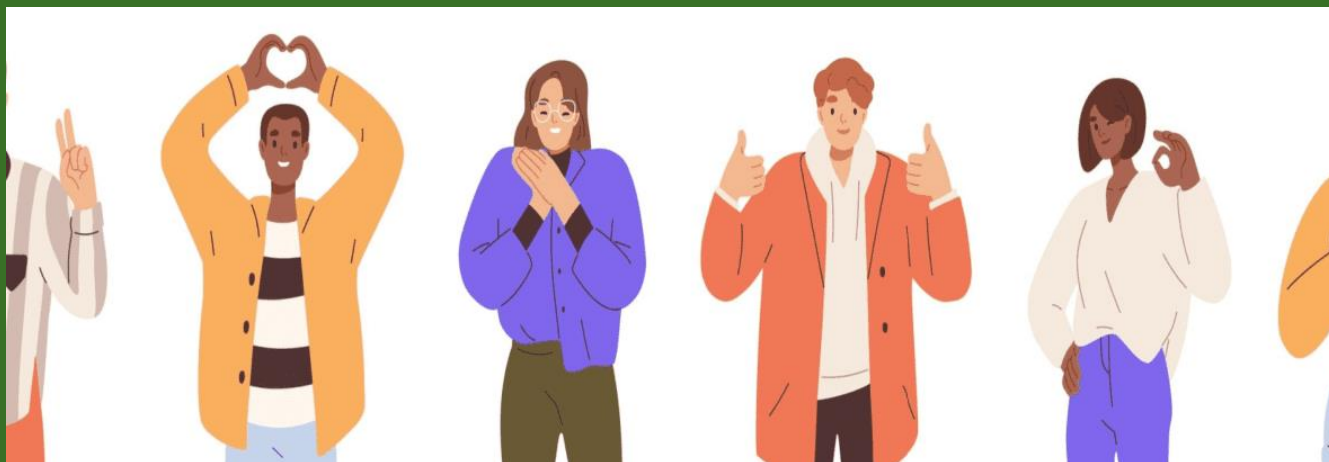
Facial Expressions



Communication is...

More than just words

- Gestures (Pointing, signing, movement)
- Facial expressions
- Objects (Pictures, symbols, sound boards, and more)
- Behavior



What is Communication?



Communication is...

A human right!

- It is a right to be able to influence what happens in your life, and that is done through communicating your wants and needs
- It is a right to be communicated with in a way that is meaningful to you.

Barriers to Communication

Common barriers to communication that people with disabilities experience:



Uncertainty about how to connect



Not being listened to



Not being given enough time

These barriers can be frustrating, and sometimes lead to a person giving up on trying to communicate.

Communication is a Process

Remember that communication is a skill and a process that grows with you.

It's okay to mess up!



Guessing Game: What Feeling are They Feeling?



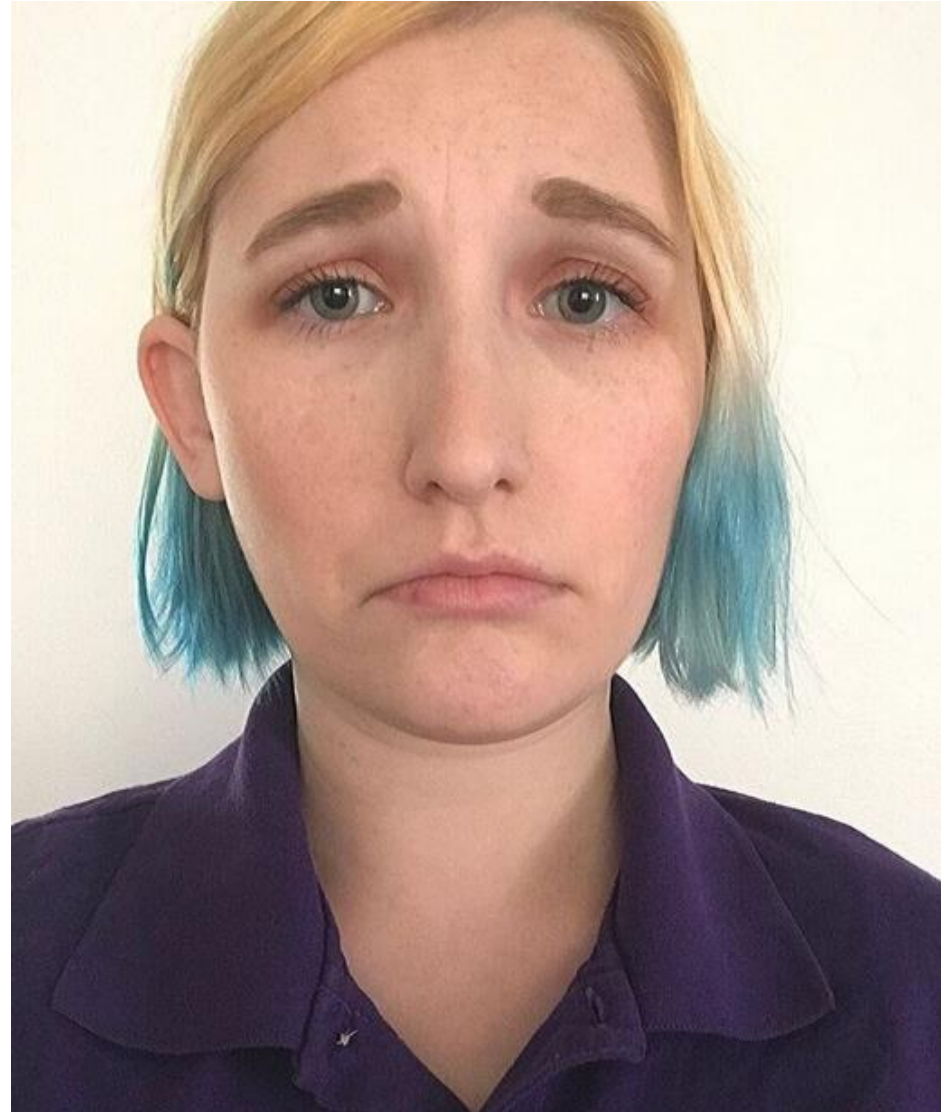
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Start with the Person

Open Future Video: “Start with the Person” (2 minutes, 8 seconds)

“Listen slow with your whole body so that what I say will enter your heart.”

When we’re communicating, it’s best to **Take it SLOW:**

S: Share time with the person

L: Listen to the person

O: Observe what happens and try to make sense of it

W: Wait for a response. Give them time to communicate



Activity: Put in chat one word or phrase that spoke to you about this video.

Less is More

Open Future Video: “Less is More” (1 minute, 55 seconds)

“Speak less, listen more.”

When we’re communicating, it’s important to:

- Use plain language
- Use receptive body language
- Take your time, give your time



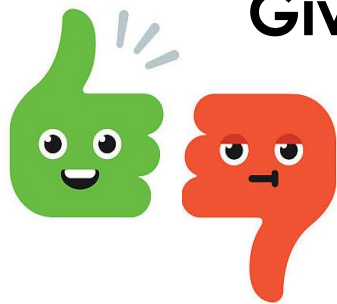
Tips for Communicating

Remember: All of these can look different for everyone!



Give and Get Attention

- Make sure you have their attention.
- Make sure you are giving someone your attention when communicating.



Give and Get Feedback

- If someone communicates to you in a way that doesn't work for you, let them know!
- If someone tells you that they need to be communicated with differently, take note.

Tips for Communicating₂

Remember: All of these can look different for everyone!



Plan Ahead When You Can

- Worried about having to say something? Plan ahead! Write notes, scripts, whatever helps.



Don't Make Assumptions

- Not sure you understood what someone told you? Ask questions!

EVERYONE Can Communicate!

Open Future Video: “Communication Passport / Dictionary” (3 minute, 43 seconds)

“No matter how they are communicating, they are still communicating.”

- Create a language dictionary so people know how to communicate with you or your family member.
- Takes notes on how someone needs and wants to be communicated with.
- Respect the language that people bring with them.



Tool Time: Communication Passport

- A communication passport is a simple tool for explaining:
 - How a person communicates
 - How to communicate effectively with that person
 - That person's likes and dislikes
- Communication passports are a great tool for helping people understand one another.
- These can be used in a variety of settings, and can be especially helpful when making new friends!



My Communication Passport

My Name: Jolene

My Pronouns: She/Her

How I Communicate

Receptive

- Using multiple forms at once is best (ex: visuals and audio at the same time).
- Make sure you have my attention, or I might not take everything in.
- Just because I'm not looking at you doesn't mean I'm not listening to you.
- Be patient with me; I need time to process what you tell me.
- Be clear in the instructions that you give me. I have spatial awareness problems.

Expressive

- Be patient with me; I need time to gather my thoughts and retrieve my words.
- Writing my thoughts makes it easier to express myself.
- What's on my face isn't always what I'm feeling inside.
- Sometimes my tone of voice doesn't match what I am feeling.
- Sometimes I don't notice the volume of my voice.
- Sometimes I accidentally say things that can hurt people's feelings.

How You Can Support Me

Please Do

- Don't take everything I say that offends you personally.
- Tell me if I hurt your feelings, and explain how. If I don't know how, I can't change anything.
- Assume competence, and respect if I say I cannot do something.

Please Don't

- Talk down to me.
- Tell me things if you don't want them repeated – I always like to tell the truth.
- Tell me how to live my life.
- Finish my sentences or speak for me.

Preferences and Topics

Things I Like

- Tv shows/movies
- Animals
- Dog parents/hearing about people's dogs
- Dolly Parton
- Graphic novels
- Events I can go to
- Instagram posts that I like
- Junk food
- My job
- Music I like

How I Communicate I Like Them

- I smile when people bring these things up.
- I like to discuss them.
- I like to spend more time with people who share my interests.

Things I Don't Like

- People talking negatively about my family.
- People who are unkind to animals.
- People assuming I can't speak.
- Willful ignorance.
- My boundaries not being respected.
- People who are mean to people who are different from them.

How I Communicate My Boundaries

- I will tell you directly.
- I will distance myself from the person or situation.

Questions?

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into action

Upcoming Events



Technical Assistance Sessions

For self-advocates / family members:

Wednesday, Feb 21 at 6:30pm

For professionals:

Thursday, Feb 29 at 10:00am

More Learning Sessions

Coming later in 2024

Topics that will be covered:

- Safety: Myths and Reality
- Relationships: Healthy vs Toxic
- Sustaining Friendships

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Thank you!



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