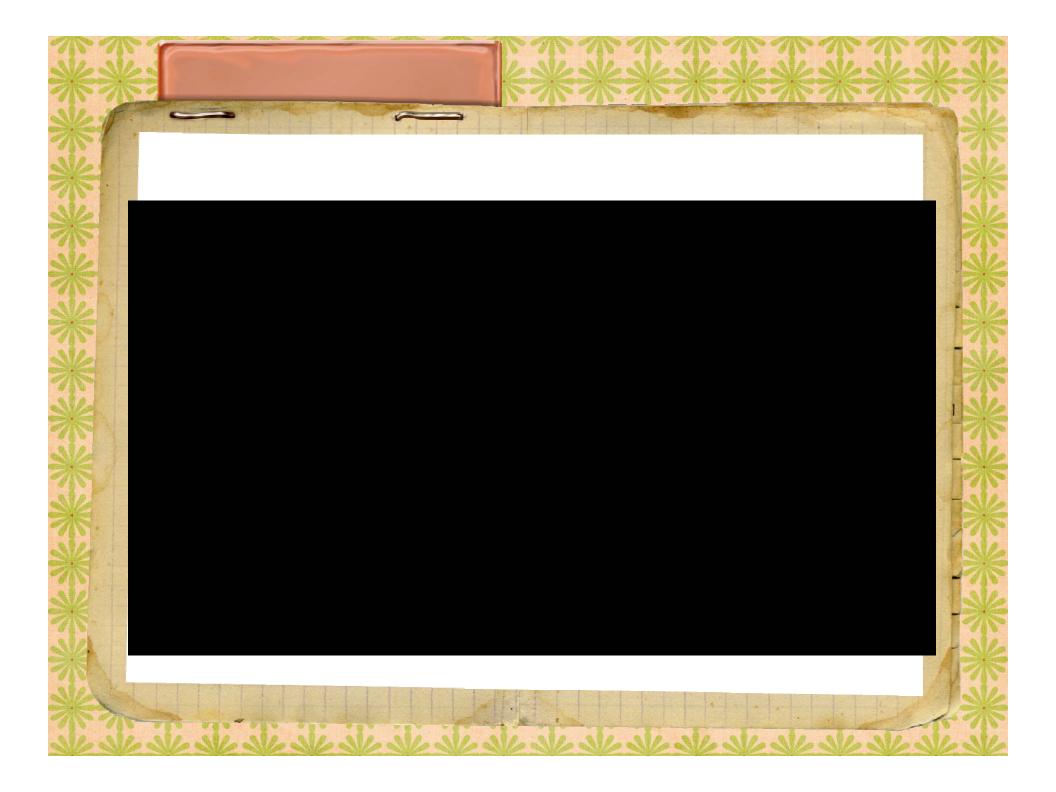# Destructive Communication

Blaming

- *Not taking responsibility for yourself*
  – You are the one that's not listening
  – You should have . . .

- You-messages suggest blame, and encourage the recipient to deny wrong-doing or to blame back.
  – For example, if you say, "You broke your promise," the answer is likely to be, "No, I didn't," which sets you up for a lengthy argument, or, "Well, you did, too," which also continues the conflict.
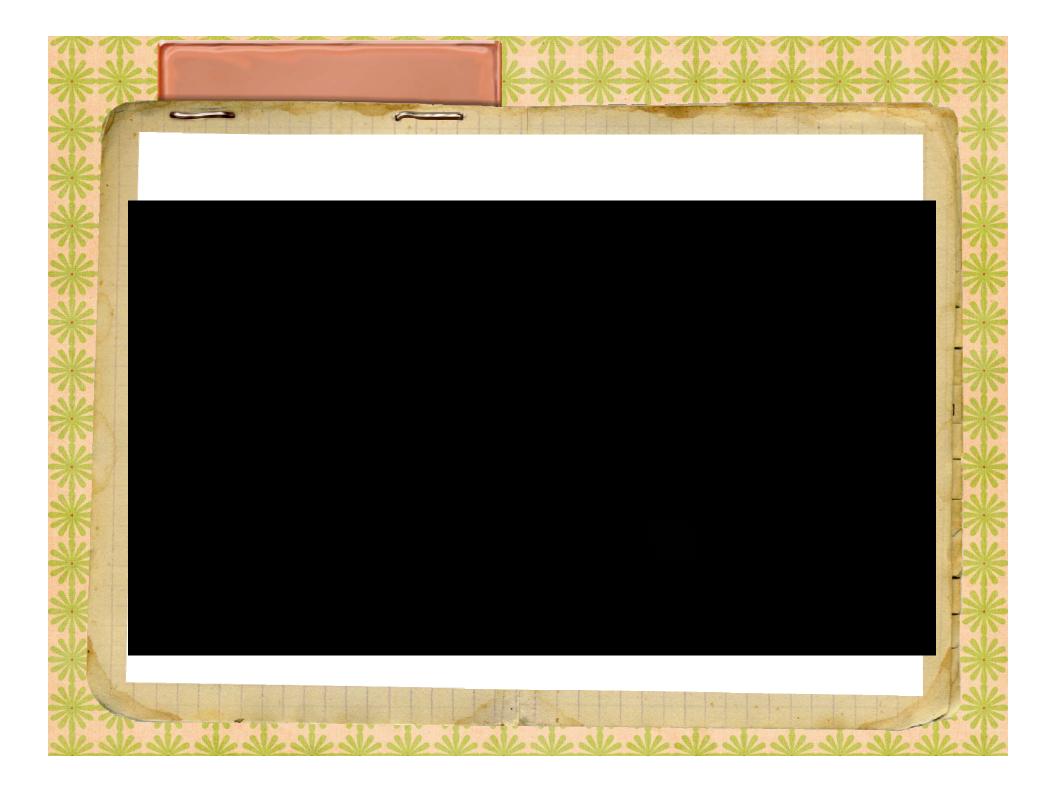
Interrupting

- Interrupting is a *sign that one person feels their idea is more important than another persons*
  – Stops communication
  – Shows disregard for the other person's ideas

- *Involving outsiders in your personal relationships and quarrels*

- Positions instantly harden because you feel the need to save face

- Breaks the bond of trust that you need to build in all good relationships

- One of the most damaging things that can be done in communication

Character Assassination

- Involves *name calling, belittling, comments about sensitive subjects, & insulting remarks*

- Destroy self-esteem, trust and communication

- Words once said cannot be taken back!

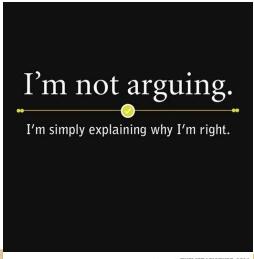- Sarcasm is a form of character assassination

- *Arguments that never end*
- Bringing up things that are old and have nothing to do with what is happening now

- ## Withdrawing from communication and *avoiding conversation*
  - Includes ignoring, neglecting, acting indifferent, and rejecting
  - Basically saying "I don't care enough about you to work this out."

- *Refuse to admit any wrong doing because they need to always be right*!

- Sign of poor self-esteem

I'm not arguing.

I'm simply explaining why I'm right.

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Constructive Communication

I-Messages

Constructive Communication

- *State the feelings and thoughts you are having at the time of communication*
  - *"I feel … when … because …"*
  - "I would like …"
  - Instead of "You broke your promise"
  - Say "I felt upset when you didn't call home because it made me afraid something bad had happened to you."
- Clearly indicates who is sending the message.
- Lets you be responsible for your own thoughts and feelings without blaming another person

Clarity

- *Meaning what you say and saying what you mean*
- Don't use sarcasm
  - "I hope you had a great time at the movie last night with all your other friends!!!"
  - "I felt badly last night when I heard you invited everyone but me to go to the movie."
- Don't make the listener second guess what the message means

Timing

- *Select a good time to do your important communicating*
  - Don't pick a time when the person is busy or otherwise occupied
  - Look for non-verbal and verbal cues to determine if your timing is good

- People seldom say what they really mean the first time.

- *Collecting more information* helps the speaker feel like you are listening and trying to understand

- *Allow the person to express his/her emotions even when you do not understand them*
  - Respect the other person's point of view even if it is different than yours
  - Don't be critical or judgmental;

Avoiding Anger

- *Avoid shouting, name calling, and physical expressions of anger*
  - They build roadblocks, destroy self-esteem & create fear
  - Instead tell the person you are too upset to talk at the time
    - "I am too upset to talk about it right now. I'm going for a walk and we can talk when I get back."
    - If I say anything right now, I'll be sorry. I'm not in control of my emotions. Can we talk about this later?"
- Be sure to keep your word and communicate as soon as you can.
- Do so in a constructive way