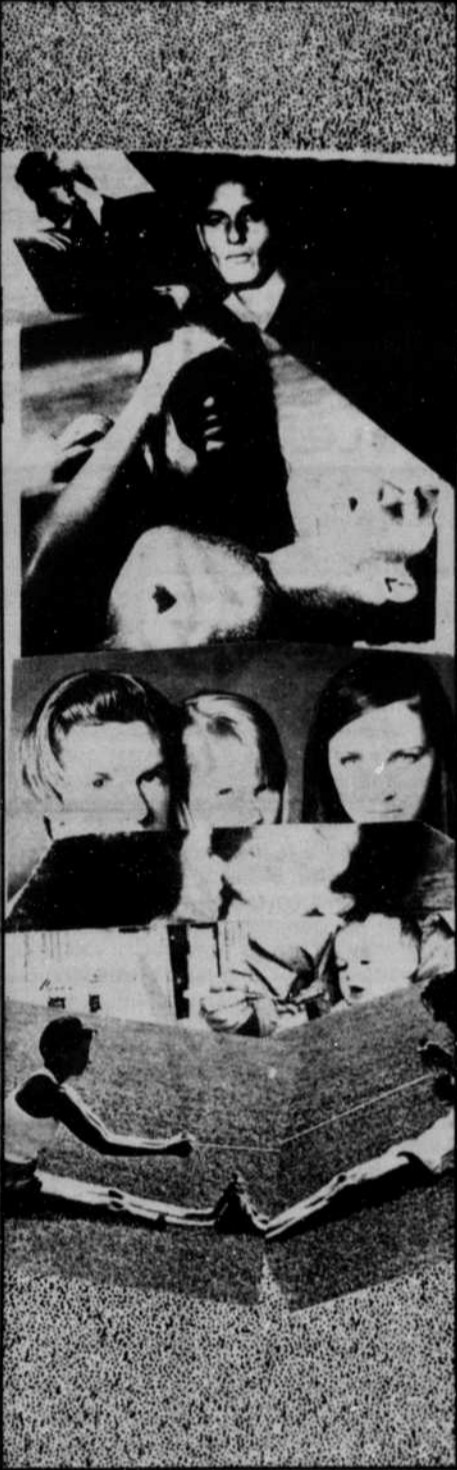


Well Now

THE STUDENT HEALTH CENTER NEWSLETTER

Sex — body, mind and soul



BAD "CONNECTION?"

"I know you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not really what I meant."

Communication is essential to an intimate relationship. Let's start then with "intimacy." According to most dictionaries, intimate means: "characterized by pronounced closeness of friendship or association; deeply personal." So intimacy only vaguely hints physical relations with another, and closeness of friendship, well, that requires communication.

Communication is a paradigm of hits and misses. Often communication is better called miscommunication, misinterpretation or missing all together! There are a few short circuits at work here in crossing communication wires: assuming we can adequately read one's mind and assuming another can read our minds; fear of becoming vulnerable and the big "P" word: pride. Do you identify with any of these? If so, read on!

Monologue is a speech given in a play or movie where a character explains an essential portion of the plot. Between friends or lovers, monologue means I talk **AT** you, you talk **AT** me and neither is heard so we either talk louder or quit talking. Dialogue is different. Dialogue is a communication of presence and non-judgmental listening — talking **TO** someone. Dialogue includes those "secret" things that are difficult to share — feelings. By expressing your feelings you add honesty and presence to your words. By non-judgmental listening, you allow another to share theirs and if the signals are vague you ask questions, hold the judgment please.

Game playing is deceitful communicatio

where both players lose. Game playing begins when you bait another by asking loaded questions or playing "Poor Pitiful Pearl", the victim of neglect or wrong-doing. If you "win" the game, you successfully dump guilt and resent on your opponent and master the skill of manipulation. Leave the games in the play-pen, please, and read on!

Assertiveness is a skill vital to opening communication lines. The problem with assertiveness is it is often confused with aggression. The first is true and firm, the second is hostile. To be assertive means to gain ownership of your rights as a human being: to feel and to think and to let these be known. Being assertive means taking the risk to unravel a few of your psychological layers and let another see what is inside. This also means saying no when you mean no and saying yes when you mean yes. Being assertive means someone may disagree with you or you may experience some pain in allowing yourself to be vulnerable. It also clears a path for intimacy where you won't continually scramble to keep your facade intact.

Communication is a skill, perhaps even an art and because of that, it takes practice. The starting point is looking inward and reacquainting yourself with "yourself": your feelings, values and beliefs. The reward of true communication is setting aside defense mechanisms and cover-ups to share the profound closeness of friendship, honesty and as a friend or lover — intimacy.

By Beth Gaiser

FROM THE HIP

INSIDE:

DATE RAPE

Contraceptaphobia
The fear of protection?

More on Aids

Sexual Wellness

NEED SOME HEALTH INFORMATION FOR THAT PAPER YOU ARE WRITING????

Come by the Health Education Center, Monday through Friday between 9 am and 2:30 pm. You'll find a variety of books and audio cassettes to check out, plus educational pamphlets and handouts on many different health topics — free!

DID YOU KNOW...

that 43 million people in the U.S. stopped smoking in the last 25 years? Make it 43 million and one by joining the Fresh Start smoking cessation classes at the Student Health Center. For more information, call the Health Education Center at 686-4456 M-F 9-2:30.

SEXUAL HEALTH MEANS...

Knowing how to do a breast self-exam or testicular self-exam...going in for your annual check-ups with your health care practitioner...making responsible choices and encouraging others to as well. To meet with a campus health expert, call the Student Health Center at x4441 or x4456.

WHAT IF I AM AFRAID...

that I'll lose him/her if I don't have sex ... that I'm pregnant or that my partner is pregnant ... that I have something wrong with me .. don't let fear stop you. Call 686-4441 to set up an appointment at the Student Health Center.