

Communication Skills

When you are disabled and your partner cares for you, good communication is key. They need to know what you need in order to help you. My husband and I keep things light and jokey, remembering that, though he may do things for me other husbands don't, we are still together because we love each other. Good communication is key to all relationships, whether it's talking about day to day tasks or deeper issues. It's true what your Granny told you: you should never go to bed angry, and always remember to say 'I love you' to the people that matter.

Vicky Kuhn, @curlywurlygirly

The reason many relationships flourish? **Good communication.**
And they break down? **Bad communication.**



Disabled or not, it's vital that any relationship you are in benefits from open, honest and fair communication. Without it, there's often not a lot to grab onto! We all communicate differently, be it in person, via text, with our words or our actions. What's important is your partner knowing how you communicate best, and you respecting their communication, too. Some important things to remember when you are communicating with your partner.

Make time for each other

Be 'present' when the person you are seeing is around. Whether they are celebrating, concerned or upset, give them your attention and advice; it will go a long way. Listening to someone and showing them you care is just as important as taking them to a fancy restaurant or buying them gifts.

Actions speak louder than Words

Sometimes, it's not about what you say, but what you do. Remember to do what you say you will and make an effort not to let your partner down when they are depending on you. There are ways to show that you care that are much more powerful than the words you say.



Everyone makes mistakes

A really important rule of communication? Realising that nobody is perfect, there will be disappointment and arguments and your relationship won't always be perfect. The trick is to know how to act in these situations: be calm, have patience and hear your partner out. Dealing with conflict in a mature way will almost always lead to a better outcome than shouting and screaming.

Laughter is the best medicine

When the going gets tough, there is little that can't be solved with a good old giggle. Some of your favourite memories will be formed when you are both cackling over something silly – enjoy it!



Keeping in Touch

Even when you're apart – it's good to let that special person know you are thinking of them. Send them a snapchat or a picture that reminds you of them. It's also healthy to spend time apart, though, so make sure you still pay attention to your family and friends. There's plenty of time to spend with everyone!

No means No

When it comes to sexual communication, 'No' means 'No'. Don't ever force someone or be forced into something you don't want to do. And if you don't 100% trust someone to take care of you and have your best interests at heart, don't spend time alone with them. No one should expect anything more of you than what you are comfortable with; you are worth so much more than that.

If you have a disability: Communication might be slightly more difficult if you have a speech impairment or are unsure of what you are physically capable of, for example. Be honest and open with your partner from the start, and work through things slowly together; you will build such a beautiful, intimate relationship that way.

