



## COMMUNICATION

*“Let’s talk about it.”*

**Communication is a gift from God.** It allows us to connect with God. It allows us to connect with each other. Most communication is non-verbal. Each person has a unique style of communicating and a unique language that we’ve developed over the years. Each word we speak has a specific meaning attached to it. And the challenge we face in communication is learning to give and to receive clear messages so that people can know and understand each other.

If communication is a gift and a meaningful tool to help us connect, then *why is it so difficult for us to communicate?* One reason we have trouble communicating is the ideas we’ve already formed about others. Over the course of time, we develop a form or image we sift information through. To illustrate this, imagine you’re a foundry worker. You’ve developed forms that shape the hot, liquid metal that you pour around the forms. We do the same thing with people. Once we form good or bad images of people, we pour or sift everything we hear and say through those forms. Unfortunately we miss out on, and misunderstand, much of what is said because of the assumptions we have already made before we’re talking with people. In order to improve our communication with God and people, we must be willing to **inspect** and **improve** what we first think of them.

**Good communication requires daily effort and all of our attention.** It’s much easier to grunt, shrug our shoulders, say nothing, or say things that make people just go away and leave us alone. In order to give and receive clear messages, we must take a moment to stop what we’re doing, look one another in the eye, and honestly say what’s on our mind or on our heart.

Making time each week to discuss ways to improve our healthy living will give us a chance to talk about our daily challenges. Since most people avoid talking out their struggles, we have a lot more misunderstandings and conflicts. Providing opportunities for weekly “health talks” is one way Pump House Ministries strives to help you to establish a new, healthier communication pattern. When conflicts and issues come up, let’s practice saying to one another, **“Let’s talk about it.”** In order for this to work, first **we need to establish some good communication boundaries to keep us focused and positive.**

1. No yelling
2. No threatening
3. No name calling
4. No put downs
5. Use positive words
6. Define the problem
7. Brainstorm possible solutions
8. Focus on desired outcome
9. Choose a solution you will act upon
10. Evaluate the results

- **What are some of our communication challenges?**
- **What can we do to improve how we communicate with each other?**
- **What should we do when we cross over good communication boundaries?**

**“Health Talks”** are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.