



WISER Communication

When you are faced with a difficult conversation in a relationship, or when you need to speak truthfully about something to someone, and you want to stay centred, calm, focused and balanced, try this WISER communication tool.

WISER stands for:

When I saw, heard, etc – use 'I' statements to name the observation or behaviour

I felt (hurt, rejected, angry, etc – name the feeling using 'I' statements)

Speak your truth: why you felt the way you did

Empathise with the other person, if there is a mitigating factor

Request what you would like in the future

Here are the steps to achieving WISER communication:

When I saw, heard... name the behaviour, or what happened. Give specific data or details. Don't generalize. Describe the situation without trigger words like 'always' or 'never'.

I feel/felt... state your feelings in a simple, non-judgemental way. Stick with your feelings. Don't confuse feelings with thinking or judgements eg. "I felt you were being rude" which in truth says "I thought you were rude". Rather say something like "I felt hurt/angry/taken aback by your tone". Stick with your feeling, be brave and say how you honestly feel.

Speak your truth... say why you think and feel the way you do. Avoid judging the other person. This is your truth.

Empathise with the other person's situation. Empathy means seeing the situation from another person's perspective. Think about how they may be feeling in a particular situation. Communicate this empathy by saying things like 'I realise you were tired/stressed/misunderstood the situation/heard incorrectly.'

Request what you would like: "Please can we...", "What I needed was...", "What I would have preferred is...". This step is about finding a resolution and moving forward.

Once you have followed these steps, then listen to the other person.

Give the other person a chance to say how they feel. Listen with curiosity to hear them, without judgement and without thinking of your response.

Adapted for Gender Equity & Reconciliation International (GERI) from:
Marshall Rosenberg's Non-Violent Communication