How can I communicate better?

1. Pick the right time and location.

“Texting is a brilliant way to miscommunicate how you feel, and misinterpret what other people mean.” - Dr. Henry Cloud

2. Learn to listen.

*James 1:19 (NLT)* Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

“The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply.” – Unknown

*Proverbs 18:13 (NIV)* To answer before listening—that is folly and shame.

3. Listen to learn.

*1 Peter 3:7 (NKJV)* Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

- Learn to empathize.

*Philippians 2:4 (TEV)* Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

- Learn to be aware of their emotions.

“Effective communication requires more than the exchange of information...” - Unknown

- Learn to ask questions.

4. Be careful what you say.

*Proverbs 12:18 (NIV)* The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

How do you resolve a conflict?

1. Resolve it as soon as possible.

*Ephesians 4:26 (NIV)* “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,

2. Make resolution the priority rather than winning or “being right.”

*James 4:1 (NCV)* Do you know where your fights and arguments come from? They come from the selfish desires that war within you.
3. Focus on the present.

4. Own your part of the conflict.

**Matthew 7:3, 5 (NIV)**  
3 Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?  
5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

5. Be willing to forgive.

6. Pick your battles.

**Peter 3:8-9 (NIV)**  
8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.  
9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

**What do I do if it seems hopeless?**

1. Call on God for help.

**James 4:2b (NIV)** ...so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.

2. Convene a peace conference.

**Matthew 5:23-24 (CEV)**  
23 So if you are about to place your gift on the altar and remember that someone is angry with you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. Make peace with that person, then come back and offer your gift to God.

**James 3:17 (TLB)** ... wisdom... is peace-loving and courteous. It allows discussion and is willing to yield to others;

3. Concentrate on reconciliation.

**Ephesians 2:14 (NIV)** For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,

**Assignment:** Ask someone you have a safe relationship with (your spouse, a friend, a coworker) what area you can be a better communicator in, and apply these principles.