



## Girl talk about the Art of Listening

March 2014

### *Hints for Doing a Better Job Communicating* (excerpted from Homeward.com)

Positive communication is vital for maintaining a healthy family. Successful families talk and listen. Good communication does take work, but if you employ some of the following hints, you'll be on the road to improving your communication skills and the health of your family.

• **Actively listen.** Listening is the language of love. Listening communicates value, significance and worth. To really listen is to listen with your head and your heart. Good listening skills include:

- giving a person your undivided attention
- looking past the content of the words, take note of tone and body language
- maintaining an accepting and open attitude
- questioning, in a respectful way, to help clarify your understanding
- making appropriate verbal responses to what is being communicated (i.e. not giving a blank stare, but replying – even if you say



something like "I'm not sure what I think about that.")

- **Be aware of your tone and body language** when you speak. Do your best to make sure the message you send is the message you intend to give.
- **Avoid the "silent treatment."** Silence can wreak havoc on communication and relationships. The use of silence to stifle a conversation or as a weapon to frustrate or hurt a family member is never helpful. Sometimes, however, silence is appropriate to provide time to gather your thoughts. Yet, always communicate the purpose of your silence. For example, one might say, "I need some time to consider how to respond. Let's talk about this at dinner."
- **Be aware when emotions are running high.** Sometimes a cooling-off period is required in order for good communication to occur.
- **Express how you feel.** Sharing your feelings is important in effective communication.
- **Use "I" statements instead of "You" statements.** It's better to say, "I feel hurt when we don't communicate effectively," than "You hurt me when you don't listen to me." "I" statements allow you to share your feelings with someone without blaming them.
- **Break the no-talk rule.** Healthy families talk on a regular basis. Try to find some regular time to talk with your family members: a family meal time, before your kids go to bed, etc. Make the attempt to create a habit of talking in your home.
- **Learn to ask open-ended questions.** questions that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." "Tell me about your day," is better than "Did you have a good day?"
- **Avoid discussion killers:** such as
  - Put-downs
  - Identifying comments or questions as "dumb"
  - Yelling, interrupting or talking-over another person
  - Downplay your role as parental authority whenever possible. In discussion, learn and discover with your kids together. In differences of opinion, help kids think through what they believe and why they believe it. Defend your position without becoming authoritarian or over-emotional, if possible.
- In communicating, provide affirmation whenever possible. Everyone needs affirmation! Regular use of statements like, "Great idea," "That's so clever," "I would have never figured that out," "Way to go," "Good job," etc. will cause your family to grow and thrive.
- **Bathe your family communication with plenty of love.** Love is a trait that no family can get enough of. Loving words and loving deeds are certain ways to communicate value to your family member. Love builds a family. The Bible conveys that love binds people together in perfect unity (Colossians 3:14) and covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).

### *Listen*

*When I ask you to listen to me and start giving me advice, you have not done what I asked. When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.*

*When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problems, you have failed me – strange as that may seem.*

*Listen! All I ask is that you listen – not talk or do – just hear me.*

*So please listen and hear me.*

*And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn, and then I'll listen to you.*

*Anonymous*

### **Listening To God**

by Adele Cover

*Each day I'm learning more and more  
To hear Your small, still voice  
To keep those things that please You, Lord,  
The first among my choice.*

*The things that this world offers  
Are false and soon will end.  
So Lord, I'll keep my eyes on You,  
And to Your will, I'll bend.*

*It won't all be just the times of joy,  
At times will come real stress.  
But Lord, one thing I've come to know,  
And that's Your will is best.*

*So come what may, I'll not turn back,  
I've made my final choice.  
Where'er You lead, I know for sure,  
I'll hear Your small, still voice.*

### **Calendar Corner...**

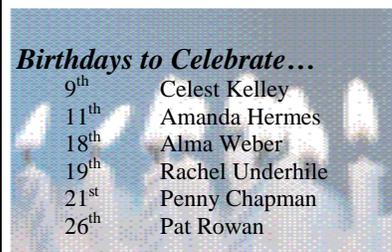
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Ladies pray together @ 5
- 5<sup>th</sup> Body Shop @ 7 – every Wednesday with activities for every age.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Laundry Love @ 6:30-Batavia Laundromat
- 9<sup>th</sup> Daylight savings begins
- 11<sup>th</sup> Easter choir practice begins @ 7:30 and every Tuesday till Easter
- 16<sup>th</sup> Carry-in-dinner after service – games too
- 17<sup>th</sup> Chocolate Conversations @ 7, TBA

### **For Prayer and Praise...**

- **Lilliam Allison** has made marked improvements but remains at Kindred Hospital in Sycamore.
- **Mary Sharp's** hubby, Dick, is back at home after a lengthy stay in hospital and rehab.
- **Barb Cox**, and hubby, Jim, will spend 10 days in Israel in mid-March.

### **Birthdays to Celebrate...**

- 9<sup>th</sup> Celest Kelley
- 11<sup>th</sup> Amanda Hermes
- 18<sup>th</sup> Alma Weber
- 19<sup>th</sup> Rachel Underhille
- 21<sup>st</sup> Penny Chapman
- 26<sup>th</sup> Pat Rowan



## Getting to Know You...

In the movie/stage play "The King and I" the heroine Anna sings to a group of palace children as she becomes their teacher. "Getting to know you, getting to know all about you. Getting to like you, hoping that you'll like me..." While this column won't tell you all there is about a gal among us...we hope you will be enticed to get to know her better...learning to know and love her as a fellow member of this church family.

You can learn a lot about **Becky Cormier** by her email address: ChinaMama4@email. Becky and her hubby, Al, have four children – all adopted from China: Hannah (age 14), Rachel (age 11), Abbie (age 10), and David (age 6). How they came to be a family is one story. How they came to Sanctuary is another.

Becky and Al each grew up in New England, but met in Chicago through music. Becky says each of her children were a God-thing. More than anything else in her Christian experience, she received clear direction from the Lord regarding the adoption of each one. The girls joined the Cormier family as infants. After each arrived, Becky and Al thought their family was complete. Then another directive would come from the Lord for another waiting child. By the time they were "expecting" the fourth child, they had learned how long and how expensive it would be. As they began the process, they expected another infant girl. Surprisingly and much sooner than anticipated, a call came asking if they would take a toddler boy with a cleft lip. Their answer was "yes!"...but the finances for another foreign adoption would have to be acquired in a hurry. Within a few weeks of traveling to China, they were short needed dollars. They had exhausted all their resources. Again, clear validation of this direction for their family came from the Lord. Friends gave a baby shower for Becky...there were lots of blue things AND an envelope with a cashier's check for the exact amount of thousands and hundreds needed!

David joined their family at 2 ½ years old, and had his need surgery in Chicago. The Cormier family feels complete! They are a musical family. Becky plays the violin and is taking guitar lessons, Al plays the oboe and piano, Hanna is very artistic and loves composing electronic music, Rachel has been a jazz fan since she was little and plays the trumpet, Abbie is taking violin and is in a string group. Al says "I had to go 4,000 miles to get a daughter just like me." Becky already notes that David has an analytical mind plus a natural gift for music. He tells his parents he plans to play the piano, saxophone, and maybe the drums.

So how did this interesting and talent family come to be part of Sanctuary? They had been members of a large church nearby and were not actively seeking a new church home. Al and the kids were in Portillo's February 2013. Eyes went to a nearby table where the Hill family and their China doll, Ava, were having dinner. There was an immediate connection...and an invitation "to come worship with us at Sanctuary some Sunday." It was months (June actually) before that visit happened. On their first visit "we clicked." "We all wanted to come again", Becky says. "I wanted to hear Pastor Keith's wisdom and preaching, and we all wanted to hear more of Sanctuary's music." We had been in a great church but had begun to feel lost in the crowd. At Sanctuary, our need for church friendships seemed to be instantly met. Each of us has connected here."



## You're Cooking Good

Here's a new addition to the Whatley's Favorite File. It meets all my criteria for a have-it-again meal. Couldn't be easier...just put raw chicken and the ingredients from a few opened cans...some spices...oh, yes, you do have to chop an onion...altogether in a crock pot. Did I mention delicious! So easy and fills the kitchen with yummy aroma. What's not to love?

### Chicken Enchilada Slow Cooker Soup

about 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts  
1 (15 oz) can corn, drained  
1 (14 oz) can petite diced tomatoes  
1 (14 oz) can chicken broth  
1 (10 oz) can red enchilada sauce  
1 onion, chopped  
¼ cup fresh cilantro or 2 Tablesp. dried cilantro  
2 bay leaves  
3 cloves of garlic, minced OR  
1 rounded Tablesp. minced garlic from a jar  
1 teasp. ground cumin  
1 teasp. chili powder  
¼ teasp. salt (OPTIONAL)  
¼ teasp. black pepper  
1 (4 oz) canned diced green chilies  
(OPTIONAL but recommended!)

Add all ingredients to a slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW for 4 ½ hours.

Remove chicken and shred. Discard bay leaves. Return chicken to cooker, add about a cup of water. Cover and continue cooking 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Serve with tortilla strips (nice ones from Aldi's) or Fritos' corn chips. Can freeze leftovers.

## Parenting Tip....

"I take my children everywhere, but they always find their way home."

-Robert Orben, comedy writer

I actually had the misfortune of losing my daughter for about 10 minutes at Disneyworld, so I try not to joke too much about the idea of abandoning kids on purpose. However, every parent, when honest, fantasizes about life without their kids, at least for a brief moment or two. That's because the truth is, parenting is just plain hard. And when I accept that truth, I feel a lot less alone and a lot more capable of facing the task at hand.

from ScreamFree