

CONSTRUCTIVE/DESTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

DESTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY

Have two students act out the following scene:

WIFE: (She is coming home late from work.) Hi, honey. I'm home!

HUSBAND (He is angry because dinner has been ready for over an hour.) It's about time! Dinner is ruined now!

WIFE: I'm sorry I'm late, honey.

HUSBAND: Saying you're sorry isn't going to make it tonight! I've had it up to here with your apologies. You are just thoughtless and inconsiderate. I can't believe how rude you are.

WIFE: Well, what do you think you are? You don't even have the decency to ask why I'm late. For your information I was tying up ends to a job that will bring in a big commission. Of course, if you'd get a better job I wouldn't need to work late to bring in more income.

HUSBAND: Oh, really now! I thought you worked so you could have more money to spend on your outrageous shopping sprees with your mother.

WIFE: What does my mother have to do with this? Just leave her out of it.

HUSBAND: Your mother has everything to do with this. All you ever do is talk on the phone to her and shop with her. You know, I've told my friends at work about you and your mother and they think that something is wrong with a grown woman who is still so dependent on her mother!

WIFE: You have a lot of nerve talking about me and my mother to your friends! It's all your fault that I need to spend so much time with my mother. If you were any kind of a husband you would be there for me and talk to me so I wouldn't need to go to my mother all the time.

HUSBAND: Well, what about last spring when I took you on that nice overnight trip to Las Vegas? I wanted it to be a time for us to just talk and be alone together, but noooo, you had to call your mother as soon as we got into town! I tried to . . .(wife interrupts)

WIFE: What are you talking about? I was calling to make sure the children were all right.

HUSBAND: It's no use trying to talk to you! I'm out of here! (Husband walks out of the room.)

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY

Have two students act out the following situation:

WIFE: (She is coming home late from work.) Hi, honey. I'm home!

HUSBAND: (He is irritated because dinner has been ready for over an hour.) Well, it's about time!
Dinner is ruined!

WIFE: I'm sorry I'm late, honey.

HUSBAND: Saying you're sorry won't make the dinner any less burned. Where have you been?

WIFE: I was tying up the ends to a deal that will earn a big commission check.

HUSBAND: Well, the money won't make up for all the grief you've caused me.

WIFE: My being one hour late has caused you a lot of grief?

HUSBAND: Yes, it not only ruined dinner, but I was worried about you.

WIFE: So you are upset because dinner is burned and you were worried that I was in some car accident or something? You know I have a cell phone in the car in case something happens to me.

HUSBAND: That's just my point. You have a phone in your car and you knew that you were late, yet you still didn't call me. I could really care less about the dinner being burned and I wasn't really worried about a car accident, but I was worried about you.

WIFE: I don't understand, if you are not worried about me being in a car accident then what are you worried about?

HUSBAND: Well, I don't know where in the world you are. I know you have a phone but you don't call. I try to call you, but the phone is turned off. What am I supposed to think? There you are late at your office alone with that new guy, John.

WIFE: So you are upset that I'm working late with John?

HUSBAND: Well, you've seemed so distant lately and tonight is the second time this week that you've been late.

WIFE: Are you saying that you think John and I are having an affair?

HUSBAND: No, I don't really think you would do that, but the thought has crossed my mind. I guess that I feel a little jealous of John and all the time you spend with him. Sometimes I feel like you don't love me anymore.

WIFE: I guess I have acted a little distant lately, but it's only because I've been thinking so much about this deal I've been working on. It would be nice if you would ask me about my work more and act interested in what I do all day.

HUSBAND: Are you saying that I don't talk to you enough?

WIFE: Well, you talk to me about what is happening at your work, but you hardly ever ask about my work. I feel like you think what I do is unimportant compared to what you do.

HUSBAND: That's not how I feel, honey. It looks like we need to spend more time talking to each other. I will try to become more involved in your life.

WIFE: I promise to call you when I'm going to be late and I'll start talking more about what I do at work. (They hug.) Let's go to McDonald's, my treat!