COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

(These communication guidelines were provided by Timothy Keller.)

Proverbs 18:21; 25:11; Job 19:2; James 3:8-10; 1 Peter 3:10; Ephesians 4:25-32

Think about the guidelines and study the supporting Scripture verses. Rate yourself on each of these items: Excellent (3), Good (2), Fair (1), Poor (0).

1. Be a ready listener and do not answer until the other person has finished talking (Prov. 18:13; James 1:19).  ___
2. Be slow to speak. Think first. Don't be hasty in your words. Speak in such a way that the other person can understand and accept what you say (Prov. 15:23,28; 29:20; James 1:19).  ___
3. Don't go to bed angry! Each day clear the offenses of that day. Speak the truth always, but do it in love. Do not exaggerate (Eph. 4:15, 25; Col. 3:8; Matt. 6:34).  ___
4. Do not use silence to frustrate the other person. Explain why you are hesitant to talk at this time (Prov. 15:28; 16:21,23; 10:1-9; 18:2; Col. 4:6; Prov. 20:15).  ___
5. Do not become involved in quarrels. It is possible to disagree without quarreling (Prov. 17:14; 20:3; Rom. 13:13; Eph. 4:31).  ___
7. When you are in the wrong, admit it and ask for forgiveness and ask how you can change (James 5:16; Prov. 12:15; 16:2; 21:2, 29; 20:6; Matt. 5:23-25; Luke 17:3).  ___
8. When someone confesses to you, tell him/her you forgive him/her. Be sure it is forgiven and not brought up to the person, to others, or to yourself? (Prov. 17:9; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; I Pet. 4:8).  ___

10. Do not blame or criticize the other person. Instead, restore . . . encourage . . . edify (Rom. 14:13; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 5:11).

11. If someone verbally attacks, criticizes, or blames you, do not respond in the same manner (Rom. 12:17, 21; I Pet. 2:23; 3:9).  ___
12. Try to understand the other person's opinion. Make allowances for differences (Prov. 18:2, 13, 15; Phil. 3:15, 16).  ___
13. Be concerned about the interests of others (Phil. 2:3; Eph. 4:2; Rom. 12:15).  ___

Reflect on the 13 guidelines for communication above and:

• List the items that you most need to work on changing.
• Write down two specific actions you can take to improve these items.
• Share these with your mate and ask for help in changing. Get other suggestions concerning how you can improve these items. If you do not have a mate, share with a close Christian friend.