

**March's topic is focused on Communication Breakdown.**

***Communication breakdown:***

- ***When communication is incomprehensible to one party or entirely absent between two people***
- ***A failure to exchange information***

**These tips can be helpful in becoming more aware of communication breakdown by recognizing when it's happening & knowing what to do to repair it.**

### **1) How to Recognize Communication Breakdown**

- **Recognize non-verbal cues** (i.e.-looks of confusion, communication partner looks away from you, looks to someone else to re-state what you said, doesn't respond and begins doing something else or talking about something else)
- **Recognize when what someone says during the conversation doesn't match what you said** (i.e.-you are talking about the movies that are out in the theater right now and your communication partner responds by agreeing with how much fun it is going to amusement parks - notice the communication partner's response about amusement parks doesn't match what you said about the movies)
- **Listening for communication partner to directly state mis-understanding** (i.e.-communication partner directly states "I didn't get that" or "What do you mean by that?" or "Can you repeat that?")

### **2) How to Repair the Communication Breakdown**

**Several strategies can be used to repair communication breakdown:**

- 1. Try to figure out what part that you said was mis-heard or mis-understood and repeat that part with better pronunciation and a slower rate**
- 2. If you can't figure out what they mis-understood**
  - a. Try repeating the last part slower and more clearly**
  - b. Rephrase what you said differently**
- 3. Tell the person you're confused and ask them what they thought you said**
- 4. Ask them a question about what they said**
- 5. Tell them you got confused and start over from the beginning**

*(\*See scenario below re: recognizing communication breakdown & using identified strategies to repair it.\*)*

## Communication Breakdown & Repair Scenario

*Bob and Lindsay are talking at lunch.*

*Bob: "I really like going the movies. I can't believe how many good movies are playing in the theater right now!"*

*Lindsay: (has a confused look on her face and looks away) "I agree. It's a lot of fun going to amusement parks."*

**Strategy 1: Repeat the part you know was mis-heard with better pronunciation and more slowly**

*Bob: "I was talking about how much I like going to the movies."*

**Strategy 2: Rephrase what you said differently**

*Bob: "There are so many movies I want to go to see."*

**Strategy 3: Tell your communication partner you're confused and ask what they heard you say**

*Bob: "Oh, I think I am confused, what did you think I said?"*

**Strategy 4: Ask your communication partner a question about what they said**

*Bob: "Did you want to talk about amusement parks instead?"*

**Strategy 5: Tell your communication partner you got confused and start over from the beginning**

*Bob: "Wait, I'm confused. Let me start over. There are so many movies I want to see. I'm excited to go to the movies this weekend!"*