



# Divine Solutions for Life, Inc.

Holistic Solutions for Your Mental, Spiritual, and Physical Well-being

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A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization

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## BARRIERS TO HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

### A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE & WORKSHEET

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#### INTRODUCTION

Even with the best intentions, communication often breaks down. Misunderstandings, frustration, and conflict can arise when certain barriers get in the way. Becoming aware of these barriers is the first step toward overcoming them. This guide explores common barriers to healthy communication and offers strategies for removing them so you can connect more clearly, confidently, and compassionately.

#### ASSUMPTIONS & MIND-READING

**Definition:** Believing we know what others are thinking without clarification.

**Impact:** Leads to misunderstandings and resentment.

**Healthy Alternative:** Ask open-ended questions and seek clarification.

#### EMOTIONAL FLOODING

**Definition:** Letting strong emotions (anger, fear, sadness) overwhelm our ability to listen or speak clearly.

**Impact:** Leads to defensiveness, shouting, or shutting down.

**Healthy Alternative:** Pause, breathe, and calm down before responding.

## DEFENSIVENESS

**Definition:** Responding with excuses, justifications, or counterattacks instead of listening.

**Impact:** Shuts down dialogue and escalates conflict.

**Healthy Alternative:** Practice reflective listening and validate the other person's perspective.

## DISTRACTIONS

**Definition:** Divided attention (phones, multitasking, outside stressors) prevents true connection.

**Impact:** Leaves the speaker feeling unimportant or ignored.

**Healthy Alternative:** Give full attention — eye contact, put devices aside, practice presence.

## LACK OF EMPATHY

**Definition:** Failing to acknowledge another person's feelings.

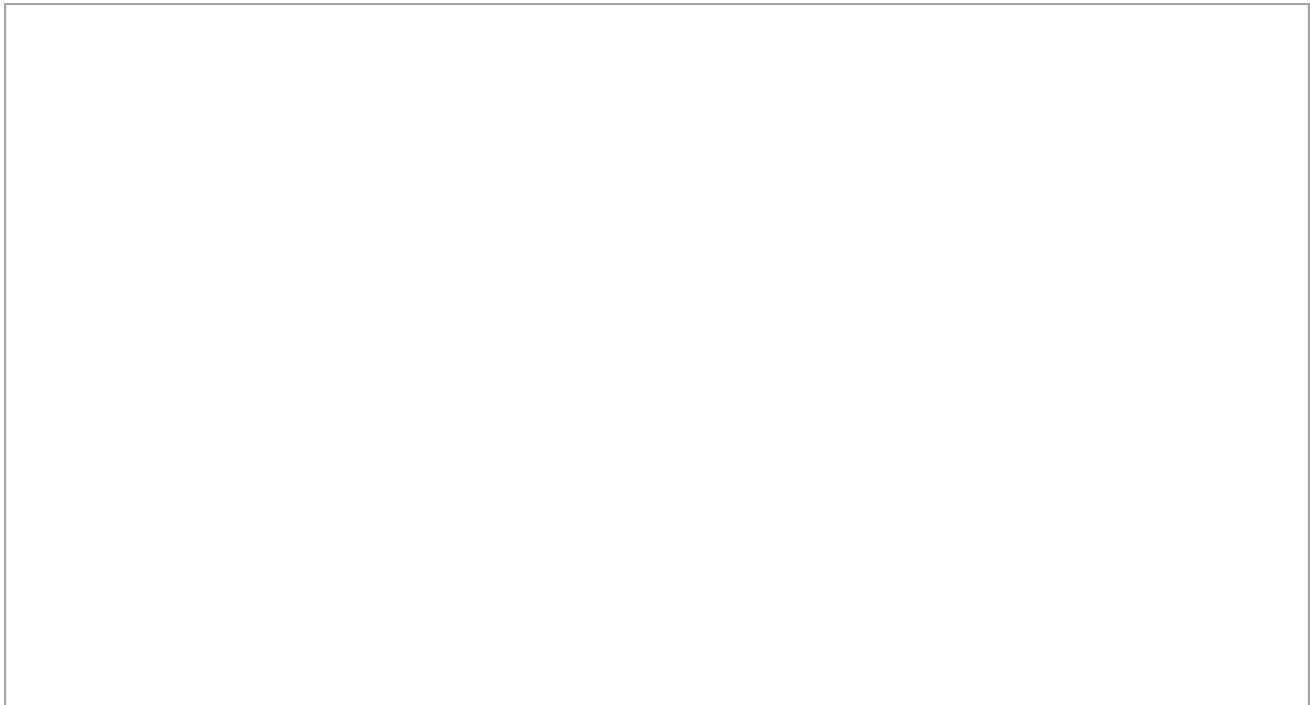
**Impact:** Leads to disconnection and hurt.

**Healthy Alternative:** Respond with empathy: 'I hear you saying... You seem to be feeling...'

## BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

**“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” – James 1:19**

**Healthy communication is not only about the words we choose but about creating an environment where understanding can grow.**



# BARRIERS TO HEALTHY COMMUNICATION WORKSHEET

Instructions: Reflect on the statements below. Check ✓ if the barrier is true for you 'often,' circle it if it's true 'sometimes.'

## ASSUMPTIONS & MIND-READING

- ☐ I jump to conclusions without asking questions.
- ☐ I assume I already know what someone is going to say.
- ☐ I fill in the gaps instead of listening to the whole message.

## EMOTIONAL FLOODING

- ☐ I struggle to stay calm when conversations get tense.
- ☐ I often raise my voice or shut down when emotions run high.
- ☐ I regret things I say in the heat of the moment.

## DEFENSIVENESS

- ☐ I often feel attacked when receiving feedback.
- ☐ I quickly explain why I'm not at fault instead of listening.
- ☐ I point out the other person's flaws instead of addressing my part.

## DISTRACTIONS

- ☐ I check my phone or multitask during conversations.
- ☐ I have difficulty staying present when I'm tired or stressed.
- ☐ People often ask if I was listening.

## LACK OF EMPATHY

- ☐ I sometimes dismiss other people's feelings as 'too sensitive.'
- ☐ I focus on being 'right' instead of understanding.
- ☐ I forget to ask how the other person feels.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Which barrier do I struggle with the most?

How does this barrier affect my relationships at home, work, or church?

What's one practical step I can take this week to overcome this barrier?

Which scripture or affirmation can remind me to communicate with grace and patience?