

CARE TO CONNECT

Tips & Tools for Authentic Communication



JANUARY 2021

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FROM THE DESK OF

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As we put away 2020 and embark on 2021, events at our nation's capital illustrate the deep need for pervasive listening, understanding, and Truly Human Connection. From the homes of our communities to the halls of Congress, leadership, empathy, listening, care, and service are vital for moving forward.

In our alumni survey this past summer, you told us one of the most impactful components of the OCL programming is the tools you receive around Effective Confrontation. If you have not already done so, please join us for the final sessions in our [Effective Confrontation](#) series. More information may be found below. Also check out our toolbox of resources to help you continue building better relationships with those in your care. Skills Snippets are short videos that give 'learning nuggets' you can apply right away, and Connect Sessions allow you the chance to reflect and grow alongside others who are working to become better listeners, and have a moment of community in the process.

Please share the newsletter with colleagues and friends so that they, too, might access tools designed to foster community, leadership, and connection.

Sharing alongside you,
Rebecca

What's New?

Webinars:

"The Art of Crafting and Delivering Confrontation Messages"

- [January 19, 5:30pm-7pm CT](#)
- [January 23, 9:00am-noon CT](#)

Connect Sessions:

- [January 21, 10:30am-noon CT](#)
- [January 26, 5:30pm-7pm CT](#)

[Click here for up-to-date class offerings](#)

Podcast:

["Connecting Despite Differences"](#)

Blog Post:

["More Than Words: Listening Beyond the Tangible to Unveil True Potential"](#)

TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY

Universal connection tools for the areas where we work, serve or interact

WEBINAR: “The Art of Crafting and Delivering Confrontation Messages” Perfect for those who have not yet attended our Communication Skills Training, this one-hour class is a primer on empathetic listening.

- [January 19, 5:30pm-7pm CT](#)
- [January 23, 9:00am-noon CT](#)

EFFECTIVE CONFRONTATION SERIES:

We are wrapping up the final webinar in our confrontation series in February and will be offering new, intensive Learning Labs in March that allow you to practice your new skills to help manage conflict as it arises. These Learning Labs will be limited to 15 people and will cost \$20 per session. [Learn more about our sessions in February and March here.](#)

CONNECT SESSION:

Connect with others as we learn about utilizing communication skills and concepts in every day, real life moments. Sessions are interactive with information and conversation that can be applied immediately. The participants help shape the discussion based on the needs expressed by the group.

Choose ONE of the following times:

- [January 21, 10:30am-noon CT](#)
- [January 26, 5:30pm-7pm CT](#)

SKILL SNIPPET: “Nonverbal Communication”

We are constantly sending messages with nonverbal communication of facial expressions, body posture, gestures, and tone of voice. We might not realize the impact nonverbal has on the integrity of our message. The words we use will have greater influence and connect with our listener if we take the time to consider our nonverbal communication in our messaging.

[Listen](#) or [Watch](#)

PODCAST: [“Why Should I Care: The Impact of Impact”](#)

CHALLENGES:

- Construct a confrontation message using the FBI formula.
- Practice delivering a confrontation message with awareness of nonverbal communication

ICYMI ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



Original posting by [Contemplative Monk](#)

Do you have a Social Media post you'd like to share with us? Just tag @OurCommunityListens and include #CareToConnect and we'll find it!

TOOLS FOR HOME

Resources for parenting, education, family & committed relationships

WEBINAR: “Parenting - Using Recognition with a Child or Teen”

How can you give meaningful feedback to your child or teen? Even during stressful times, letting them know they are seen and appreciated can go a long way in building a positive environment. Not only that, but training ourselves to be actively looking for things to appreciate can help us to develop positive thoughts as parents.

- [January 28, 7:00pm - 8:30pm CT](#)

SKILL SNIPPETS: “Values: The Core of Who We Are”

Do you know your own values? What happens when the core things important to us are different than those of our partner? We likely have different values than those around us, which is usually not a problem, yet when we are doing life in close relationships with others, having shared values and a shared understanding of each other’s values is key.

[Listen](#) or [Watch](#)

CHALLENGE: Values are at the core of who we are. They shape our attitudes and then, our attitudes inform our tendencies to behave in certain ways. Values are also the lens with which we view the world. Knowing that we are a mixture of many values, begin to consider words that describe your core values.

Reflecting on 2020

Check out this [Everybody Matters Podcast](#) with Dr. Alise Cortez as she looks back on 2020 and shares insight from leaders she’s talked to about this unique and challenging year.



SPOTLIGHT ON: Education

Education, like many fields, is inundated with training, professional development, special projects, annual initiatives, and quality improvement plans. Often initiatives are endured or outlived, only to become clutter in forgotten-about binders on dusty bookshelves.

That's where Our Community Listens is different. Person after person shares testimonials that our training is unique because, for sometimes the first time in their careers, the training is not about becoming more productive, but rather equipping them with tools to relate better as humans. Yes, these skills have the power to transform classrooms and cultures, but they touch individuals' hearts and homes first.

When colleges, universities, and K-12 systems partner to offer Our Community Listens, they are doing more than instituting yet another initiative, they are literally giving their faculty, administrators, staff, and supporters the gift of better connection. Learning empathy, relational understanding, and the skill to truly listen must first be a gift received and instilled in individual lives before it can be expected to impact educational environments. The point at which people can be personal practitioners of OCL is the point it will affect positive relationships with the students.

Educational Initiatives Leader Mike Desparrois says seeking those systems that want to support their teammates is the first thing he looks for in new partnerships. "This is one of the main reasons why we will vet our educational partners closely. We want to make sure they are committed over time and not looking for training that checks off a box for them."

While schools prepare their educators in pedagogy, content, and curriculum, there are little to no skills being taught on working with kids as people, explains Mike. "The people skills are where OCL can provide support," says Mike. "When teachers have, use, and model these skills, the classroom environment is transformational."

For an industry steeped in research, Mike says the need is transparent. "The research is very clear that if the adults are not receiving the training, modeling it to the students, and supporting the kids, it has little to no effect.

"In fact, research supports it can damage kids if they are taught the skills but the adults are not trained on them to model them to the students. With this in mind, we are preparing to launch our own research into how OCL skills support and help teachers in the classroom and impact the student's sense of belonging and their self-efficacy."

As we head into another semester of online or remote instruction, OCL is developing new ways for educational institutions to support their teammates and stakeholders with the tools and understanding that transform not only classrooms, but also transform lives. In 2021 we will roll out new Virtual OCL offerings based on our foundational core class. To find out more about partnerships and how your institution can give the gift of connection, contact us at info@ourcommunitylistens.org."

