

Communicate with clarity and do not make assumptions

In recent weeks, we have discussed many times the importance of clear unequivocal communication. Many of you have provided great examples of the benefits of

- listening to understand
- asking clarifying questions
- overcoming any tendency to jump to conclusions.



So many times, things go badly, or relationships become strained because we violate one of the 'Four Agreements' of Don Miguel Ruiz - Do not make assumptions.

Let's just think for a minute how often we are tempted to make assumptions.

Someone says something that we perceive as sharp and we assume they are cross, frustrated or possibly even annoyed with us, when the fact is they just said something in a certain tone of voice.

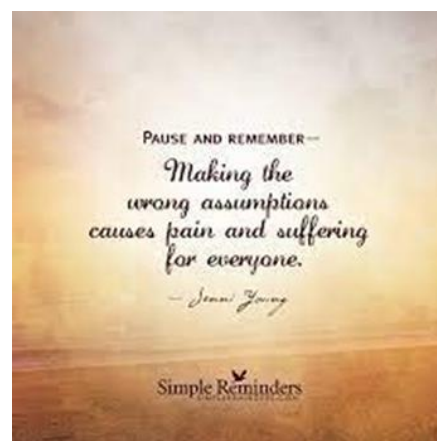
Rather than react, often by being defensive, it is much more helpful to ask non-threatening and non-judgmental questions

Is there anything I can do to help? Is something bothering you?

As well as helping get a better understanding of what the other person wants and needs, these types of questions can often diffuse a situation.

When we make assumptions we lose the opportunity to communicate effectively with another person and we increase the potential for miscommunication.

Similarly, do not assume that people know what you want and need if you have not clearly told them. Practice expressing what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can, to avoid misunderstandings to reduce the potential for hurt, sadness and drama.



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