

A RECIPE for Good Communication *By Larry Forthun and Matthew Kaplan*

Effective communication is characterized by:

- **(R)**eflective listening. In order to truly hear what another person is saying, repeat back what you think they said either exactly or in your own words. By repeating or rephrasing what the speaker said, the speaker knows they have been heard.
- **(E)**ncouragement. Encourage and empathize with each other. Express appreciation for other family members' attempts to communicate properly. Consider what they are trying to express to you by putting yourself in their "shoes."
- **(C)**ompromise and Cooperation. Find ways to work together rather than fight.
- **(“I”)** Messages. Rather than focusing on the behavior of the other person, express your own feelings.
- **(P)**ractice. Good communication is difficult to learn. It takes practice! It will feel uncomfortable at first until you get the hang of it. Expect to take time to get it right and allow other family members to get it right as well.
- **(E)**ngagement. If someone is speaking to you, give them your whole attention. It is difficult to really hear what someone is saying if you are not paying attention.