



I-L. O. V. E-YOU: Effective Communications Skills to Empower Women's Voices

Nur Hidayu Md Pojan^{1,3}, Nor Hidayah Jaris^{1,3*}, Salmi Razali^{1,3}, Iman Mohamed Ali^{1,3}, Hayatul Najaa Miptah^{2,3}

¹Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

²Department of Primary Care Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia

³Hospital Al-Sultan Abdullah, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: norhidayahjaris@uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Background:

Effective communication is crucial for women's empowerment, as it enables them to clearly express their needs, advocate for their rights, and confidently engage in all areas of life. However, challenges such as reluctance to speak up, fear of risk-taking, difficulties in self-advocacy, internalizing failures, and self-comparison can hinder progress. We would like to propose a community project that is structured, educational and practical on effective communication skills using- "I-L. O. V. E-YOU" techniques to address these obstacles and empower women's voices. We aim to enhance women's communication skills by building confidence, facilitating clear self-expression, overcoming barriers to self-advocacy, and fostering supportive interactions.

Project details:

This effective communication skills development program emphasizes six techniques of communication. "I" is to use an I-statement, "L"- listen actively during conversations, "O"- observe and name others' emotional changes, "V"- validate the feelings, and "E"- empathize with the other person's emotions and "You"- Avoid You-statement (during a conversation, avoid using blaming statement and focus on the other person rather than yourself). The six techniques will be explained in a talk session. A role-play session will be conducted subsequently following each method.

Outcomes:

Participants will develop verbal and nonverbal communication skills to express themselves effectively and understand others better. They will gain more confidence in their communication skills to handle conflicts and give feedback. Through active listening and showing empathy, they can also build stronger personal and professional relationships.

Conclusion:

This project will empower women to voice their thoughts and needs respectfully and minimise the risk of communication breakdown by engaging and insightful conversation.

Keywords: empower; women's voice; communication skills; communication techniques; community project

Biodata:

Dr Nur Hidayu Md Pojan is a second-year postgraduate psychiatry student at UiTM Puncak Alam. She believes that mental health promotion and early intervention can significantly reduce stigma and improve outcomes for patients, their families, and the community, contributing to the overall development of the country

Dr Nor Hidayah Jaris is a medical lecturer and psychiatrist, with a deep interest in child, adolescent, women, and young adult mental health. She is actively involved in mental health advocacy and loves engaging in women mental health and parenting programs

AP Dr. Salmi Razali is a Consultant and Associate Professor in Psychiatry with a PhD and extensive expertise in Women's and Perinatal Mental Health. She is passionate about advancing women's mental health and has received multiple awards for her innovative psychological skills, which are practical and accessible to a wide audience.

Dr Iman Mohamed Ali is a medical lecturer and psychiatrist with a dedicated interest in child, adolescent, women, and young adult mental health. She is actively involved in women's mental health advocacy

Dr Hayatul Najaa Miptah specializes in family medicine and is a medical lecturer with a focus on child, adolescent, young adult, and women's physical and mental health. She is actively involved in a program to prevent nicotine addiction in secondary schools.