

## Fostering Communication

Generation Z is known as the “Zoomers.” This nickname has always made me laugh, but when I ponder over why, it makes sense. We take the fast lane. There are a million things swirling around us every second, and it’s harder and harder to have intentional moments with each other. Communication is at an all-time low, and mental health issues have spiked because of this. I want to help by becoming a therapist. Using the classic art of rhetoric is essential to my success in a mental health career. To build connection, I will use rhetoric to foster relationships, combat crumbling communication, and unite my community.

When a client attends therapy, they are looking for compassion, guidance, and a listening ear. Imagine laying your heart on your sleeve to a complete stranger, and you can start to understand how difficult it is. I want my clients to feel comfortable and using clear speech can help. From the University of Illinois. “Knowing how to use the tools of rhetoric can improve your communication and can help more people to agree with your perspective,” (University of Illinois 2022). Therapy is an exchange. I will have to persuade clients every day. Struggling individuals are sometimes hard to convince to take care of themselves.

Verbal communication does not come easy to my generation. Put us behind a screen and we can talk for hours, but there’s something about standing face to face that gives us the shakes. The use of technology had led to crippling decrease in communication and toxic comparison is a detrimental side effect. “When we get on social media, we are looking for affirmation, and consciously or not, we are comparing our life to the lives of others,” (Piedmont Healthcare 2022). The negative effects of technology are not only felt by “zoomers,” but also by our communities as well.

I want to use rhetoric in my future practice and on the streets of my community, whether that be with friends, family, or neighbors. In our current climate, apprehension and passive aggression are sooner brought to the table than a clear mind and air of understanding. “When we understand one another, we can work together to find solutions to problems. This is true even when we disagree,” (Hill 2018). The words we use can unite cities, but also tear them down just as fast. Everyone is open to listening to your point of view, if only you present it in a way that they are prepared to receive. I want to use my language to unite my community in a positive way.

Rhetoric is an essential tool to my future success as a therapist. I can harness it to foster relationships, build communication, and increase understanding in my community. All those around us need compassion, if only we are willing to give it. From the words of Buddha, “Whatever words we utter should be chosen with care for people will hear them and be influenced by them for good or ill.”