

WHAT'S THAT, YOU SAY?

Liz Curtis Higgs is an author of 37 books with 4.6 million copies in print, a motivational speaker, and a woman who has charmed Life Care's directors of nursing in a couple of our meetings.

She tells a humorous story about a woman named Eilene from Maine. Eilene longed for a little relief from the embarrassment she felt while visiting a school and orphanage in Kenya. Dozens of children who spoke Swahili pressed around her, trying to see if the white of her skin would rub off.

What took her aback was that they were all yelling *jumbo* and *super!*

Eilene grumbled to her interpreter, "I know I need to lose weight, but I didn't think I was so fat and large that they would yell *jumbo* and *super.*"

The interpreter burst out laughing, then explained, "In Swahili, *jumbo* means 'hello' and *super* means 'hello very much.'"

Communication is a difficult art, even under the best of circumstances.

During World War II, a misunderstanding over just one word, the verb *to table*, created a great debate and ill will. According to the memoirs of Sir Winston Churchill, he and his staff were discussing with their American allies whether they should "table" a certain issue.



However, when Americans table an issue, it means they set it aside for consideration at a later time; when the British table an issue, it means to place it on the table for immediate discussion.

"A long and acrimonious argument ensued," Churchill wrote, until finally the two sides discovered their respective cultures had contrasting definitions for the same term.

Another example ...

During court one day, the judge quietly passed the clerk a note reading, "Blind on right side, may be falling. Please call someone."

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Understandably alarmed, the clerk called for help. While waiting for the help to come, he reassuringly whispered to the judge that paramedics were on their way and would arrive shortly. Puzzled, the judge pointed to a sagging Venetian blind on the right side of the courtroom and explained, "I was thinking maybe someone from maintenance."



Clear communication is critical. How many marriages fail because couples lose the ability to communicate? How many families are in distress because parents and offspring fail to communicate? How many hurting people could be helped if someone would simply take the time to communicate with them?

In the work we are called to do in Life Care and Century Park, effective communication is imperative – for the sake of the residents and patients we

serve, the involvement of their families in the care being delivered, and in achievement of the best outcomes through teamwork.

How valuable is good, positive communication? The Bible tells us:

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver (Proverbs 25:11 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter