



The Art of Listening

Building love, trust and connection involves listening to our partner – which is sometimes not as easy as it sounds.

Relationship
• BOOTCAMP •

An exercise to experiment with: try something like...

"How are you doing today babe?"

"How was work for you today?"

Find a question to ask, not just because it is polite but because you really want to know.

Step 1. Prepare Yourself

- Shift the focus away from yourself
- Postpone your own agenda
- The conversation does not have to be interesting, you just need to be INTERESTED in the other person.
- Hear your partners emotions – their pain, joy, experience – even if you don't agree.

Step 2. Attune

This means your job in this moment is to just be the listener and be "present" with your partner. Do not minimise your partners feelings. Try not to take on your partner's feelings. Do not try and fix your partner. Do not try and cheer them up. Just tune in to how your partner is feeling.

YOUR GOAL – to just understand.

*Remember: This is a listening moment, not a fix me moment.
Might be a please 'hug me' moment.*

DO:

- Ask questions. Really listen to the answers
- Ask open ended questions
- Avoid judgement
- Avoid giving advice
- Communicate respect
- Communicate understanding and patience

DON'T:

- Be defensive
- Engage in put downs or conversations of superiority

Step 3. Reflect Back What you Hear

A powerful way to be there for your partner and show them you are truly listening is to repeat back in your own words what you may have heard and then communicate some validation.

“Oh, am I hearing you say that..... and now that I know that, it makes sense to me that you may feel that way because.....”

For Example: “I hear you saying you miss your friends and you miss the things we all used to do together. I do understand that. I miss our friends too. I can see now why you seem sad sometimes”

Questions you can Ask to Practice Listening

1. What are you feeling?
2. What else are you feeling?
3. What are the positive and negative aspects of these choices here?
4. What are the choices as you see them?
5. What do your values tell you about this?
6. Think of someone you really admire. What would he or she do and how would he or she view this situation?
7. Does this particular story/event/incident remind you of anything else in your past or personal history?
8. What was your first reaction to this information?
9. What would you like to see happen?
10. How did this all begin? Can you talk to me about things from the start?

Express Empathy and Understanding

1. You are in such a tough spot here
2. I wish you didn't have to go through this
3. Oh, wow, that sounds terrible
4. I support your position here
5. That sounds like you feel totally disappointed in what happened
6. That would have hurt my feelings too
7. I can understand what you are feeling here
8. I think you are right
9. Wow that must have been awful
10. Tell me your feelings here