

Relational Empowerment Techniques: Speaker

Key Point: Stop being critical in your demands. This will help to prevent defensiveness and/or withdrawal. Instead, reveal what you feel and state what you are needing.

Action Steps

- Before disclosing, first ask your partner, "Is now a good time to talk? If not now, then when?" Your partner needs to be accessible for effective communication to happen.
- Get clear on your main issue and focus on that one issue only – "this is what happened"
 - Stay on track with this one issue throughout the conversation.
 - Speak in a tone of voice that engages your partner and enables them to hear you.
 - Don't blame or shame your partner
- Express your feelings and thoughts, be vulnerable.
 - "This is how I feel ... "
 - "I feel ____ when ____ happens ... "
 - "The story I tell myself about all of this is ... "
- Explain what you are longing for.
 - "I need ..." (reassurance, validation, compassion, etc.)
 - "I want ... " (contact, intimacy, etc.)
 - "I hope ..." (we can work on this together, you understand me, etc.)
- Ask your partner to repeat back to you what you just said.

Relational Empowerment Techniques: Listener

Key Point: Your goal is to make your partner feel secure in your love for them. Think about the act of listening as an act of generosity.

Action Steps

- Actively listen by putting yourself aside and focusing on your partners words, feelings, and point of view.
 - Don't interrupt
 - Don't take what your partner is saying personally
 - Imagine your partner as a small child who is expressing their experience
- Ask questions.
 - Be genuinely curious about your partner's perceptions, feelings, and thoughts.
 - Use the phrase, "Tell me more."
 - Don't deny your partner's story or get defensive.
- Empathize: take your partner's childhood and emotional wounds into account
 - "I hear your saying ..."
 - "I hear you feeling ... "
 - "From what I understand, the story you're telling yourself is ..."