

Relationship Journal*

<p>Step 1 – S/he said: Write down exactly what the other person said. Be brief:</p> <p>My husband said: “You never listen!”</p>	<p>Step 2 – I said: Write down exactly what you said next. Be brief:</p> <p>I usually say nothing and just ignore him.</p>
<p>Underline the emotions S/HE might have been feeling</p>	<p>Underline the emotions YOU were feeling</p>
<p><u>Sad</u>, blue, depressed, down, <u>unhappy</u></p>	<p><u>Sad</u>, blue, depressed, down, unhappy</p>
<p>Anxious, worried, panicky, nervous, frightened</p>	<p>Anxious, worried, panicky, nervous, frightened</p>
<p>Guilty, remorseful, bad, ashamed</p>	<p><u>Guilty</u>, remorseful, bad, ashamed</p>
<p>Inferior, worthless, <u>inadequate</u>, defective, incompetent</p>	<p>Inferior, worthless, inadequate, defective, incompetent</p>
<p><u>Lonely</u>, <u>unloved</u>, unwanted, <u>rejected</u>, <u>alone</u>, <u>abandoned</u></p>	<p><u>Lonely</u>, <u>unloved</u>, <u>unwanted</u>, <u>rejected</u>, <u>alone</u>, <u>abandoned</u></p>
<p>Embarrassed, foolish, <u>humiliated</u>, self-conscious</p>	<p>Embarrassed, foolish, humiliated, self-conscious</p>
<p><u>Hopeless</u>, <u>discouraged</u>, pessimistic, despairing</p>	<p>Hopeless, <u>discouraged</u>, pessimistic, despairing</p>
<p><u>Frustrated</u>, stuck, thwarted, defeated</p>	<p><u>Frustrated</u>, stuck, thwarted, defeated</p>
<p>Angry, mad, resentful, <u>annoyed</u>, <u>irritated</u>, <u>upset</u>, furious</p>	<p>Angry, mad, resentful, <u>annoyed</u>, <u>irritated</u>, <u>upset</u>, furious</p>
<p>Other (specify)</p>	<p>Other (specify)</p>

Step 3 – Good Vs. Bad Communication: Was your response an example of good or bad communication? Use the EAR Checklist to analyze what you wrote down in Step 2.

E.A.R. Checklist*

	Good Communication	✓	Bad Communication	✓
E = Empathy	1. You acknowledge the other person's feelings and find some truth in what s/he said.		1. You ignore the other person's feelings or argue and insist s/he is "wrong."	✓
A = Assertiveness	2. You express your feelings openly and directly.		2. You fail to express your feelings or express them aggressively.	✓
R = Respect	3. Your attitude is respectful and caring.		3. Your attitude is not respectful or caring.	✓

Step 4 – Consequences: Did your response in Step 2 make the problem better or worse? Why?

My response confirms his belief that I'm not listening. As a result, he'll keep telling me that I'm not listening. This means that I've been forcing him to criticize me all these years!

Step 5 – Revised Version: Revise what you wrote down in Step 2. Use the "Five Secrets of Effective Communication." If your revised response is ineffective, try again.

- "You're right. (DT) I *haven't* been a good listener. (DT) I've been arguing with you and defending myself, and it finally dawned on me that what you're saying is absolutely right." (TE; DT)
- "You probably feel really frustrated and ticked off at me." (FE)
- "It upsets me to have to admit this because I love you so much and now I realize I've been pushing you away and ignoring you for years." (IF; DT; ST)
- "I'd like to hear more about how you've been feeling." (IN)