


Relationship Journal*

<p>Step 1 – S/he said: Write down exactly what the other person said. Be brief: What did you do after work yesterday? Lucky! I wanted to but didn't have anyone to go with. Where did you ride? Were there lots of people? How long did you ride? Did your husband join? Why not?</p>	<p>Step 2 – I said: Write down exactly what you said next. Be brief: I went for a bike ride. All my answers are short: Oh that's too bad. Around the neighborhood. No, not many people. Rode about 20 minutes. No, he didn't come. He was doing other stuff.</p>
<p>Circle the emotions S/HE might have been feeling</p>	<p>Circle the emotions YOU were feeling</p>
<p>Sad, blue, depressed, down, unhappy</p>	<p>Sad, 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>Guilty, remorseful, bad, ashamed</p>
<p>Inferior, worthless, inadequate, defective, incompetent</p>	<p>Inferior, worthless, inadequate, defective, incompetent</p>
<p>Lonely, unloved, unwanted, rejected, alone, abandoned</p>	<p>Lonely, unloved, unwanted, rejected, alone, abandoned</p>
<p>Embarrassed, foolish, humiliated, self-conscious</p>	<p>Embarrassed, foolish, humiliated, self-conscious</p>
<p>Hopeless, discouraged, pessimistic, despairing</p>	<p>Hopeless, discouraged, pessimistic, despairing</p>
<p>Frustrated, stuck, thwarted, defeated</p>	<p>Frustrated, stuck, thwarted, defeated</p>
<p>Angry, mad, resentful, annoyed, irritated, upset, furious</p>	<p>Angry, mad, resentful, annoyed, irritated, upset, furious</p>
<p>Other (specify) jealous</p>	<p>Other (specify) Taken for granted, unappreciated</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?

I didn't really act like I cared when she said she had wanted to go for a bike ride but didn't get to. I didn't show any interest in her whatsoever or ask what she did. I didn't express my feelings telling her that I did not feel like talking or that I was feeling frustrated because I needed to focus on my work. I don't think I really had a caring attitude. I was indifferent.

I think my response made the problem worse. It sounds like she might have been feeling lonely. Maybe she felt the need to keep asking me questions to keep the conversation going, possibly hoping I would ask her more about how her night was. Maybe she was feeling just as lonely in the conversation with me as she had been the night before when she didn't have anyone to bike ride with.

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.

I'm sorry to hear you didn't get to go on a bike ride. I can imagine that might have been frustrating & maybe you even felt lonely that you didn't have anyone to go with. You've always made such an effort to be friendly with me, and I really appreciate it. I'm actually pretty busy with this project right now and feeling irritated because I'm not doing a good job working on it & talking with you at the same time. I'd like to hear more about your night if you don't mind telling me about it later today? I think I can be a much better listener then.

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