





Shirley's Relationship Journal*

Step 1 – S/he said:	Step 2 – I said:
I do everything I can to do what you want but it is never good enough. You expect me to be a completely different person than I am. I am not that person and I resent that you want me to be perfect and not get angry when I feel like it.	I feel neglected by you and I am angry too. You are so self-focused and are not interested in how you impact me and our family. Your angry tirades have damaged the love that I have for you and the love that your children had for you.
Circle the emotions S/HE might have been feeling	Circle the emotions YOU were feeling
Sad , blue, depressed, down, unhappy	Sad blue, depressed, down, unhappy
Anxious , worried, panicky, nervous, frightened	Anxious worried panicky, nervous, frightened
Guilty , remorseful, bad, ashamed	Guilty , remorseful, bad, ashamed
Inferior , worthless, inadequate, defective, incompetent	Inferior , worthless, inadequate , defective, incompetent
Lonely , unloved, unwanted, rejected, alone, abandoned	Lonely , unloved, unwanted, rejected, alone, abandoned
Embarrassed , foolish, humiliated, self-conscious	Embarrassed , foolish, humiliated , self-conscious
Hopeless , discouraged, pessimistic, despairing	Hopeless , discouraged , pessimistic, despairing
Frustrated , stuck, thwarted, defeated	Frustrated , stuck, thwarted, defeated
Angry , mad, resentful, annoyed, irritated, upset, furious	Angry , mad, resentful, annoyed, irritated, upset, furious
Other (specify)	Other (specify)

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?

Worse. I did nothing but defend myself and throw the blame back at him.

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 are right. I do expect you to be perfect and to be completely different from the person you are. I also expect you to not show your anger. I am not satisfied by the efforts you make to change or improve.

I am feeling really upset and angry. I am also feeling embarrassed and frustrated with myself and the way I have been responding to you.

I do care about you and hope that I can show you the respect that I should as you tell me about how you are feeling.

You must be feeling really angry, right now and frustrated. You probably are feeling hopeless, lonely, rejected, and alone.

I have been so bogged down in my own emotions that I have lost touch with you. I need to know how you have been thinking and feeling. Tell me about what has been on your mind.
