

SHARE EMOTIONS

1 INTEREST

Tell me more about that. Ask questions.

2 EXCITEMENT

Wow! This is really hot stuff! Let's do it!

3 SADNESS

That's so sad.

4 FEAR

That is something that would have me worried too.

5 IRRITATION & ANGER

I can see why you'd be annoyed here.

6 DON'T

Stonewall; Ignore your partner; Fail to respond; Get Defensive, Criticize.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR PARTNER

First, ask your partner, "Do you feel understood yet?"

1 If she or he answers "No," then ask questions to help increase your understanding:

- What is most upsetting to you about this?
- What is it that you don't like about this situation?
- What is the worst thing that could happen in this situation?
- What is this like for you?
- Is there anything I can do to support you in this?
- What do you need?

2 If she or he answers "Yes," and does feel understood, then ask "Are you interested in receiving advice or problem solving?" If the answer is "Yes," then move onto advice and/or problem solving suggestions. See if your partner has ideas before suggesting some ideas of your own.

REMEMBER

there is no such thing as an "over reaction" emotionally.

Try not to judge your partner's emotions.

It would be great if you could commit to having a conversation like this one for about twenty minutes at the end of each day. Write down how you and your partner have agreed to build the Stress-Reducing Conversation into your daily schedule.

DON'T SIDE WITH THE ENEMY