

## Relationship Journal

**STEP ONE:** Write down exactly what the other person said. Be brief: She/he said,

---



---



---

**STEP TWO:** Write down exactly what you said next. Be brief: I said,

---



---



---

**STEP THREE:** Do Step One & Two meet the criteria for EAR? (See other side.) Did your response show good or bad communication? Did it have empathy, assertiveness and respect?

**STEP FOUR:** Check off what feelings both parties were having in the interaction. Underline your feelings. Circle how might you think the other person is feeling.

Sad, blue, depressed, down, unhappy	Hopeless, discouraged, pessimistic, despairing
Anxious, worried, panicky, nervous, frightened	Frustrated, stuck, thwarted, defeated
Guilty, remorseful, bad, ashamed	Exhausted, tired, drained, overwhelmed
Inferior/ worthless/ inadequate/defective/incompetent	Angry, mad, resentful, annoyed, irritated, upset,
Lonely/unloved/unwanted/rejected/ alone/ abandoned	Confused, mixed-up, uncertain, perplexed
Embarrassed, foolish, humiliated, self-conscious	

### **STEP FIVE: COMMUNICATION ERRORS**

Examine below what communication errors your interchange had.

<b>TRUTH?</b> I'm right; you're wrong!	<b>LABELING?</b> You call the other a "loser" or worse!
<b>BLAME?</b> It's not my fault! It's hers/his!	<b>SARCASM?</b> Your tone of voice belittles or patronizes.
<b>DEFENSIVE?</b> You argue and admit no imperfection.	<b>COUNTER-ATTACK?</b> You respond with criticism.
<b>MARTYRDOM?</b> You play the innocent victim.	<b>SCAPEGOATING?</b> You imply the other is defective.
<b>PUT-DOWN?</b> You imply the other is a loser!	<b>DIVERSION?</b> You change the subject or list past grievances.
<b>SELF-BLAME?</b> You act as if you are terrible.	<b>HELPING?</b> Instead of listening, you give advice.
<b>HOPELESSNESS?</b> You claim nothing can be done.	<b>PROBLEM SOLVING?</b> You ignore feelings and offer solutions.
<b>DEMANDINGNESS?</b> Others must be as you expect!	<b>MIND-READING?</b> You expect others to know how you feel?
<b>DENIAL?</b> You pretend you are not upset.	<b>PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE?</b> You say nothing, pout/slam doors.

**STEP SIX:** Did your response in STEP TWO make the problem better or worse. Why? What were the consequences?

---

---

---

**STEP SEVEN:** Revise what you wrote down in STEP TWO. Use the FIVE SECRETS OF COMMUNICATION. Keep trying if the first attempt fails. It takes practice and courage. For each statement, mention which of the FIVE SECRETS OF COMMUNICATION you are using.

**1. You're right ...**

---

---

---

**2a. I hear you saying ...** (repeat same words or paraphrase what the other person has said.)

---

---

---

**2b. I imagine you may be feeling ...** A \_\_\_\_\_, B \_\_\_\_\_ & C \_\_\_\_\_.

(Write in three feelings from Step 4.)

**3. Tell me a bit more about how you are feeling and what you are thinking so I can understand better.**

**4. Well, I'm feeling ...** X \_\_\_\_\_, Y \_\_\_\_\_ & Z \_\_\_\_\_.

(Write in three feelings from Step 4.)

**5. However, you are important to me ...**

---

---

### **Five Secrets of Effective Communication**

*E = EMPATHY - You Acknowledge the Other's Feelings*

**1.** The Disarming Technique **DT**. Find some truth in what the other person is saying.

**2a.** Thought Empathy **TE**. Paraphrase the other person's words.

**2b.** Feeling Empathy **FE**. Acknowledge how the other person is probably feeling, based on what she or he said.

**3.** Inquiry **IN**. Ask gentle, probing questions to learn more about how the other person is thinking and feeling.

*A = ASSERTIVENESS - You express your own feelings.*

**4.** "I Feel" Statements **IF**. Express your own ideas and feelings in a direct, tactful manner. Use "I feel" statements, such as "I feel upset," rather than "you" statements, such as "You're wrong!" or "You're making me furious!"

*R = RESPECT - Your attitude is respectful and caring.*

**5.** Affirming **AF** or Stroking **ST**. Convey an attitude of respect, even if you feel frustrated or angry with the other person. Find something genuinely positive to say to the other person, even in the heat of battle.

