



Dialogue Process

<i>Person 1: Speaker / Sender</i>	<i>Person 2: Listener / Receiver</i>
<p>1. <i>Set context and get consent</i> for the conversation: “I would like to talk with you about _____. I want to explore this because (benefit I’d like to get and what I imagine they could gain) _____. Is now a good time?”</p>	<p>1. <i>Check inside yourself for willingness.</i> If you’re not ready right now ask yourself what you might need in order to be willing and reflect on what you could gain from the conversation. “Yes, let’s talk now.” (Or suggest a time in the near future)</p>
<p>2. <i>Share what happened</i> without blame or criticism. Stay away from “you always / never...” Stick to one topic and focus on observations without interpretations (only say things a camera would record). “When I (saw, heard, noticed, etc.) ...”</p>	<p>2 & 3. <i>Receive</i> what the other person is saying with curiosity and an open mind. Remind yourself that this is an opportunity to connect and understand the other person’s world. Accept the other person’s experience as it is without believing it should be different.</p>
<p>3. <i>Reveal your experience.</i> Allow your words, voice, and body to be congruent with what you’re expressing. Name body sensations (tightening, heaviness, relaxation, etc.), core feelings (anger, fear, sadness, joy, etc.), impulses, images, what this reminds you of from the past, patterns in your yourself or your relationship. Completing three or more of the sentences below can help you stay on track. Share a little at a time and allow the other person to mirror and understand you.</p> <p>“The story I am making up about this is...” “I imagine this means...” “Part of me thinks that...” “When that happens I feel...” “When I think about this my body wants to...” “What hurts the most about this is...” “What I’m most afraid of is...” “In this situation I protect myself by...” “What this reminds me of from my childhood is...” “The challenge I’m finding about this is...” “This feels important to me because...” “What I’m learning about myself from this is...” “Something I haven’t told you yet is...” “If I could do it over again, I would...” “One thing I could do to improve the situation is...”</p>	<p>Mirror without adding additional content or interpretations. Demonstrate that you’re listening and seeking to understand. “What I hear you saying is...” “Did I get that?” “Tell me about...?” “Is there more?”</p> <p>Next summarize what you heard. “Let me see if I got it all....Is that it?”</p> <p>Next validate the other person “What makes sense to me about what you said is...”</p> <p>Next empathize “Given all that I imagine you might feel (mad, scared, tender, happy, etc.)... is that right?”</p>



<p><i>(For this step, speaker becomes listener)</i></p> <p>4. <i>Take in the nourishment</i>, connection and notice how your vulnerability touched the other person. Mirror back what touched them without adding your own interpretations. “What I heard touched you is...” “You felt most connected to me when...” “Tell me more about...”</p>	<p><i>(For this step, listener becomes speaker)</i></p> <p>4. <i>Share impact</i> and what happens inside you when you hear the other person sharing. “What touches me most about what you said is...” “I felt closest to you when you said...” “What it means to me that you shared this is...” “When you said... I felt (body sensation or emotion)”</p>
<p>5. <i>Requests</i>, own your unmet needs by asking for specific things from yourself and your partner. “Would you be willing to...” “What I’d like instead is...” “What I hope for around this...” “What’s missing for me is...”</p>	<p>5. <i>Respond to requests</i>. Be creative and look for ways to get underlying needs met for both of you. If you need more time or to be heard first, set a timeline to come back to the requests.</p>
<p><i>(For this step, speaker becomes listener)</i></p> <p>6. <i>Check if you’re willing</i>. Continue with listener / receiver step 1 from above.</p>	<p><i>(For this step, listener becomes speaker)</i></p> <p>6. <i>Check for consent</i> to move the focus to your experience. Continue with speaker / sender step 1 from above. “Is it ok if I share what this brings up for me?”</p>

Adapted from Imago Dialogue, Authentic Relating, Nonviolent Communication