



Using the Relational Language Skill Steps to Engage, Connect and Collaborate with Girls and Women

Alyssa Benedict, 2007

Relational Language Skills Steps fall into two main categories: Engaging/Connecting and Collaborative Action Planning.

Part I: Engagement and Connection

Step 1: Anticipate and Explore - Why might she be saying/doing this?

Step 2: Acknowledge - What might she be feeling?

Step 3: Validate - Validate her experience.

Step 4: Reflect - What do you hear her saying?

Part II: Collaborative Action Planning

Step 5: Reflect her position.

Step 6: Reflect/explore relevant parameters/limits.

Step 7: Generate Solutions - Review strengths and barriers and brainstorm solutions.

Step 8: Stay Positive - Encourage the client to pick an option and then remain involved and supportive by checking in with her and if necessary reviewing the steps again.

The first four steps allow us to demonstrate that we truly understand our female clients – this solidifies our connection with them. The last four steps then flow much easier. Setting limits and exploring realistic options while remaining positive happens more successfully in the context of a healthy and respectful connection.

(Benedict, 2002)