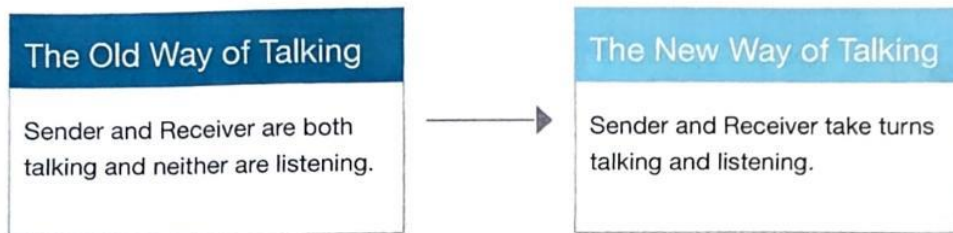


Harville Hendrix and Helen LaKelly Hunt are psychologists who have spent their career understanding relationships and how to communicate more effectively. Their latest work is called Safe Conversations, and the following pages are copied from their workbook with their permission from a Safe Conversations workshop.

III – Structure of the Safe Conversations Dialogue



In the Safe Conversations Process:

One is the Sender (talks). 

 One is the Receiver (listens).

The Sender and Receiver take turns talking and listening while using the 3-step Dialogue Process:

-  Mirroring
-  Validating
-  Empathizing

The Safe Conversations Dialogue



The Sender follows these simple rules:

- 1 Asks for an Appointment.
- 2 Makes eye contact without words.
- 3 Sends message in short sentences.
- 4 Uses I-language.
- 5 Makes no criticisms of partner.



The Receiver follows these simple rules:

- 1 **Mirroring**
Let me see if I've got it.
You said... Did I get it?
Is there more about that?
- 2 **Validating**
That makes sense, and what makes sense is...
- 3 **Empathizing**
I imagine you might be feeling...
Is that what you are feeling?
Are there other feelings?

When the Sender confirms that the Receiver mirrored everything accurately, the Receiver then asks: "Is there more about that?"

USING "IS THERE MORE?"

This question expresses curiosity, a vitally important expression of interest, respect and validation.

SUMMARY

When there is "no more" the Receiver offers a summary of all they heard and checks again for accuracy: "So, in summary, I heard you say" and "Did I get it all?"

VALIDATION

When you validate, you cross the bridge into another person's world, see their point of view and accept it as their "truth." Validation is not agreement, it is acknowledgement. You can respond with: "That makes sense, and what makes sense is..."

EMPATHY

And finally, imagine what the other person feels in that moment and state what those feelings might be. You can respond with: "And I can imagine you might be feeling...Is that the feeling? Are there other feelings?"

A horizontal bar composed of five colored segments: dark blue, light blue, red, dark green, and orange.

CLOSURE

After all 3 steps of the Safe Conversations Dialogue are completed, the Sender and Receiver move into closure.

Sender says: "Thank you for listening." and Receiver replies: "Thank you for sharing."

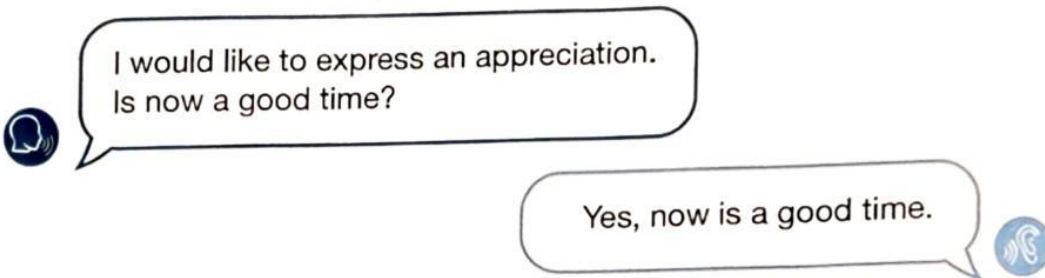
Closure can be achieved with a hand shake or high five, or if comfortable, with a hug. Now switch roles and repeat the process.

Here is an example of the Safe Conversations Dialogue utilizing the sentence stems discussed in our podcast this season, shared with permission from Harville Hendrix and Helen LaKelly Hunt.

Mirroring an Appreciation

- 1 Decide who will be the first Sender  and who will be the Receiver 

MAKING AN APPOINTMENT



A dialogue bubble with a speaker icon on the left contains the text: "I would like to express an appreciation. Is now a good time?"

A second dialogue bubble with an ear icon on the right contains the text: "Yes, now is a good time."

Connect Non-Verbally: Make eye contact and take three deep breaths in sync.

SHARING THE APPRECIATION



A dialogue bubble with a speaker icon on the left contains the text: "One thing I appreciate about you is _____"

Below the bubble, a note reads: "Note to the Receiver: If at any point in the dialogue you get overloaded, raise your hand and say: 'I'm overloaded, let me try to mirror you back so far.'"

MIRRORING FOR ACCURACY

 Checks for Accuracy

Let me see if I've got it. You said _____. Did I get it?



Yes, you got it.  The part you got was _____
and I also said _____



 Shows Curiosity

Is there more about that?



Yes. When you do that I feel _____
When I see that in you, I feel _____



 Continues Mirroring, Checks for Accuracy, Shows Curiosity

Let me see if I've got it. You said _____.
Did I get it? Is there more about that?



Yes, you got it.  The part you didn't get was ____



When I feel _____ it reminds me of a time in
the past when _____.



! Checks for Accuracy

Let me see if I've got it. You said _____. Did I get it?



Continue the process until the Sender agrees the Receiver "Got it".

SUMMARIZING

! Checks for Accuracy

Let me see if I got all of that. In summary
you are saying _____.



! Sender listens to the summary to Verify Accuracy

Yes. You got me. *or* - The part you got
was _____ and I also said _____.



CLOSURE

Thank you for listening.



Thank you for sharing.



Give each other a handshake or high five, or with an intimate partner give
each other a one minute hug.



SWITCHING ROLES

When all the steps are completed, switch roles and repeat the process.

V – Empathy

Relational challenges from our past inevitably show up in our present relationships. Challenges may have been experienced in childhood, associated with our caretakers who have been either intrusive and overbearing or neglectful and absent. Or, they may be more recent challenges, issues or events experienced in adulthood. Memories of past challenges may increase in intensity over time, or create persistent frustrations that inhibit our ability to connect with others in every part of our life

Empathy Sentence Stems

"Given what you've shared, I imagine you must feel..."
"Is that your feeling? Are there other feelings?"