EFFT Script-Builder: Supporting Through Validation and Support

Step 1 – Validation

Make an effort to convey understanding of your loved one's experience—whether it's an emotion, thought, urge, behavior, or state of being—and from their point of view.

Begin with a sentence starter like:	
"I could understand if you might…"	"I can imagine you…"
"No wonder you…"	"It makes sense that you…"
"I will never fully understand, but when I try to put myself in your shoes, I imagine you…"	"When I try to see it from your perspective, I imagine you might…

…followed by one of these verb choices: feel / think / want / don't want _____

Next, generate three because-statements. Because-statements are most effective when they are grounded in tentativeness and sincerity AND when they consider the underlying vulnerability of the other, their positive intentions, or their attempts to cope with stress or distress, as relevant.

Examples:
No wonder you want to _____ because #1, because #2 and because #3, OR
It would make sense that you might not want to _____ because #1, because #2 and because #3

Step 2 – Emotional and Practical Support

Next, follow your validation efforts with emotional and practical support, and in that order.

2A: Emotional Support Sentences (include 2-3 sentences)

Comfort/Love	Offer loving words, a hug, or a hand
Reassurance	"It's going to be okay."
Positive regard	"I know you're doing the best you can right now."
Belief in them	"I believe in you." / "I know you can do this."
Togetherness	"We're in this together." / "I want the best for you too."
Sharing a perspective	"Did you know?" / "From my end, I _____"
Physical / emotional space + a plan for later	"Why don't we take 5 and try again?"

2B: Practical Support Suggestions (include 1-2 suggestions)
→ Move forward with (or suggest) a behavioral plan or intervention.
→ Propose a soothing or regulating activity (like a walk, watching a movie, or listening to music).
→ Make a plan to reconnect or spend time together.
→ Share a skill, brainstorm ideas, offer solutions or take over where appropriate.
→ State a behavioral expectation or set a limit.
→ NA (sometimes, once the other is validated and supported emotionally, nothing further is needed.

The most powerful support is personalized and authentic. Because of this, remember to communicate from the heart and adjust the language and length as needed.

Practicing with Scripts

1. I want to _____

It makes sense to me that you might want to _____ because:
1.
2.
3.

Emotional support sentences (2-3):
Practical support suggestion (1-2):

2. I don't want to _____

I can imagine why you wouldn't want to _____ because:
1.
2.
3.

Emotional support sentences (2-3):
Practical support suggestion (1-2):

3. I feel so_____

No wonder you feel so_____ because:
1.
2.
3.

Emotional support sentences (2-3):
Practical support suggestion (1-2):

4. Why are you trying to talk to me like that? (said after a first attempt to validate & support)

I can understand why you'd react in this way to what I'm saying because:
1.
2.
3.

Emotional support sentence:
Practical support suggestion:

*this last script can be useful when this support style is very different from past interactions and the other reacts with doubt, suspicion, anxiety, etc. (more common with older adolescents and adults)