



COUPLES DIALOGUE

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MIRROR:

Accurately reflect back the content of your partner's message. Actually using your partner's own words establishes to your partner that you have really heard them.

"so you are saying...."

"did I get you?"

"is there more?"

VALIDATE:

Tell your partner that what you have mirrored "makes sense", that your partner is not stupid or crazy. To validate does not necessarily mean that you agree. It is, rather, your recognizing your partner's separate and different subjective experience as having a logic of its own.

"What you are saying makes sense because..."

EMPATHY:

Convey to your partner what you can see or imagine to she or he feels with regard to what you have mirrored. Empathizing requires you to recognize and experience your partner's emotions. Feelings are one word long!

"and I can imagine you must feel..."

adapted from work by Harville Hendrix