

The Validation Formula

One of you shares. The other listens and validates using the six steps below. Then swap. Partner A writes on page 3, Partner B writes on page 4.

THE FORMULA — SAID BY THE PARTNER WHO IS LISTENING

- 1 "It makes sense you feel ____ (name the emotion)."
- 2 List 2 or 3 reasons why they might feel this way. "...because ____." and "...because ____."
- 3 Provide an attached statement -- a statement that creates healthy connection. Example: "When I follow through with what I said I would do, you feel like you matter. And you do matter to me."
- 4 Stop. Do not explain or justify.
- 5 Thank them for sharing. Allow your partner to feel the glow of being seen and heard.
- 6 STOP. Do not explain or justify. No "buts."

TAKING TURNS

- 1 Decide who is Partner A and who is Partner B.
- 2 Partner B shares one recent moment. Partner A validates out loud, then writes it on page 3.
- 3 Swap. Partner A shares. Partner B validates out loud, then writes it on page 4.

Use these prompts to build validating statements in your own words:

- 1 "It makes sense that you feel _____, given _____, and because you needed _____."
- 2 "I can understand why you would think _____ because _____ and because _____, and what you hoped for was _____."
- 3 "I see that you are feeling _____. That must be _____ for you."
- 4 "Your feelings are completely valid, especially since _____ and because this meant so much to you."
- 5 "I hear you saying _____, and I can appreciate why you feel that way. I know you are feeling _____ because _____ and because _____."
- 6 "I am not sure what to say right now, but I am so glad you shared with me."

Three Reasons Why This Formula Will Help Disarm Conflict

1 Acknowledges and Validates Emotions

By naming the emotion and giving reasons for it, you show empathy and understanding. This validation helps the other person feel heard and valued -- which can reduce their emotional intensity and defensiveness.

2 Strengthens Connection

The attached statement reinforces the importance of the relationship and communicates that you care about their feelings. This helps build trust and intimacy, making it easier to resolve conflicts collaboratively.

3 Avoids Defensiveness

By stopping without explaining or justifying, you prevent the conversation from escalating into arguments or defensiveness. This focus on listening and understanding -- rather than defending your position -- helps create a safe space for open communication.

Your partner has shared. Say your validation out loud, then write it here.

STEP 1 — "IT MAKES SENSE YOU FEEL ____ ." OR ONE OF THE OTHER VALIDATION SHORTCUTS

STEP 2 — TWO OR THREE REASONS WHY

STEP 3 — YOUR ATTACHED STATEMENT

REFLECTION

What you notice in yourself and your partner, and what you would like to validate more.

Then stop. Do not explain or justify. No "buts."

Your partner has shared. Say your validation out loud, then write it here.

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