

# The Ritual of Closing Relational Energy Leaks (words from Harville Hendrix)

## Invitation

## Presencing

Hold hands, look into each other's eyes, and take a moment to breathe.

## Crossing the Bridge

Host prepares to welcome the Visitor; Visitor crosses over the bridge.

## Listening

Speak in short sentences:

**Host** One way I disconnect in our relationship is... (describe one of your exits)

**Visitor** I hear you say... Am I with you?

**Host** And the reason I do this is... (truthfully say why you disconnect this way)

**Visitor** What I hear you say is... Am I with you?

**Host** And the feeling(s) I'm not able to express are... (describe the underlying feelings)

**Visitor** What I hear you say... Am I with you?

**Host** And the reason I am not able to express this is because I'm afraid... (the fear you express will reveal a fear you had in your childhood)

**Visitor** What I hear you say... Am I with you?

**Host** Yes (or say "You got so much but something I would love you to hear is...")

## Essentializing

- Visitor** Let me see if I got the essence of what you just told me.
- Visitor** Have I got the essence of what you just told me?
- Host** Yes / Yes you got a lot, and what I also want you to hear is...  
(add what is needed for the visitor to have the essence)

## Understanding and Taking Ownership/Validating

- Visitor** I understand what you're saying, and you make sense to me because I know that I... (include both elements: what your partner has said, and your ownership for your contribution)
- Visitor** And the last thing you need is a partner who... (describe your contribution)
- Visitor** Have I understood you? Am I with you?
- Host** Yes (or add what is needed for the understanding to be complete)

## **Empathizing**

**Visitor** I imagine that the way you might have felt before this visit was...  
(mention one or more feelings)

**Visitor** Is that how you felt, am I with you?

**Host** Yes (or add the feelings you had that were not mentioned)

**Visitor** And the way you might be feeling now that I visited you is...  
(mention one or more feelings)

**Visitor** Is that how you felt?

**Host** Yes (or add the feelings you had that were not mentioned)

**Pause, switch and repeat steps 3-7 of the ritual.**

## **Mutual Appreciation**

A good way to end the visit is for both parties to appreciate each other for something they said or did during the visit and for the partner to repeat back the appreciation.

## **Qualities of the Space**

Report of the quality of the relational space by saying a few descriptive words about it. (For example, warm, clear, inviting, connecting...)

## **Thank you**

Thank each other for the visit.