

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 for the other person.

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 with a few descriptive words about it. (For example, warm, clear, inviting, connecting...)

Thank you

Thank each other for the visit.