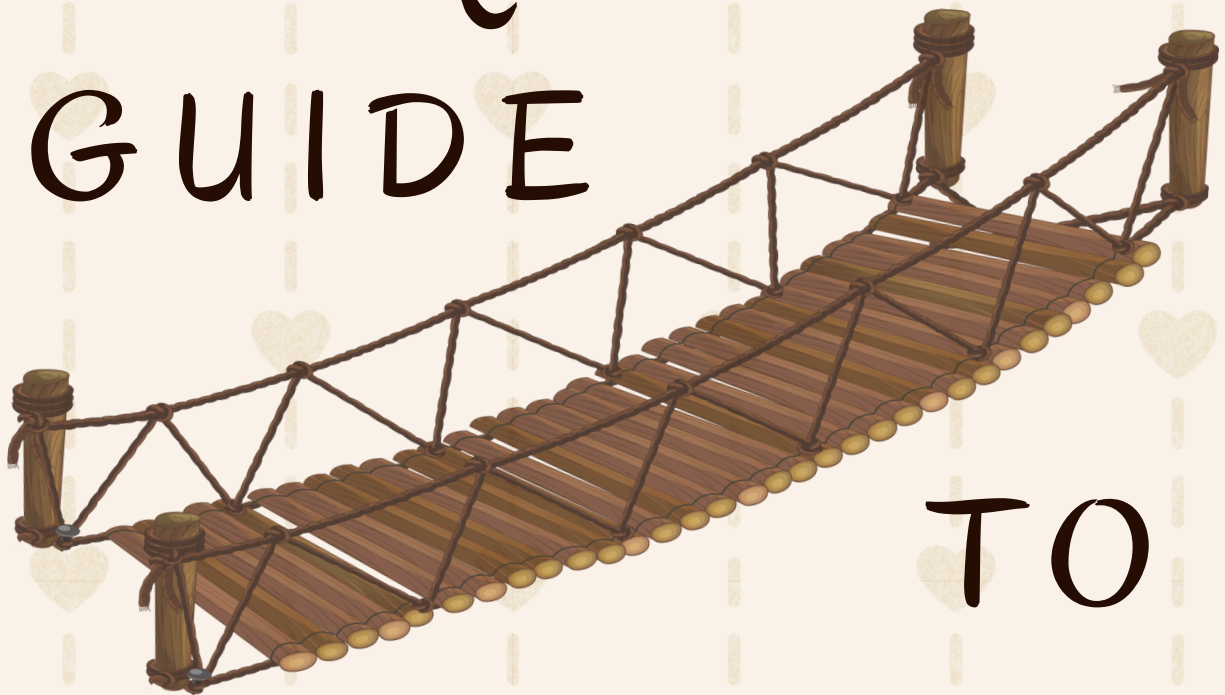


CATE MACKENZIE

# YOUR GUIDE



# TO BRIDGING

SLOW DOWN AND CREATE  
INCREDIBLE CONNECTIONS

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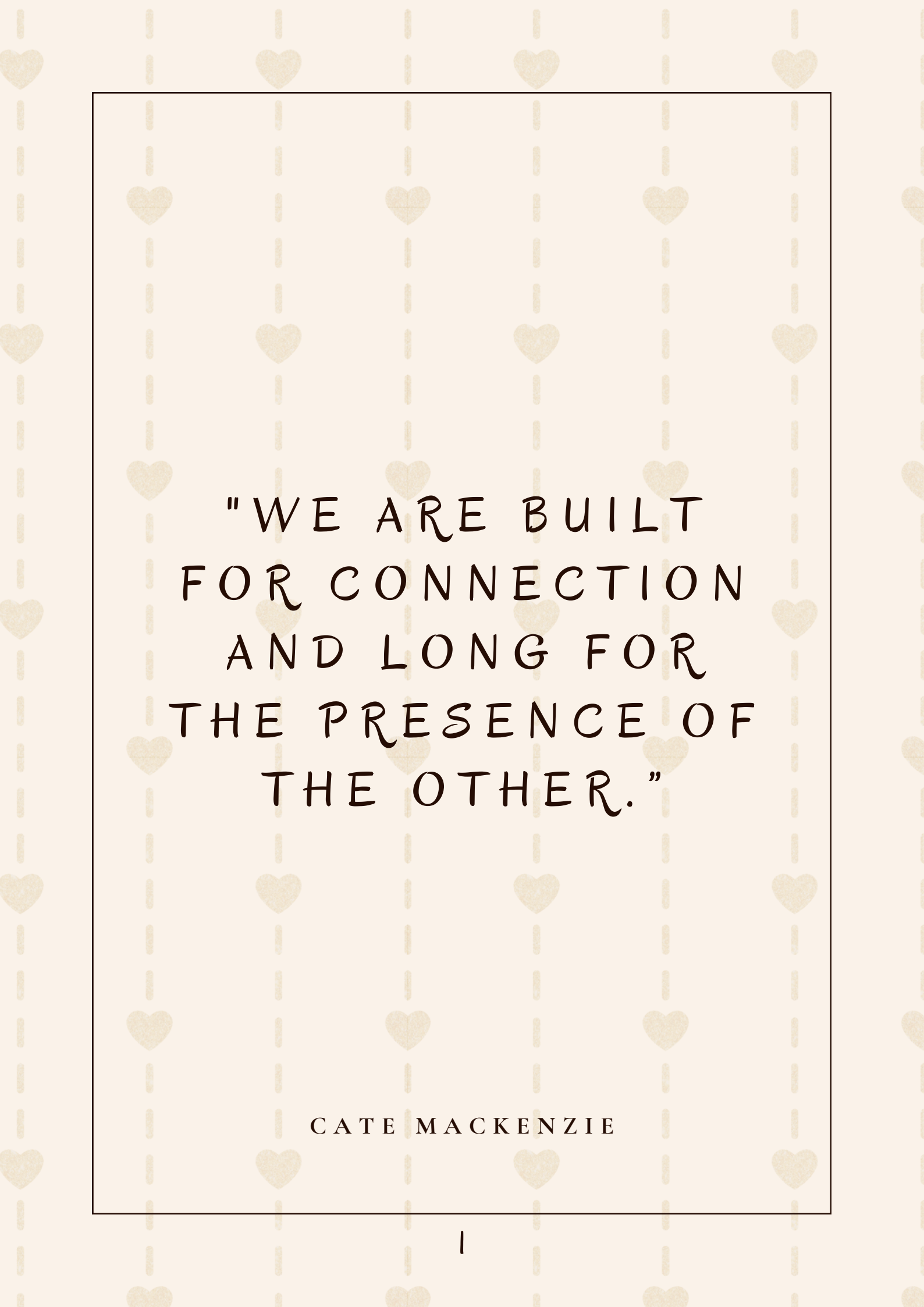
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"WE ARE BUILT  
FOR CONNECTION  
AND LONG FOR  
THE PRESENCE OF  
THE OTHER."

CATE MACKENZIE

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# INTRODUCTION

Bridging was developed by Hedy Schleiffer from the work and scripts of Harville Hendrix and Helen La Kelly Hunt. This is a method to create sacred space when communicating with another person. How we create the container before we go deep is very important and affects how the words land.

“As you honour the space and you cross the bridge to another persons world you create the conditions for the encounter. The encounter is where we feel totally connected to each other, where time seems to have stopped and seems to be eternal.” Hedy Schleiffer.



---

# THE THREE ART FORMS OF A BRIDGE

## **The Art of Hosting**

This is the practice of inviting your partner with open-hearted warmth into your world. It involves creating a safe, welcoming space where they feel comfortable to share and be vulnerable. With mindfulness and an open spirit, allow them to step into your emotional landscape.

One person's kind presence can start to heal another person's attachment injuries and create new neural pathways. When two people connect closely together, it creates a brain-bridge, where transformation is possible.

## **The Art of Visiting**

Visiting is the art of entering your partner's world with "new eyes"—free of preconceived notions or judgments. It's about being fully present, where all of you listens to all of them. This is a gift that shows your partner they are valued, allowing you connect deeply with them.

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## The Neighbourhoods

Our inner worlds are made up of different emotional “neighbourhoods”—some feel familiar and precious, while others are difficult or mysterious even to ourselves. Bridging invites us to explore these varied spaces with curiosity and kindness, helping both individuals navigate through the layers of self-discovery - comfortable or challenging.

The following poem by Rainer Maria Rilke explains why being vulnerable and open in the present moment is so powerful and much more intimate:

“Be patient towards all that is unsolved in your heart  
and try to love the questions themselves, like locked  
rooms and like books that are written in a very  
foreign tongue.

Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given  
you because you would not be able to live them.

And the point is, to live everything; live the questions  
now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without  
noticing it, live along some distant day into the  
answer.”

---

## BRIDGING FROM HEDY SCHLEIFFER

This is an example of a simple bridge that you could use with someone to explore a topic and discover where it relates to their past and for the listener/visitor, to re-tell the sharer's/host's story in a loving positive way.

**Host:** (Share an essential topic that's important to you.) I would like to invite you to the neighbourhood of...

**Visitor:** (Say one essential sentence at a time.) I am here and I am listening.

**Host:** (Share what thoughts are coming) I feel...

**Visitor:** I hear you say... Am I with you? Is there more?

**Host:** I feel...

**Visitor:** (Validate the Host's experience) So that makes sense to me... I am wondering if you might want more and more/less and less of certain things.

**Visitor:** I am curious what do you feel about what I said. (You are helping the person stretch into what they might want and you are helping them imagine links. They can tell you if you are on track or not.)

---

**Host:** (Take time to consider this.) Yes or no I feel...

**Visitor:** Can you give me a snapshot of what this reminds you of in childhood?

**Host:** (Just pick the first picture that comes to you.) I see a picture of...

**Visitor:** (Validate the Host's experience.) It makes so much sense to me that...

**Host:** Tell the Visitor what you would like more of in your life:

- I would always always always want...
- I would never, never, never want...
- And I would always, always, always want...

(When you use three “never” or “always” phrases, they go deeper into your heart.)

**Visitor:** ‘Once upon a time’, there was a little person called [Host Name]... (tell the story about your Host including all the pieces they have heard, and you can add a happy ending, according to what you know your Host wants.)

**Visitor and Host:** Appreciate and thank each other and name what the space feels like between you.





"IN REAL  
CONVERSATION WHAT  
IS ESSENTIAL DOES  
NOT TAKE PLACE IN  
EACH OF THE  
PARTICIPANTS, BUT IN  
THE SPACE BETWEEN  
THEM, IN A DIMENSION  
WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE  
ONLY TO THEM."

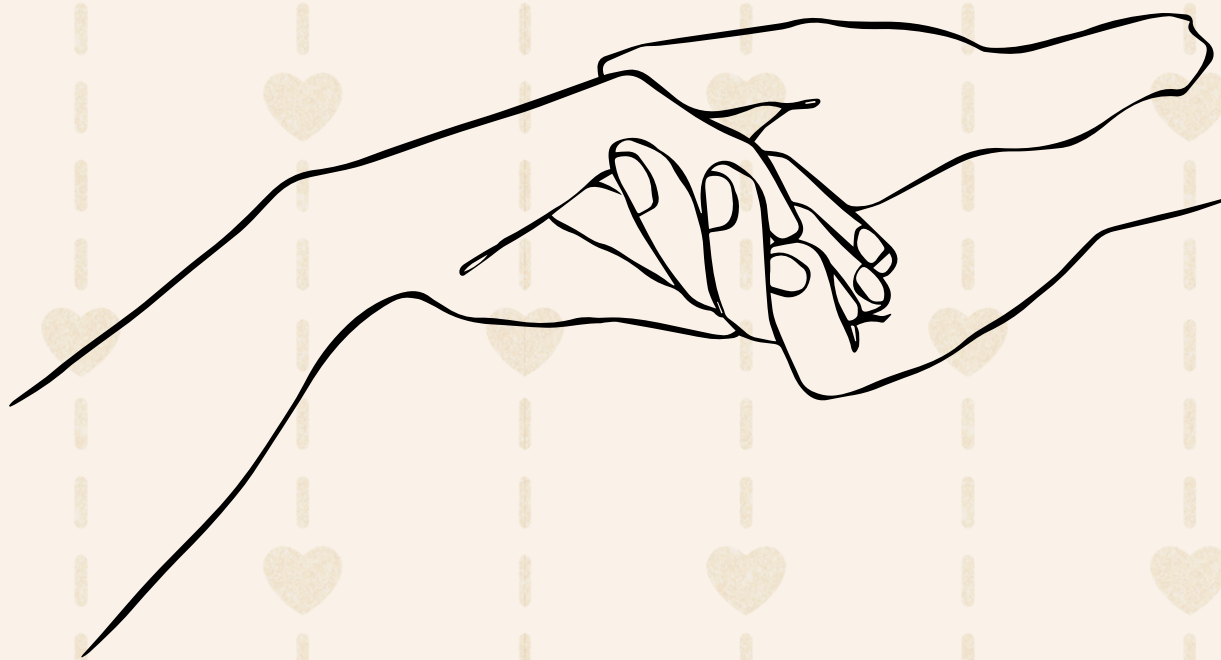
MARTIN BUBER

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# INVISIBLE CONNECTORS

By practicing Bridging, you can unlock the potential for deeper, more meaningful interactions, not just with others, but with yourself as well. The more we bridge, the more we create pathways for empathy, understanding, and love.

The three invisible connectors in Bridging—**The Relational Space**, **Crossing the Bridge**, and **The Encounter**—are crucial because they form the foundation of deep, meaningful communication. These connectors are not just abstract concepts but key elements that bring individuals into genuine emotional connection. Let's explore why each one is so important.



---

# THE RELATIONAL SPACE: TRUST AND CONNECTION

The relational space is the unseen emotional and energetic field that exists between two people when they engage with one another. This space is often overlooked in everyday interactions, but it holds profound importance for the quality of connection.

When both individuals are aware of and honour this space, it becomes a container for trust, vulnerability, and openness. In this space, we acknowledge the other person as someone with their own experiences, emotions, and needs, and we approach the interaction with respect. The relational space allows for emotional safety, which is a prerequisite for any deep connection. Without this, people may feel rushed, misunderstood, or unsafe to share their true selves.

## **Why it's important:**

By maintaining this space, each person permission to show up authentically. It is a buffer that protects both parties from judgment or misunderstanding. This space fosters the emotional safety that is necessary for deep listening and genuine understanding. By valuing this space, we create an atmosphere where growth, healing, and trust can flourish.

---

# CROSSING THE BRIDGE TO THEIR WORLD

Crossing the bridge into the other person's world involves stepping out of our own perspective and fully immersing ourselves in their emotional and mental state. This act is the essence of empathy. It requires us to let go of our own biases, opinions, and assumptions, and instead, focus entirely on the other person's reality.

This process of crossing the bridge is what enables us to truly understand another person. It's not about projecting our own thoughts or feelings onto them but rather listening with the intent to understand their unique experiences. In doing so, we validate their emotions and create a sense of being seen and heard.

## **Why it's important:**

When someone feels that you've truly entered their world, it can be incredibly validating and healing. It builds trust and strengthens the emotional bond between two people. The ability to cross this bridge is also essential in conflict resolution, as it allows us to see beyond our own perspective and appreciate the other person's point of view. By doing so, we open the door to mutual understanding and compassion.

---

## THE ENCOUNTER: LISTEN WITH AN OPEN HEART

The encounter, which involves listening with an open heart, is the culmination of Bridging. This type of listening goes beyond hearing words; it involves being fully present, non-judgmental, and emotionally available to the other person. It requires us to quiet our inner dialogue and focus entirely on the other person's words, body language, and emotions.

This deep level of listening communicates to the other person that they are important, that their experiences and feelings matter. When we listen with an open heart, we create a space where the other person can be vulnerable without fear of judgment. This kind of listening invites trust, openness, and emotional depth.

### **Why it's important:**

Listening with an open heart is a powerful act of love and presence. It reassures the speaker that they are valued and that their emotions are respected. This type of listening also creates a feedback loop of emotional safety, where both individuals feel comfortable sharing more deeply. It's in this encounter that true transformation happens—people feel more connected, more understood, and more appreciated.



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# CONNECTORS WORKING TOGETHER

While each of these invisible connectors—**Relational Space**, **Crossing the Bridge**, and **The Encounter**—is important on its own, their true power lies in how they work together. Each step builds upon the previous one to create a complete framework for meaningful communication.

- The relational space sets the stage by providing emotional safety.
- Crossing the bridge establishes empathy by allowing us to step into the other person's world.
- The encounter seals the connection by fostering deep, heartfelt listening.

Together, these connectors create a transformative experience where both individuals feel seen, heard, and valued. When applied consistently, these connectors can significantly improve the quality of our relationships—whether personal, romantic, or professional.

In a world where surface-level interactions dominate, these invisible connectors offer a pathway to deeper, more fulfilling connections. They allow us to slow down, truly engage, and build relationships that are based on trust, understanding, and emotional resonance.



“OUR SURVIVAL  
DEPENDS ON THE  
HEALING POWER OF  
LOVE, INTIMACY, AND  
RELATIONSHIPS. AS  
INDIVIDUALS, AS  
COMMUNITIES, AS A  
COUNTRY, AS A  
CULTURE, PERHAPS  
EVEN AS A  
SPECIES...”

DEAN ORNISH

---

# ESSENTIAL BRIDGING EXERCISES

*\*Maintaining eye contact throughout the exercise is essential.*

(Order inspired by Hedy Schleifer and words from Harville Hendrix).

Before starting a Bridge, I find it is best to do a meditation: Slow down, breathe easy deep breaths and check that you are both ready to share or listen. Give yourself some time to acknowledge whether you are ready to share or listen.

**Cautions:** If you are triggered in any way, give yourself some time to reach a state of calmness before beginning any Bridging exercise. If you are triggered during any Bridging exercise, take some time to yourself to address what the cause may be, before returning to the person you are doing the exercise with.

To set a warm tone to the conversation, give the person in front of you a specific appreciation. This may be their kind face, sparkling eyes, or pleasant scent. Let them know what that makes you feel, as that opens up a loving space.

---

## EXERCISE: THE VISIT - CROSSING THE BRIDGE

Now is a good time to try the following exercise to deepen your connection with your partner or friend.

The purpose of this exercise is threefold. First, it helps us reconnect and deepen our connection with our partner or friend. Second, it allows us to alert our partner or friend that we have something important to say and that we need their full attention. Finally, it provides clarity on a subject that holds significance to us, whether within or outside the relationship with our partner or friend.

### 1) Invitation

One partner/friend (the Host) invites the other (the Visitor) for a visit to one of the 'neighbourhoods/themes' in his/her/their world...

**Host:** I would like to invite you to cross the bridge for a visit into my world. There is something important I would like to talk to you about. Is now a good time?

---

**Visitor:** Yes (if this is a good time. If not, arrange for an appointment at a mutually satisfactory time, preferably soon).

## 2) Presencing

At the appointed time, sit across from each other if you can, as close as you can, leaning forward so that your faces are approximately 18 inches (45cm) from each other, arms unfolded, and open, touching hands (if possible and OK for both of you if you are in the same room). Establish eye contact.

Keep breathing regularly, maintaining eye contact, and continue sitting quietly until both of you feel that the internal conversations inside your head have become silent, and you are both in “present time” and “in the here and now”.

## 3) Crossing the Bridge

**Host:** (Prepare yourself to welcome your partner/friend with an open heart and open mind. Open the doors to your heart wide.)

**Visitor:** (Imagine yourself crossing the bridge: to the world of your partner/friend, slowly and deliberately. When you feel you have arrived, say...) I am here and I'm listening.

---

## 4) Listening

Talk in short sentences, 2-3 at a time, and pause. This means it's easier for the visitor to take it in, but equally it means that the host can share what is really important.

**Host:** I would like to talk about...

Signal if you feel flooded by the length of your partner's message by gently raising your hand and ask for a moment to slow down and/or for a repeat of the words. When the Host pauses, wait 2-3 seconds, then repeat what you heard by saying...

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

If the Visitor was with you completely, you answer with a big resounding...

**Host:** YES.

If not say...

**Host:** You got so much (we always celebrate what they "got" as it can be quite hard to be a Visitor).

OR

**Host:** And what I would also like you to hear is... (Repeat what the Visitor missed that is important to you.)



---

Repeat what you heard by saying...

**Visitor:** What you would also like me to hear is...Am I with you?

If the Host says “yes”, continue by saying...

**Visitor:** Tell me more... / Is there more about that?

Continue with ‘tell me more’ until your partner/friend says that there is no more about that for now.

## 5) Essentialising

This is not about whether or not you agree – only that it makes sense to you from your partner’s/friend’s perspective, through your partner’s/friend’s eyes, as if you’ve stepped into your partner’s/friend’s shoes.

**Visitor:** (Mention two or more feelings. A feeling is described by one word.) I can imagine the way you might have felt before my visit is...

**Visitor:** (Mention two or more feelings like understood, heard.) And the way you may be feeling now is...

**Host:** (Acknowledge those feelings that are on the mark by saying...)Yes, I do feel... and...

**Host:** (Add any additional feelings by saying...) And I also feel...

**Host:** (Recap ALL the feelings by saying...) I heard you say that you are feeling... and... and...



---

**Visitor:** (Pause, then say...)Is there more about that (about this subject)?

**Visitor:** Tell me more... / Is there more about that?

**Host:** If there is, repeat the process.

## 5) 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/friend to repeat back the appreciation.

## 5) Qualities of the Space

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

## 6) Thank you

**Host and Visitor:** (Thank each other for the visit.)

A “return visit” is optional at the end of the visit. Suggest “time out” at the end of the visit to digest the experience and avoid a “tit-for-tat”. Ask yourself: “Is my need for a return visit in my interest or in the interest of connecting more with my partner/friend?”

---

## EXERCISE: THE AMENDS BRIDGE

This exercise, called "The Amends Bridge", is designed to help you make heartfelt amends for any harm caused in your relationship. It provides a structured way to acknowledge wrongdoings, express genuine regret, and repair the emotional bond with your partner or friend. Follow the script below to begin the process.

*\*Maintaining eye contact throughout the exercise is essential.*

### 1) Invitation

**Host:** I am inviting you to cross the bridge. I would like to make amends for a wrong that I did to you. What I would like to make amends for is...

**Host:** And specifically what I did that was hurtful to you is...

**Host:** And as I say this, I realise what might also have been hurtful to you is...

**Host:** And now it makes me see what might also have been hurtful to you is...

---

**Host:** And now that I hear what I just said, I realise that what might also have been hurtful to you is...

**Host:** You did not deserve this. You never deserved this. And how I imagine you may have felt when I did this was...  
(Express every layer of what you realise that you did, that might have been hurtful to your partner.)

**Host:** I understand today that the way you might also have felt when I did this was...

**Host:** And as I hear what I just said, I realise that the way you might also have felt when I did this was...

**Host:** (Express all the feelings you now realise that your partner might have felt when you did this.)

**Host:** I wish I could have done it differently. And how I would have liked to have done this differently is...

**Host:** And as I say this, what I also wish I would have done then is... (Express every single scenario that describes how you wish you would have done it differently.)

**Host:** (Allow yourself to feel the depth of your regret, and repeat the statement only when you feel a new depth of regret.)

---

**Host:** I am sorry that I did that, and that I hurt you.

## **2) Bridging Back to Our Younger Selves**

The Childhood exercise is designed to help the Host reflect on how their childhood experiences may have shaped their behaviours and decisions. This reflection allows for deeper understanding of patterns that have influenced the present relationship.

*\*Maintaining eye contact throughout the exercise is essential.*

**Visitor:** And what does this remind you of in your childhood?

**Host:** (Tell your childhood story until there is no more.)

**Host:** And the decision I made as a child was...

**Visitor:** (Summarise the childhood experience as a story you tell the host...) 'Once upon a time', there was a little person called... (Take the Time Machine back to that child.)

**Visitor:** And now I take my time machine back, and I'm sitting across from you, and I can now fully understand the amends you have made today because...

---

**Visitor:** Thank you for telling me all this. It was very important to me because...

### 3) Bridging Forward with a Gift

The Gifts exercise is focused on the Host offering a conscious gift of positive behaviour change to the Visitor. This gift symbolises the Host's commitment to the relationship and serves as a way to strengthen emotional bonds.

*\*Maintaining eye contact throughout the exercise is essential.*

**Host:** (Think of a behaviour that is a real stretch for you and your partner. Make it positive, measurable, and specific.) A global gift I would like to give you now is...

**Host:** From now on, I would like to always, always, always...  
And never, never, never again...

But always, always, always...

And so, specifically what I am going to give you as a gift is...

**Visitor:** Thank you! Your being conscious while giving this gift to me, and my accepting of the gift you are giving me, will reduce my fear of... and make me feel...

---

**Host:** You're welcome. It's gift to you and also a gift to me. Giving this to you consciously will help me reclaim... and help me feel...

"GENUINE DIALOGUE...  
SATISFIES THE HUMAN  
HUNGER TO BE  
UNDERSTOOD,  
TO BE AFFIRMED,  
TO BE VALUED,  
AND TO BE  
APPRECIATED."

VIRGINIA SATIR



---

# CLOSING RELATIONAL ENERGY LEAKS

This exercise, called The Ritual of Closing Relational Energy Leaks, is intended to address ways we disconnect in relationships. By speaking openly about these disconnections and understanding their origins, you can bring closure to emotional energy leaks and strengthen your connection. The words used here are inspired by Harville Hendrix's work.

(words inspired by Harville Hendrix)

*\*Maintaining eye contact throughout the exercise is essential.*

## 1) Presencing

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

## 2) Crossing the Bridge

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

---

### 3) Listening

Speak in short sentences:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**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:** (Add what is needed for the visitor to have the essence.) Yes / Yes you got a lot, and what I also want you to hear is...

#### 4) Understanding and Taking Ownership/Validating

**Visitor:** (Include both elements: what your partner has said, and your ownership for your contribution.) I understand what you're saying, and you make sense to me because I know that I...

**Visitor:** (Describe your contribution.) And the last thing you need is a partner who...

**Visitor:** Have I understood you? Am I with you?

**Host:** Yes (Or add what is needed for the understanding to be complete).

#### 5) Emphasising

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

---

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

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

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

**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.

## 6) 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.

## 7) 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...)

---

## 8) Thank You

Thank each other for the visit.

---

# THE DOUBLE GIFT RITUAL

## 1) Presencing

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

## 2) Preparation

**Host:** (Allow yourself to go back, and allow yourself to feel the frustration, as well as where it registers in your body, so that when you tell it to your partner, you speak from both the emotional and the physical sensation.)

## 3) Invitation and Acceptance

**Host:** I am inviting you to cross the bridge and come to me. I would like to express a frustration and transform it into a double gift.

**Visitor:** (As you hear the word “frustration” put your hand on the part of the body that registers “danger”.)

---

**Visitor:** (The, take the escalator from your old brain up to the frontal lobes part of the brain where you can say: “A frustration! What an opportunity!”)

**Visitor:** (Then say...) I am ready to hear your frustration fully.

#### 4) Expressing the Frustration

**Host:** (Start with a small frustration. State the frustration in one short bottom-line sentence.)

**Host:** (Describe the frustrating behaviour.) I feel frustration when...

**Visitor:** I hear you say that what frustrates you is...

**Host:** And what hurts me about it is...

**Visitor:** (Repeat)

**Host:** (Grab the first thing that comes to mind.) And it makes me afraid that...

**Visitor:** (Repeat)



---

## 5) The Childhood Connection

**Visitor:** Tell me what these feelings remind you of in childhood?

**Host:** Allow yourself to feel those feelings... you might want to close your eyes... and as you feel those feelings, let them take you back to childhood. Grab the first thing you remember, even if it makes no sense at this time.

**Host:** What those feelings remind me of in childhood is...

**Visitor:** (Let go of the formulation of “I hear you say... Have I got you?” so that it can begin to become a narrative. Simply repeat the words, and say: “Tell me more” until there is no more.)

**Host:** And what I felt as a child was...

**Visitor:** (Simply repeat the words.)

**Host:** And so the decision I made as a child was...

**Visitor:** (Simply repeat the words.)

---

## 6) The Archetypical Story

**Visitor:** Holding your partner's hand, tell them the story that you heard them say...)

**Visitor:** I'm going to tell you a story: Once upon a time there was a little boy/girl/being...

**Visitor:** (Then ask...) Have I gotten the essence of your story

## 7) The "Time Machine"

**Visitor:** I feel lucky to live in a time where we now have a "time machine". I am going to take this "time machine" to go back in time to when you were a little child so that I can talk to your mother and to your father, and to you, and to some of the other people who surrounded you.

## 8) The Encounter with the Parents and the Child

**Visitor:** (As the champion of the child, tell each of the parents what you now understand they needed to hear. As the champion of the child, tell the child what he/she needed to hear. Then ask...)

---

**Visitor:** Have I said everything to everybody you would like me to talk to?

**Visitor:** (Go and bring the child's message to others as needed.)

## 9) The New Understanding

**Visitor:** And now for the first time, it is beginning to dawn on me that when I do (the frustrating behaviour) it frustrates you because... and take you back to your childhood home where...

**Visitor:** Have I got the essence of what you just told me?

**Host:** (Add what is needed for the visitor to have the essence) Yes / Yes you got a lot, and what I also want you to hear is...

## 10) The Global Desire

**Visitor:** What is it that you desire of me?

**Host:** My global desire is that from this moment on and forevermore, I want you to always, always, always...

---

**Host:** And I don't want you to ever, ever, ever again...  
And instead I want you to always, always, always...

**Visitor:** (Repeat the Global Desire.)

## 9) The Three PMS Requests

**Visitor:** What is it specifically and concretely that you would like from me?

**Host:** (State three PMS requests: Positive, Measureable, Specific. Repeat each one as it is given. Write all three requests on your list. Tell your partner which request you promise to give as an unconditional gift.)

**Host:** The request I am choosing to give you as an unconditional gift is...

## 10) Growth & Healing

**Host:** Thank you. In receiving this unconditional gift, it will help reduce my fear of [childhood hurt] and help me feel...

**Visitor:** (Repeat)

---

## 11) Growth & Healing

**Visitor:** (Then say...) You're welcome! It is a double gift. It is a gift for you and it is also a gift for me. Stretching to give you this gift will help me reclaim my... (atrophied, "frozen", or lost part of self)

**Host:** (Repeat)

## 12) 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.

## 13) Qualities of the Space

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.

---

## 14) Thank You

Thank each other for the visit.

“WHEN WE DREAM  
ALONE, IT IS ONLY A  
DREAM. WHEN WE  
DREAM TOGETHER, IT  
IS NO LONGER A  
DREAM, BUT THE  
BEGINNING OF  
REALITY.”

BRAZILLIAN PROVERB



---

# DARING TO DREAM THE UNDREAMABLE

## 1) Presencing

Sit across from your partner, as close as you possibly can, with open hands, arms unfolded, and establish eye contact. Keep breathing regularly, maintaining eye contact, and continue sitting quietly until both of you feel you have arrived and all the internal voices have quieted down. When you both feel internal silence and connected, one of you crosses the bridge for a 'Visit'.

When describing the vision of your dream, use deep descriptions of the senses of that vision.

*\*Allow the proactive, out-of-the-box, pushing-the-envelope, wildest possibilities kind of dreaming to draw you into a reality you never thought possible. \**

**Visitor:** Tell me about three visions for our future?

**Host:** (Tells vision)

**Visitor:** (Repeat)

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**Visitor:** Tell me more.

**Host:** (Tells vision 2)

**Visitor:** (Repeat)

**Visitor:** Tell me more.

**Host:** (Tells vision 3)

**Visitor:** (Repeat)

**Visitor:** (Summarise all three visions)

**Host and Visitor:** (Take 10 minutes and then switch)

**Visitor:** Look into the future. We've achieved the most extraordinary and life-giving things we can imagine for our relationship. What do people see when they look at us?!

**Visitor:** (Repeat)

**Visitor:** Tell me more.

**Host and Visitor:** (Take 10 minutes and then switch)

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# THE CHERISHMENT CIRCLE

With your partner sitting in a chair, circle your partner slowly while touching and looking at your partner.

Look... and let yourself see your partner 'as if for the first time'. Appreciate and delight verbally in what you see. Begin with the physical: eyes, body, hair, hands, everything!

Then continue with the personality: generous, kind, patient... Keep circling. Let the essence of your partner's being reveal itself to you. Keep circling and cherishing your partner by appreciating what they do in the world as your partner, as a parent, as a professional, as a friend.

*\*End the cherishment with an exuberant explosion of love\**

- *Jump and shout your partner's name*
- *Jump and shout: "you are the most... and the most... and the most... and the most... man/woman in the world... and maybe in the whole universe!"*
- *Jump and shout: "I love you, I love you, I love you!"*

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# TOUGHEST NEIGHBOURHOOD VISIT

We are going to do a very important journey here. Every couple have a survival knot. Out of everybody they have chosen someone that would give them the best knot.

You are now graduated to unravel the survival knot.

And it is very important to unravel the knot – if not – there is no creativity, no growth. When it opens, there is transformational learning, because there is something different – you are different – something has shifted.

I am going to ask you to write in your book: what is my toughest, toughest place with my partner – 1 word – max 2 words – that describe that place, that neighbourhood.

Now it is time for each of you to write your words, for example:

- **Host (G):** Depression
- **Visitor (H):** Lonely

You are going to visit one of them. One is going to be the Host and one the Visitor.

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**It is time for each of you to ask:**

- “Which one are we going to visit?”
- “What will it be... ask what will serve our relationship best now...”

**Now ask yourself:**

- Why you choose that one?
- Why is it important...
- What is most useful for the relationship?

**Explain:** The host is going to invite the visitor to streets they know. And then suddenly a street will reveal itself that you haven't been to before – go there – you will get to the *main square*.

So come close – feel grounded, take time to look, see the landscape of your partner's face...

Gently close your eyes for a moment... to feel your hands... the code... the pressure... the movement... temperature... take a moment to really experience that language... breathe it in... take it in...

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You can come back to the richness of your journey by feeling your hands... so when you feel you have it... you can open your eyes... Take your time...

And just with your eyes... thank you... express with your eyes the gratitude... the blessing you feel... I am glad you are alive... Look at the face of your partner and see the landscape... how it looks like when you see that....

**To Host:** I want you to close your eyes... entering this big expanding world with different neighbourhoods... so many (name them...financial, children...etc.)... and there is one – the neighbourhood of ... *Depression*...(the one the host has named)...You are choosing one out of all the neighbourhoods... and you go inside that neighbourhood called... *Depression*.

When you are there, I want to invite you to feel how it feels... where are the sensations... get to know your body and the sensations... discover if there are places that are tense... scan from your head to your toes...

Tell me when you are there – shake your head... then I am going to give you more instructions... Go to the strongest sensation in the body... when you are there, shake your head.



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Tell me when you are there – shake your head... then I am going to give you more instructions... Go to the strongest sensation in the body... when you are there, shake your head.

Once you are there, recognise this is a gated community – it's got a gate and I am going to invite H (partner's name) in... I am going to put up a big banner there: "Welcome Host...I am welcoming you right in here today..."

## **1) Exploring Neighbourhood and Entering the Main Square**

**Host:** (opening their eyes and inviting): Host, I invite you to cross the bridge and come to me...I'd like you to take my hands and come and visit a neighbourhood called Depression...

**Visitor:** Indicating acceptance of invitation.

**To Visitor:** Here is your possibility to visit in the NOW, now, now, now... let your world disappear in the distance so that everything is in the present... so you are hearing everything NOW... And tell Host when you have landed.

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**To Host:** So G is going to be essential statements. It might be that a street opens that you are not aware of – for you to get to the core...

**Host:** Give essential statement.

**To Visitor:** Really take him/her in... take in everything...

**Visitor:** I hear you say... am I with you?

**Host:** Confirms...

**Visitor:** Tell me more... I am with you...

**Host:** Continues...

**To Host:** Allow yourself to let yourself know if this is the core... the main square...

Let yourself say it again (when it has landed). If you feel you have to say it again – say it again... if you want to walk around it again to get familiar... to say it again... Walk around... So check your body, your body will know...

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*\*Ultimately Host will get to the Main Square...*

**Host:** Verbalising Main Square.

**Visitor:** Mirrors.

## **2) Core Reason (The Coherent Truth)**

If you are ready for the next step:

**Host:** It is essential that I say this to you today, on [Today's Date], because... the *Core Reason*...

Visitor writes Core Reason

**Visitor:** Mirrors.

And take as long as you need to be here... take pictures...  
and if you feel it has penetrated – only then – you are  
ready for the next step...

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### 3) Implicit Memory

So here is what we are going to do next: we are learning the distinction between the explicit memory and the implicit memory – the latter one is the one that you don't fully remember – it is a climate...

To resolve a tough neighbourhood, you want to get to the climate – you want to get a picture – a random picture – an image... the one that shows itself – you don't even have to know why...

When you get that – the first one – grab it; and your mind goes fast, so you just want to go to the picture... go to the next one, it doesn't matter... you grab what shows itself...

**Host:** It is essential that I say this to you today, on [Today's Date], because... when I was a child...

Host, grab the first picture... and if it is a blank...that is great, say it is a blank – it is a corridor to the next one...

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...And once you have the picture stay with it...How old were you... describe the picture... and what else were there... give the picture...

Visitor, the image you see is...you are 5 years old and you just describe what your Host said.

Host, it is time for another image - the first one that comes to you.

**Host:** It is essential that I tell you...

**Visitor:** Your second image is...

Host, grab the third image... if it is blank... say again: "And it is essential that I tell you this today, because in my childhood... and grab anything else that is there..."

Continue in this way... up to five images... An image comes out of nowhere; a memory you have looked at, and write everything down.

Visitor, you are going to have a beautiful task: You are going to tell a story to your Host.

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**Visitor:** Once upon a time there was a little [Host] that was born in a family... (Visitor weaves all the images into a beautiful story).

**Visitor:** Have I got the essence of your story?

**Host:** Affirms.

You are going to say: “You know Host, I have got myself a time machine to go back to your (e.g. home...) And on the day you (e.g. took your little sister to go and visit your dad at his work,) I am going to arrive with my time machine and knock on the door and I get to speak to...

**Visitor:** You know [Host], I have got myself a time machine to go back to your home... And on the day you... (re-tell story), I am going to arrive with my time machine and knock on the door and I get to speak to... And who to you want me to speak to first?

The partner comes as the champion, entering the home, talking to mom/dad/brother/sister...

It is time for the Visitor to speak to people the Host introduces, e.g. Visitor speaking to Host’s father.



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**Visitor:** Hi, I am [Name] and I have landed here in my time machine and one day I am going to... (e.g. marry Host). And right now I want to tell you to take time to see [Host's] intention and excitement to... (e.g. visit you at your work. He had no idea of the danger for little children to drive off with their bicycle... etc.)

**Visitor:** (Continue to ask to who else your Host wants you to speak to and then ask). Have I said everything to everyone you wanted me to talk to?

Host, you can now send your Visitor anywhere - to the future... back in time...

**Visitor:** I have all the time in the world... I am here in my time machine...

**Visitor:** I am going to see you in the future... and then I am going to marry you...

**Visitor:** So here I am back on [date]. I am across from you and you from me... what touched me the most was...

So what is the new neighbourhood you want to construct?

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#### 4) New Neighbourhood Under Construction

**Host:** So what I want to have with you on [date], as a new neighbourhood under construction, is...

Give your Visitor a word to describe your new neighbourhood under construction

**Host:** Welcome to my new neighbourhood...

**Host and Visitor:** (Tell each other what you most enjoyed.)

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## RECOMMENDED READING

If you are looking to deepen your understanding of bridging, communication, and emotional healing further, here are some highly recommended books:

- Getting the Love You Want – *Harville Hendrix*
- The Five Love Languages – *Gary Chapman*
- How to Make Relationships Work – *Anne Geraghty*
- Conscious Loving – *Gay and Kathleen Hendricks*
- Hold Me Tight – *Sue Johnson*
- Rekindling Desire – *Barry McCarthy and Emily McCarthy*
- Intimacy & Desire: Awaken the Passion in Your Relationship – *David Schnarch*
- Understanding and Treating Chronic Shame – *Patricia DeYoung*
- Counselling Skills for Working with Shame – *Christiane Sanderson*
- Shame and Jealousy: The Hidden Turmoils – *Phil Mollon*
- Unshame: Healing Trauma-based Shame Through Psychotherapy – *Carolyn Spring*
- Shame and the Origins of Self-Esteem: A Jungian Approach – *Mario Jacoby*

“THERE IS A  
FIELD BEYOND  
RIGHT THINKING  
AND BEYOND  
WRONG  
THINKING.  
I WILL MEET  
YOU THERE.”

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