

The Stop Replay Exercise

Situation: Terry feels hurt by what his partner just said. Instead of responding defensively, Terry goes through the following steps.

1. Terry says, "Ouch stop, can we replay what just happened?"
2. "What I would like to hear is"
3. Terry's partner replies only with what Terry wants to hear.
4. Terry will tell partner if a refinement is desired.
5. Terry thanks partner for being responsive.

Healing Past Injuries with Collaborative Communication

This process is not designed to solve problems — only to stop the ruminating of negative experiences and get emotional relief so you can discuss topics more constructively.

This exercise is an experiment to get relief from emotional pain. You are not committed to any promises made during this experiment. Your logical mind does not have to believe promises made during this experiment to obtain benefits for your emotional brain.

An attitude of open mindedness is the key for success. Don't ask for a promise of change and when you get it, say, "Well, I don't believe you."

Here are the steps.

1. Think of an argument that isn't finished.
2. Tell your partner the headline of disagreement — just enough so they know what you are talking about.
3. Tell your partner you would like to create a better emotional reaction to that disagreement and stop spiraling out of control.
4. Tell your partner "This is what I would like to hear" (not 'what I want you to say is' ...) ---
5. Partner recaps back what you want to hear.
6. Repeat if necessary until you hear what you want to hear.
7. Tell partner what you feel and the effect of hearing those words.
8. If you discover you would like an additional statement, tell partner what you would like to hear now.
9. Partner repeats what you would like to hear.
10. Take a relaxing breath.
11. Tell your partner what you feel and the effect on you.
12. Thank each other for breaking old patterns.
13. Reverse roles if desired.

Keys to success:

- Just repeat what partner wants to hear.
- A cooperative attitude is more important than doing everything perfectly.