

# How To Deal With Negative History In Your Marriage And Family Relationships

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When dealing with negative history with your loved one it's important to agree upon two things:

- A. We cannot change the past.
- B. We can validate the feelings that are present when negative history is recalled.

**Negative History** - includes negative memories and feelings about past hurts and disappointments.

When you become skillful at these four steps of validation, you'll find that it takes less than 60 seconds to respond to negative history! It's fast!

Establish the following ground rule...

You can bring up negative history as often as you want knowing that the validation of your feelings will be brief but powerful.

It's important to not have a "gag order" – "no talk rule" – about past hurts and events. After all they will always be a part of your history. It's important that everyone has a voice and there are no forbidden topics. This will help build your emotional bridge.

## The Four Steps of Validation Are:

- A. I can see how you feel... (use feeling words here)
- B. Because I... (this is your confession)
- C. Moving forward I will...
- D. I want you to feel... (use feeling words here again like – loved safe secure adored respected valuable)

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### Example:

- A. I can see how you'd feel... Hurt embarrassed, unimportant, unsafe.
- B. Because I... was very harsh and critical towards you. I said horrible things to your family about you. I was completely out of line to do that.
- C. Moving forward I will... Not criticize you to your family or anyone else. I'll turn my criticisms it a polite request. I'll be kind and respectful to you.
- D. I want you to feel... Safe, secure, like the most important person in the entire world to me, treasured, and dearly loved.

### Less frequent – Less intense

We are hoping that the pain and trauma of past hurts and wounds becomes less frequent and less intense – with time, validation, connection and support and other forms of healing.

Like a graph that has a general downward trend there may be spikes from time to time when negative history is triggered.

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