

Emotional Intimacy through

# VALIDATION

of your loved one's feelings.  
by Kevin Downing Ph.D. MFT

Four steps –

## 1) “I can see how you’d feel...”

Be sure you say feeling words here – such as, “hurt, betrayed, lonely, frustrated, angry, or alone”. Don’t share opinions e.g. “I can see how you feel that you can’t trust me.”

## 2) “Because I...”

This step is just good old confession. Don’t defend yourself. Defensiveness breaks the emotional bridge – i.e. the emotional connection we’re after. Don’t admit to something that you didn’t do. Be specific about what you did.

Add some commentary about what you did. e.g. “What I did was uncaring and uncalled for.” Sometimes it isn’t anything that you did. It’s something that happened to the other person e.g. “Because your favorite uncle is in the hospital.”

## 3) “Moving forward I will...”

In this step you state your intention for changing your future behaviors.

## 4) “I want you to feel...”

In this step you often share the opposite of the feelings mentioned in step one e.g. “safe, secure, loved, adored, embraced, understood, cared for, supported” etc.

This exercise can take less than 60 seconds after you become skillful with it. The goal is to connect both **quickly** and **deeply**. The result is that your relationship can get to the positive fast. You are masterful when you can help turns negatives around quickly. Researchers call this a “repair”!

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