

## 2 EXERCISES IN TALKING AND LISTENING

### ① Normalizing the expression of the basic feelings of MAD - SAD - GLAD - SCARED

Growing up in a family where one or more feelings were either ignored or overemphasized cripples children emotionally. Those children then need to learn how to express all their feelings in a normal manner. This is an exercise designed to help learn that skill.

Each person, in turn, says a **MAD** feeling.  
After that each person, in turn says a **SAD** feeling.  
After that each person, in turn says a **GLAD** feeling.  
After that each person, in turn says a **SCARED** feeling.

**USE THE WORDS** (not cross, indignant, furious, irate, sore)  
(not gloomy, melancholy, somber, doleful)  
**MAD - SAD** (not happy, cheerful, joyful, lighthearted)  
**GLAD - SCARED** (not nervous, anxious, terrified, alarmed)

The content of the mad/sad/glad/scared **DOES NOT MATTER**. It may be past, present, or future. It may be trivial or profound. Make it up (lie!) if you have to, but you have to do all four feelings, each session. Alone or with a partner, & write it down. The statements of the feelings **MUST** be made with no discussion, no argument, no value judgments, no comments, no 'faces' no groaning, no big "sighs", no muttering, and no "eye-rolling". If you "absolutely" have to discuss an issue, then you must wait 1 hr.

### ② Learning how to talk without fighting is a skill and a discipline that can be developed in a relatively short time ONLY IF the participants are willing to develop and then use the self-discipline and self-control necessary to practice this exercise.

The primary problem in fighting is that the listener does not recognize that the talker's words are THE TALKER'S OWN FRAME OF REFERENCE, and not your frame of reference. As such those words are NOT necessarily to be TAKEN PERSONALLY!!! The talker sees the world in their own way. You don't have to agree with them -BUT- you do have to UNDERSTAND them if you are going to stop the fighting and learn about who the person is that you are talking with. They are not you - you are not them.

Blaming and Shaming are the two easiest ways to avoid what is going on INSIDE OF OURSELVES, and to avoid understanding ourselves and the talker. If we can make the other person Wrong, or Stupid, or Inadequate, or NotOK, then we do not have to look at ourselves and what we contribute to the arguments, bad communication, misunderstandings, avoidance, denial, isolation, etc.

The following exercise, **IF YOU FOLLOW THE STEPS WITHOUT EXCEPTION**, will allow you:

- A. To talk and be less defensive while you talk.
  - B. To listen without getting dysfunctionally defensive.
  - C. To gain control of your own defensiveness.
  - D. To state your positions about an issue with more clarity and facts.
  - E. To listen to others positions with more clarity and hear them as facts.
1. Flip a coin to see who talks first.
  2. Set a length of time for the total session. A practical length is 15 to 30 minutes. Time it with a kitchen timer if necessary.
  3. The talker then talks and can say whatever they want to say in a short statement (no long lectures or the listener will not get it). The content of the talking does NOT matter. They can talk about the weather, a factual description of the room, where they work, what high school was like, what they like or don't like about you or themselves, or some personal conflict between you.  
----- **IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT THEY SAY** -----
  4. The listener **MUST NOT RESPOND IN ANY WAY** while the talker talks. When the talker has finished they say "I'm done". While you are listening bite your tongue if you have to **BUT YOU MUST NOT SPEAK!!!** (no groaning, big "sighs", muttering under your breath or "eye-rolling" either!)
  5. The listener then says "WHAT I HEARD YOU SAY IS. . ." and repeats, in words or summary, as best they can, what the talker just said, then finishing their recall of the talkers words with the question "IS THAT CORRECT?"
  6. The talker then says "YES" if correct or "NO", if not correct and then gives any corrections as necessary.
  7. When feedback needs correction the listener repeats step 5 until the talker says "YES" to the question "IS THAT CORRECT".
  8. Now switch sides and repeat steps 3 to 7. Follow the steps as stated -- **no deviation -- no variation** -- develop self-discipline.

**IF YOU CANNOT CONTROL THE QUANTITY OF TIME THAT YOU HAVE THEN CONTROL THE QUALITY OF THE TIME THAT YOU HAVE TOGETHER.**



**OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.**