

Couple Listening Exercise

James Earl / 2021

Put aside an uninterrupted half-hour (ish), & have a glass of wine if you like!

1. Ask your partner:

How do you think we've been this week?

Person Asking:

- maintain complete silence, and demonstrate attentive listening

Person Answering:

- speak for as long as you like! (practically, probably from 1 minute up to 10 minutes?)

- no sugar coating, but no point scoring (be real, but respectful)

- stroke before you kick (at least one nice thing first)

- no attribution of your feelings, thoughts or action to the other person:

'You made me angry when you broke my cup' = NOT OK

'I got angry when you broke my cup' = OK

- When you've finished, say so, then ask your partner the same question.

2. Ask your partner:

What do you need?

Person Asking:

- maintain complete silence, and demonstrate attentive listening

- deep listening - listen out for subtexts:

'I need more help cleaning' may also mean

'I feel overwhelmed'

- do not 'try and fix' in your head - just listen!

if you 'try and fix' you will stop listening, and miss subtexts

- this is NOT a to-do list for you - the other person needs you to listen, not fix them

Person Answering:

- speak for as long as you like! (practically, probably from 1 minute up to 10 minutes?)

- be gently positive, real, but not too whiney

- You can go from the mundane & particular
'I need the back door handle fixing'
to more general issues
'I need more conversation/hugs/sex'
to the more abstract
'I need a sense of direction in life.'

- you are NOT presenting a to-do list to your partner

So say *'I need ..'*,
not *'I need YOU to ...'*

- When you've finished, say so, then ask your partner the same question.

If your partner answering breaks any of the rules, ignore it - the rule of silence is paramount.

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Afterwards, don't continue the conversation: hug, & go off separately for at least ten minutes

Any questions text 07429 186 222 or email info@jamesearl.com

Book in here: calendly.com/jamesearl