

## Couples' Dialogue

- When to use it:
1. You want to be listened to & understood,
  2. You are upset about something & want to discuss it,
  3. You want to discuss a topic that you think might be *touchy*.

### **SENDER**

1. The one who wants to send a message must take the initiative & says **'I would like to have a Couples' Dialogue. Is now okay?'**
2. Sends messages e.g., **'I love...'; 'I feel...'; 'What bothers me...'**
3. Continues sending message until completed.
4. Listen to summary & give accuracy check.
5. Listen to validation.
6. Listen. If the RECEIVER did not get the feelings right or did not get all of the feelings, share that with RECEIVER.
7. Once all three parts are mirrored, switch roles.
6. Then mirror what is said.

### **RECEIVER**

1. It is the RECEIVER'S job to have the Couples' Dialogue ASAP. If not now, set a time so that the sender knows when they will be heard. Otherwise say: **'I'm available now.'**
2. Mirrors: **'If I've got it right, you said...'** (Paraphrase the sender's message).  
  
*Accuracy Check: 'Did I mirror you accurately? Or 'Did I get it?' If SENDER accepts, then say, 'Is there more about that?'*
3. When the SENDER has finished sending the message, RECEIVER summarises the SENDER'S message with this lead-in: **'Let me see if I got all of that....'** Check for accuracy.
4. Validates: **'You make sense because...'** & then state the logic of the SENDER'S point of view based on examples of experiences.
5. Empathise: A lead-in sentence might be: **'I imagine you might be feeling...'** or **'I imagine you might have felt...'** or **'I can see you are feeling...'** (If emotions seem obvious).  
  
*You must make some guesses as to what the SENDER is, or was, feeling. Feelings are stated in one word (e.g., angry, confused, sad, upset). If your guess entails more than one word it is probably a thought ('You feel that I don't support you.' This is a thought, not a feeling).*
6. Also, one never knows for sure what another person is feeling. Therefore check out your guess by saying:  
**'Is that what you are feeling?' or 'Did I get it right?'** If the SENDER shares with you other feelings, mirror back what you heard. Then ask, **'Is there more about that feeling?'**
7. When the RECEIVER has gone through all three parts (mirror, validation, & empathise) then say: **'I would like to respond now.'** Then there is a switch & the RECEIVER now becomes the SENDER.