

#RelationshipGrowth: Session Two



This is your time to regularly realign and reconnect with each other. But remember these tips:

- *Keep an open mind**
- *Limit distractions**
- *Approach each exercise with a positive attitude**
- *Carve out 30-45 minutes for this process**
- *Avoid blowups - take a break if necessary**
- *Share three positives for every negative**

You learned that **it is important to listen to both the content (words) of what your spouse is saying, as well as some of the feelings behind the words.** To let your spouse know that you “get it,” means that you periodically need to restate what was said and his/her feelings. This is your chance to practice that skill.

1. Think back over your week and **share something you have not yet shared, or did not have enough time to fully share.** In other words, play a little catch up with what has been going on in your lives when you have been apart. But here is the key: After your spouse shares a bit with you, **try to summarize what they said** in just a sentence or two and add a description of what you “guess” they were feeling. It would sound something like: “You were probably feeling really disappointed and hurt, and maybe even a bit angry when you did all that research for that project at work and were not even mentioned during the review meeting.” If you nailed your partner’s meaning and feelings, **they will feel known and understood,** and will probably go on to tell you a bit more. But if they correct you, don’t get defensive — just take it and put their description into your second attempt at a restatement. And whenever your spouse does attempt to restate what you said, make sure you always **appreciate it!** Tell them, “Thank you.” And continue with your conversation.

2. The second area of good communication is to be able to **gracefully talk through a misunderstanding or disagreement.** This is your chance to make your personal conflict-resolution plan. **Get a sheet of paper and together, brainstorm everything you can think of that makes for a good approach to talking through a conflict.** Think of the “do’s and don’ts” and write them down.

