

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION PROCESS

1. **Understanding the impact** - empathic connection with the assumption of innocence: invite the other person to share their pain however they express it. Connect empathetically with the present pain in the other person, opening your heart to them without defensiveness. Maintain this focus as much as you can until the person is complete and expresses a desire to hear what arises in you. (You may ask them if they are complete and would like to hear how you feel).

2. **Acknowledging my contribution to the impact** - acknowledge how your choices might have contributed to the other person's experience without taking responsibility for their experience or self-blame.

A. Express the observation of what you did and say that contributed to the impact, without evaluation or interpretation.

B. Connect the observation to the feelings and needs arising in the other person.

Example: Yes, I can see why when I didn't call you at the agreed time for the 3rd time in a row, you lost trust in being cared for and having any reliability on our agreements.

3. **Caring for the impact** - Mourning - focus on expressing what needs of yours were not met by the action you took. As much as you can, connect deeply with your unmet needs so you can share yourself without defensiveness. Track any sense of self judgment, guilt or shame. Check how the person feels when you are done and see if they are interested in and ready for the next step.

Example A: I feel regretful and sad because I want my choices to reflect the genuine care that I have for you and our relationship.

Example B: I feel sad for this impact and that I don't currently trust my own capacity to track and follow through with my agreements.

4. **Restoring trust** - Understanding for your action - some of the pain we experience when other's actions don't meet our needs has to do with bewilderment about how someone could possibly act that way. There is a deep need for understanding and re-opening our hearts to another's humanity even when they have acted in ways that were painful for us. This step is intended to meet this need of understanding of the feelings and needs that led you to take the actions that contributed to the pain for the other person. Focus on contributing to the other person and not on wanting to justify or even receive their understanding or forgiveness. You are still focused on the other person even though you are sharing your own pain. Therefore, again, the more you can connect with your own humanity (the needs that led you to do what you did), the more you'll be able to speak without defensiveness and with full compassion and care for both of you.

Example: Since I've lost my job I've been in a state of panic and paralysis and I realize I don't have the capacity to focus on supporting others in my life, as I would like. I can see that there has been a gap between my intention to support you and agreeing to have these calls with you, and my capacity to do that.

5. **Restoring wholeness** - Agreements / Requests - explore with the other person what you can do or say differently in the future to act in ways that are caring both for the other person's needs that were not met with your choice, and for the needs you were attending to