



**Communication from the Heart**  
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One Simple (but Not Always Easy!) Skill to Develop: Communication from the Heart

When your relationship is feeling flat or worse.

When you wish your spouse would stop blaming you.

When you are tempted to blame your spouse instead of reflecting on your own behavior.  
(We all have these moments!)

Try this:

1. Tune in to what emotion you are feeling when something happens that upsets you.  
Emotions come under the following categories and have many gradations of intensity:

Happy Sad Angry Afraid Caring

Emotions can be layered one on top of the other with the most difficult one often hiding underneath another.

2. When you discover the emotion that you know is most real for you- the one that feels the most scary or vulnerable to share- then that is the one to share.

3. Say to your spouse “I have something I would like to share with you. Is this a good time?” When you get the go ahead then share in this format: “I realize that I have been feeling \_\_\_\_\_ and instead of saying that I have been blaming you.

Here is an example:

Jennifer was constantly getting annoyed with her spouse Ron, for doing what she called “going silent” during the discussions about their relationship. When he did that she would begin her usual rant “why can’t you tell me what is going on?” Or some statement that implied “what is wrong with you?” Of course that made Ron more silent.

After tuning in to what she was feeling *underneath* the annoyance that led to blame Jennifer realized that his silence actually made her feel nervous and a bit scared because she worried he didn't care. When he went silent it made her feel unsafe. Rather than stay in touch with feeling unsafe she had protected herself from feeling vulnerable by getting annoyed, which she found easier to handle.

So she decided to give the exercise a try. She went to Ron and asked him if it was a good time to tell him something. When he said yes she took the leap and shared this: "Honey, I realized that when you "go silent" what happens for me is I get scared that you don't care about me. I know that's sounds silly but I want you to know that my annoyance is just covering my feeling vulnerable."

Guess what Ron said?

He said "wow. I never would have figured that out! I don't want you to feel nervous. Sometimes I just need a lot longer to know what to say. If you'd be patient I could figure it out. Thanks for letting me know."

**NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO TRY. LET ME KNOW HOW IT GOES!**

Look for my Free Webinar on the Seven Skills You Need for a Happy Marriage on my Marriage2Deepen Facebook page.