



Talking and Listening



Often, what makes a good relationship can seem deceptively simple. That there are many different versions of the following exercise is proof of its power.

- STEP 1.** Agree to give this exercise time to work. Three times a week for four weeks is a good trial period.
- STEP 2.** Set aside a regular time when both of you are relaxed, comfortable and won't be interrupted. The exercise should take about 30 minutes.
- STEP 3.** Keep a clock handy. For 10 minutes one person tells the other how their day went, how they're feeling, and anything else that might be on their mind. The other person's job is to listen completely and attentively without speaking.
- STEP 4.** Switch roles without discussion. The one who spoke now listens, and the first listener speaks for 10 minutes.
- STEP 5.** Take the remaining 10 minutes to talk together in any way that's satisfying to both of you.

When a couple builds this ritual into their life together early on, it can benefit the relationship in an amazing number of ways.

What effects did you notice the first time you tried it?

After doing it three times?

After a month?
