RELATIONSHIPS: EXPRESS AND EXPLAIN

When there's something you want to discuss with your partner, the guidelines on both sides of this card can help.

As the "speaker," use "I" statements ("I feel...") to describe your thoughts and feelings.

- "I" statements help keep the listener from feeling attacked.
- "I" statements help him/her hear what you're saying.

Be specific and brief. Discuss only one main idea at a time, so the listener can easily remember it.

Pick a good time and place to talk, with minimum distractions.

If you're expressing something negative, try to balance it with something positive.







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RELATIONSHIPS: LISTEN AND HEAR

As the "listener,"

Listen openly so that you truly understand what the other person is saying.

Summarize and restate what the other person said.

Focus on responding in a way that conveys respect and understanding.

Take turns! Once one person has finished expressing an issue, switch roles. Listening and speaking are skills that require practice.

Don't!

- Don't question or debate what you heard.
- Don't express your own views; just listen carefully to what the other person said.
- Don't offer solutions to problems that the speaker describes.
- Don't try to interpret what the speaker means or try to read his/her mind.

Do!

- Do maintain an open and non-defensive tone of voice, facial expression, and posture.
- Do put yourself in the speaker's shoes, trying to see things the way he or she does.
- · Do be respectful of the speaker.







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