

Making An Ask



Communicating Your Desires Without Causing Shutdowns

In any relationship, the ability to express your needs clearly, without triggering defensiveness, is crucial. When we inadvertently cause our partner to shut down, it only leads to more frustration and emotional distance.

The key to overcoming this is learning how to convey your desires in a way that fosters connection rather than conflict.

We all want to be heard and understood, but this can be challenging when our approach causes disengagement. The goal isn't just to state what we want, but to do so in a way that invites our partner to listen and engage. By mastering this skill, you're not just solving a communication issue—you're laying the groundwork for a stronger, more connected relationship.

This handout introduces a simple **three-step process** to help you express your desires effectively. These steps will empower you to communicate in a way that supports understanding and cooperation, paving the way for you to be heard.

1

Check to make sure your partner is available

2

Check in with yourself to see what you want to happen. (do you want to be listened to, helped, or supported)

3

Make a statement about your desire and tell them what you wish could happen

For Example

1

Hey John, "Can I talk to you about my day?" or "Is now a good time to talk about this weekend?"

2

Check your attitude and remind yourself not to complain about how it would be nice to have someone listen like your friend Sally or you never go anywhere together anymore.

3

If husband says "**yes**" then you might say:

"I had a rough day at work and if I can just vent for 5 minutes and have you listen"

"I would really like to go out for dinner this weekend. I have been feeling like I want more alone time together".

If your partner says they are **busy or negative** about your request to talk, you may ask for a better time or tell them you will check back with them after they are finished with what they are doing.

**JUST THIS ONE THING,
CHECKING FOR READINESS
CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE!**