

Dual Monologue Checklist

Overview

- **DAILY MONOLOGUE: Protect 8 minutes each day to ask each other:**
 - A. What satisfied me about **US** today?
 - B. What did not satisfy me about **US** today?
 - C. What do I need help with ?
 - The Daily Monologue is an intentional effort to talk about your relationship.
 - The focus of this interaction is to invite the opportunity to hear each others' feelings, about each other and your lives together. This is your "daily homework" of practicing the application of First Principles and Active Listening.
 - This sets a new tone for communication between you that, with a concerted effort, will become the new way of being in your lives and relationship.
 - The intent is to **LISTEN TO HEAR, NOT RESPOND**. This is simply an exchange of information. (PRO HACK: Ground yourself in the **First Principles, #3** is often of particular importance).
 - Extenuating circumstances sometimes enter the flow of the daily monologue and identify/highlight an area in which real time collaboration is needed. When presented with these experiences establish **SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely)** goals and employ first principles, and active listening skills to move through.
Build in 1.5-2 hours a day of quality time together, as defined by you.

- **SELF CRITIQUE: As part of your Daily Monologue build in reflection about your adherence to or lack there of with First Principles**

- First Principles:**
1. **No one is more important than my partner. Nothing comes between us.**
 2. **Every decision I make: does it serve me or the relationship?**
 3. **My partner is a good and decent person, and they compel by their feelings honestly, have a right to their feelings and their feelings are valid. I do not have the right to dismiss or be offended by them.**

ACTIVE LISTENING

1. **Listen** without interruption.
2. **Reflect.** Make sure **intent and message** align.
3. **Empathy:** **Acknowledge & validate.** This does not mean you agree
4. **Gentle Response.** We are responsible for our perceptions. Ensure your response embodies honouring first principles.

PRO HACKS:

- Reflection:** What did you hear me say?
- Empathy:** What do you think I am feeling and why?
- Response:** Would you please rephrase that?
- Listen to understand, not to respond**

TIME OUT

1. Request a time out.
2. Set a duration. * If later than 9:00 pm at night, move to the next day.
3. During Time Out: self reflect using the lens of First Principles and Active Listening. Explore your role, responsibility and perspective in the conflict.
4. Resume the conversation. If still escalated, extend the time out.

● **Each person is accountable to OWN the steps 1-3 of Active Listening. If reflection does not occur, the cycle of conflict continues.**

WE INVITE HURT WHEN WE HOLD RESENTMENT

FIVE STEPS TO RESOLVING CONFLICT

As a couple build your capacity to discuss and resolve differences. With use of these tools as a couple you will learn to share opinions, ideas, and feelings, even during times of conflict.

1. Confirm the issue. Be specific and ensure you're hitting the root cause.
2. Own your mistakes: There is a vulnerability in owning mistakes that nurtures growth.
3. Identify failed solutions.
4. Brainstorm: Propose, not impose. Seeking collaboration or compromise
5. Document in the agreement notebook.

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APOLOGIES (Conviction not Condemnation)

1. Be Truthful. Admit what you did was wrong or hurtful. **This is a practice of humility.**
2. Work to understand/empathize with the pain you have caused (PRO HACK: First Principles 3).
3. Assure your partner you will not do it again.
4. Apologize and ask for forgiveness.
 - Accept consequences of failures.
5. Forgive yourself. When we engage in self forgiveness, we can heal and invite new pathways.

**FORGIVENESS IS NOT TO EXONERATE THE WRONGDOER.
IT IS TO LIBERATE THE WRONGED.**

FORGIVENESS: Forgiveness is a decision, not a feeling. It's about mercy, not fairness. It is a choice you make over and over again.

1. If you are to remain in the relationship, you can no longer bring the incident up in future disagreements once forgiven.
2. Let go of blame, resentment, and negativity toward your partner. Make the choice to **no longer entertain thoughts about what happened.**
3. Communicate your act of forgiveness to your partner.

WE ONLY INVITE HURT WHEN WE HOLD RESENTMENT.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO INCREASE INTIMACY: Remember First Principles!

1. Give full attention to your partner when conversing.
2. Remove distractions and other responsibilities (i.e. work, children, chores, telephones, television etc.).
3. Make eye contact.
 - a. Focus on the good qualities in each other and praise each other often.
 - b. Be assertive, share your thoughts, feelings and needs.
4. Use "I" statements (i.e. I feel hurt and angry when the house is a mess...).
5. **Criticize to uplift and empower, not tear down. May your words and actions be grounded in love and compassion (THINK and ask yourself: IS IT: Truthful, Helpful, Inspirational, Necessary and Kind).**
6. Assertion is not aggression. Assertiveness is the ability to express ones feelings and ask for what one wants.
7. When there is a disconnect between words and intent our message can often FEEL like harsh criticism.
8. Remember! You are not in a debate to "win". You are NOT adversaries.
9. You are on the same team, even when conflict is present.
 - a. Use **active listening** skills
 - b. **Avoid blaming** each other and work together toward a solution.
 - c. Use steps to resolve conflict.
 - d. Access support/counselling after 3 days of high tensions and no attempt/plan to resolve.

AGREEMENTS: Enter agreement book together, knowing that every agreement we make makes us closer.

FULL DISCLOSURE: be truthful, objective, and own what you bring to the table that contributes to conflict! Thank your partner for sharing what they bring to the table! **Self accountability and responsibility are key!**

RADAR: Reflect and tune in when your **radar** is going off: Ask are you okay? Are we okay? What am I feeling and why?