

Search for Safety

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Two Players: The Listener and the Angry Person. Roles must remain consistent in one exercise. Usually 20 to 25 minutes required. Some couples are best advised “Don’t try this at home alone for the first three times”.

S - Safe Place – The Listener has to be able to remain in a *safe place* in order to remain objective and able to listen when confronted, thereby, avoiding a defensive or counterattack response.

E - Emotions are Expressed – The Angry Person expresses his/her feelings. The Listener responds with Empathy. Anger runs its course as the Angry Person perceives self as “heard”.

A - Affect Change – The Angry Person becomes calm or sad or hurt. The Listener continues to respond with empathy.

R - Reframe – The change in emotion and what is presented allows one or both parties to perceive things differently

C - Comfort is given if appropriate– Holding, reassuring, listen with empathy

H - Help – The Angry Person lists three options that would help – the Listener chooses one solution and promises to give as a gift– I recommend to choose the easiest to do. These requests are often character developing requests that are good for both parties.

Safety Days – Taking Turns Being the Good Listener

- The Good Listener responds only with Empathy on the day that he/she plays that role. The Good Listener responds to emotional messages with Empathy and does not complain, criticize or defend self on that day.
- Monday, Wednesday, Friday the Husband is the Good Listener
- Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday the Wife is the Good Listener.