

Helping Your Partner Feel Understood and Supported

The following are questions and statements* you can use to deepen your understanding of your partner's experiences and to provide emotional support. This is a powerful way to deepen your intimacy and connection.

Asking for More Details

What about the situation was the most upsetting to you?

What was that like for you? What were you thinking? How did you feel?

What did you do?

What did you feel like doing?

Why do you think it happened?

Giving Sympathy

I'm sorry you had a hard day.

I think you've had a harder day than me. Why don't you relax for a while and I'll take care of the kids/chores/etc.

I don't like it when people treat you that way.

Communicating Loyalty

I'm on your side

We're in this together

I'll help you if you want me to.

Giving Affection

Why don't you come over here and I'll rub your shoulders for a few minutes.

Here, you put your feet up while I get you something to drink.

Let me hold you for a minute.

*These questions and statements are taken directly from Atkinson, Brent. J (2005).

Emotional Intelligence in Couples Therapy: Advances from Neurobiology and the Science of Intimate Relationships. W.W. Norton & Company, New York (p. 87). I recommend the site:

www.couplesclinic.com for great articles and resources.