

Practicing Scales with Your Partner

Self-disclosure is also known as transparency. Regardless of the term, it helps us be known and leads to intimacy. How well do we share who we are and then negotiate from there? Many of us struggle with disclosing how important things are to us.

When expressing yourself, try expressing how important the issue/event is to you on a 0-10 scale and assist your partner in expressing the same by being curious about their inner world. Stan Dale, used to say that you could say the word “intimacy,” this way: “In-to-me-you-see.” Being transparent is certainly a large part of intimacy and being known by another person.

For example, if my desire to see a movie is a 9 of 10 and my partner wants to see a different movie, but says it’s only a 5 in desire, then it’s easy to agree to go to the movie I want this time. The goal is to make sure we each know how strong the desire/feeling is for both of us so we can negotiate for a win-win.

Let’s imagine that I want to go for a walk on my day off and I don’t communicate that it’s a strong 10 for me and my partner is sounding insistent about working in the yard. If we don’t use a number, I may interpret their intensity of wanting to do yard work as a 10 and not get what I want. It may be that they just really wanted to be outside, and in nature, and a walk would have been fine, or we could have made a list of yard work and we could have agreed on another day to do it, or a shorter walk and some yard work.

Also (and this is common and very important to watch out for), if I don’t say what is important to me, I may end up holding a resentment because I didn’t get to do what I wanted. This is common for those of us that tend to avoid conflict and are prone to accommodation/adaptation in relationships. We become balls of resentment. And later we whine or even explode about how we never get what we want.

My goal here is to get you thinking about what you say, and what you don’t say, and to be sure you both have a clear way of communicating your level of desire. This can reduce the number of misunderstandings through using a simple scaling technique. And it’s free!

Of course, if we have dissimilar desires and they are both the same level of importance, then we have some important communication to complete, and negotiation skills come into play in a big way.

Courtesy of:



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