

JOINING

A pathway to Empathic Connection Across Differences

Use joining to slow things WAY down.

There are many conversations we have in relationships that become difficult and not productive. Both people in the conversation might be feeling like they are not being heard. This is a technique you can use to try and do it different.

This is how it works.

One person will start by saying a sentence or two about the issue they want to address. Focus on getting at the most important part you want the other person to understand.

Then before the second person responds, take a deep breath. Find your heart. Remember that you love this person. Now look for what you DO understand about what they just said. You do not have to agree. Just say what you DO understand. Stay with this until you get a nod of “yes you got it.”

Then switch and repeat with opposite roles.

Go back and forth, back and forth.

Sloooooowing things down.

Helping each feel heard before responding.

A few tips:

- Keep each response to 1-2 sentences.
- The purpose of joining is helping each person feel “gotten” to help calm the brain and open your heart.
- If needed just start with mirroring back what the other person is saying.

“There is a channel of connection under your differences. It doesn’t come from agreeing. It comes from fully hearing each other. Just take a moment to sense this.” -Patricia L. Papernow