

COMPLAIN

GATHER YOUR THOUGHTS ON WHAT TO SHARE:

FACTS, YOUR OPINION, WORRIES ABOUT THE FUTURE,
YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO AN EVENT, ETC.

REQUEST TIME AND ATTENTION, ASSUME THEY CARE,
AND BE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT:

LISTENING, VALIDATION, PROBLEM SOLVING, ETC.

OPTIMIZE YOUR APPROACH.

USE "I" STATEMENTS "I FELT HURT WHEN..."

AVOID GENERALIZATIONS "YOU NEVER/ALWAYS..."

✗ ACCUSATIONS "YOU ONLY CARE ABOUT YOURSELF"

ARTICULATE THE COMPLAINT IN A DIRECT MANNER,
AND OWN HOW YOU CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROBLEM.

NOTICE THEIR REACTIONS AND BODY LANGUAGE.

IF THEY GET DEFENSIVE, SWITCH TO LISTENING;

TWO PEOPLE COMPLAINING IS AN ARGUMENT.

LISTEN

ASSESS YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL STATE, AND TAKE SPACE

IF YOU'RE OVERWHELMED, EXHAUSTED,

HUNGRY, UPSET, ETC.

LEAD WITH CURIOSITY AND CLARIFYING QUESTIONS TO
FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY'RE SAYING.

INVITE VULNERABILITY BY EXPRESSING GENUINE
EMPATHY, UNDERSTANDING, AND KINDNESS.

GROUND THE CONVERSATION WITH PRESENCE,
WARMTH, EYE CONTACT, AND WELCOMING POSTURES.

NOURISH YOUR CONNECTION BY NOT GIVING ADVICE,
GETTING DEFENSIVE, INTERRUPTING, TRYING TO FIX IT,
OR LODGING YOUR OWN COMPLAINT.

VALIDATE

SHARE WHAT MAKES SENSE ABOUT WHAT THEY SAID,

IMAGINE YOU'RE ARGUING FOR THEIR PERSPECTIVE.

"NO WONDER YOU'RE UPSET!"

AFFIRM THEIR FEELINGS ON THE TOPIC.

"YOU'RE DISAPPOINTED IN ME AND ANGRY THAT..."

(NOTE: THIS DOESN'T MEAN YOU LOSE OR AGREE)

LOCATE THE COMMON GROUND BETWEEN YOU,

HIGHLIGHT THINGS THAT ARE OBJECTIVELY TRUE.

"I WOULD FEEL THE SAME WAY IF..."

VERIFY THE IMPACT YOU HAD ON THEM REGARDLESS OF

WHAT YOUR INTENTIONS WERE. "I HURT YOU"

INSTEAD OF "I DIDN'T MEAN TO"

EXPLORE THE ACCURACY OF YOUR VALIDATION.

"IS THAT RIGHT? IS THERE ANYTHING I MISSED?"

TAKE SPACE

PROMOTE YOUR DESIRE FOR SPACE BY EXPLAINING

HOW IT WILL HELP THE SITUATION.

"I'LL BE ABLE TO LISTEN BETTER AFTER SOME REST."

ASK FOR A BREAK WITH A SPECIFIED END POINT.

"CAN WE TALK MORE WHEN I'M DONE WITH WORK?"

UNDERSTAND THAT THEY MAY FEEL ABANDONED AND
NEED REASSURANCE THAT YOU CARE.

SOOTHE AND GROUND YOURSELF. THIS IS YOUR SPACE.

FIGURE OUT HOW YOU WANT TO SHOW UP.

ESTABLISH WHO IS GOING TO LISTEN/VALIDATE FIRST
BEFORE RETURNING TO THE CONVERSATION.