

# Responding to the Hurt

*After listening to your partner and getting a clear picture of the hurt inflicted reflect on what you heard. Check in again with your feelings, body sensations & have empathy towards your partner by putting yourself in his/her shoes. Also take an honest, open look at your own responses and try to help your partner understand how your response evolved at that point in time.*

**What I heard you say is...**

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**You felt...**

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**What I felt as you told me was...**

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**What you needed from me then was...**

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**And what you need from me in the future is...**

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**Now that I have put myself in your shoes, I am able to better understand what that experience was like from your point of view.**

**To help you understand where I was coming from at the time and why I responded in the way I did was (NOTE: This is not about blaming the other person, rationalizing or justifying, but about being understandable and predictable to your partner):**

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**I understand that in that past experience you felt hurt and for that I sincerely feel....** (address the pain inflicted and express regret with courage, sincerity and empathy. Refer to the feelings list as sharing your feelings may be useful here):

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*If you are unable to provide a sincere and authentic apology now, share with your partner your difficulty and discomfort below.*

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*ADDITIONAL WORK if unable to apologize: Take time in the next week to reflect and revisit PART IV as a daily reflection. Take 5 minutes and step into your partner's experience and look at the situation from his or her eyes.*