



The Art and Science of Lovemaking



Lesson 2

The Three Skills of Intimate Conversation

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Lesson 2:

The Three Skills Of Intimate Conversation

This lesson helps conversations become deeper and more personal, which in turn makes it easier to connect with your partner on any subject.

To Start. Try opening up an intimate conversation with an open-ended question; that is, a question that has a longer answer than just “yes” or “no.”

Examples:

- “How would you like to ideally change our life together in the coming year so it could be the best year ever?”
- “What do you feel is going well for you these days?”
- “What do you feel is not going as well as you’d like?”
- “How are you doing, baby?”
- “How is life treating you? Talk to me. I’m listening.”

After you have started, take a look the skills below. They are designed to help you explore and talk about your feelings as the conversation proceeds. If your partner asks you something about how you feel but you’re not sure how to put feelings into words, look over the first list below, and say aloud which feelings are true for you. It’s ok to name more than one, since people often experience blends of feelings.

Skill #1 – Putting Your Feelings Into Words

I feel

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. I feel accepted | 12. I am upset |
| 2. I know I am liked | 13. I am alarmed |
| 3. I feel understood | 14. I feel resentful |
| 4. I feel rejected | 15. I am astounded |
| 5. I feel like you dislike me | 16. I’m upset |
| 6. I feel misunderstood | 17. I feel awe |
| 7. I feel appreciated | 18. I feel clumsy, awkward |
| 8. I feel unappreciated | 19. I feel belittled |
| 9. I feel abandoned | 20. I feel insulted |
| 10. I feel connected | 21. I am hungry |
| 11. I don’t feel accepted | 22. I am tired |

23. I feel close to you
24. I feel distant from you
25. I am afraid
26. I feel like hitting something
27. I feel like kicking something
28. I am amused
29. I want to be belligerent
30. I feel bashful
31. I feel battered
32. I am baffled
33. I feel beautiful
34. I feel handsome
35. I feel neglected
36. I am bitter
37. I feel comfortable
38. I feel critical of you
39. I feel uncomfortable
40. I feel affectionate
41. I feel tense
42. I feel betrayed
43. I feel like you don't even like me
44. I feel irritable
45. I feel alienated
46. I am angry
47. I am agitated
48. I am restless
49. I feel alone
50. I feel lonely

51. I am exhausted
52. I have no energy
53. I feel like boasting
54. I'm depressed
55. I am surprised
56. I feel like arguing
57. I appreciate you
58. I feel like bragging
59. I am anguished
60. I feel like a failure
61. I am ashamed
62. I want to assert my rights
63. I feel like an innocent victim
64. I feel righteously indignant
65. I am apprehensive
66. I have a lot of mixed feelings
67. I feel shy
68. I am horny
69. I feel romantic
70. I feel unattractive
71. I am not sure how I feel
72. I am ambivalent
73. I feel like apologizing
74. I feel regretful
75. I feel disgusted
76. I am afraid
77. I am happy
78. I feel joyful

Skill #2 – Ask Questions During An Intimate Conversation

After a conversation has begun, if you want to explore your partner's feelings and thoughts, one of the best tools you can use is asking questions that open the heart. Here are some examples you can try. Anytime during the conversation, look over the list below and read aloud a question that you'd like to ask your partner:

Questions

- ❖ What are you feeling?
- ❖ What else are you feeling?
- ❖ What are your primary needs here?
- ❖ What do you really wish for?
- ❖ How did this all evolve?



Skill #2 – (Continued)

- ❖ Who are the main characters in these feelings you're talking about?
- ❖ What would you really like to say, and to whom?
- ❖ What are the feelings you are afraid to even think about?
- ❖ Do you have any mixed feelings? What are they?
- ❖ What are your choices as you see them?
- ❖ What are the positive and negative aspects of each of your choices?
- ❖ Do you think this has affected our relationship (or another relationship). If so, how?
- ❖ Is there some way you wish you could have done things differently? How so?
- ❖ What are your obligations (or duties) here?
- ❖ Do you have a choice to make?
- ❖ What would you really like to ask of me?
- ❖ What do your values tell you about all this?
- ❖ Think of someone you really admire. What would he or she do and how would he or she view this situation?
- ❖ Does these feelings and needs have any spiritual, moral, ethical, or religious meaning for you?
- ❖ Is there anyone or anything you disapprove of here?
- ❖ Is there anything or anyone you admire here?
- ❖ Is there anything you've learned from this?
- ❖ Who is going to be most affected? How will they be affected? Why?
- ❖ Does this remind you of anything else in your personal history?
- ❖ What meaning does this have for you to bring this up now?
- ❖ How does this affect your identity, your idea of yourself?
- ❖ How does this situation touch you?
- ❖ How does this situation change you?
- ❖ How have you changed or how are you changing now, and how has that affected this situation?
- ❖ How did this all begin, what was the very start?
- ❖ What's your major reaction or complaint here?
- ❖ Who do you think is most at fault?
- ❖ How do you think things would be resolved in the next five years?
- ❖ How do you WISH things would be resolved in the next five years?
- ❖ Pretend that you only had only six more months to live. What would be most important to you then?
- ❖ What are your goals here?

Skill #2 – (Continued)

- ❖ How are you thinking about how all of this fits into your life as a whole?
- ❖ What, if anything, makes you angry here?
- ❖ What are the “shoulds”? (Like what should you take responsibility for here?)
- ❖ What is your biggest “turn off” in this situation?
- ❖ Are there parts of yourself that are in conflict?

Skill #2a - Exploratory Statements

While questions are always interesting, sometimes statements that *explore feelings* are also very powerful at making the conversation deeper and more intimate. Here are some exploratory statements you can try. Again, anytime during the conversation, look over the list and read aloud a sentence you'd like to use to go a little deeper into the conversation.

Exploratory Statements

- ❖ Tell me the story of that.
- ❖ I want to know everything you're feeling.
- ❖ Talk to me, I am listening.
- ❖ Nothing is more important to me right now than listening to you.
- ❖ We have lots of time to talk.
- ❖ Tell me your major priorities here.
- ❖ Tell me what you need right now.
- ❖ Tell me what you think your choices are.
- ❖ It's okay not to know what to do, but what's your guess?
- ❖ I think you're being very clear. Go on.
- ❖ Tell me all of your feelings here.
- ❖ Help me understand your feelings a little better. Say more.
- ❖ I think that you have already thought of some solutions. Tell me what they are.
- ❖ Help me understand this situation from your point of view. What are the most important points for you?
- ❖ Tell me what you're most concerned about.
- ❖ Tell me more about how you are seeing this situation.
- ❖ Talk about what the decision is that you think you have to make.
- ❖ If you could change the attitude of one of the key people in this situation, talk about what you would do.

Skill #3 – Express Empathy And Understanding During An Intimate Conversation

To deepen the intimacy of a conversation, it really helps to give understanding and empathy to your partner. First, try to put yourself in your partner's shoes, and understand what they are saying or feeling. Then communicate to your partner that their thoughts or feelings really make sense to you. Below are some great statements you can make that convey understanding and empathy. Look them over and say aloud any that ring true for you, as a follow-up to what your partner has just said.

“*communicate*
to your
partner
that their
thoughts
or feelings
really
make sense
to you”

Empathic Statements

- ❖ You're making total sense.
- ❖ I understand how you feel.
- ❖ You must feel so hopeless.
- ❖ I just feel such despair in you when you talk about this.
- ❖ You're in a tough spot here.
- ❖ I can feel the pain you feel.
- ❖ The world needs to stop when you're in this much pain.
- ❖ I wish you didn't have to go through that.
- ❖ I'm on your side.
- ❖ I wish I could have been with you in that moment.
- ❖ Oh, wow, that sounds terrible.
- ❖ You must feel so helpless.
- ❖ That hurts me to hear that.
- ❖ I support your position.
- ❖ I totally agree with you.
- ❖ You are feeling so trapped!
- ❖ You are making total sense.
- ❖ That sounds like you felt really disgusted!
- ❖ No wonder you're upset.
- ❖ I'd feel the same way you do in your situation.
- ❖ I think you're right.
- ❖ I see. Let me summarize: What you're thinking here is...
- ❖ You are in a lot of pain. I can feel it.
- ❖ It would be great to be free of this.
- ❖ That must have annoyed you.
- ❖ That would make me mad too.
- ❖ That sounds infuriating.
- ❖ That sounds very frustrating.
- ❖ That is very scary.

- ❖ Well I agree with most of what you're saying.
- ❖ I would have been disappointed by that too.
- ❖ That would have hurt my feelings also.
- ❖ That would make me sad too.
- ❖ POOR BABY!
- ❖ Wow! That must have hurt.
- ❖ I understand what you are feeling.
- ❖ I totally understand what you are feeling.
- ❖ Okay, I think I get it. So what you are feeling is...
- ❖ I would have trouble coping with that.
- ❖ What I admire most about what you're doing is...
- ❖ That would make me feel insecure.
- ❖ That sounds a little frightening.
- ❖ Tell me what you see as your choices here.



“ remember,
 the use
 of these skills is
 not just limited
 to intimate
 conversations
 with
 your partner.
 Like John’s story
 in the video
 about
 the engineer
 who learned
 these
 three skills,
 we encourage
 you
 to use this tool
 to improve
 all your
 conversations
 with other
 people. ”