

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling and looking at each other in profile. The woman is in the foreground, and the man is slightly behind her. The image is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the title.

# SAFE CONVERSATIONS® ESSENTIALS

LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

Safe Conversations® is a relational technology that makes it possible to experience connection through creating safety.

The regular practice of this new technology and integrating it into your life will move you and your partner toward a sustained experience of connecting, joy and full aliveness.

## 2. GETTING STARTED

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### LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

Congratulations on taking the first step toward reconnecting and restoring your experience of full aliveness and igniting your sense of wonder.

### ASSIGNMENT

Connecting ignites a co-creative process that transforms the negative energy of conflict into vibrant energy of connecting and full aliveness. Safe Conversations® is a relational technology that makes it possible to experience connection through creating safety.

In this course, you'll learn a new way to talk to your partner that invites you to experience connecting rather than polarization. Use the space provided on the next page to make a list with your specific examples of how you'd like to transform your relationship and experience more connection.



### 3.

## THE IDEA, THE SKILL, THE DECISION

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*"People are longing for a safe relationship because they can connect."*

### LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

Everyone has a wound from childhood or a childhood challenge. An early childhood challenge results in a relational need that is brought into your adult relationship. You must identify your childhood challenge to understand why you're the way you are and why your partner is the way he or she is. Through identifying and understanding each other's childhood challenges we develop empathy for each other. We can use the skill of dialogue and the decision to have zero negativity in our relationships to understand childhood challenges and to create safety.

### ASSIGNMENT

With the provided space on the next page, complete the sentences:

- What I wanted most as a child and didn't get was..."
- "As a child I had these negative feelings over and over again..."

Next, let's explore how your childhood challenge has become a relational need. Write down the words below and complete the sentences by using your responses from the sentences above.

- I wish my partner would give me...[**what I wanted most as a child and didn't get.**]
- When my needs aren't met I have these feelings...[ **negative feelings I had as a child.**]

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## 4. TALKING IS DANGEROUS

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*“Talking is the most dangerous thing we do and listening is the most infrequent.”*

### LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

Most of us rarely listen to what other people are saying. We believe that what we say is true and that what we say is true for everyone else. The person hearing what is said, has a different experience and raises objection. When we could be listening, we are responding to the impact of what we are hearing instead. Our objection to difference causes anxiety in our partner which causes conflict and polarization can occur.

### ASSIGNMENT

Accurately listening with curiosity and empathy are the essential skills of a thriving relationship. Learning how to talk without criticism and to listen without reacting negatively makes conversations safe and connection possible. Think of a time when you reacted negatively to something your partner said.

- What objection did you have to what your partner said?
- What experience did you have that caused the objection?
- What was your partner’s experience?

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## 5. FROM MONOLOGUE TO DIALOGUE

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*“Over the centuries, we’ve discovered there are three ways people talk.”*

### LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

Monologue is when one person is talking and everyone is supposed to be listening. In parallel monologue, two people are talking and no one is listening. Safe Conversations® encourages dialogue. Dialogue is when two people take turns talking and the other listens, mirrors back what was said, and checks for accuracy about what was said. You then create a conversation that now has a sender and a receiver. Engaging in dialogue changes the structure of monologue from inequality to equality. You get to know your partner and get to discover your partner’s world without judgment

### ASSIGNMENT

Mirroring teaches you how to speak and listen in order to create a dialogue and allow you to express empathy for your partner’s feelings. When you mirror, you use precise sentence stems to talk without criticism and listen without judgment. Through mirroring, you are creating safety and connection with your partner. A simple sentence stem to use to begin mirroring is to say *“Let me see if I got that.”*

- Imagine your partner has expressed to you they don’t like when you don’t pay attention to what they’re saying. Use the space on the next page to mirror their frustration using the sentence stem.
- Now, think of a time your partner expressed a frustration with you and write down how to mirror their frustration using the sentence stem.



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## 6. SAFE CONVERSATION® DIALOGUE PROCESS

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### LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

A safe conversation has a three part dialogue process, that includes mirroring, validating, and empathy. It provides you and your partner with the ability to talk without criticism, listen without judgment, and connect beyond differences. To begin a safe conversation you need to ensure your partner is available to engage in dialogue.

### ASSIGNMENT

Beginning with an appreciation is the best way to practice the three part dialogue process. During the process, you will use sentence stems. Using sentence stems allows you to slow down the inner chatter in your mind and be available to listen and share with your partner in connectedness.

- Take a few moments to write down three appreciations for your partner.
- Next, set aside some time to share your appreciations with your partner. Begin your conversation with the sentence stem, *"The appreciation I have for you is..."*

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## 7. THE NATURE OF DYADIC RELATIONSHIPS

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*"Incompatibility is the grounds for marriage."*

### LIVING YOUR FULL ALIVENESS

All of nature is dyadic and incompatibility is the grounds for a good relationship. In a relationship, some people process their feelings outwards and they are called maximizers. Some people process their feelings inward and these people are called minimizers. For example, as a minimizer you may feel tight inside and not verbalize your emotions. As a maximizer you may express your feelings with passion and energy. Every minimizer falls in love with a maximizer. Working through this incompatibility using Safe Conversations® can improve your relationship and improve your overall brain health.

### ASSIGNMENT

Based on the descriptions above, determine if you are more likely to be a minimizer or a maximizer.

- Using the space provided, jot down a few frustrations that can occur with your partner if you're a minimizer.

**or**

- Using the space provided, jot down a few frustrations that can occur with your partner if you're a maximizer.
- Review your frustrations and when your partner is available use the Safe Conversation three part dialogue process to talk, listen, and connect about your frustrations.

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## 8. THE POWER OF SAFE CONVERSATIONS®

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### CONGRATULATIONS

You've finished Safe Conversations® Essentials. We hope you feel inspired to integrate our dialogue process into your relationship and all of your life. We believe Safe Conversations® is a movement and can remove polarization from our relationships. We welcome you to join the movement.

### SAFE CONVERSATIONS RESOURCES

You can learn more about Safe Conversations® by visiting your website at **[safeconversations.com](https://safeconversations.com)**. You can also find more information on how to teach Safe Conversations® to others.