

# DESIGNING EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

*How to talk to one another so others will truly listen  
& talk to you about their feelings*

## I. Denial of Feelings

"There's no reason to be so upset. How silly to feel that way.  
You are probably just tired. Come on, smile!"

## II. Philosophical Response

"Look, life is like that. Things don't always turn out the way you want.  
In this world, nothing is perfect."

## III. Advice

"You know what I think you should do?  
Tomorrow morning, go straight to your boss, and say "I was wrong."

## IV. Questions

"When was that?" or  
"Didn't you realize he'd be angry if you didn't get to it immediately?"

## V. Defense of the Other Person

"I can understand Jacks' reaction. He is probably under a lot of pressure.  
You are lucky he is not screaming at all."

## VI. Pity

"Oh, you poor thing. That's terrible. I feel so sorry for you!"

## VII. Amateur Psychoanalysis

"As a child you probably worried about displeasing your father, and when your  
roommate criticized you, it brought back those early fears of rejection."

## VIII. An Empathic Response

"Wow, that sounds like a rough experience. To be subjected to such an attack like  
that in front of other people, especially after having been under so much pressure.  
That must have been hard to take!"