The Sculptor

This role is proactive, accepting of challenges, non-blaming, respectful, vulnerable and courageous. Think of yourself as a leader for you and your relationship. Decide what is important to discuss. Your overall goal is to be influential. You are trying to skillfully move the needle. Remember this is an opportunity and a duty.

- Remind yourself this is your issue or problem you are addressing.
- Speak to your partner in a way that indicates respect for their time and willingness to listen to you.
- Remember this is an egalitarian relationship. You will benefit from respecting this person has a choice to listen to you. If you don't speak to them in a respectful manner take accountability and apologize.
- Avoid being petty by not focusing on what did not occur in the past. Instead speak using positive action language to paint a picture of your vision. Pull from your disappointment and identify what you would like to see occur in the future. Less past negative, more future positive.
- Transcend a right/wrong framework for discussion. If you are seeking to be right you are also using the platform to imply the other is wrong. This is not effective for creating an ally because you are not seeking one. You are seeking to be the right and the winner of a zero sum game.

- Ask if this is an okay time for them to listen and support you around the issue you are having.
- Identify and make clear to them and yourself what the one issue is you are going to focus on.
- Clarify your thesis if you have one.
- Identify what it is you hope will happen by talking about this one issue. Be transparent about the sculpting you are attempting to do.
- Identify how you would like them to relate to you (i.e. please only ask supporting questions, please look for and help me expand the underlying idea, please give me the benefit of the doubt and abstain from being critical about the accuracy of my facts).
- Favor sharing over explaining. Explaining is an indication you are trying to persuade some one to believe something.
- Do not seek agreement of your point of view or your beliefs indirectly or passively. A person is more likely to absorb your message if they do not perceive you having an ulterior motive to shape their thinking.

- Be accepting and accountable for the fact that you have distressing emotions. You are a mammal not a reptile. You have an evolved social brain that is designed to include the bandwidth to be emotionally distressed. Do not buy into the idea that the final impetus for your distressing emotion is the variable to blame or even hold accountable. That is thinking which is trying

to pad the world. Adopt thinking, which you employ to develop your resilience and indifference to experiencing distressing emotions.

- Recall the dogma of Eleanor Roosevelt, “No one can make you feel inferior with out your permission.”
- Avoid saying, “made me feel” about the other person or anything. Instead say, “I feel or felt (insert feeling) when this happened.”

- Take responsibility for being the one to accurately differentiate between the experience of feeling and the experience of thought. The two essentially occur in tandem much of the time so it is important to deconstruct your experience your self rather than present you listener with a muddled presentation of you experience. If you want or expect them to understand your experience than it is helpful for you to understand it and be able to differentiate between feeling and thought.
- There is wide spread confusion in our society about the two.
- A useful way to differentiate is to identify where the feeling is occurring in your body. If there is no location where you can notice a physical sensation of some sort than what you think is a feeling is most likely a thought of some sort.
- People tend to conflate thinking for feeling as a way to down play or hedge away from their thinking.
- Avoid saying, “I feel like” and apologize when you say, “I feel like you ….(insert something unflattering, critical or negative). “

- You will start to notice you have thoughts you are fearful to speak. Remind yourself the work of the Sculptor is about developing your ability and willingness to speak and increase your strength for expressing your individual view.

- Screen or internally “ask” your self if your thoughts are true/factual or if they are subjective. Share facts and subjective interpretation differently because they are different. Do not conflate subjective interpretation for facts.

- Do not blame or imply blame. You do not need to find fault or take fault.
- This is about eliminating fault finding as a first and dominant stance taken when something goes “wrong” and cultivating a culture of curiosity and non-judgment with in yourself and with in your team when something does not happen the way you would have liked.

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