

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

C E N T E R

The ALC Communication Model

Empathic Listening Finding out what's inside the other person.	The Communication Components ↓	Intentional Expression Letting the other person know what's inside me.
<p style="text-align: center;">Goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the attitude of a <i>compassionate detective</i>. Acknowledge the content <u>and</u> emotion: What is this person feeling and saying? All reflected in a way that shows you are guessing <i>and</i> interested. 		<p style="text-align: center;">Goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the attitude of <i>intentional self reflection</i>. Express directly and honestly what is going on inside of me. Be responsible for my feelings and judgments without attacking or making the other person wrong.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paraphrase the content – the data. Do NOT interpret. 	Observable Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective facts of the issue or situation. What did I see or hear?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The emotions in them expressed in the words, tone, or body language. 	Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The emotions occurring in me around these observations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meaning or judgments they have made. 	Imagination, Interpretation, Judgment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meaning or “story” I tell myself about the facts and my feelings.
Check in to see if you got it right. If not, ask them to tell you more about what you missed (“Tell me more about that...”).	Check In (Can be done any time – the more the better)	Check in to get their reaction or see if they got what you said.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of these components may be a part of the information the person is communicating. Reflect back any of these components, both expressed and implied. 	Triggers, Needs, Owing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspects of my past or my personality that are playing a part in my feelings and story. Why might I make the meanings I have made?
	Requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions or behaviors I wish to request. This is NOT a demand.
	Commitments & Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What am I willing to commit to? What will happen if I get my request? What will happen if I do not get my request?

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Tips and Techniques

Empathic Listening Finding out what's inside the other person.	Intentional Expression Letting the other person know what's inside me.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep rephrasing and adjusting your description of what you heard until the speaker says that you got it right. Go for the "Yes!" • If you are reacting and interpreting instead of reflecting, apologize and shift back to reflection mode. If you are unable to shift back into Empathic Listening, call a timeout. • If you have an opinion or a different point of view that you wish to express, first make sure they feel accurately heard. Then PAUSE for 2-3 seconds before gently asking if they are willing to hear your ideas. You then shift into Intentional Expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the issue is too emotionally charged, either person can call a timeout and schedule a time to continue the discussion. • Be ready to shift into Empathic Listening mode if your listener has a big reaction to your expression. • Usually a sentence that begins with "I feel <u>that</u>..." is an expression of judgment and is therefore a part of the meaning you are making of the facts and your feelings. • Owning your part around your feelings and judgments you have about the facts and feelings is an extremely effective way to lower the listener's defenses and energy.

Example

Husband comes home and wife begins asking questions about a big meeting he was to have at work that day. Their pattern is for her to question and seek information and him to answer grudgingly and, if the questions keep coming, to get defensive and shut down. He could use this model to say what is going on for him:

Husband: "You're asking several questions and I am getting anxious and a bit angry. I am imagining that you are trying to find out what I did wrong or that you don't trust me to make the right decisions." *So far, he's used the first three components of intentional expression: the observable facts, his feelings, and his imagination. He could continue with the other components:*

"I own that I get really defensive when people ask me questions because of how my father used to grill me every day and then humiliate me with all the ways I messed up. I request that you give me about 5 minutes to relax and sit down and catch my breath from my long day. I promise that I will give you a full accounting of my big meeting. OK?" *He used the rest of the model: I own, I request, and I commit to gain some space, but also accommodated her need to know and be involved. If the wife used empathetic listening, she might say something like:*

Wife: "So what I'm hearing is that you are getting up-tight and even angry as I ask you questions and that you relate this reaction to how your dad humiliated you with questions. I also hear you need a few minutes to relax, but you will tell me about your big meeting later... Did I get that right?"