

### ***Be Present: I am with you and for you; fewer words***

1. **Acceptance:** Love me just the way I am without fixing me. *"It's hard when you make a mistake. I am here with you. I can live with your mistake. We can figure it out together."* Or *"I love you even when you fall."*
2. **Attunement:** Let me know that you feel what I am feeling. *"That sounds really hard,"* while just sitting with them in their emotion. Or, *"I'm glad you told me how frustrated you're feeling. I will always listen and you can talk to me about anything'."*
3. **Validation:** Let me know that my feelings aren't insignificant and need to be put aside. *"I can see how sad you are".* Or, *"I know how disappointing that must be, especially since you worked so hard on that!"*
4. **Identification:** Do you have a story that is similar to my story so that I know that I am not alone or a freak? *"I know I feel really bad, too, when I'm not included and am left out."* Or, *"I know you didn't want to leave the party yet. I get it. I hate it, too, when I have to do things I don't like."*
5. **Containment:** Hold the space with me. Sit with me and listen while not being overwhelmed by my feelings or trying to fix it. *"Where are you feeling it in your body?"* *"I'm here for you even when you're falling apart and at your absolute worst. I can take it. I've got your back. No matter what."*
6. **Comfort:** Can you sit quietly and help me to cry as I say goodbye to this. *"You didn't want me to pull the plug on the bathtub yet, did you?"* Or, *"It is hard to leave playing at the park with your friends, isn't it?"* Or, *"I understand you're having a hard time, and I am here."*

### **Convey the Good: Give words of Goodness and Grace**

1. **Affirmation:** *Can you name something that you see me working hard to accomplish? "I see that you really gave that your best." Or, "I see a lot of work has been going on here. (then describe what you see) All the blocks are back on the shelf and your jacket is hung up."*
2. **Encouragement:** *Believe in me and let me know why you know that I have what it takes as I don't see it for myself right now. "I think you will make things right with your friend. I know you will find the words. You have what it takes to do this." Or, "You've been working to memorize that vocabulary list for over an hour. Now that's what I call perseverance."*
3. **Respect:** *Show me you have respect for me even though I made a mistake today and don't feel very respectable. "I respect your motives and see how hard you try." Or "It sounds like you handled that really well. That was hard, and I really respect that you did that."*
4. **Hope:** *Show me a picture of my positive future that you can see for me. "There is always a way through." "Tomorrow is fresh with no mistakes in it!" "I believe you will find your life's purpose."*
5. **Forgiveness:** *Help me to not hold a grudge against those who have hurt me. And even more, help me know that when I hurt others, I am worth being forgiven. "I see your pain, and am with you as you take the time to honor it and then release it, rather than staying angry at the person for what they did."*

6. **Celebration:** *I need to know that you are as excited as I am about this! "I celebrate YOU!" Or, "That is wonderful! You must feel so happy and proud of yourself! Did you surprise yourself with that? Did you know you could do that?"*

#### **Provide Reality: Share Truth and Honesty**

1. **Clarification:** *Can you ask me a lot of questions so I can be sure about what to do? "Tell me more so I can explore with you the reasons why this happened." Or, "Tell me the story so I can really see what happened."*
2. **Perspective:** *Help me connect the dots and see this situation from other's way of thinking. "I wonder how your friend felt when she heard what you said?"*
3. **Understanding:** *Let me know you understand how complicated this is. "You are really hurt by what your friend said. That is hard, isn't it? Can you tell me more about it?"*
4. **Feedback:** *Will you help me see how I come across to you so I can learn how others experience me? "You know, when you say it like that and speak in that softer tone of voice, I can really hear you better."*
5. **Wisdom:** *Provide me with something you have learned and experienced in life that will help me to know how to live my life better.*
6. **Confrontation:** *Point out something I'm doing that is going to cause me problems or get me into troubles so that I can do better. "I need to talk to you about something. Is this a good time?" Then, "I want to tell you something hard. But, I'm going to say it because I love you, and I think you can handle it."*

#### **Call to Action: Challenge Me to Go and Do**

1. **Advice:** *Do you have any tips for me so that I can change my behavior to make me stronger? "Would you like me to give you some ideas that might help? Let's be curious together."*
2. **Structure:** *I need ideas for steps that I can take to solve this situation. "When I feel overwhelmed, I like to draw or have quiet time, or go for a bike ride, or stomp my feet like this, or breathe like this." Or, "What can we add to our evening routine that will help you get to school in the morning with everything you need?"*
3. **Challenge:** *Move me higher than I ever thought that I could go and see things that I can accomplish that I just can't see right now. "Let's have a do-over. I know you can say that again in a more respectful way." "I know you're mad at me, and I'm mad as well. Tell me your side of the story again, and I'll listen, then I'll tell you mine. We can work this through together."*
4. **Development:** *Help me grow in areas that are important to me. "I see that you really want to develop your writing/dance. Would you like to check out a tutor/class for that?"*
5. **Giving:** *Help me be thankful for who I am and what I have. Let's find ways to serve someone who needs a hand. "I'm going to make a meal for our friend who is sick, would you like to help me or make him a card?"*
6. **Prayer:** *Will you pray with me and help me connect to my God? "Would you like me to pray with you tonight?"*

Listen quietly and attentively. Acknowledge their feelings with a word: "Oh...Mmm....I see...."  
Give the feeling a name. (Name it to tame it. If it's mentionable it's manageable.)

Make sense of your own mistakes:  
"I'm so sorry I yelled and scared you. I flipped my lid. It's not your fault. I wish I'd handed it differently. I'm working on that, and I will continue to do so."

\* Created by Erin Torr & Tina Ratliff, based on Dr. John Townsend's 21 Relational Needs