**Emotional Attunement**

*The key to building trust in intimate relationships and repairing interactions that leave a trail of hurt*

**A – Awareness of emotion**

How are you baby? How is it now? Not diminishing or disapproving

**T – Turning Toward the Emotion**

Look for the positive need, not what one *doesn’t* need. Look for the underlying longing, wish or hope. Sadness means something’s missing. Anger can be about a frustrated goal. Disappointment about hope and expectation. Lonely is about wanting connection.

**T – Tolerance of Emotion**

There are two equally valid perceptions! We can learn from each other. Not trying to change or argue your partner’s emotion. Not taking your partner’s emotion personally.

**U – Understanding**

Talk to me. Postponing your own agenda.

**N – Non-defensive listening**

Pause. Invite quiet. Focus on your partner’s *perception* of the facts rather than arguing facts. Maximize agreement. Seek common ground. If you find yourself feeling defensive, disclose this to your partner.

**E – Empathy**

Listen with compassion and understanding.

**Processing Regrettable Incidents**

**1. Feelings** – state how each felt during the incident

**2. Subjective Reality** – No attacking. Include needs. Validate your partner - how they make sense given their subjective experience.

**3. Accept Responsibility** – Each partner shares what might have set them up to act defensively, critically, etc.

**4. My triggers** – each share your vulnerability, what “presses your buttons” – find these by noting states of flooding, or fight/flight behavior.

**5. Why these triggers?** Share the story of their origin as you understand yourself.

**6. Constructive plans** – what each partner can do next time to avoid a similar incident.