

# HARD TRUTH GUIDE

## FOR BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

The core focus of this exercise is to speak your truth kindly but directly, encourage listening without judgment, and lean into discomfort for growth. Practicing this can powerfully deepen communication abilities, mutual understanding, and intimacy.

### SUMMARY

1. **Find a willing partner** - a close friend, family member, or romantic partner - to practice this exercise together. Explain that you will share a hard truth with them daily for 30 days to improve communication.
2. **Think of something that bothers you** or a compliment you usually hold back. If you think about it multiple times, it's worth sharing.
3. **Let your partner know you want to share your hard truth** for the day. Ask, "Can I share a hard truth with you?" to prepare them for the exercise.
4. When discussing a difficult topic, **use "I feel..." statements**. This avoids accusations and shows your perspective.
5. **Be patient in seeing the positive results**. With time and consistency, your partner will appreciate your courage and honesty, bringing you closer.
6. **Consider asking your partner to share hard truths**, too. However, the exercise benefits you even if only you participate.

### DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have someone agree to participate in this with you. A romantic relationship is usually the best, but a dear friend, parent, or other important figure in your life is another great person to do this with. Let them know you will tell them a hard truth every day for the next 30 days. Remind them this is to help you communicate better with them and ideally results in you being closer to them. Ensure they are willing to be curious and growth-oriented around the exercise, but suggest that a whole new level of trust and understanding can emerge once this is habitual. Know that from your perspective, when your partner knows this is a growth exercise and it's coming when you announce it, it usually helps the other person have their defenses down. Know it's okay if they don't respond. The point isn't to illicit a response then and there. It's to practice using your voice by letting people know something you usually won't share. Remember, this is a self-expression, communication, and vulnerability practice that will help you across all other communication areas of your life.
2. Each day, think about something that really triggers you or that you think is notable and have a tendency not to share. A rule we use is that if you think about it three times, you should say something. If you aren't triggered, think about compliments you often hold back for some reason. Those will go a long way, but it is best when starting to default to a trigger to release your energy around them.
3. Let the other person know you'd like to share your hard truth for the day. We usually say, "Can I tell you a hard truth?"
4. When presenting a difficult point of discussion, ensure you always say, "I FEEL." No one can ever argue with how you feel. It also ensures you aren't accusing them of doing something or being

some way. It's your perspective and reality. When you share it with someone, they get a glimpse into your reality and perspective.

5. Usually, people respond favorably at first, but give it time and leave space for you and your partner to warm up to the exercise. It can be powerful for both individuals to share a hard truth if one arises in the other person once approached. As the week progresses, an open, loving person will appreciate how hard it is for you to speak your voice this way and will appreciate you. I've rarely seen people not end up being MUCH closer after a few days; nonetheless, 30.
6. If you want to double the results, see if you can get the person to do it with you if they haven't already, but don't make it a requirement. This is for you. As you benefit from it, everyone benefits!!!

Good luck. This exercise/practice did wonders for my relationship; communication-wise, we always fall back on it when we know we feel stuck or haven't been communicating well. We'd love to see how your relationships progressed during the exercise. Please keep us posted!

### **WHY THIS WORKS SO WELL**

Truth and vulnerability are the bedrock of intimacy. Sharing difficult truths requires courage and compassion. It demonstrates trust in the other person to hear us and care for us, even when the message may be hard to take.

Suppressing truths and feelings strains relationships over time. Resentment and disconnection brew when we feel unable to share core parts of ourselves. We liberate that suppressed energy by voicing hard truths and aligning the relationship with our inner world.

The ritual of sharing a hard truth daily builds relational resilience. Like a muscle, the relationship grows stronger as truths are exchanged regularly. We develop faith that we can navigate difficulty together. Difficult conversations become less intimidating.

Active listening and curiosity defuse defensiveness. If we listen without judgment and seek to understand, hard truths illuminate rather than divide. We realize our shared humanity beneath the struggles. This paves the way for problem-solving and reconciliation.

Growth demands discomfort. Hard truths force us from complacency into learning. The desire to communicate trumps the urge to avoid. With compassion as our driver, we develop maturity and depth together.

By committing to a discipline of courageous truth-telling and compassionate truth-hearing, we construct relationships of unprecedented authenticity, trust, and mutual empowerment. The Hard Truth exercise exemplifies this transformative potential in relationships.

WITH LOVE,

*Amanda & Jason Crawford*