

Validation vs. Agreement

What Is Validation?

Validation means letting someone know their feelings make sense in light of what they have been through. It is saying, "Your inner experience is understandable," even if you see the situation differently.

Validation does not require you to approve of every action, agree on every detail, or assign blame. It simply acknowledges that their feelings are real and worthy of care.

Validation vs. Agreement

Agreement is about facts, decisions, or blame ("You are right, I am wrong").

Validation is about emotions ("Given what happened, I can see why you feel that way").

You can validate someone's feelings and still:

- Keep your own perspective.
- Maintain a boundary.
- Say no to a request.
- Share how their actions affected you.

How to Validate Without Saying "You're Right"

Focus on the emotion and the logic of their reaction, not on who is correct.

Try starting with phrases like:

- "It makes sense that you feel hurt. You were really hoping for something different."
- "It makes sense that you are overwhelmed—there has been so much on your plate."
- "It makes sense that it is hard to trust this, given what you have been through before."
- "Given what you value, I can see why this situation is so upsetting."
- "Of course you are exhausted. You have been holding a lot for a long time."
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Script Examples Using "It Makes Sense That..."

Here are a few quick scripts you can adapt:

- "It makes sense that you are angry. You felt ignored in that conversation."
- "It makes sense that you are disappointed. You put a lot of energy into this."
- "It makes sense that you are anxious. There are many unknowns right now."
- "It makes sense that you are pulling back. You have been hurt in similar situations before."

After validating, you can still share your truth or boundary:

- "It makes sense that you are upset, and I also need to take a break from this conversation."
- "It makes sense that you feel scared, and I still believe this step is important for us."
- "It makes sense that you are frustrated with me, and I want to explain what was happening on my side."