

DO Therapy

Letting Others Know Me

We all have different ways of connecting with people. Some of us share openly. Others keep things close. We talk about work, activities, responsibilities, and what's happening around us, but say less about what's happening inside us.

Sometimes that's a preference. Sometimes it's a habit. And sometimes we simply weren't shown how to express emotions, ask for support, or let others see a more personal side of us.

Being open doesn't mean telling everyone everything. It means having the ability to share more of yourself when you want to, with people you choose.

This exercise is about practicing small moments of openness so you have more ways to connect with others.

NOTICE

Start by noticing how much of yourself you typically share.

Think about your interactions with friends, partners, family, or people you trust.

- What do I comfortably share about myself?
- What do I tend to keep private?
- When someone asks how I'm doing, what do I usually say?
- Do people know what I'm experiencing, or mostly what I'm doing?
- Are there people I would like to feel more connected to?

Maybe you:

- Say "I'm good" even when there's more going on.
- Talk about events but not how they affect you.
- Ask questions but rarely share about yourself.
- Use humor when conversations become personal.
- Keep worries, disappointments, or accomplishments to yourself.
- Offer support but rarely ask for it.
- Wait for others to initiate meaningful conversations.
- Assume people aren't interested in hearing more.

What does keeping things to myself help me do?

Maybe it protects my privacy. Avoids judgment. Reduces discomfort. Maintains independence. Keeps conversations easy. Or simply feels familiar.

There's nothing inherently wrong with being private. Now ask: Am I choosing what to share, or am I following a familiar pattern?

REVIEW THE GAME TAPE

Think about a recent conversation where you had an opportunity to share something personal but didn't.

Slow it down.

- What was happening?
- What was I actually thinking or feeling?
- What did I communicate instead?
- What made sharing more feel difficult or unfamiliar?
- What did I want from the interaction?
- What might I have liked the other person to understand about me?

Now consider whether you learned something about openness from earlier experiences.

Maybe emotions weren't discussed. Vulnerability wasn't demonstrated. Independence was emphasized. Personal struggles were handled privately. Or you didn't have many opportunities to experience someone listening with curiosity and care.

Those experiences may help explain what feels familiar today.

What could I have shared that would have allowed the other person to know me a little better?

Not everything. Just something.

PRACTICE

Choose one small way to let someone know more about you.

Not five. One.

MY USUAL RESPONSE

- When:
- I usually:

LET SOMEONE KNOW ME

- Next time, I will try:

Make it specific enough that you can actually do it.

Instead of: "Be more vulnerable."

- Try: "Tell a friend I've been feeling disconnected lately."

Instead of: "Open up more."

- Try: "Share how an experience affected me, not just what happened."

Instead of: "Be more authentic."

- Try: "Express my actual preference rather than automatically agreeing."

Instead of: "Build deeper friendships."

- Try: "Share something meaningful about myself and invite the other person to do the same."

Instead of: "Ask for more support."

- Try: "Tell someone I'm having a difficult week and would appreciate talking."

Choose the right person and the right amount.

Consider:

- Who has demonstrated care, respect, and trustworthiness?
- What am I comfortable sharing with this person?
- Is this a reasonable time and setting?
- Am I sharing because I want to, rather than because I feel obligated?

Now expect something important: **IT MAY FEEL UNFAMILIAR.**

You might feel exposed, awkward, uncertain, or tempted to change the subject. That's information. It doesn't automatically mean you shared too much or did something wrong.

Afterward, ask:

- What happened?
- How did it feel to share?
- How did the other person respond?
- Did I feel heard, understood, or more connected?
- Would I share something similar again?

BUILD REPS

One conversation won't transform how you experience openness or connection.

You may have spent years becoming comfortable keeping certain things to yourself. Give yourself opportunities to experiment with sharing differently.

Try a few small moments of openness. They don't need to be dramatic or deeply personal.

REP 1

- What I shared:
- What happened:

REP 2

- What I shared:
- What happened:

REP 3

- What I shared:
- What happened:

REP 4

- What I shared:
- What happened:

Now notice:

- Is sharing becoming more comfortable?
- Am I learning which people and situations feel safer?
- Do others seem to know or understand me better?
- Am I becoming more comfortable acknowledging what I think, feel, need, or want?
- What would I like to keep practicing?

Remember: The objective isn't to become someone who shares everything.

You can be authentic and still have boundaries. You can be open and still be selective. You can value independence and still allow others to support you.

KEEP THIS IN MIND

Being known requires allowing others to see something of who you are.

That might mean expressing an emotion, sharing a concern, acknowledging an accomplishment, revealing a preference, asking for support, or simply telling someone that they matter to you.

Not every attempt will produce the connection you hoped for. Some people will respond with curiosity and care. Others may not know what to say. Their response provides information about the interaction and relationship, not a verdict on your worth.

The goal isn't to make every conversation meaningful or personal. It's to develop the ability to choose when, how, and with whom you want to be more open.

Instead of: **FEEL SOMETHING → KEEP IT TO MYSELF**

You're practicing: **NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHARE → EXPERIENCE → LEARN**

Over time, you may discover that connection isn't only about knowing other people.

It's also about giving them opportunities to know you.

TEST & LEARN

Choose one person. Identify something you'd like them to know about you. Find a reasonable opportunity to share it.

Notice what happens. Pay attention to what feels unfamiliar, what feels meaningful, and what you learn about yourself and the relationship.

Try again. Adjust the amount, timing, or approach as needed.

Notice → Review the Game Tape → Practice → Build Reps

You don't have to share everything to be authentic. Sometimes connection begins by letting someone know just a little more of the real you.