



## 6 Steps To Healthy Conversation

Day 4: Echo

Mark Oelze

### *Transcript:*

Hi I am Mark Oelze. Welcome back to the PLEDGEtalk online FREE mini-course where you are learning a “how to” for when communication *really* matters!

Everyday - including TODAY - you and I have the opportunity to make a difference in people’s lives by the way in which we communicate with them. And every day, there are moments in conversations where what we say *really* makes a difference, good or bad.

In this video we are going to be talking about the third step in the PLEDGEtalk process. My son who wrote the foreword to my book, says it’s his favorite step.

Corresponding with the “E” in the word PLEDGE, it is the step we call Echo.

When conversing with one another in everyday conversation, or processing conflict, it is critically important to Echo back what each other says.

It is true for me, just as it is for you, when talking to someone - I am hoping they genuinely listen to understand what I am trying to communicate. It would be rather pointless for you or I to speak if they weren’t. So I work hard at trying to explain what I am thinking, and I hope **they** work hard at listening and understanding. The question is, how do you or I KNOW if someone is listening, and furthermore—genuinely understanding the point we are trying to make?

That’s where the all-important step of Echo comes into play.

Only when someone can Echo back or summarize well what you have said, do you know that they really **have** been listening and understand what you said.

There are actually 4 reasons to Echo back in a conversation, and particularly when processing conflict.

1. First, it helps the speaker know if you heard correctly.
2. Second, it helps YOU know if you heard correctly.
3. Thirdly, it helps FORCE you to **listen** well, knowing you are going to have to Echo back what you heard! Remember how we said in the lesson on Listening, that most of us listen only long enough to build up our line of defense. When you know you have to Echo back, it forces us to listen!!

4. Fourthly, it slows down the interaction, which helps to keep emotions from escalating again.

Let's go back to the example with my daughter -- when she called me up to talk about being frustrated at me. I knew it was a moment in time when how I responded *really* mattered! After I listened to her explaining why she felt I had treated her like a child, I could have corrected her and told her in some way or another that she was wrong. That would have either started a bit of an argument, or shut my daughter down, thereby damaging our relationship. **Instead**, I simply echoed back what she had told me and asked if I had heard her correctly. She said I had and thanked me for listening. No doubt it made her feel safe and valued. Our relationship was made stronger as a result.

Now imagine a different scenario. You are speaking to a friend who mentions that he and his wife hit a rough spot last night. It is another one of those moments in a conversation when what you say next *really* matters. You could give a pressured response like: "Bummer man. My marriage isn't always the greatest either. You wanna go watch a game?"

OR, you could remember PLEDGETalk:

Let's see:

P stands for Pause. You could Pause a moment before saying **anything**. Don't give in to the internal pressure that you have to respond in some way with an answer. Let the rational part of your brain come online. Remind yourself to value your friend and what he is going through right now.

L stands for Listen: You could very simply say something like: "Man what happened last night?" -- inviting him to talk more, and indicating you are willing to listen.

E stands for Echo: when he finishes talking, you could Echo back what he said. By doing so, he will know you were really listening. And you will know you heard correctly!

Doing just those three easy steps will make you a better friend in moments like that.

## Ok so here's your challenge today:

### Practice Echoing!

Whatever your child or teenager says to you today, make them feel valued by Echoing back what they said.

When your boss gives you directions, don't just nod your head and say OK, instead Echo back to make sure you heard correctly.

When your friend talks about something meaningful in his or her life, don't start telling your own stories, instead Echo back what they said to show them you really listened!

Men, when you see your wife today and she says she had a rough day just Pause, Listen and Echo. It will make you a Hero! She will love it because she will feel like the two of you are connecting!

PAUSE. LISTEN. And ECHO - and see what a difference that makes in your relationship. If you are in conflict, using these steps will help bring peace to your relationship. Don't worry about coming up with advice. Just Pause, Listen, and Echo!

Adding the fourth step I will teach you tomorrow will make you even a SUPER Hero!

Practice **ECHOING** today - everywhere you go!!

See you tomorrow!