



MAKING CONNECTIONS

- **Be authentic.** You want customers to feel comfortable and safe, and that they are hanging out with a good friend who understands them and their needs.
- **The minute people feel safe, they will be real.** The minute they are real, they will truly connect with each other and with you, and your only job left is to take the picture.
- **Put yourself in the customer's shoes** - how might they be feeling? Tired, jetlagged, excited? Ask them and be sensitive to their feelings.
- **Clients are always willing to laugh with you before they'll go deeper.** Frequently, clients will already be cracking jokes because they're nervous. Recognize that and laugh! It lets them know this is fun & light-hearted, and we will laugh.
- **Start your session with "invitations."**
 - With a couple: do a more posed shot first, then ask some questions and tell customers they can answer and laugh and look at each other. Ask things like, "So, who asked who out first?", "Who kissed who first?" They ALWAYS look at each and laugh so be ready for it! "On the count of three I want you so say the same color at the same time, ready 1,2,3!" Try it a few times.
 - When your couple is ready, you can try a deeper one. Find the best cuddling, comfortable pose in the best light. And then say, "I'm going way over there. But I'd like you to think of a moment in the last year that you were the most proud of your partner. No need to talk, just think about it." By the time you've backed up and set up the shot, they are there, in that moment. And sometimes they look at you, and sometimes they just embrace. It's always a beautiful moment.
 - For a family: **Pose, funny, game. Pose, funny, game. Pose, cuddle, connect.**
- **Take some time and come up with your own invitations,** finding a progression from light to deeper. Not every couple will always go deeper with you. But you'll notice the more real you are with your clients, the more they are willing to trust you.
- **If things go stiff, have three movements ready to go.** It's the easiest way to loosen everyone up.
 - Elena's favourite: "I move the couple apart about 6 feet facing each other. I back way up and give them instruction to merely walk towards each other and then towards me. Sometimes they'll do something silly, like he'll twirl her or dip her, or even pick her up. Most times they're just grateful for direction and everyone looks more natural moving."
- **Give customers lots of compliments** - always say nice things and keep up the compliments throughout shoot.
- **Be funny** while shooting to keep the mood light and customers engaged.
- **Find similarities** between you and the customers to easily connect.
- If customers feeling nervous, **show them some of your shots** in your camera; they will start to feel better and then can get on with shoot.
- **Take 5 deep breaths** with your customers, show them difference in your camera, tell them how beautiful they are when relaxed.
- When you **capture the "wow" shot**, show the customers - great for boosting confidence.
- **Come to shoot feeling confident yourself**, feeling like you are there to hang out and have fun!