



“I” Statements

Taking responsibility for your feelings will help to improve your communication when you feel upset or angry.

Before you say a word, however, you need to determine how heightened your emotions are. If you're a 7 out of 10 and up, go cool off... know that when emotions are heightened, your thinking brain shuts off and you are more likely to say things you may later regret. It's important to create some space, slow things down, and do some deep breathing. Depending on the degree of upset, you may even benefit from a short brisk walk or vigorous exercise. In a separate space, allow the wave of emotion dissipate and your prefrontal cortex come back online.

Once you have cooled down, ask yourself “what is the **feeling** word that best fits your emotion (use the feelings chart to help if needed). Then, ask yourself “what event triggered this emotion?” Once you identify the event, you are ready to formulate your “I” Statement. The “I” Statement will allow you to communicate what is upsetting you while minimizing blaming.

When we communicate with blaming language, the person we are trying to speak to will close off, become triggered/defensive and will be busy coming up with a reply rather than focusing on the message you want them to receive.

Below is the “I” Statement format and examples to help get you started...

“I” Statement Format:

“I feel _____ when you _____ (if appropriate you can add) because _____.”

After the words “ I feel” use **ONE** word that expresses your feeling (e.g.: sad, angry, frustrated, hurt, happy etc.)

✘ “I feel like you are an inconsiderate %o^@ when you leave your shoes in the doorway” is NOT an “I” statement! As soon as you add any word that is not a feeling word, you have created a blaming statement...

✓ “I feel **frustrated** when you leave your shoes in the doorway” is a non-blaming “I” Statement.

Communicate Your Need:

After you have formulated the “I” statement, identify what your *need* is and communicate it clearly. In other words, what would you need the other person to do, or not do to make things better for you or to help improve the situation?

“I would appreciate it if you would/ wouldn't _____” OR “It would help/ feel better if you would/ wouldn't _____”

Examples:

✘ **Blaming Statement** - “You make me angry because you are always late”

✓ **“I” Statement** - “I feel frustrated when you come home late because I stay awake worrying.”

✓ **Communicate Need** “I would appreciate it if you would text me and let me know that you will be late”

✘ **Blaming Statement** - “You never listen. You don't even care about me.”

✓ **“I” Statement** - “I feel hurt when you don't listen, because I feel like I don't matter.”

✓ **Communicate Need** “It would help if you could stop what you're doing and look at me so I know you're listening”



Feeling List

FEARFUL

Tense
Anxious
Afraid
Nervous
Worried
Concerned
Scared
Insecure

ANGRY

Frustrated
Annoyed
Irritated
Perturbed
Ticked Off
Livid
Outraged
Furious
Seething
Venomous
Aggravated
Insulted
Resentful
Indignant

GUILTY

Ashamed
Judged
Damned
Convicted
Condemned
Undeserving
Sentenced
Disgraceful
Villainous
Remorseful
Contemptible

LOW SELF-WORTH

Demeaned
Rejected
Worthless
Useless
Inadequate
Insignificant
Unimportant
Ignored
Left out
Humiliated
Despicable
Pathetic
Shy
Timid

SAD

Dejected
Depressed
Melancholy
Sorrowful
Dismal
Despondent

Blue

Down

Gloomy

Glum

Forlorn

Low

LONELY

Empty
Abandoned
Void
Hollow
Nothingness

Aloneness

Sunken

Desolate

Bleak

Withdrawn

Detached

Aloof

Distant

DESPAIR

Hopeless
Agony
Anguish
Helpless
Defeated
Destitute
Sterile
Deficient
Lacking

DRAINED

Depleted
Spent
Exhausted
Burdened
Consumed
Devoured
Tired
Used
Abused
Dissipated
Discounted
Weary
Dead

RELAXED

Tranquil
Placid
Serene
Collected
Quiet
Composed
Soothed
Sedate

WORTHWHILE

Useful
Valuable
Functional
Effective
Helpful
Okay
Important
Self-esteem
Valid

HOPEFUL

Optimistic
Encouraged
Heartened
Eager
Reassured
Supported
Strengthened
Able

Empowered

FULFILLED

Accomplished
Complete
Satisfied
Secure
Whole
Settled
Perfected
Contented
Sated
Intact
Definite
MOTIVATED
Inspired
Stimulated
Activated
Actuated
Triggered
Prompted
Fired up
Determined
Committed

CONFIDENT

Assured
Sure
Certain
Positive
Safe
Stable
Convinced
Definite
Empathic
Graceful
Balanced
Grounded
Calm
Brave
Proud

HAPPY

Cheerful
Delighted
Glad
Pleased
Fortunate
Ecstatic
Elated
Jubilant
Thrilled
Bright

ENERGIZED

Aroused
Excited
Exhilarated
Captivated
Fascinated
Enthused
Wild
Delirious
Electrified
Charged
Ready

NEW WORDS
