

“I” Statements

When you are having conflict with someone, you need to express your feelings and communicate what the problem is. If the other person feels like they are being blamed or accused, they are more likely to get upset and act defensively.

“I” statements express your concerns without putting blame on the other person.

Here are some examples of common responses to conflict, and examples of how they can be reworded as “I” statements.

Common response: “You never help with chores around the house. You don’t care if I do all the work.”

“I” Statement: “I feel frustrated when you don’t help with chores. It is too hard for me to do everything.”

Common response: “You don’t care about me at all! You never text me back!”

“I” Statement: “I feel sad when I text you and you don’t respond. I’m afraid that I’m not important to you.”

Practice phrasing these conflict situations into “I” statements. Remember to start by saying “I feel” and then choosing an emotion. Then give an explanation of how the situation is affecting you. Your “I” statement should look something like this:

“I feel <emotion> when <explain the situation> because <explain why you are feeling that way>.”

Situation: Your younger sister frequently asks to borrow things from you, but they often get lost or damaged while she is using them.

Write your “I” statement:

Situation: Your teacher has repeatedly told you to quiet down in class, even though several other students in the class are making the same amount of noise. He says that you will be given detention if he has to keep speaking to you.

Write your “I” statement:

Situation: A friend expects you to do the homework assignments for algebra and then let them copy your answers.

Write your “I” statement: