

# “I Feel” Statements

"I feel" statements are a structured way to express emotions and needs without blaming others. They help improve communication, reduce misunderstandings, and create safer conversations in relationships

## Why Use Them

- Express emotions clearly
- Communicate needs without conflict
- Reduce defensiveness in conversations
- Help neurodivergent individuals verbalize emotions more effectively
- Support emotional regulation

## Examples In Relationships

### With a Partner:

- ✗ "You never listen to me!"
- ✓ "I feel hurt when I talk about my day and you don't pay attention, because I value feeling connected. Can we have some distraction-free time to chat?"

### With a Friend:

- ✗ "You always cancel plans last minute!"
- ✓ "I feel disappointed when plans change last-minute, because I get excited and need time to adjust. Can we find a way to plan that works for both of us?"

### With Family:

- ✗ "You don't respect my boundaries!"
- ✓ "I feel overwhelmed when my boundaries aren't acknowledged. I need them to be respected so I can be comfortable."

## What Not To Do

### Don't disguise blame as a feeling:

- ✗ "I feel like you're being mean." (This is an opinion, not a feeling.)
- ✓ "I feel hurt when I hear those words because they seem critical to me."

### Don't assume intent:

- ✗ "I feel like you don't care about me."
- ✓ "I feel lonely when we don't check in, because I value our connection."

# "I Feel" Statements

## Your Turn: Fill in the blanks

Think of a recent situation where you felt unheard or upset.

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

How you felt: \_\_\_\_\_

Why: \_\_\_\_\_

What you need: \_\_\_\_\_

Your "I feel" statement:

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. I need/would like \_\_\_\_\_."

## Rewrite These Blame-Based Statements As "I Feel" Statements:

"You never help around the house!"

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_. I need/would like \_\_\_\_\_."

"You always ignore my messages."

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_. I need/would like \_\_\_\_\_."

"You don't care about my feelings."

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_. I need/would like \_\_\_\_\_."

Reflection: What was challenging about using "I feel" statements?  
How did it change the way you communicated?

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Looking for more tools and insights on neurodivergent communication, relationships, and emotional regulation?

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