


'I' Statements

When you are communicating with others, 'I' statements' can be very useful. They can help to reduce feelings of blame and criticism. 'I statements' put responsibility for our own feelings back onto us. They are most useful when we want to express something difficult.

HOW TO MAKE AN 'I' STATEMENT


1. Say 'I' instead of 'you' or 'they'
2. Say what we feel
3. Say what the circumstance that provoked our feelings is
4. Say what it is about the behaviour or its consequences that we object to

AN EXAMPLE:



"I feel hurt when you do not respect the boundaries I have put in place. When you do this, trust is damaged between us and I'd appreciate you putting in more effort"

OTHER POSSIBILITIES....



"I feel angry when you talk to me like that"
"I feel sad when I see you using drugs"
"I feel stressed when I don't hear from you for ages"

- Avoid words such as 'that, 'like', they are often about an opinion or judgement
- Avoid 'I feel like you' or 'I feel that you'
- Avoid stating with the word 'you', because the 'you' sounds like blaming

- Start by practicing with emotions like hurt, anxiety or sadness, rather than anger
- Remember to practice using positive 'I' statements too
- Both parties often get better at this with practice
- Remember, it is not about getting the response you want. The aim is to be respectful, *regardless*.