

# Assertive I-Statements

FOR USE WHEN YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE BEHAVIOR OF A FRIEND, FAMILY MEMBER, PARTNER, OR LOVED ONE

I feel/felt \_\_\_\_\_ when you

(feelings/emotions, such as frustrated, sad, jealous, worried, concerned, insignificant, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ because

(short, specific, and objective description of other person's behavior)

\_\_\_\_\_.

(optional; explanation for why you think you feel these emotions)

Tip: Try to state your **positive need** underlying your concern.

I want/wish/would like/prefer

\_\_\_\_\_.

(specific request for the other person; a statement of you would have preferred the person do or what you would like in the future about this situation or issue)

# Examples

## Instead of...

- It pisses me off that you can make time for your buddies but not for me. It's like pulling teeth to get you to spend time with me, but the moment one of them calls, you drop everything for them. I'm your wife, and you should prioritize me. You need to treat me better.

## Try something like...

- I felt frustrated, lonely, and unimportant when you made plans with your buddy to go to the hockey game because we haven't been on a date in a while. I miss you and want to spend more time with you. I'd like us to set up a date night, or maybe I can go to the game with you.

# Examples

## Instead of...

- You're always nagging at me like I'm a kid or something. All I ever hear is criticism instead of recognition for everything I do. I work my ass off all day long and then I come home just to listen to you bitch and moan. If you want things to get better between us, you need to treat me with respect. I'm tired of it.

## Try something like...

- I felt unappreciated and irritated when I came home and you complained about me not doing the lawn yesterday, because I'm having a hard time dealing with the stress of work and home, and I really want your support. When I come home, I'd like for us to greet each other warmly and give each other time to settle in and relax a little before we talk about concerns. I'd also like us to express our gratitude for each other.

# Examples

## **Instead of...**

- Are you kidding me? You're a grown man, and you can't pick up after yourself? How am I supposed to teach the kids to pick up after themselves when their own father just walks around doing whatever he wants all the time?

## **Try something like...**

- I felt annoyed when I saw that you left your candy wrappers laying around the house because I like a clean home; It helps me relax. I want you to try harder to pick up after yourself.