

## Session 5 – Communication and Intimacy

### “I” Statement Overview and Tips

- “I” statements are not about being polite, they’re about being clear without judgment, criticism or blame.
- “I” statements indicates how the talker sees it from their side of things.
- “I” statements focuses on your own feelings and experiences.
- “I” statements help create more opportunities for resolution in a respectful and constructive dialogue.
- “I” statements are effective in all areas of life, including marriage, work, family and friendships.
- There are responsibilities for the talker, effectively using “I” statements, and for the listener, to affirm, clarify, and seek more information.

#### Four parts of an “I” Message: FBI+N (feelings, behavior, impact + need/preference)

1. “I feel or I think \_\_\_\_\_” state feeling
2. “When you \_\_\_\_\_” state observation
3. “Because \_\_\_\_\_” state need
4. “I would prefer that \_\_\_\_\_” state need/preference

#### Example:

1. How you feel: “I feel angry...”
2. What you have that feeling about: “about the way you spoke to me...”
3. Why you feel this way “because it embarrassed me in front of my friends.”
4. What you would like to see instead: “I would prefer that we discuss these things in private.”

#### Examples of the Talker and the Listener:

Talker: “I feel that my concerns are not being heard when you look away from me as I’m talking. I need you to look at me while we are talking.”

Listener: “I hear you saying that when I look away from you while you’re talking you don’t feel heard and that it would be better for you if I gave you my full attention. Is that right?”

Talker: “I feel disrespected when you come home late from work without calling me. I would prefer that you call me when know you won’t be home until later. Then I can plan dinner accordingly.”

Listener: “I’m so sorry you felt this way because I wasn’t calling you when I’m going to be late. I do appreciate the work you do in getting dinner ready. I’ll make sure to call you if I’m going to be late.”

The talker has effectively utilized the “I” statements

The listener has effectively confirmed what the talker was saying.

*Refer to Session 5, Pgs. 96-97 for the responsibilities of the Talker and the Listener*



Practice Pages

Using "I" statements effectively takes practice. If this is helpful, you may use this page to write "I" statements in any given situation. The Talker identifies the issues, the listener confirms the issues. The listening confirms the issues and writes in clarifying or affirming statements of understanding or other responses appropriate to the issue.

Talker: What is the issue? \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. "I feel or I think \_\_\_\_\_
2. "When you \_\_\_\_\_
3. "Because \_\_\_\_\_
4. "I would prefer that \_\_\_\_\_

Listener:

- 1. "You sound \_\_\_\_\_
2. "Because/when \_\_\_\_\_
3. "Next time I will \_\_\_\_\_
4. "Will that work, does that help? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the "I" statements effectively communicate the issue for the talker and the listener? Yes No

Any improvements noted? \_\_\_\_\_

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