I – Messages

Telling Others What You Feel in a Direct, Non-Blaming Way

By using I- messages you will be able to better accept responsibility for your actions and to express your feelings so that others will hear you. The benefits of using I-messages include:

- **Your partner or child is less likely to be offended as they create a softer start-up to a conversation.**
- **Defiance is reduced and cooperation increased.**
- **You become more aware of your feelings as you think about how to express yourself in I-messages.**
- **You are more likely to improve relationships by avoiding negative communication styles such as putdowns, demanding, whining, blaming, judging, criticism, defensiveness, contempt, etc.**

I-Message Parts

1. **"I feel …." (state the feeling)**
2. **"when you….." (describe the other person's behavior)**
3. **"because ……." (explain the results of or consequences of the person's behavior)**
4. **"and I want……" (state what would make the situation better for you)**

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