

Build Your I-Statement

Say what bothers you without starting a fight

Name _____

Date _____

Pick a real situation that's bugging you. Fill in the four parts, then join them into one or two sentences. Practice saying it out loud before you use it.

Situation (just for you, a few words)

The four parts

1. **I feel...** (one feeling word)

☐ frustrated ☐ hurt ☐ worried ☐ embarrassed ☐ disrespected ☐ left out ☐ overwhelmed ☐ disappointed ☐ tired ☐ nervous ☐ other: _____

2. **when...** (what happened, the way a camera would see it — no guessing why they did it)

3. **because...** (why it matters to you)

4. **I'd like...** / **I need...** (one specific thing the other person can actually do)

My I-statement

Example: "I feel **frustrated** **when** the heat gets turned up to 78 while I'm at work, **because** our power bill doubled last month. **I'd like** us to agree on a setting, maybe 70, and both stick to it."

Check before you say it

- ☐ My feeling is a real feeling word — not "I feel like you..."
- ☐ My "when" part has no "always" or "never."
- ☐ My "when" part doesn't guess at their motive.
- ☐ My request is something a person can actually do.
- ☐ It's two sentences or less.

Four ways to say the same thing

STYLE	EXAMPLE
Passive	"It's okay, don't worry about it." (when it isn't)
Aggressive	"You're an idiot if you think that'll work."
Passive-aggressive	"Nice of you to finally show up."
Assertive	"I'd like to finish my point, and then I'll listen to yours."

Body and tone count too: relaxed hands, normal volume, eye contact without staring. Hard talk by text? Wait, reread, and consider a call instead.