

Use “I”-Messages

1. When you are trying to talk to someone, notice how you are feeling
2. Think about what happened right before you started feeling that way
3. Create an “I”-message:

“I feel ____ when ____, and I would feel better if ____.”

For example, “I feel upset when we yell at each other, and I would feel better if we made our points without yelling.”

4. Use your “I”-message in your conversation.

Tip: This skill can also be used to highlight positive feelings and situations (e.g., “I feel happy when we do things together, so I would like to find ways to spend more time together”).

When to use this skill: “I”-messages can help improve communication and decrease conflict (e.g., during an argument, when asking for help). You can even use this tool to help your medical team understand what you need.

How this skill helps: “I”-messages can help you communicate your feelings without blaming anyone or becoming angry. “I”-messages tell others what you need and begin the process of problem-solving.

If you want to learn more coping strategies, talk to your doctor about meeting with the Psychology Team!