

# Using “I Messages”

When you’re angry with people, it’s easy to blame them for whatever happened. But when you blame other people, they often get angry with you. Then, everyone ends up with hurt feelings. You can use I messages to tell other people what you really want, without judging, confronting, or blaming them. You can also use I messages to express other feelings, like happiness or fear. I messages always focus on what the speaker feels, rather than blaming the listener.

## Here’s how an I message works:

1. Say what you feel (I FEEL...)
2. Tell what the other person did that upset you (WHEN YOU...)
3. Describe how you were affected (BECAUSE...)
4. State what would make the situation better for you (AND I WANT...)

## Example

*A friend teases you by calling you a nickname you hate.*

*“I feel sad when you call me (nickname) because it reminds me of a bad period in my life. I want you to call me by my real name.”*

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## Practice with Youth

A friend constantly cancels when you have made plans together.

Your brother turns the CD player up so loud that you can’t hear your friend on the phone.

Your sister borrows your jacket without asking and wears it to school.

A student in your class is always trying to touch your rear end.

Your parent goes through your personal belongings in your bedroom.