

## "I" STATEMENT

I am \_\_\_\_\_  
State the **feeling**

when \_\_\_\_\_  
State the **behavior** or situation

because \_\_\_\_\_  
State the **impact**

### EXAMPLE (I FBI)

I am afraid  
when we don't talk  
because I want to have an intimate  
relationship, but I see us drifting apart.

### A FEW FEELINGS

Afraid, Alone, Annoyed, Anxious, Bored,  
Confused, Contempt, Disconnected, Disgusted,  
Dismayed, Embarrassed, Exhausted, Helpless,  
Hopeless, Insecure, Inadequate, Incompetent,  
Jealous, Lonely, Longing, Nervous, Repulsed,  
Sad, Stressed, Tense, Tired, Unloved, Worthless

## ACTIVE LISTENING

- Give your full attention and really try to understand. Don't be preparing a reply.
- Listen for the feelings behind the words. "It sounds like you're scared **and** angry."
- Maintain good eye contact.
- Repeat what you understand for clarity.
- Ask if your understanding is correct. "You think I am irresponsible with our money. Did I get that right?"
- Ask about non-verbal clues. "You said nothing was wrong but you won't look at me. Please help me understand."
- Ask, "Is there more?"
- Don't interrupt. Don't criticize.
- Don't be defensive. Don't try to explain.
- Don't give advice without permission.
- Don't prejudge your spouse.

## PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Schedule a time that is good for both.
2. Pray together earnestly for open hearts and minds. Look for win-win.
3. Concerned spouse describes the problem IN writing. Edit until you both agree on the problem.
4. Indicate how YOU contribute to the problem.
5. Brainstorm possible solutions; don't criticize your teammate's ideas.
6. Discuss merits of each solution. Agree to try one or more.
7. Be specific as to what each of you will do and when. Write your actions down. Work the plan.
8. Schedule a time to review the progress.
9. Celebrate your success!!

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# MARRIAGETEAM

## PLAYBOOK



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## MANAGING ANGER

- Agree not to attack each other.
- Focus on the issue.
- Admit and own your anger. Anger is OK; it is what we do with it that causes trouble.
- Ask for help from your teammate.
- Evaluate what you really need.
- Communicate clearly using “I” statements and time-outs if needed.
- Collaborate to meet both your needs.
- Actively listen to understand your teammate. Do not be defensive.
- Develop a specific play – “*What can I say or do to help us de-escalate this situation in the future?*”
- Write it down and do your part.
- Both agree to use your new play. Help each other remember you have a new play.
- Remember, we are TEAMMATES. We win or lose together.

## FORGIVENESS REQUIRED WHEN

- Unable to pray for your offender.
- Plotting or hoping to take revenge.
- Losing sleep.
- Having associated physical problems
- Cringing when you think about offender.
- Having angry outbursts connected to offense.
- Remembering exact details of old events
- Being unable to experience happiness.
- Retelling the offense frequently.
- The truth that God loves your offender causes you to question God.

*Shane & Phyllis Womack*

## IMPACT OF BITTERNESS

- Destroys us, not the offender.
- Destroys our relationships with those we love; others avoid bitter people.
- Makes us miserable.
- Taking poison & waiting for offender to die.

## HOW TO FORGIVE

- Forgiveness is a decision.
- Forgiveness is our cure for bitterness.
- Pray and decide to forgive today!
  1. I will not use an incident against you
  2. I will not talk to others about an incident I have forgiven.
  3. I will not dwell on it.
  4. I will not let the incident stand in the way of our relationship. (added)

*Jay E. Adams*

## ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS HELPFUL BUT NOT REQUIRED

- I’m sorry; [it was my fault (if it was)]
- It was not my intention to . . . .
- How do I make it right?
- Will you please forgive me for . . . .

## RESPONSE

- I forgive you, because I love you.

## CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT

- Stop; pray together before going on.
- No name calling, digging up the past, changing topics, or avoiding issues.
- Realize you are on the same TEAM. If one of you loses, the relationship loses.
- Listen actively to insure understanding before seeking to be understood.
- Accept responsibility for your role.
- Confess your part to one another.
- Use “I” statements.
- Speak gently to each other.
- Respond compassionately.
- Forgive each other.
- Agree to be accountable to each other to stay constructive.
- If I fail to use constructive behaviors, my teammate has permission to bring this to my attention by saying \_\_\_\_\_

