



**People
Working
Well**

Preparing for Difficult Conversations

With Dr. Ellen Choi



Invitation:
Pick up your
sword.



**When did you learn
that your voice
wasn't welcome?**

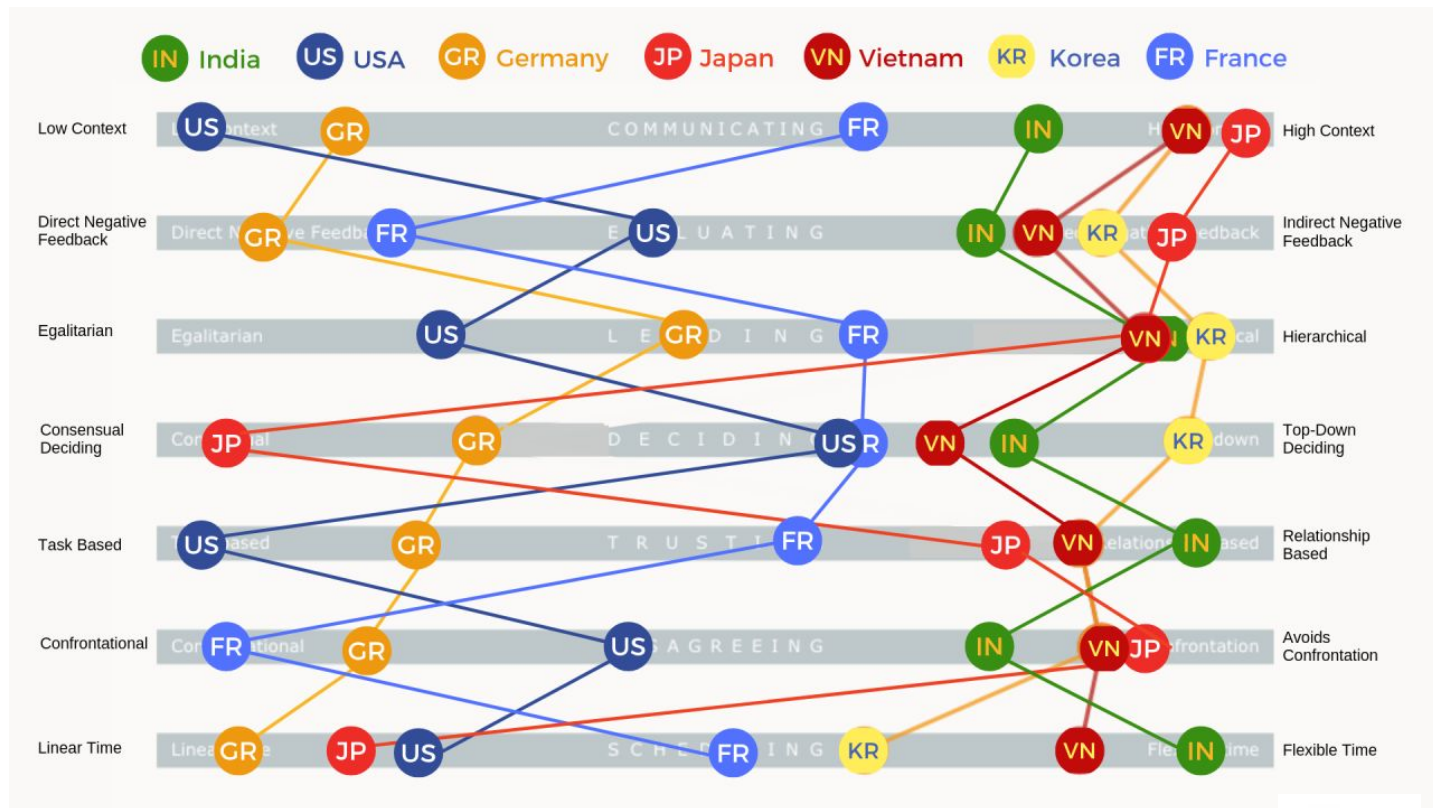


The Stats

- US employees spend about 2.8 hours a week dealing with workplace conflict
- 70% of people surveyed reported avoiding tough conversations at work with a boss, colleague, or direct report (27% report avoidance as they're primary conflict reaction) and after a disagreement, 67% report avoiding a colleague entirely
 - 72% had stayed silent when a peer wasn't pulling their weight
 - 68% avoided addressing disrespectful behavior
 - 57% let a colleague slide on skirting an important process
 - only 1% saying they felt "extremely confident" voicing concerns in the moment.
- Leaders are roughly twice as likely to give positive feedback than corrective feedback
- 60% of employees said they hadn't received useful feedback in the past six months
- Only 12% of nurses had spoken to a peer about a competence concern (less than 1% raised it with the physician directly involved), and only 7% spoke up about disrespectful or abusive behavior
- Groups prefer to discuss common knowledge rather than divergent information even though teams are more successful when unique and shared information is discussed



Cultural Differences



Fawning

Like fight/flight/freeze, ***fawn*** is a stress response that occurs when we appease, go along with, and defer to other people's needs at the cost of our own. It leads to anxiety, resentment, and hypervigilance in relationships.



Epigenetics

How the experiences of previous generations can affect who we are.



The Good Girl Narrative

“If I please others, I
can avoid discomfort.
If I’m don’t upset
anyone, I’ll be safe
and loved.”

— NICE GUYS EVERYWHERE

The “Don’t be Difficult” Reflex

“It’s not a big deal,
don’t be a nuisance,
you’re being too
much.”

— THOSE TAUGHT THEIR NEEDS
WERE A BURDEN

The Martyr

“It’s fine, I’ll be the
bigger person and
just move on.”

— STRONG RESILIENT PEOPLE
PREFERRING TO SIDESTEP
DISTRESSING CHALLENGES

The Should Self vs. The Essential Self



List 3 (Limiting) Beliefs of Speaking Up

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



The 5 Monkeys of Influence



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.





If never
share the
“real” you,
no one will
ever really
know you.





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The hardest things to talk about are the topics that most need to be discussed in order to facilitate connection.



Oh, the
possibilities!



Authentic Conversation

A mutual attempt to be honest with each other and disclose true thoughts and feelings that are potentially risky in the conversation.



How much do you have in the relational piggy bank?

Withdrawals

- Inconsistency
- Blame/Criticism
- Failure to give recognition
- Jumping to conclusions (attribution error)
- Total task-orientation
- Defensiveness
- Poor follow-through
- Resentment

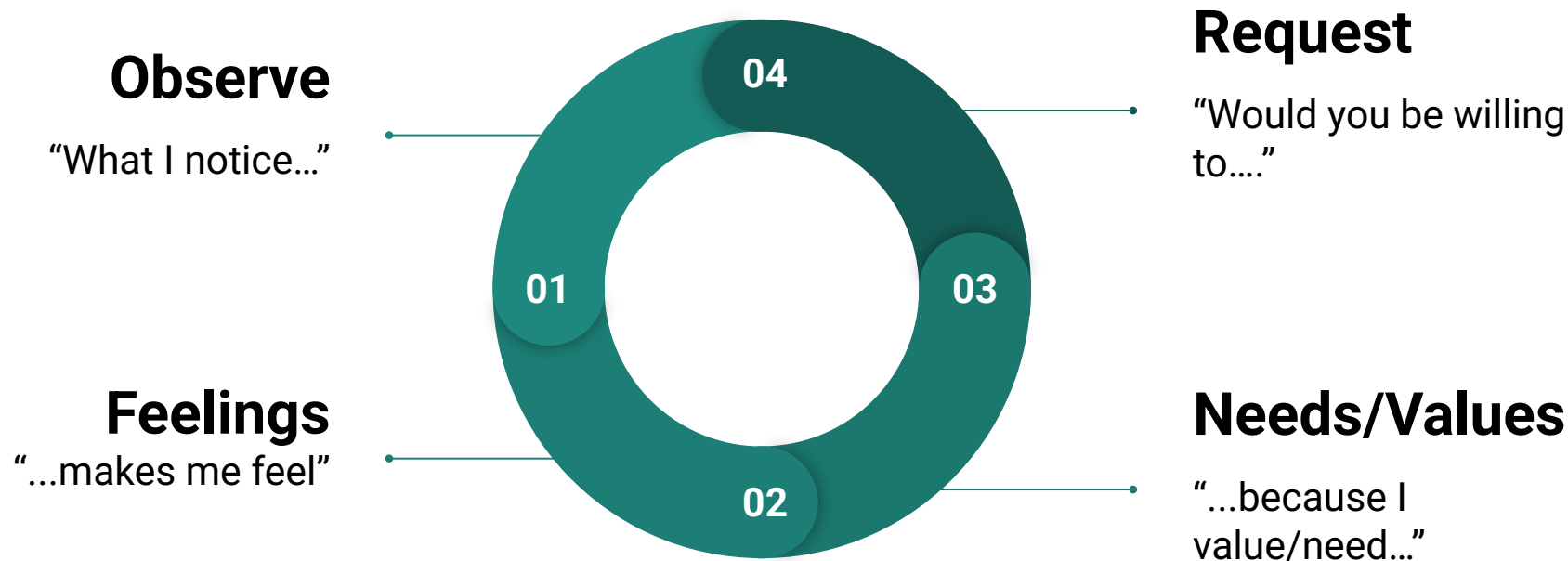


Deposits

- Repair attempts
- Self-disclosure
- Relational-orientation
- Appreciating whole person
- Validation & empathy
- Clarifying expectations
- Inspiration
- Accountability
- Integrity



NVC: Compassionately Communicating Needs



Stage 1 Emotional Prison

We see ourselves
as responsible for
others' feelings.

— DR MARSHALL ROSENBERG,
NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION



Stage 2 Obnoxiousness

“We are
dangerous when
we are not
conscious of our
responsibility
for how we
behave, think,
and feel.”

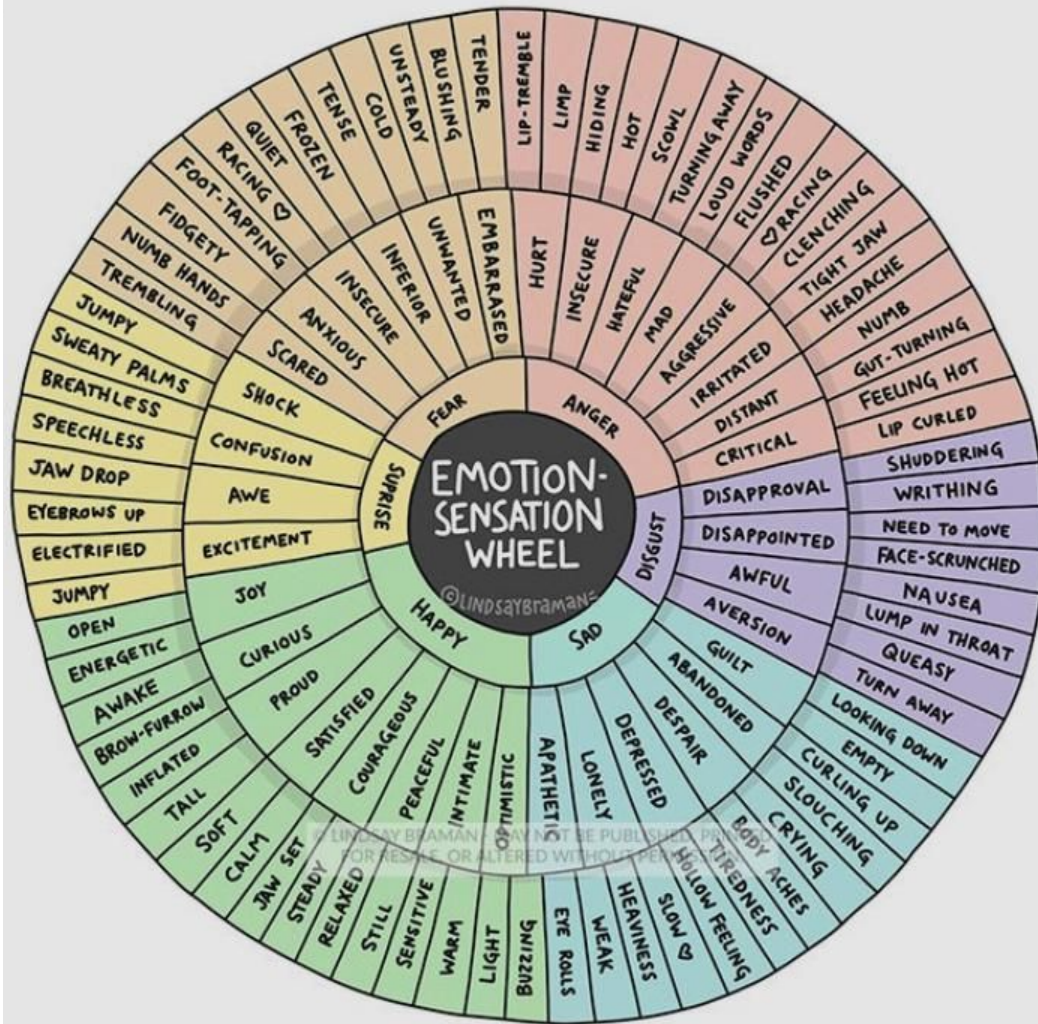
Marshall B. Rosenberg



List of Obnoxious Reactions

- Passive aggression or non-engaging and resorting to blame, silence, and/or a punishing element
- No poker face
- Blame others for how we feel
- Condescension or power tripping





Name it to
tame it.



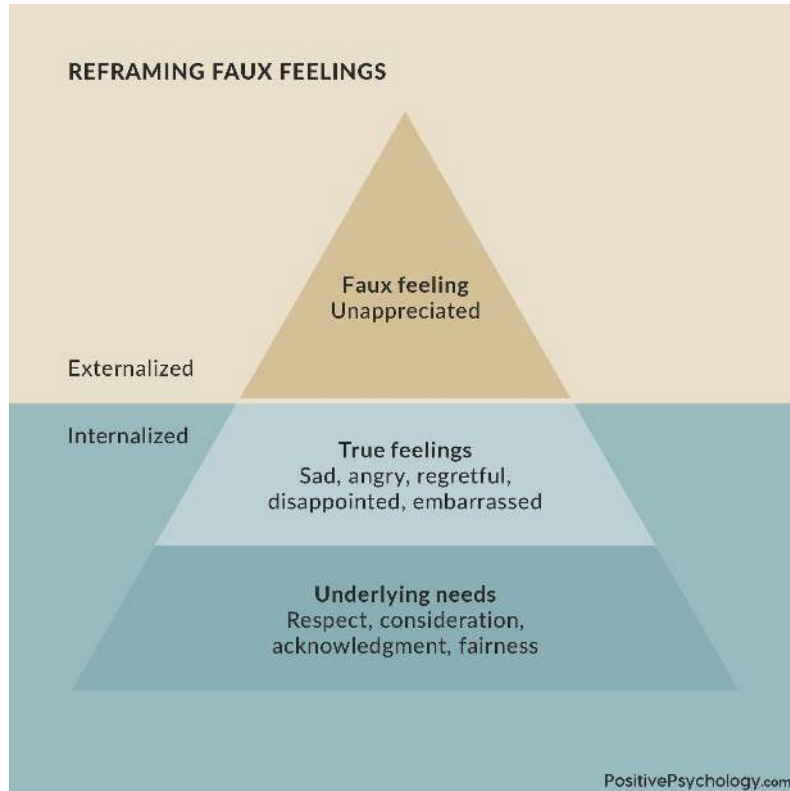
Faux Feelings



Hurt | Sadness | Fear | Grief | Disappointment



Reframing Faux Feelings



EXAMPLES:

Faux feeling	True feelings	Underlying needs
↓	↓	↓
Insulted	Angry, embarrassed, incensed	Respect, consideration, acknowledgment
Blamed	Scared, antagonistic, hurt	Fairness, justice, understanding
Pressured	Overwhelmed, anxious, resentful	Clarity, relaxation, space
Rejected	Defiant, embarrassed, angry	Belonging, connection, acknowledgment



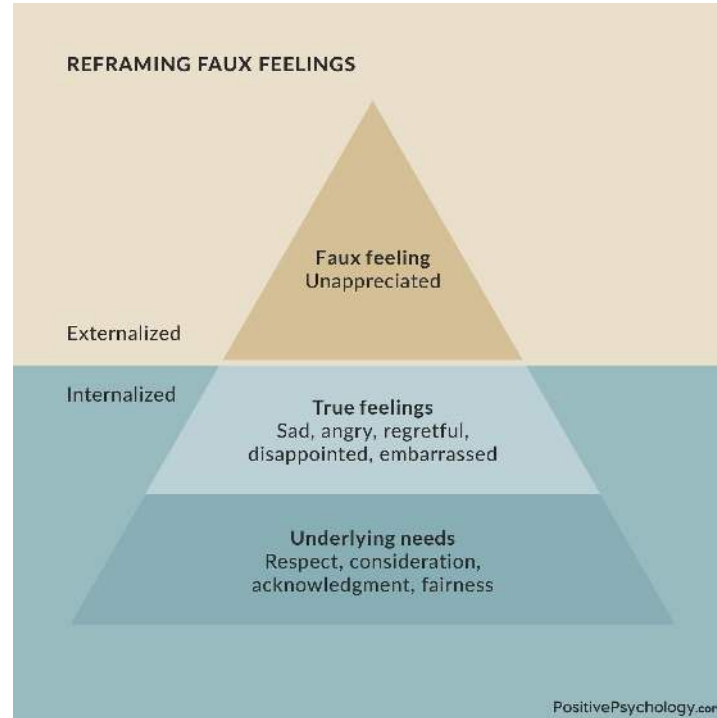
Share a time you were recently upset.

What were your:

Faux feelings

True feelings

Underlying needs



self-determination theory

HUMAN BEINGS HAVE THREE BASIC NEEDS:

COMPETENCE

People need to gain mastery and control of their own lives & their environment.
Essential to wellness.

AUTONOMY

People need to feel in control of their own life, behaviours and goals. This is about choice.

RELATEDNESS

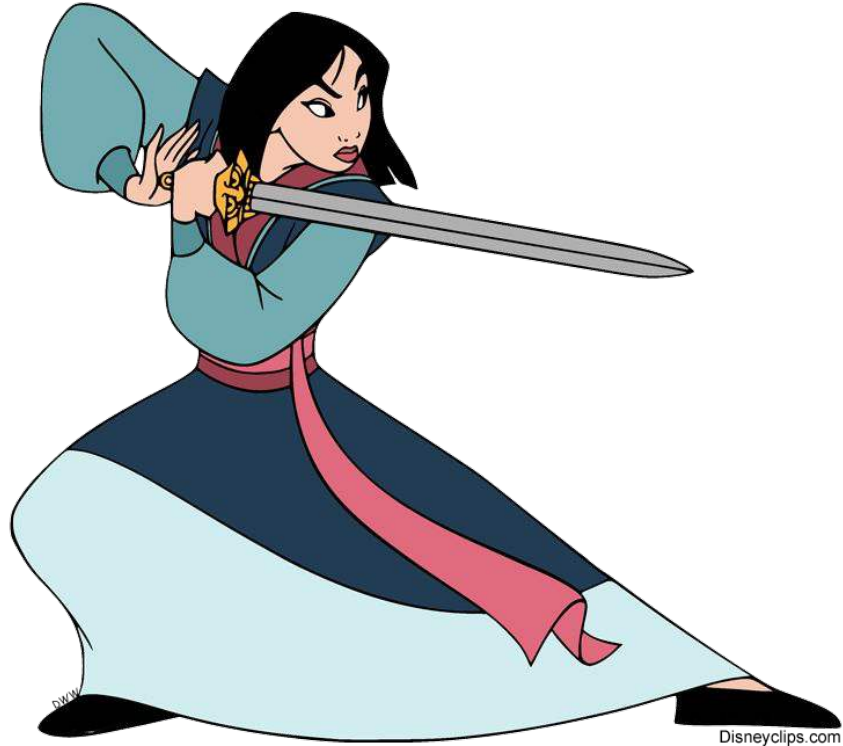
People need to experience a sense of belonging and connection with other people.

*Feeling cared for by others
& to care for others.*

Based on the work of Richard Ryan and Edward Deci.



NEED	DESCRIPTION	INJURY	COPING PATTERN
Responsive -ness	Feel needs being met	Lonely Unworthy Neglected Hurt Anxious Depressed Insecure Doubtful Don't matter	Excessive reassurance or withdrawal
Attention	Be seen		Exaggerated or unusual behaviours
Security	Safe and secure		Control, rigidity, hypervigilance
Belonging/ Acceptance	Included and welcomed by group		People pleasing, difficult to trust
Validation	Positively reinforced by group		Perfectionism, big emotions, or avoidance
Connection	Comforted, meaningful communication		People pleasing, perfectionism, overachieving



There is a middle road to be found between waving your sword, taking prisoners, and locking yourself in the dungeon.

- Pixie Lighthouse
- Take a few breaths
- Practice anxiety relieving techniques
- Exercise humility
- Get curious about **needs**



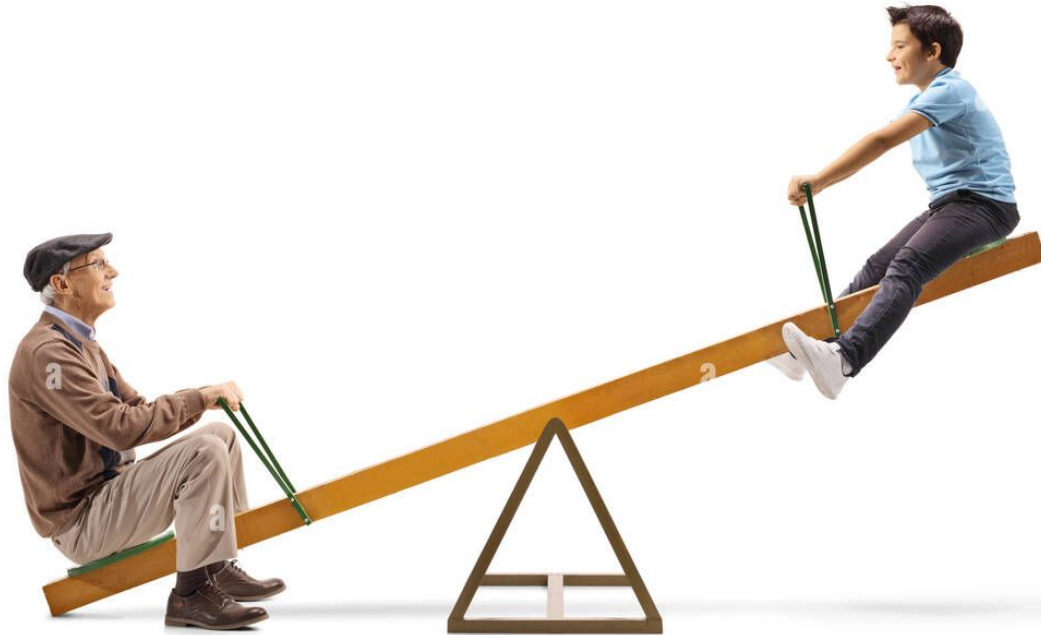
Stage 3 Emotional Liberation

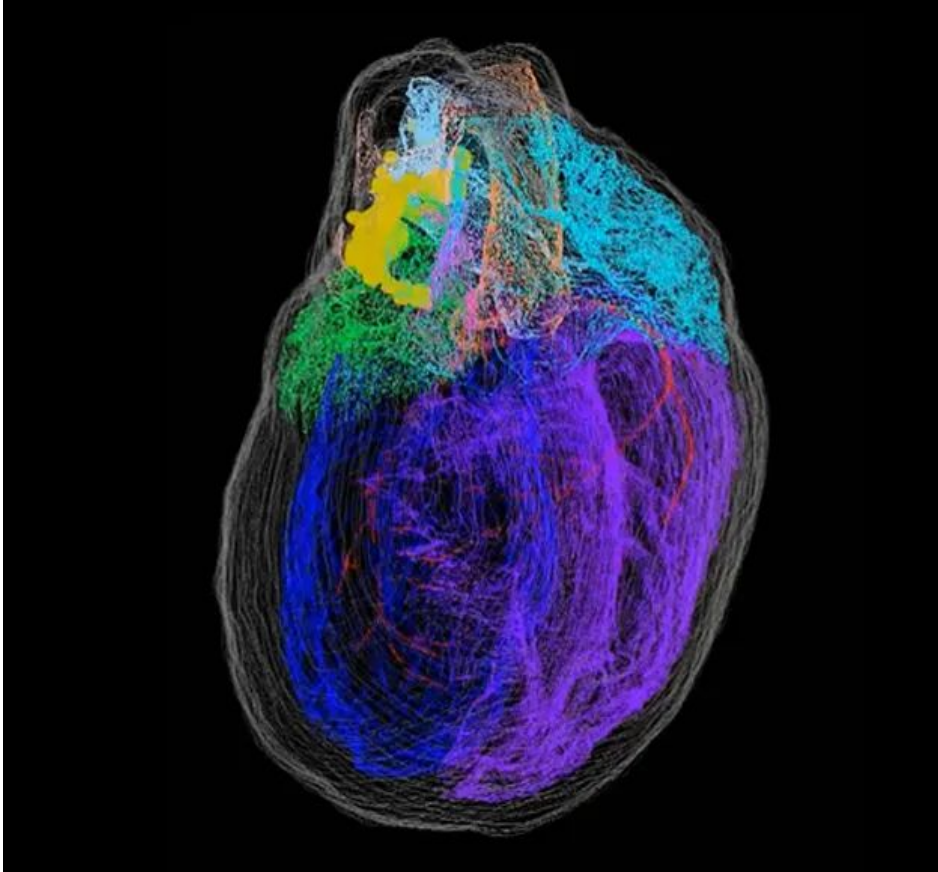
“Our actions are fulfilling to us, as well as to those who receive our efforts. We are aware we can never meet our own needs at the expense of others.”

— DR MARSHALL ROSENBERG
NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION



Prosocial vs. Defensive Networks

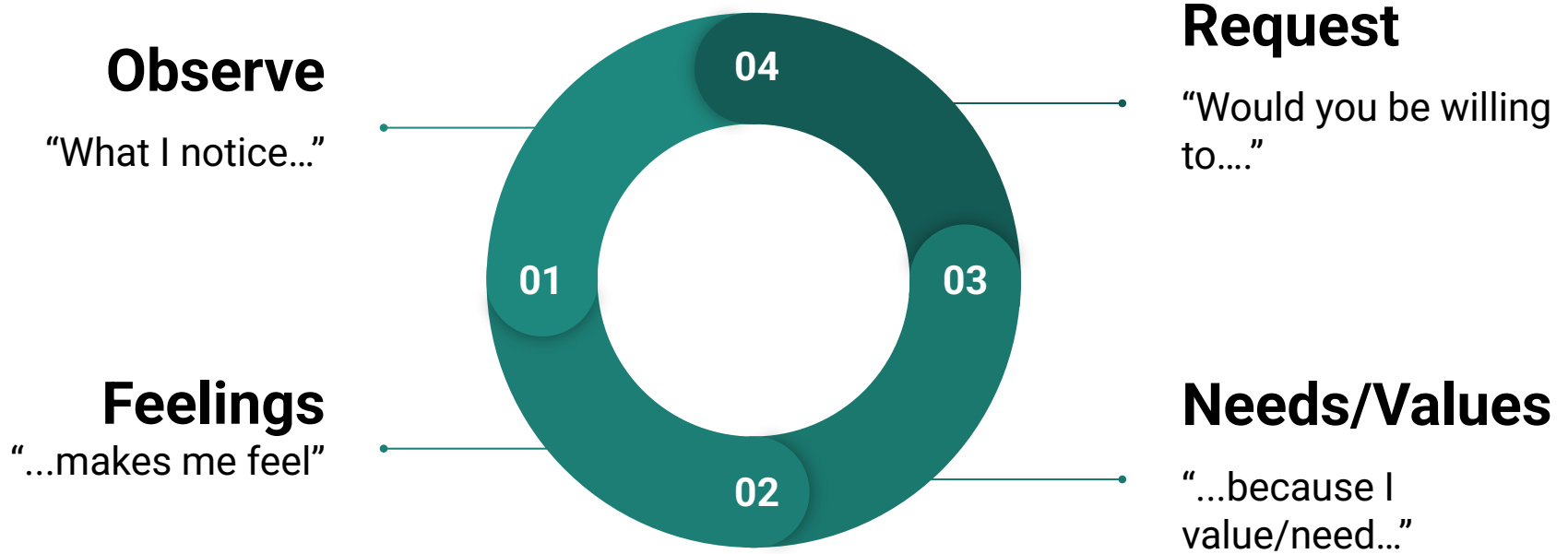




Set the (Vagal*) Tone

*Vagal tone is the activity of the vagus nerve, which helps regulate heart rate, blood pressure, and other automatic functions. It's a key part of the parasympathetic nervous system, which controls many of the body's functions while at rest.

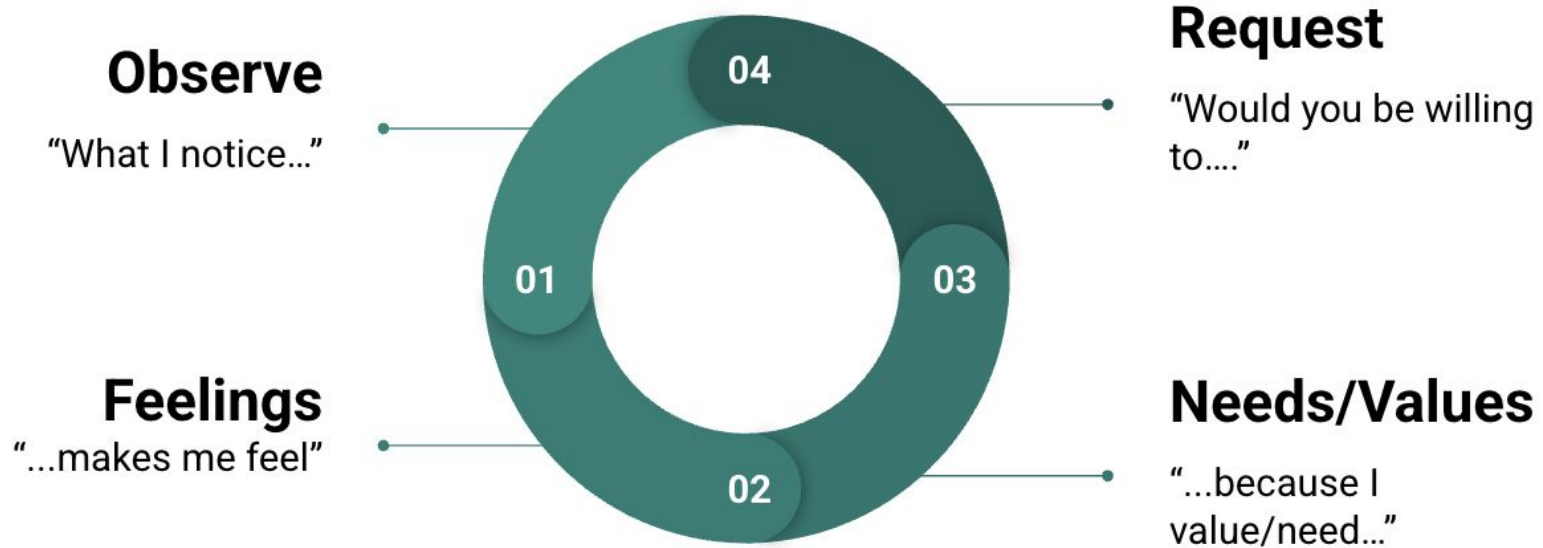




*How can you demonstrate care for the needs of others that your boundaries impact?



Practice an NVC Request



What's the best thing that
could happen if you had
the conversation you
know you need to have?

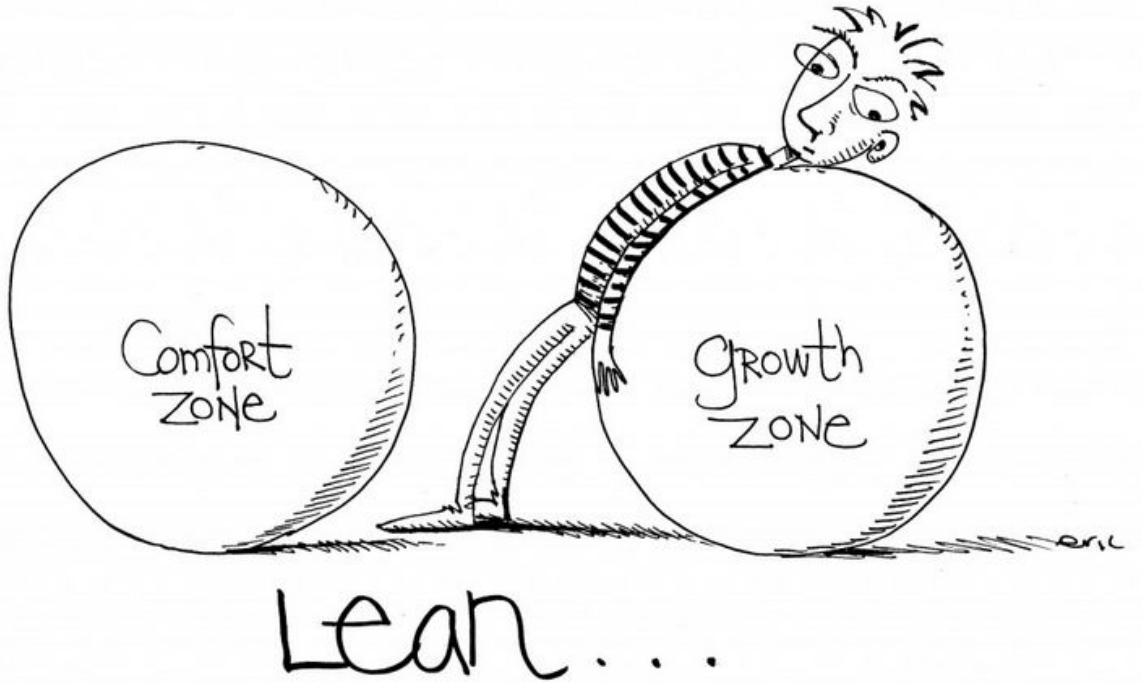




Call to Action:
Use your
weapons
wisely.



THANK
YOU





Additional Resources



1. Mind reading
2. Rehearsing
3. Judging
4. Daydreaming
5. Advising
6. Being right
7. Derailing
8. Placating
9. Comparing
10. Identifying
-
11. Filtering
12. Sparring

Mindful Listening Blocks



Defensiveness

Defensiveness is an emotional and physical state in which a person reacts with anger, competitiveness or avoidance. When defensive, energy is spent on self-protection rather than listening.

It arises when a person feels:
threatened, punished, unimportant,
incompetent, unsafe or “less than”



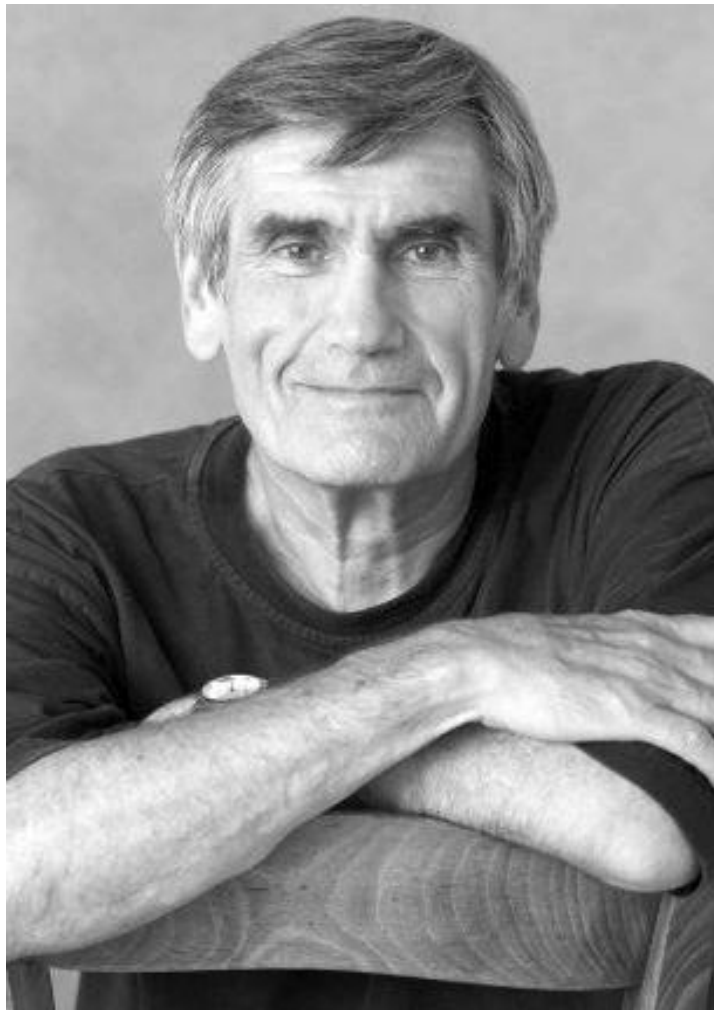
Defensiveness Anti-Dote

Agree – i.e. find the areas that you do agree on (e.g. a shared purpose, facts etc), often people can be in violent agreement, with just 5-10% points of difference.

Build – Our education system and culture raises us to be critical. So we are better at tearing things down than building up. Skilled negotiators use the principle of ‘Yes and...’ This is especially useful if the other side has missed out a key part of the argument.

Compare – We should not set up the other person’s point of view to be wrong, but just different. Often an opening statement like “I think I see things differently...” helps.





If "violent" means acting in ways that result in hurt or harm, then much of how we communicate could indeed be called "violent" communication.

Nonviolent **COMMUNICATION**

A Language of Life



Words matter. Find common ground with anyone,
anywhere, at any time, both personally and professionally.

MARSHALL B. ROSENBERG, PhD

Foreword by **Deepak Chopra**

Endorsed by Tony Robbins, Arun Gandhi, Marianne Williamson,
John Gray, Jack Canfield, Dr. Thomas Gordon, Riane Eisler, and others



NVC Supporting Materials



When <observation> ,I feel <feeling> because I'm needing some <universal needs> .Would you be willing to <request> ?

OBSERVATION	FEELINGS			NEEDS			REQUEST
Do Be factual and focus on facts. When <I/you> <see/ hear/ remember/ imagine> <description of what happened without evaluation> E.g. "When I saw that you didn't arrive on time for our appointment twice this week..."	E.g. Feelings when needs are met.			E.g. of needs			Do Be concrete, specific and ask for a positive action. E.g. "Would you be willing to let me know if you are going to be late at least an hour before we meet?"
Avoid Avoid judgement, evaluation and emotion. E.g. AVOID: "When you're always inconsiderate and late for our meetings..."	AFFECTIONATE compassionate friendly loving	CONFIDENT empowered open safe secure	GRATEFUL appreciative thankful	CONNECTION acceptance appreciation belonging cooperation communication community compassion consideration consistency empathy inclusion intimacy love respect/ self-respect	PHYSICAL air food movement/ exercise rest/sleep sexual expression safety shelter touch water	AUTONOMY choice freedom independence space spontaneity	Avoid Negative requests about 'stop' doing things. Also avoid general non-specific requests. E.g. AVOID: "Stop disrespecting me all the time."
	ENGAGED alert curious engrossed fascinated interested intrigued stimulated	EXCITED amazed aroused astonished eager energetic enthusiastic invigorated passionate surprised vibrant	JOYFUL delighted glad happy	EXHILARATED ecstatic thrilled	HONESTY authenticity integrity presence	MEANING awareness celebration of life challenge clarity competence consciousness contribution creativity discovery efficacy effectiveness growth hope learning mourning participation purpose self-expression stimulation to matter understanding	
	HOPEFUL expectant encouraged optimistic		PEACEFUL calm relaxed relieved satisfied	CONNECTION safety security stability support to know and be known to see and be seen to understand and be understood trust	PLAY joy humor	PEACE beauty communion ease equality harmony inspiration order	
	AFRAID frightened mistrustful panicked scared suspicious	CONFUSED bewildered torn	EMBARRASSED ashamed guilty				
	DISCONNECTED alienated distant distracted	FATIGUE exhausted tired					
	ANNOYED frustrated impatient	DISQUIET agitated disconcerted disturbed shocked	PAIN devastated lonely				
	ANGRY furious outraged		SAD depressed				

E.g. When I saw you were late for our appointment twice this week, I felt *frustrated* because I'm needing some *trust and respect*. Would you be willing to *let me know if you are going to be late at least an hour before we meet?*

The Validation Formula

Tentative Opening	+ Feeling	+ About or because or when + thought
It sounds like	You feel lonely	When ...
If I hear you correctly	You're mad	Because of
You seem to be saying	You feel afraid	That...
I think I hear you saying	You feel embarrassed	Because they
I'm not sure I am following	Your nervous	About the
Are you saying that	You're frustrated	About ...
Am I hearing you say	You're worried	They will...

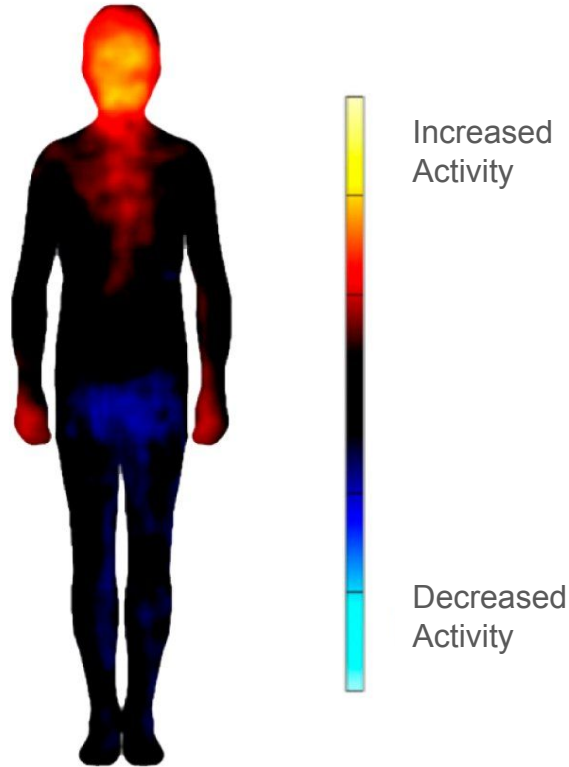


Validation No-Nos

Fixing It	A: I'm anxious about getting to the airport on time. B: I'll drive you.
One-Upping	A: Check out this bruise from my fall down the stairs. B: That's tiny, look at what I got when I was hit by a bike.
Storytelling	A: I couldn't get a taxi for hours last night and had to walk home at 5 am. B: That sounds like the time when...
Consoling	A: I feel terrible that my student failed his exam. B: You're not to blame, you're a brilliant tutor.
Sympathizing	A: The dentist told me I need to have very painful root canal surgery. B: Oh man, that's terrible.
Interrogating	A: I can't get my mom to listen to my point of view. B: What's the problem, exactly?
Shutting Down	A: My boss has cut my pay. B: Buck up, let's play some pool.
Educating	A: I don't know anybody at my new college. B: See it as a chance to develop your social skills.
Explaining	A: I'm annoyed because you left the kids waiting an hour after school. B: That's only because the traffic was terrible...
Advising	A: I can't understand where all my money goes after I get paid. B: I reckon you should create a budget.
Correcting	A: I think your essay about the greenhouse could be improved. B: It was about a glasshouse, not a greenhouse.



Contempt Body Map



Contempt is an attitude towards individuals, social groups and eventually ideologies, that evokes a *sense of superiority and the right to judge, amid feelings of disgust and anger.*

Resentment is a complex emotion that has been described as a mixture of disappointment, disgust and anger or as a secondary emotion that can be elicited in the face of insult and/or injury. Resentments are the natural result of not expressing unmet expectations.



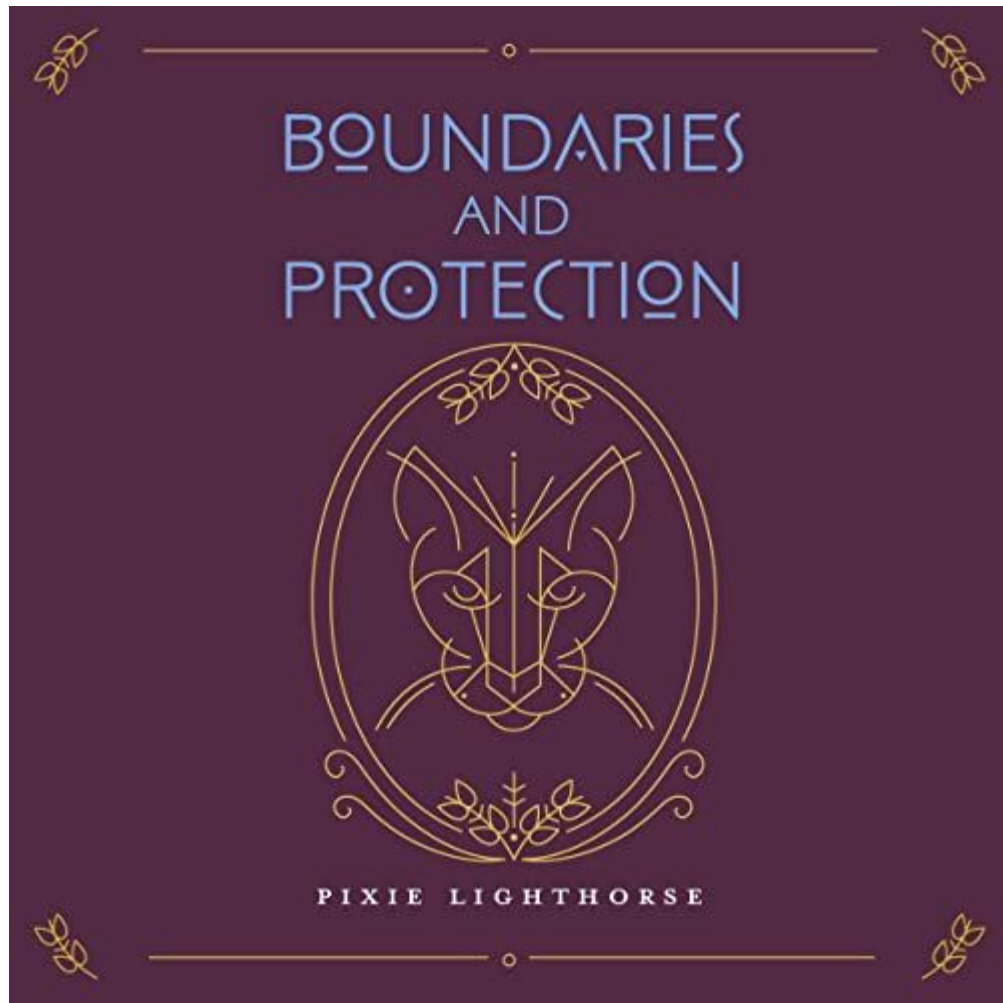
Be Kind to Self When Triggered

What Triggered Me

1. I felt excluded.
2. I felt powerless.
3. I felt unheard.
4. I felt scolded.
5. I felt judged.
6. I felt blamed.
7. I felt disrespected.
8. I felt a lack of affection.
9. I felt I couldn't speak up.
10. I felt lonely.
11. I felt ignored.
12. I felt I couldn't be honest.
13. I felt like the bad guy.
14. I felt forgotten.
15. I felt unsafe.
15. I felt unloved.
17. I felt it was unfair.
18. I felt frustrated.
19. I felt disconnected.
20. I felt trapped.
21. I felt lack of passion.
22. I felt uncared for.
23. I felt manipulated.
24. I felt controlled.

The Gottman Institute





Feel the Feeling | Drop the Story



Victim stories
(It's not my fault)



Villain stories
(It's all your fault)



Helpless stories
(There's nothing
else I can do)



Setting Boundaries & Prompts

- I can only work until 5pm
- I disagree
- I can't support you right now
- I can't lend you my car today
- I need to stay in tonight and rest
- I'm not ready to talk about that
- I don't want to do that
- Can I get back to you tomorrow?
- I need some time to consider this
- I can't make good decisions under this amount of stress.
- I have the energy to ...
- I don't have the resources to carry out this task well
- Can we put our heads together to come up with an alternative solution?
- How can I help with the resources I have?
- I'm getting close to burning out and need to turn toward my health/family/
- No

