

COMMUNICATION CHEAT SHEET

Words to Describe
Feelings and Needs



Feelings when we enjoy what's happening:

CONFIDENT

Empowered, Open,
Proud, Safe, Secure

CONNECTED

Affectionate,
Compassionate,
Friendly, Loving,
Open, Openhearted,
Sympathetic, Tender,
Vulnerable, Warm

CONFIDENT

Absorbed, Alert,
Curious, Engrossed,
Enchanted, Entranced,
Fascinated, Interested,
Intrigued, Involved,
Spellbound, Stimulated

EXCITED

Amazed, Animated,
Ardent, Aroused,

Astonished, Dazzled,
Eager, Energetic,
Enthusiastic, Giddy,
Invigorated, Lively,
Passionate, Surprised,
Vibrant

EXHILARATED

Blissful, Ecstatic,
Elated, Enthralled,
Exuberant

GRATEFUL

Appreciative, Moved,
Thankful, Touched

HOPEFUL

Expectant,
Encouraged, Optimistic

INSPIRED

Amazed, Awed,
Radiant, Rapturous,
Thrilled, Wonder

JOYFUL

Amused, Delighted,
Glad, Happy, Jubilant,
Pleased, Tickled

PEACEFUL

Calm, Clearheaded,
Comfortable, Centered,
Content, Equanimity,
Fulfilled, Mellow, Quiet,
Relaxed, Relieved,
Satisfied, Serene, Still,
Tranquil, Trusting

REFRESHED

Enlivened,
Reinvigorated,
Rejuvenated, Renewed,
Rested, Restored,
Revived

Needs:

AUTONOMY

Choice, Empowerment,
Freedom, Independence,
Space, Spontaneity

CONNECTION

Acceptance, Affection,
Appreciation, Belonging,
Closeness, Communication,
Community, Companionship,
Compassion, Consideration,
Consistency, Cooperation,
Empathy, Generosity,
Inclusion, Intimacy, Love,
Mutuality, Nurturing,
Openness, Reliability,
Respect/Self-respect, Safety,
Security, Stability, Support,

To know and be known,
To see and be seen,
To understand and be
understood, To be heard,
Trust, Understanding, Warmth

HARMONY

Balance, Beauty,
Communion, Ease,
Equality, Equanimity,
Inspiration, Order, Peace,
Serenity

HONESTY

Authenticity, Clarity,
Congruence, Integrity,
Openness, Presence,
Reliability, Self-expression,
Transparency, Trust

MEANING

Awareness, Celebration,
Consciousness,
Contribution, Creativity,
Discovery, Effectiveness,
Efficacy, Growth, Hope,
Learning, Mattering,
Mourning, Participation,
Purpose, Self-expression

PLAY

Adventure, Joy, Humour,
Spontaneity, Stimulation

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

Air, Food, Movement/Exercise,
Rest/Sleep, Sexual expression,
Safety, Shelter, Sustenance,
Touch, Water



Feelings when we don't enjoy what's happening:

AFRAID

Apprehensive, Dread, Foreboding, Frightened, Mistrustful, Panicked, Petrified, Scared, Suspicious, Terrified, Wary, Worried

ANGRY*

Enraged, Furious, Incensed, Indignant, Irate, Livid, Outraged, Resentful

ANNOYED*

Aggravated, Dismayed, Disgruntled, Displeased, Exasperated, Frustrated, Impatient, Irlked, Irritated

AVERSE

Animosity, Appalled, Contempt, Disgusted, Dislike, Hate, Horrified, Hostile, Repulsed

CONFUSED

Ambivalent, Baffled, Bewildered, Dazed, Hesitant, Lost, Mystified, Perplexed, Puzzled, Torn

DISCONNECTED

Alienated, Aloof, Apathetic, Bored, Cold, Detached, Distant, Distracted, Indifferent, Numb, Removed, Uninterested, Withdrawn

DISQUIETED

Agitated, Alarmed, Discombobulated, Disconcerted, Disturbed, Perturbed, Rattled, Restless, Shocked, Startled, Surprised, Troubled, Turbulent, Turmoil, Uncomfortable, Uneasy, Unnerved, Unsettled, Upset

EMBARRASSED

Ashamed*, Chagrined, Flustered, Guilty*, Mortified, Self-conscious

FATIGUED

Beat, Burnt out, Depleted, Exhausted, Lethargic, Listless, Sleepy, Tired, Weary, Worn out

PAIN

Agony, Anguished, Bereaved, Devastated, Grief, Heartbroken, Hurt, Lonely, Miserable, Regretful, Remorseful

SAD

Depressed*, Dejected, Despair, Despondent, Disappointed, Discouraged, Disheartened, Forlorn, Gloomy, Heavy hearted, Hopeless, Melancholy, Unhappy, Wretched

TENSE

Anxious, Bitter, Cranky, Distressed, Distraught, Edgy, Fidgety, Frazzled, Irritable, Jittery, Nervous, Overwhelmed, Restless, Stressed out

VULNERABLE

Fragile, Guarded, Helpless, Insecure, Leery, Reserved, Sensitive, Shaky

YEARNING

Envious, Jealous, Longing, Nostalgic, Pining, Wistful

***Feelings marked with an asterisk are usually not 'pure' feelings. They may include critical or assumptions, interpretations, or judgments. It is advisable to clarify related needs.**

The following feelings usually arise from assumptions about others' feelings, beliefs, or intentions. They may precede self-protective or aggressive behavior ("lashing out"). There is usually a more vulnerable feeling underneath.

Abandoned, Abused, Accused, Attacked, Belittled, Betrayed, Blamed, Boxed-in, Bullied, Cheapened, Cheated, Coerced, Condemned, Controlled, Cornered, Criticized, Devalued, Diminished, Discredited, Dismissed, Disparaged, Distrusted, Excluded, Harassed, Ignored, Insulted, Interrupted, Intimidated, Invalidated, Judged, Let down, Manipulated, Micromanaged, Misunderstood, Mistrusted, Neglected, Offended, Oppressed, Patronized, Pressured, Provoked, Put down, Rejected, Ridiculed, Ripped off, Scapegoated, Shamed, Taken for granted, Threatened, Tricked, Trivialized, Unappreciated, Unheard, Unloved, Unseen, Unsupported, Unwanted, Used, Victimized, Vilified, Violated, Wronged

