

Step 1: Observation

What happened? (Facts only)

- Describe the situation without judgment or evaluation.
- Phrase: "When I saw/heard..."

Example: "When I saw the dishes still in the sink..."

Step 2: Feelings

How do you feel? (Emotion words)

- Identify an emotion you are experiencing, not a thought.
- Phrase: "I feel..."

Example: "I feel frustrated and overwhelmed..."

Step 3: Needs

What need is connected to your feeling?

- Link your feeling to a universal human need (e.g., respect, support, connection).
- Phrase: "...because I need..."

Example: "...because I need support and shared responsibility."

Step 4: Request

What would make life more wonderful now?

- Ask clearly and positively for a specific action.
- Phrase: "Would you be willing to..."

Example: "Would you be willing to load the dishwasher tonight?"

Empathy Loop (For Listening)

When someone shares with you:

- Reflect back what you hear using feeling + need.
 - Ask: “Are you feeling ____ because you need ____?”
 - Offer presence and empathy, not solutions.
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Full Example:

“When I saw you texting during our conversation (Observation), I felt hurt (Feeling) because I value being heard and feeling connected (Need). Would you be willing to put your phone away when we talk? (Request)”