

Presbyterian Counseling Center

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CENTERPOINT

In close relationships, we often feel sad, angry, disappointed, or hurt when our loved one does not meet a need we have. It's important to let our partner (or anyone) know how we have been affected. The way to do this is to state the facts directly, rather than giving your impression of the situation. Then tell the other how that situation made you feel.

For example, you and your spouse have plans to go to a movie at 7pm. Your spouse arrives home at 6:59 and when you get to the theatre not only has the movie started but it has also sold out! You might be tempted to say, "You always get home late!! You must not care for me or respect me to treat me this way." In this instance, you have not stated the facts ("always" is not this instance and "late" is a relative term). You have not directly stated your own feelings but tried to tell the other what her/his experience is.

Instead you could try just expressing how your spouse's action affected you. Be sure to state **ONLY** the facts. Then state your emotion. "When you got home at 6:59, I felt disappointed, hurt and angry." It's as simple as that. No one can argue with the facts or with what you feel. Next month we'll go a little farther with this example and explore how to state what your needs are.

To contact the Presbyterian Counseling Center call: 910-452-7370 or visit us at **presbyteriancounselingcenter.org**.

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