

# Appendix B: Social Sharing Advice

This guidance will help you practice each step of social sharing. By combining your responses to the four steps, you can create statements that will help you express difficult emotions to others.

The basic structure of these statements is as follows:

“When I hear/see, etc \_\_\_\_\_ (observation), I feel \_\_\_\_\_ (label emotions), because I need \_\_\_\_\_ (express needs); would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_ (request)?”

## Advice #1: Making Observations

The goal of this step is to communicate what you observe (see, hear, notice, remember, etc.). Observation is about reporting facts without judging or evaluating what’s happening.

Your observations make up the “When I hear/see...” part of the sharing statement above.

### How to do it

- ← Ask Yourself: What really happened? What are the facts?
- ← Focus on the facts: Describe what you see, hear, notice, etc. - nothing more.
- ← Use “I” rather than “you” statements. This helps you express the facts without blaming, criticising, or accusing.

Correct Examples	Incorrect Examples
← “When I hear you raising your voice...”	← “When you become aggressive...”
← “When I see you checking your phone while I’m talking...”	← “When you ignore me...”
← “When I hear you say you are too busy to meet up...”	← “You never care about what I have to say...”

The statements on the left make specific observations (not assumptions) about what happened or why. They state the facts and don’t place blame or make accusations, which makes it more likely the other person will be open to hearing what you’ve got to say.

The examples on the right include assumptions and criticisms of others rather than focusing on facts. These types of statements can make people defensive and less receptive to what you’re saying because they feel accused and personally attacked.

## Advice #2: Naming Your Feelings

The goal of this step is to identify and label your emotions. In Session 3, we explored labelling to develop emotional clarity. This is important when sharing challenging emotions with others because it helps you express what you're feeling clearly and precisely, which can reduce misunderstandings and potential escalation of conflicts.

Your emotion labels make up the "I feel..." part of the sharing statement above.

### How to do it

- ← Ask yourself: What specific emotion(s) and bodily sensations am I experiencing?
- ← Focus on what you're feeling: Describe the specific emotions and physical signs rather than thoughts.
- ← Be precise: Use specific labels like "frustrated," "hurt," "anxious," or "disappointed" rather than vague terms like "bad" or "upset."

**Tip:** Refer to the emotion wheel you used in Session 3 to help pinpoint the exact emotion(s).

Correct Examples	Incorrect Examples
← "I feel nervous."	← "You make me feel nervous."
← "I feel frustrated."	← "I feel that you should know better."
← "I feel hurt."	← "When you walk away during our conversation, I feel abandoned."

As you can see from the examples on the left, the phrases are all about what's happening inside you without blaming anyone.

The statements on the right blame others for how you feel, which can make them defensive and lead to arguments. Your emotions are always related to your body and do not include words that involve another person.

## Advice #3: Expressing Your Needs

The goal of this step is to state the needs connected to your emotions. In Session 5, we explored how emotions can tell you the extent to which your needs are being met. Extracting and sharing this data with others can open the door for them to support you and understand what is needed to help you feel better.

Your needs make up the "because I need..." part of the sharing statement above.

## How to do it

- ← Ask yourself: What does the data say about what I need in this situation?
- ← Focus on your needs: Your needs are always about you, not about another person; focus on what you need rather than telling others what to do.
- ← State needs clearly: Be specific about what you need.

Correct Examples	Incorrect Examples
← "I need financial security."	← "I need job X."
← "I need to feel appreciated."	← "I need you to thank me every day."
← "I need to feel understood."	← "I need you to agree with me."

The examples on the left clearly state what is needed without making direct demands of others.

The examples on the right place expectations and demands on other people, which can make them feel manipulated and defensive.

## Advice #4: Requesting specific actions

The goal of this step is to request a specific action (or actions) that would help meet your needs. When asking others to take action, your requests must be clear, realistic, and respectful. This will help other people understand exactly what you need from them and reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings.

Your request(s) make up the "Would you be willing to..." part of the sharing statement above.

## How to do it

- ← Ask yourself: What can I ask from others to help meet these needs?
- ← Be specific: Requests should be clear and specific to avoid confusion.
- ← Ensure it's a request and not a demand: Phrase requests in a way that allows the other person to say "no" without fear of repercussion, which makes it a request instead of a demand.

Correct Examples	Incorrect Examples
<p>← “Would you be willing to put your phone away and listen to me?”</p> <p>← “Would you be willing to drive at the speed limit?”</p> <p>← “Would you be willing to help me with this project today?”</p>	<p>← “Put your phone away when I’m talking to you.”</p> <p>← “You should drive more responsibly.”</p> <p>← “You have to help me with this project now!”</p>

The examples on the left clearly state what actions will help satisfy unmet needs, doing so without making demands on others. They are respectful and leave room for the other person to decline

The examples on the right do not make specific requests; they are vague and open to interpretation, which can be confusing. They are also phrased as demands rather than requests, which are likely to be met with resistance because people may feel controlled or pressured to do something.

Tip: Make sure requests are realistic and reasonable to increase the likelihood that the other person will agree and help find a resolution.

## Advice #5: Putting it all together

After making observations, naming your feelings, expressing your needs, and requesting specific actions, it’s time to combine these elements into a sharing statement. You can use these statements to communicate difficult emotions to others respectfully and clearly.

Remember, the basic structure of sharing statements is as follows:

“When I hear/see \_\_\_\_\_(observation), I feel \_\_\_\_\_(label emotions) because I need \_\_\_\_\_(express needs); would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_(request)?”

Use this basic structure to combine your responses into effective and accurate sharing statements.

# Examples of Effective Sharing Statements

- ← When I see you checking your phone while I'm talking, I feel hurt because I need to feel heard and valued in our conversations; would you be willing to put your phone away when we talk?
- ← When I hear you raising your voice during our discussions, I feel anxious because I need a calm environment to express myself; would you be willing to speak in a softer tone when we discuss things?
- ← When I see the dishes piled up in the sink, I feel overwhelmed because I need a clean and organised space to relax; would you be willing to help me with the dishes tonight?
- ← When I hear you interrupting me while I'm speaking, I feel frustrated because I need to feel that my thoughts and opinions are valued; would you be willing to let me finish speaking before you respond?
- ← When I see you not following through on promises, I feel disheartened because I need to trust that I can rely on you; would you be willing to set aside some time each week for us to do something together?"

**Tip:** Be patient and practice. It might take time for the other person to understand and fully respond to your request. Also, like any new skill, creating and using sharing statements effectively requires practice. The more you use them, the more natural they will become.