

WHY USE "I" STATEMENTS?*

"I" statements help the speaker move	
From this behaviour or attitude.....to this behaviour or attitude
From making the assumption that I understand and can speak for someone else's motivations, concerns or experiences.....to realizing that I need to clarify my own motivations, concerns and experiences.
From talking about another's experiences, what they think and feel.....to saying what I see, feel, think, and experience.
From denying or avoiding the problem or my role in the problem.....to admitting mistakes and taking responsibility.
From being silent or withdrawing.....to making requests and suggestions and stating preferences.
From making blaming, critical "you" statements.....to giving assertion messages that let someone know how I feel, what's bothering me, and what I need.
From assuming simplicity, being quick to pass judgement or place blame.....to assuming complexity and looking within.
From saying "Yes" to everything or saying "Yes" impulsively, just going along.....to saying "No" when I need to and identifying my limits and boundaries, as in "I feel uncomfortable when.....;I need....."
From giving general praise and sweeping judgements, even when those judgements are positive, as in, "You're such a good boy,"to giving specific appreciation messages, as in, "I really appreciate it when you.....; it helps me a lot."

**Adapted with permission from Carol Miller Lieber and Rachel Poliner, Educators for Social Responsibility, 1996*