Title: Expressing feelings

Exercise Code: SLINTEGRA027

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| Modules: | Group size: | Duration: |
| 1. Social Learning  3. Personal Integrity  4. Professional Integrity  5. Conflict Solving Strategies | Small group  Large group | 45 min |

**Purpose:**

* To learn how to express your emotions
* To recognize when to express emotions and when not to, but rather we describe events and other people using our emotions as a basis.
* To improve our own verbal expressions

**Description:**

Participants circle the number in front of each of the following statements in which they think feelings are verbally expressed.

1. I feel you do not love me.
2. I am sad that you are leaving.
3. I feel scared when you say that.
4. When you do not greet me, I feel neglected.
5. I am happy that you can come.
6. You are disgusting.
7. I feel like hitting you.
8. I feel misunderstood.
9. I feel good about what you did for me.
10. I am worthless.

The trainer discusses the answers based on the following responses:

Responses:

1. The statement “You do not love me” is not an expression of feelings. It is a statement in which the speaker is conveying what he/she thinks the other person is feeling.. Whenever the words *I feel* are followed by the words *I, you, he, she, they, that, like* or as *if*, what follows is generally not what is considered to be a feeling. An expression of feeling in this case might be: “I am sad.” Or “I am feeling anguished.”
2. If you circled this number, you are right that a feeling was verbally expressed.
3. If you circled this number, you are right that a feeling was verbally expressed.
4. This sentence contains the word “neglected” ,which is not an expression of feelings. It is a word that conveys what the person thinks the other person is doing to him/her (that he/she is neglected). An expression of feeling might be: “When you do not greet me at the door, I feel lonely.”
5. If you circled this number, you are right that a feeling was verbally expressed.
6. The word “disgusting” is not an expression of feelings. It is an expression of how speaker thinks about the other person, rather than how the speaker is feeling. An expression of feeling might be: “I feel disgusting”.
7. The phrase “like hitting you” doesn’t express feelings. It expresses what the speaker imagines doing, rather than how the speaker is feeling. An expression of feeling might be: “I am furious at you.”
8. The word “misunderstood” doesn’t express feelings. It expresses what the speaker thinks the other person is doing. An expression of feeling might be: “I feel discourage.”
9. If you circled this number, you are right that a feeling was verbally expressed. However, the word *good* is vague when used to convey a feeling. We can usually express our feelings more clearly by using other words, for example: *relieved, gratified, encouraged.*
10. The word “worthless” doesn’t express feelings. It expresses how the speaker thinks about himself or herself, rather than how the speaker is feeling. An expression of feeling might be: “I feel skeptic about my own talent.”

**Methods:**

Experiental learning

Through the exercise the participants will recognize when a person is and is not expressing their own feelings and when they are focusing on describing external events, people and situations.

**Advice for Trainer:**

When the participants finish the task the trainer can encourage them to pair up and role play; there they focus on expressing their own emotions and don’t fall into judgement, description or interpretation of external factors.

**Source/Literature:**

Adapted from “Nonviolent communication: a language of life “, B. Rosenberg, 2003

**Handout:**

Expressing feelings