

empathizing with her by listening to her feelings and needs. Here are a few tips: An observation is just the facts; avoid adding your judgments about the situation. Talk about your own feelings; avoid talking about the other person's feelings. Needs are universal; every human being has the same needs. Strategies are specific; ask someone for a specific action to help you meet your need.

Be aware of opportunities to be honest with people using the four steps of Compassionate Communication.



AUGUST 29

Few blame themselves until they have exhausted all other possibilities.

—Anonymous

Being Honest About Our Anger

When I am angry, it is likely that I am not getting something that I want and that I think I should get, and I am about to say something that will ensure I won't get it. When we blame other people, we place ourselves in a dangerous position of not meeting our needs in that relationship. Instead, take a deep breath and don't say anything. While taking this breath, quietly acknowledge to yourself *your* unmet needs and feelings in the situation. Only when you have connected to your feelings and needs should you consider speaking to the other person.

Here is how it works. Let's say your boss just told you:

“This proposal is completely unacceptable. You have a half hour to fix it!” Take a breath and think to yourself: “Ugh. I am so ticked at him. He is so demanding and impossible to please because he gives such vague information.” Then connect to the feelings and needs beneath these judgments, “I really *feel annoyed* (feelings) because I’d like *clarity about what he specifically wants* (needs).” Then, say aloud: “You know when I hear that I feel frustrated because I created the proposal based on your specifications. I need some clarity here. Would you be willing to tell me exactly what parts are unacceptable to you?” Such a communication is more likely to meet your needs for clarity, respect, and being valued.

Be aware of opportunities today to practice connecting with yourself before responding to another person in anger.



AUGUST 30

Happiness itself is a kind of gratitude.

—Joseph Wood Krutch

How Are You Feeling?

How are you feeling right this minute? Here is a list of words that may describe how you feel when *your needs are being met*: loving, happy, satisfied, content, excited, joyful, peaceful, confident, elated, vibrant, delighted, amused, or hopeful. Here is a list of feelings you may have if *your needs are not being met*: scared, worried, pain, confused, annoyed,