



## “Expressing Needs & Wants” Printable PDF

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*Overview: Expressing Needs and Wants provides a way for a couple to discuss their core issues while reducing the chance of upset and defensiveness on the part of the other partner. This is facilitated by: (1) Placing the discussion in a context of being physically connected, (2) balancing what they want for themselves with what they want for the other, and (3) balancing their needs and wants with their contribution to the problems.*

**STEP 1: Each partner in the couple should think about what they need and want in their life and in their relationship.**

**STEP 2: Both partners need to choose a way to be connected. Each partner can choose a different way to do this.**

Some of the most effective ways used for the purpose of this activity are:

- Laying with their head in the lap of the other partner, facing up
- Hugging
- Holding both hands

From that position of connectedness, have the one partner talk about the following: (while the other mainly listens)

- What do you need and want to be happy in your life?
- What do you need and want to be happy in your relationship?
- What do you want and need for the other person (not from them)?
- What's one way you think you contribute to the problem, to the negativity, and to the distance between you?

**STEP 3: Switch roles and have the other partner talk about the above, while remaining connected to your partner in a physical way**