# Identifying Underlying Feelings

*This tool will help you gain a deeper understanding of the underlying feelings a speaker may be expressing to help you listen with empathy more effectively.*

Feelings that we experience emotionally

The feelings we experience emotionally differ based on whether our needs are or are not being fulfilled.

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| **When Needs Are Being Fulfilled** | **When Needs Are *Not* Being Fulfilled** |
| GLAD, happy, excited, hopeful, joyful, satisfied, encouraged, confident, inspired, relieved, touched, elated | SAD, lonely, helpless, overwhelmed, dismayed, discouraged, disheartened |
| PEACEFUL, calm, content, absorbed, expansive, loving, blissful, satisfied, relaxed | SCARED, fearful, terrified, nervous, horrified, anxious, lonely |
| LOVING, warm, affectionate, tender, friendly, sensitive | MAD, angry, aggravated, furious, resentful, disgusted, irritated, annoyed, disappointed |
| PLAYFUL, energetic, invigorated, refreshed, stimulated, alive, eager, giddy, adventurous, enthusiastic | CONFUSED, frustrated, troubled, torn, embarrassed, uneasy, worried, concerned |
| RESTED, relaxed, alert, refreshed, energized | TIRED, exhausted, fatigued, indifferent, weary, overwhelmed, helpless, heavy |
| THANKFUL, grateful, appreciative | UNCOMFORTABLE, pained, uneasy, hurt, miserable, embarrassed |

Feelings we experience physically

Feelings exist in our bodies, not outside of them. Feelings generally have physical sensations associated with them. The idea is to develop awareness of our feelings then consciously choose whether or not to express them.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expansive** | **Contracted** | **Burning** | **Faint** | **Shaky** |
| Airy | Breathless | Achy | Chills | Fluttery |
| Bubbly | Congested | Flushed | Clammy | Jumpy |
| Buzzing | Constricted | Frantic | Cool | Pained |
| Light | Dense | Hot | Damp | Shuddering |
| Radiating | Frozen | Quaking | Dizzy | Tingly |
| Relaxed | Heavy | Pounding | Fuzzy | Trembling |
| Shimmering | Numb | Pulsing | Goose-bumpy | Twitching |
| Soft | Sharp | Quivering | Nauseous | Vibrating |
| Sparkly | Tense | Sweating | Queasy |  |
| Warm | Tight | Throbbing | Wobbly |  |

Adapted with the permission of the creator:

Jeff Brown, Certified Trainer with the Center for Nonviolent Communication ([www.evolutionaryorganizations.org](file:///C:/Users/Jess/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/XAZLXKWW/www.evolutionaryorganizations.org))

Evaluations: Indirect expression of feelings

*The following expressions can be considered evaluations rather than feelings. These words say more about what we interpret or judge another person as doing. Use the chart below to help you access the deeper feelings and needs of the speaker while listening with empathy. Note: This list is not designed to be complete or authoritative.*

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| **When you say or hear this evaluation** | **You might be feeling** | **You might be needing** |
| Abandoned | Lonely, terrified, hurt, sad, frightened | Connection, belonging, support, caring, nurturing |
| Abused | Angry, frustrated, frightened | Caring, nurturing, support, consideration,  physical wellbeing, respect |
| Attacked | Scared, angry | Safety |
| Belittled | Angry, frustrated, tense, distressed | Respect, autonomy, to be seen,  acknowledgement, appreciation |
| Betrayed | Angry, hurt, disappointed, enraged | Trust, dependability, honesty, honor, commitment, clarity |
| Blamed | Angry, scared, confused, antagonistic, hostile, bewildered, hurt | Accountability, causality, fairness, justice |
| Cheated | Resentful, hurt, angry | Honesty, fairness, justice, trust, reliability |
| Coerced | Angry, frustrated, frightened, scared | Choice, autonomy, freedom |
| Criticized | Scared, anxious, frustrated, angry,  embarrassed | Understanding, acknowledgement, recognition, accountability, acceptance |
| Disrespected | Embarrassed, frightened, frustrated, hurt, irritated, angry | Respect, appreciation, acknowledgment,  consideration, to be seen and valued |
| Ignored | Lonely, scared, hurt, sad, embarrassed | Connection, belonging, inclusion, community, participation |
| Incompetent | Frustrated, disappointed, worried | Proficiency, success, competence,  effectiveness, development |
| Insulted | Angry, embarrassed | Respect, consideration, acknowledgment,  recognition |
| Interrupted | Angry, frustrated, resentful, hurt | Respect, to be heard, consideration |
| Intimidated | Scared, anxious | Safety, equality, empowerment |
| Manipulated | Angry, scared, powerless, frustrated | Autonomy, empowerment, trust, equality, freedom, connection, genuineness |
| Misunderstood | Upset, angry, frustrated, discouraged | To be heard, understanding, clarity |
| Pressured | Anxious, resentful, overwhelmed | Relaxation, clarity, space, consideration, ease |
| Put down | Angry, sad, embarrassed | Respect, acknowledgement, understanding |
| Rejected | Hurt, scared, angry | Belonging, inclusion, closeness, to be seen, acknowledgement, connection |
| Threatened | Scared, frightened, alarmed, agitated | Safety, autonomy |

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(Originally created and conceived by Marshall Rosenberg)

[The Center for Nonviolent Communication](https://www.cnvc.org/)

With contributions from:

Tom Carlisi, Compassionate/Nonviolent Communication Coach & Trainer (www.carlisiandassociates.com)

[Compassionate Communication Center of Ohio](http://www.speakingpeace.org/compassionate-communication-center-of-ohio/)

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