



Resources for Navigating Emotions in Dialogue: Faux Feelings and Underlying Needs

In *nonviolent communication* (NVC), **universal needs** are the core human motivations we all share, like respect, autonomy, and connection, which lie beneath our emotions and behaviors. Recognizing these needs in conflicts helps us understand each other beyond blame. **Genuine feelings** signal whether these needs are met or unmet, while **faux feelings** are evaluations masquerading as feelings. They carry implicit blame and can escalate misunderstandings. By distinguishing between these, we can communicate our needs clearly and compassionately, fostering connection and reducing defensiveness, ultimately paving the way for constructive resolution.

Evaluative Word	Primary Feeling(s)	Possible Underlying Need(s)
Abandoned	Terrified, hurt, lonely	Nurturing, connection, belonging
Abused	Frightened, confused	Caring, support, well-being
(not) accepted	Upset, scared, lonely	Acceptance, inclusion, belonging
Attacked/ Dumped on	Scared, angry, overwhelmed	Safety, respect, peace
Belittled	Hurt, distressed	Respect, autonomy, visibility
Betrayed	Hurt, disappointed	Trust, honesty, commitment
Blamed	Scared, confused	Accountability, fairness, justice
Bullied	Scared	Autonomy, safety
Caged/trapped	Anxious	Autonomy, freedom
Cheated	Hurt	Honesty, fairness, trust
Coerced	Frustrated, scared	Choice, autonomy, freedom
Criticized	In pain, embarrassed	Understanding, recognition, respect
Discounted	Hurt, frustrated	Matter, inclusion, respect
Disliked	Sad, hurt	Connection, appreciation, inclusion
Excluded	Sad, lonely	Inclusion, belonging
Harassed	Angry, anxious	Respect, space
Hassled	Irritated, frustrated	Serenity, autonomy, calm
Ignored	Lonely, sad	Connection, community, being heard
Insulted	Embarrassed, angry	Respect, Acknowledge
Interrupted	Frustrated	Respect, being heard
Intimidated	Anxious	Safety, empowerment
Invalidated	Hurt, frustrated	Appreciation, recognition

Evaluative Word	Primary Feeling(s)	Possible Underlying Need(s)
Invisible	Sad, scared	To be seen, inclusion
Left out	Sad, lonely	Belonging, community
Let down	Disappointed	Consistency, support
Manipulated	Scared, frustrated	Autonomy, trust, freedom, equality
Marginalized	Frustrated, lonely, sad, disappointed	Inclusion, community
Mistrusted	Upset	Being heard, understanding
Neglected	Lonely, anxious	Connection, care, mattering
Overpowered	Helpless	Equality, freedom, justice
Overworked	Tired, exhausted	Respect, rest
Patronized	Frustrated	Equality, respect
Pressured	Anxious	Relaxation, clarity
Provoked	Angry	Respect
Put down	Embarrassed	Respect, understanding
Rejected	Hurt, sad	Belonging, being seen
Ripped off /screwed	Disappointed	Consideration, fairness
Smothered	Desperate	Space, autonomy
Taken for granted	Sad, disappointed	Appreciation
Threatened	Scared	Safety, autonomy
Tricked	Resentful	Integrity, honesty
Unappreciated/undervalued	Sad, frustrated	Appreciation, respect
Unheard	Sad, frustration	Understanding, empathy,
Unloved	Sad, bewildered	Love, connection, care
Unseen	Sad, anxious	Acknowledgement, visibility
Unsupported	Sad, hurt, lonely	Support, cooperation
Unwanted	Sad, anxious	Belonging, caring
Unsafe	Scared, anxious	Safety, peace
Used	Sad, resentful	Autonomy, mutuality
Violated	Agitated, anxiety	Privacy, safety, trust, space, respect
Wronged	Irritated, resentful, hurt, angry	Respect, fairness, justice, trust

Adapted by the University of Maryland Intergroup Dialogue Training Center (igdtraining@umd.edu) from Natalie Bybee Coaching (www.nataliebybee.com).