

Invalidating vs Invaliding Statements

The Things We Say

“Ordering” You to Feel Differently

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
Smile	I see you frowning
Be happy	You seem down
Cheer up	You feel sad
Lighten up	You feel stubborn
Get over it	I sense that you are stuck
Don't worry	You are very worried about this
Stop whining	I know you want this
Deal with it	I see you're upset with ...
Give it a rest	You feel ... because ...
Forget about it	It's hard to move on
Stop complaining	This is bothering you
Don't be so dramatic	This is a big deal to you

Denying Your Perception, Defending

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
But of course I respect you	You believe that I have been disrespectful
But I do listen to you	You don't feel listened to
That is ridiculous (nonsense, totally absurd, etc)	You see..., you feel..., you hear..., you think...
I was only kidding	I see that I hurt you

Trying to Isolate You

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
You are the only one who feels that way	I hear that you feel ...
It doesn't bother anyone else, why should it bother you?	This bugs you

Minimizing Your Feelings

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
You must be kidding	I am surprised, tell me more
You can't be serious	I had no idea, what else
It can't be that bad	This sounds serious
Your life can't be that bad	Life is rough
You are just ... (being difficult; being dramatic, in a bad mood, tired, etc)	You are in a difficult situation

Using Reason

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
There is no reason to get upset	You are in emotional upheaval
You are not being rational	You are experiencing strong (anger, sadness, fear, etc.)
But it doesn't make any sense to feel that way	Help me understand

Using Reason

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
I don't always do that	You did not like it when I ...

Judging & Labeling You

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
You are a cry baby	Tell me what is wrong
You have a problem	You look out of place
You are too sensitive	That hurt when ...
You are over-reacting	You feel very angry
You are too thin-skinned	It irritates you when ...
You are way too emotional	You feelings are tossed about
You are an insensitive jerk	I felt hurt when ... How did you feel?
You need to get your head examined!	We are upset let's take time to cool off
You are impossible to talk to	This is not going well lets try ...
You are impossible	I am frustrated with this how about you?
You are hopeless	This does not seem to be going anywhere

Turning Things Around

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
You are making a big deal out of nothing	This has really affected you
You are blowing this way out of proportion	You feel strongly about this
You are making a mountain out of a molehill	I guess I missed it. Help me to see your side.

Trying to Get You to Question Yourself

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
What is your problem?	What is the problem?
What's wrong with you?	What is wrong?
What's the matter with you?	What is the matter?
Why can't you just get over it?	This is hard to get past
Why do you always have to ...?	I see a pattern here...

Is that all you can do, complain?	I understand that you are saying ... What do you think we (I) should do about it?
Why are you making such a big deal over it?	This is a big deal
What's wrong with you, can't you take a joke?	That was not funny
How can you let a little thing like that bother you?	That was irritating
Don't you think you are being a little dramatic?	This sounds important to you

Defending The Other Person

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
Maybe they were just having a bad day	You felt angry when they...
I am sure she didn't mean it like that	That really set you off
You just took it wrong	I see you're upset. Did you get a chance to talk to them about it?
I am sure she means well	They may have had good intentions, but it still hurts.

Telling You How You "Should" Feel or Act

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
You should be excited	You're not impressed
You should be thrilled	You feel blah
You should feel guilty	You have no regrets
You should feel thankful that	You are disappointed
You should be happy that	I thought you would be happy. What is wrong?
You should be glad that	What is keeping you from being happy?
You should just drop it	Let's talk when I can listen better
You shouldn't worry so much	You have a lot on your mind
You shouldn't let it bother you	It has got under your skin
You should just forget about it	I just keeps coming back up
You should feel ashamed of yourself	I am uncomfortable that you don't appear sorry over this. How do you feel?
You shouldn't wear your heart out on your sleeve	You are a sensitive person
You shouldn't say that about your father	You've got a lot of bad feelings toward your dad

Negating, Denial & Confusion

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
Now you know that isn't true	You believe...
You don't mean that	You think that ...
You know you love your baby brother	You don't feel that loving right now
You don't really mean that	You are telling me ...

You are just ... (in a bad mood today, tired, cranky)	You are in a bad mood over ...; You look tired
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Sarcasm and Mocking

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
Oh, you poor thing	Come here, let's talk
Did I hurt your little feelings?	You were hurt when I ...
What did you think? The world was created to serve you?	You don't believe that you got what you deserve
What happened to you? Did you get out of the wrong side of bed again?	I see that you are in a grumpy mood this morning

Laying Guilt Trips

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
Don't you ever think of anyone but yourself?	You feel ... How do others feel about this?
What about my feelings?!	OK I will listen to you tell me how you feel then you listen to how I feel
Have you ever stopped to consider my feelings?	You are really focused on this

Philosophizing Or Cliché

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
Time heals all wounds	It hurts now. Hopefully time will help
Every cloud has a silver lining	I know it's hard. Is there anything good that happened?
Life is full of pain and pleasure	Right now it is painful
In time you will understand this	It makes no sense
When you are older you will understand	You believe this is unfair
You are just going through a phase	This is a rough time
Everything has its reasons	You just don't understand why this has happened to you
Everything is just the way it is supposed to be	That's tough

Talking About You When You Can Hear It

Invalidating Statements	Validating Statements
She is impossible to talk to	I tried to talk with her, but the timing was wrong.
You can't say anything to her	I try talking again later.