

# Elaborated Feedback Sandwich Worksheet

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**Lead with the positive: Say or anchor myself by remembering:** What do I genuinely value? What is working? How is this feedback part of a much larger whole (so the other doesn't have the feeling I'm noticing the pimple on the chin and missing the whole person). What is the ongoing, abiding connection that is unruffled by the feedback? Communicate the positive, non-threatening nature with my body posture and demeanor—not just non-judgment, but not distancing or disconnecting from the other, emphasizing 'we're in this together' rather than 'I don't need to walk in your shoes, I can tell from here what a train wreck you are/this is.'

## WHAT feedback do I want to give?

**Describe.** *Describe the details about the situation with facts and if-then or when-then contingencies in a matter-of-fact tone so the other person nods head, 'yes, I know exactly what you are talking about and see exactly how that's a problem for me/us'. Avoid beating around the bush that increases anxiety or embarrassment (e.g., snot-on-nose example). Possible conversation openers: "Because your progress/well being is important to me, I need to raise what might be a difficult issue ... How do you see this?" or "I've become uncomfortable/worried/curious with the way you (insert issue). I'll bet you bring a different perspective to this, and I'm eager to hear and understand it." "I've been thinking a lot about you and wanted to talk over something with you that I'm trying to sort out..." "I'm noticing something and want to get your read on whether I understand the pattern accurately or missing something..."*

**Express.** *Express what is valid, understandable, could not be otherwise about the other (and if relevant, your own). Consider expressing needs (see <http://www.cnvc.org/Training/needs-inventory>) and feelings when needs are not satisfied (<http://www.cnvc.org/Training/feelings-inventory>).*

**Assert.** *Describe what might work better in terms of if-then or when-then contingencies. Make a request. Say what you want. Suggest a course of action. Ask "Would you be willing...?"*

Check out whether format of Non-Violent Communication Template fits:

<http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/aboutnvc/4partprocess.htm> "While NVC is much more than a communication model, the components below provide a structural concept of the process that leads to giving and receiving from the heart.

Honestly Expressing how I am and what I would like without using blame, criticism or demands

Empathically Receiving how another is and what he/she would like without hearing blame, criticism or demands

Whether expressing or receiving, NVC focuses our attention on four pieces of information:

Observations—Objectively describing what is going on without using evaluation, moralistic judgment, interpretation or diagnosis

Feelings—Saying how you feel (emotions and body sensations) about what you have observed without assigning blame

Needs—The basic human needs that are or not being met and are the source of feelings

Requests—Clear request for actions that can meet needs

## HOW

- **Phrased reciprocally** (A reciprocal communication style emphasizes acceptance. Be sensitive to the nuance in the client's behavior, take the client's agenda seriously and directly respond to it rather than interpreting any latent meaning. If a client asks something personal about the therapist, the therapist, responding in a reciprocal style, is likely to use self-disclosure, warm engagement and genuineness to answer the question. A reciprocal style can also be used to matter-of-factly decline to answer based on the therapist's professional or personal limits. From this style, the therapist may use self-disclosure to help the client understand how the client's behavior affects the therapist, to model or to validate.) **GIVE:** gentle, interested, validating, easy manner
- **From DBT adherence items on reciprocal style: T is GENERALLY warm towards C**
  - T expresses caring non-verbally: e.g., voice tone, leaning forward, appropriate eye contact.
  - If T is interpersonally reserved by nature, T expresses caring in other ways.
  - T makes statement(s) about how T likes to work with C.
- **T maintains REASONABLE POWER EQUILIBRIUM** between self and C
- **T uses "we statements" or otherwise conveys T and C are a team**
- **T engages in self-involving and MODELING self-disclosure**

## Phrased irreverently

### From DBT adherence items on irreverent style:

#### I1 T discusses dysfunctional behaviors in a MATTER-OF-FACT manner (Score 0-5)

##### Anti-DBT

\_\_\_ T is harshness or fails to convey sympathy, when sympathy is called for.

##### Upgrades

(1) \_\_\_ T uses a "normal" MATTER-OF-FACT tone, is straightforward and direct

a> \_\_\_ T discusses *dysfunctional behaviors in a matter-of-fact manner*

b> \_\_\_ T is *not "shocked;"* Target behaviors are treated as normal consequences of the C's learning history or current environmental factors

c> \_\_\_ T conveys *nothing is too difficult* or outrageous to discuss in plain terms

(2) \_\_\_ T PLUNGES into sensitive areas in a non-exaggerated way

a> \_\_\_ T is *direct* and/or blunt

##### Downgrades

(1) \_\_\_ T has highly emotional or extreme response to maladaptive or dysregulated behavior

(2) \_\_\_ T is too animated in responding to dysregulated or dysfunctional behavior

(3) \_\_\_ T uses overly therapeutic language

(4) \_\_\_ T is overly soothing, conveying some things are too difficult to talk about

\_\_\_ I2 DIRECTLY CONFRONTS: T confronts dysfunctional behavior directly in a manner that gets C's attention (Score 0-5)

##### Anti-DBT

\_\_\_ T is mean-spirited when confronting

##### Upgrades

(1)\_\_\_ T CONFRONTS egregious/dysfunctional behavior in a tone of voice and manner that GETS ATTENTION

a> \_\_\_ T communicates “BULLSHIT” to dysfunctional in-session responses

(2)\_\_\_ T CALLS C'S BLUFF (including EXTENDING at times).

(3)\_\_\_ T WEAVES A WEB of logic that C cannot get out of.

(4)\_\_\_ In suicide crisis situations, T EMPHATICALLY INSTRUCTS C not to commit suicide or engage in parasuicide.

**Downgrades**

(1)\_\_\_ There is LITTLE SENSE OF URGENCY when C reports highly dysfunctional behavior

\_\_\_ **13 UNORTHODOX IRREVERENCE: T uses unexpected, irreverent or humorous responses**

**(Score 0-5)**

**Anti-DBT**

\_\_\_ T is obviously mean spirited, humiliating or sarcastic

**Upgrades**

(1)\_\_\_ T is UNORTHODOX, unexpected, and/or sudden (“off the wall”)

a> \_\_\_ T reframes C's communication in an unorthodox manner Example: C talks about a suicide attempt by choking the cap of a mouthwash. T says “You must have had the most cleanest throat in town”. Example: C says “I'm going to kill myself”, T answers, “I thought you agreed not to drop out of therapy”.

(2)\_\_\_ T uses HUMOR

(3)\_\_\_ T employs a DEADPAN or INTENSE STYLE to contrast with C's style

(4)\_\_\_ T assumes OMNIPOTENCE or IMPOTENCE

a>\_\_\_ The T behaves in an omnipotent or impotent manner. Examples: C says “How do you know I have a wise mind?”, T answers “Take it from me. I know these things”. Or: After C has complained about the T's behavior “Perhaps you need a better therapist than me.”

(5)\_\_\_ T uses an OSCILLATING intensity

**Downgrades**

(1)\_\_\_ T's responses are frankly expected and boring

**WHEN**

*What I'd say on-the fly: work out the little in the moment without making a big deal things I could say or do that give feedback and shape CRB2 or block CRB1.*

*What I'd say in a sit down feedback conversation: use all of the above to build a sophisticated feedback sandwich.*