

Non-Judgmental/Restorative Language - Helpful Phrases

Instead of saying/thinking:	Consider saying/thinking:
That doesn't make sense.	I'm not following you...
You're not making sense.	Help me understand...
	I don't understand, how will that work?
That will never work.	That's one option, here are my concerns...
	I'd like to hear your thinking on how this would work
You aren't doing this right.	This is different than what I expected.
You didn't do this right.	Does this way of doing it still meet the requirements?
We're not going anywhere...	It appears _____ may be getting in our way.
If only you would stop...	I think we can find a solution.
We'll never agree	Let's look at what we have accomplished so far
Why do you want X?	How did you get to X?
	What makes you want X?
	What makes X a good solution/choice?
Why did you do that?	What motivated you to do that?
That has nothing to do with this	How does that relate to this?
The fact is...	Correct me if I'm wrong,
	I understand (state facts as you see them)
This is how it is:	The way I see it is...
I won't do X	I am not comfortable doing X
	X makes me nervous (etc.) because...
Yes, but...	Yes, and...
You're wrong	My experience has been... or I see this differently.
Do X	I need help with X
You should do X	We need to get X done...what suggestions do you have?
I want X	One option I see is X...
	How does X work for you?
I must have X	One way I see to resolve this is X...
	What do you think of X?
	One option is X...
	X is important to me because...
You're lying. I don't believe that.	I'm confused about...
You said...	Let me see if I have this right, you are saying...
But you did...	I'm not clear about...
That's not fair	Let's find a solution that is fair for both of us
You make me mad.	I get upset when...
You're making me feel...	I feel...
Please sit down.	I'll begin as soon as you are seated.
You can't go to the restroom until I finish the directions.	Feel free to go to the restroom when I'm not giving directions.
Don't talk to me in that tone of voice!	I'll listen as soon as your voice is as calm as mine.
You show me respect!	I'll be glad to discuss this when respect is shown.

Remember – TONE and BODY LANGUAGE make all the difference in any communication.