



Check it is safe, name your goal, write your script step by step, rehearse it, then review. Not for relationships where someone is afraid: England 0808 2000 247, Scotland 0800 027 1234, Wales 0808 80 10 800, Northern Ireland 0808 802 1414, US 1-800-799-7233.

01 First: is this worksheet right for you?

This worksheet is for relationships where both people are safe and can say no. It is not for a relationship where one person controls, frightens or hurts the other. If you are afraid of the other person, there is hitting or threats, you are controlled, or you are stopped from leaving, please do not use a script or try to talk it through with them. Talk to a domestic abuse service first, and see the helplines page (selfgrowth.org/help). In England, the National Domestic Abuse Helpline is free and open 24 hours on 0808 2000 247. In Scotland, call 0800 027 1234; in Wales, 0808 80 10 800; in Northern Ireland, 0808 802 1414. US: National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233. In immediate danger, call 999 (UK) or 911 (US).

- ☐ I am not afraid of the other person.
- ☐ Neither of us hits, threatens, or stops the other leaving.
- ☐ I can say no, or leave the room, without being punished.
- ☐ I can say what I really think without fear of what happens next.

02 Your goal

A clear goal comes first. Is this a request (you want something) or a no (you want to turn something down)? Decide what is a must, and what you could let go of.

Who is this with, and what is the situation?

What I want, in one sentence (a request or a no):

How anxious am I about raising it?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all

Very

03 D, E, A, R: what you say

Write short lines. If a sentence runs past two lines, cut it.

Describe: the plain facts of the situation, with no blame and no guesses about their motives.

For example: 'The last three weekends I have covered your shift.'

Express: how it affects you, as 'I feel...' or 'I think...'. Do not assume they can tell.

For example: 'I am tired, and I feel taken for granted.'

Assert: the clear ask, or the clear no. One sentence, no long apology.

For example: 'I would like you to cover your own shifts from now on.' or 'I can't do that this time.'

Reinforce: what is in it for them, or for you both, if they agree. Keep it honest.

For example: 'It means I'll have the energy to help out when it really matters.'

04 **M, A, N: how you say it**

These three are about delivery, and they matter most when the conversation goes off script.

Mindful: my one point, to return to if they change the subject or pick a fight.

For example: 'I hear you, and I still need...' said calmly, as many times as it takes.

Appear confident: how I will carry myself (voice, posture, eye contact, no over-apologising).

You can look steady while feeling nervous. That is allowed.

Negotiate: what I could offer instead, if they cannot say yes to all of it.

- ☐ A smaller version of my request
- ☐ A later date, or a trial period
- ☐ A swap: I do something if they do something
- ☐ Asking them what they could do
- ☐ Agreeing to disagree, and stopping there

My must-haves, and what I could give up:

05 Rehearse it

Read your script aloud once or twice. Then write the full version in your own natural words, as you would say it.

My script, start to finish:

What they might say back, and my calm reply:

A good time and place to raise it:

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06 Review it afterwards

Do this once you are calm. Whether or not you got a yes, ask whether you said what you meant, in a way you can stand behind.

How well did I say what I meant?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all					Very well				

What happened, and what did they say?

The step that helped most, and the one I would change:

Date	The request or no	What happened

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- What is the hardest step for you to write: describing without blame, saying how you feel, or making the ask?
- What do you fear will happen if you ask, and how likely is it, honestly?
- How would you want a friend to say this same thing to you?
- What would you do if the answer were no?
- If this person has stopped listening however you ask, is a different kind of support worth considering?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/dear-man-worksheet



If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at findahelpline.com. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.