Requests that Help Us Meet Our Needs

The more we understand one another, the easier it is to find solutions that work for everyone. Therefore, establish as much mutual understanding as possible before problem-solving.

Connection Requests that check if the other is understanding you

- Can you tell me what you're getting (from what I said)?
- I'm not sure I was totally clear. What are you understanding?
- Could you tell me your understanding of what matters to me? Knowing that would really help me to feel understood.
- I'd like to make sure we're on the same page. What are you taking away from this?

Connection Requests that check if the other is feeling understood by you

- Am I getting it?
- What can I say or do that would help you to feel more understood?
- How is it for you to hear all of this?

Requests that move toward a solution

- Is there more? Anything else you'd like me to understand?
- Would this be an okay time to shift to talking about where we go from here?
- Do you have any ideas about what might work for both of us?

Action Requests create an opportunity to help meet needs

Action Requests: 3 Qualities	Instead of this…	Try this…
POSITIVE Requests state what we DO want rather than what we DON'T want	Not Positive: "Don't talk to me that way"	As a positive request: Would you be willing to lower your voice, or can we take a break?"
SPECIFIC Requests are concrete and doable rather than vague or abstract	Not Specific: "Will you love me more"	As a specific request: When you come home, can you try to remember to look me in the eyes and say hello? It would mean so much to me.
FLEXIBLE Requests are distinct from demands: they offer a suggestion for how to move forward, with openness to other ideas	Not Flexible: "We have to talk."	As a flexible request: Can we find some time to sit down together and talk about things? OR, if not, do you have ideas about how we can sort this out?
Examples of how action requests can begin:	• "Would you be willing to….?" • "Could it work for you to …?" • "How would it be for you to ….?"	