



Sorting out the difference can help you have more realistic expectations—of others and yourself.

You can't always get what you want from others. But more than likely, you can get the things you absolutely need. It can be hard to know the difference! Here are some examples:

- You may **want** your son's teacher to show you some understanding when you explain you're having trouble keeping track of his homework. But you really only **need** them to work effectively with your son.
- You may **want** your doctor to show empathy when you explain how difficult lupus is making your day-to-day life. But you only **need** them to provide appropriate care and assist you in caring for yourself.
- You may **want** the cashier at the grocery store to be kind to you, but you only **need** them to ring up your purchase.

This activity can help you to figure out the difference between wants and needs, even when it comes to close relationships (which are usually complex).

Step 1

Understand the difference between wants and needs. [See page 2 for more examples.]

Step 2

Think of a tough situation you've faced recently. Decide what you **want (or wanted)** and what you **need (or needed)**. Write it in the space provided after the examples on page 2.

Step 3

Focus on getting what you need by asking yourself, *"Can I realistically get what I need from this person?"*

- If YES, ask yourself, ***"What do I have to do to ensure that I get what I need?"***
- If NO, ask yourself, ***"Who can help me get what I need in this situation?"***

Write potential solutions in the space provided on page 3. If you need inspiration, see the examples of different ways to get your needs met.

Step 4

Use this process anytime you feel your needs aren't being met, or if you're having difficulty telling the difference between a want and a need. We think you'll discover new ways of getting what you need, and that you'll feel more independent and empowered as a result.

✔ Make the most of this exercise

- In cases where you can step away from a relationship that is unsupportive, by all means step away. Use your energy (a precious resource when you have lupus!) to build relationships with people who love you as you are.
- Ask for help from a friend or family member you trust as you work through this activity, especially as you seek ways to get your needs met. Sometimes someone else can help find solutions we wouldn't think of on our own.



Examples: Wants vs. Needs

These examples illustrate the difference between wants and needs, including the emotions a person might feel in this type of situation.

Situation 1

Person: Brandon's teacher

Situation: Scolded me for not making sure his homework is done

What I want: Wanted her to be understanding when I explained about having lupus

What I need: Need her to help Brandon whether I can monitor his homework or not

Situation 2

Person: Chelsea's soccer coach

Situation: Gave me a hard time for not going to weekend tournament

What I want: Wanted him to be understanding about my health

What I need: Need him to be a good coach and not let his feelings about me affect how he treats my daughter

Situation 3

Person: My rheumatologist

Situation: Seems to hurry me in my appointments; doesn't seem to understand what I'm going through

What I want: Want her to show more feeling and show she cares

What I need: Need her to provide the best care and treat me with respect

Now it's your turn. Think about a situation you've recently faced and write about it below.

My Situation

Person: _____

Situation: _____

What I want: _____

What I need: _____



Examples: Finding Solutions

Once you've figured out the difference between your wants and needs in a given situation, then you can start thinking about realistic solutions!

Start by asking yourself:

Can I realistically get what I need from this person?

- If the answer is YES, ask yourself: **What do I have to do to ensure that I get what I need?**
- If the answer is NO, ask yourself: **Who can help me get what I need in this situation?**

To help you think it through, here are some examples of potential solutions using two scenarios from page 2.

Situation 1

Person: Brandon's teacher

Situation: Scolded me for not making sure his homework is done

What I want: Wanted her to be understanding when I explained about having lupus

What I need: Need her to help Brandon whether I can monitor his homework or not

Solution A: Ask her to help Brandon because I cannot

Solution B: Speak to the principal about getting Brandon help

Solution C: Ask my brother to work with Brandon in the evenings

Situation 2

Person: Chelsea's soccer coach

Situation: Gave me a hard time for not going to weekend tournament

What I want: Wanted him to be understanding about my health

What I need: Need him to be a good coach and not let his feelings about me affect how he treats my daughter

Solution A: Tell him that I expect he will be a good coach to Chelsea

Solution B: Ask another parent to take Chelsea next weekend

Solution C: Check into more supportive teams for Chelsea

Now you try it! Start with the question at the top of this page, and brainstorm some solutions for the situation you started writing about on page 2.

My Situation

Person: _____

Situation: _____

What I want: _____

What I need: _____

Solution 1: _____

Solution 2: _____

Solution 3: _____



Situation Worksheet: Wants and Needs

Go through the steps on this worksheet when you need help telling the difference between wants and needs, so that you can figure out how to get your needs met.

Person: _____

Situation: _____

What I want: _____

What I need: _____

Can I realistically get what I need from this person?

YES

NO

If you answered YES, brainstorm solutions by asking yourself, "What do I need to do to ensure that my needs are met?"

If you answered NO, brainstorm solutions by asking yourself, "Who can help me get what I need?"

Solution 1: _____

Solution 2: _____

Solution 3: _____

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