

TTLC Needs Exercise

By Dr. Diana Kirschner

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This is your Tough or Tender Care (TTLC) Needs List adapted from my e-book, *30 Days to Love: The Ultimate Relationship Turnaround Guide*. It is designed to help you understand the kind of love in action that means the most to you. Read through the list carefully. In your journal or diary, jot down the top two items that jump out at you from the three categories, which include **Nurturance**, **Guidance and Limit-setting**. Choose the ones that you intuitively feel would be helpful to you *right now*. While it is easiest to identify needs for nurturance, look for items in all three categories, because usually, much as we might hate to admit it, we also need guidance and confrontation as well.

Nurturance

- Being accepted.
- Being chosen and wanted as the special one.
- Being made to feel safe.
- Being loved unconditionally.
- Getting hugs and physical affection.
- Being understood.
- Being prized.
- Being told I'm attractive.
- Being treated as if I'm desirable.
- Being told I'm lovable.
- Being told I'm unique and special.
- Being supported I'm when failing or feeling vulnerable.
- Receiving acts of caretaking and service.
- Being treated with respect.
- Being forgiven.

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- Being treated fairly.
- Being given to.
- Companionship—shared time together.
- Being protected from frenemies or bullies.
- Getting time and attention.
- Getting what I really need, even if it is a lot.
- Being listened to.
- Being treated as if my wants and needs are very important.

Write down: My top two Nurturance needs are...

Guidance and Envisioning

- Getting a commitment for a shared future.
- Being encouraged to live my dreams.
- Being helped to explore the world and my place in it.
- Getting recognition for my accomplishments.
- Belief in my unique potential and talent.
- Being praised and rewarded for accomplishments.
- Being encouraged to be real.
- Being encouraged to play, to find my bliss.
- Being taught, guided or advised.
- Getting symbolic and thoughtful gifts.
- Belief in and validation of my ideal self.

Write down: My top two Guidance and Envisioning needs are...

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Limit Setting for Personal Growth

- Getting constructive and helpful critiques.
- Being told to “suck it up” when I have to do something difficult or scary.
- A “swift kick in the butt” to help me get motivated.
- Being confronted when I’m out of line.
- Getting constructive limits on my behavior.
- Receiving reasonable consequences for abusive or destructive behavior.
- Being helped to make reparations for destructive acts.

Write down: My top Two Limit Setting needs are...

You now should have a total of six unfulfilled needs, two from each category. I know you may want to list twenty items from Nurturance alone. And maybe even more. But trust me on this; you need more guidance and limit setting than you think. We all do. Just ask friends who really know you. Or, especially, your partner.

Sharing with Your Partner

The six unfulfilled needs you listed are the ones that I want you to communicate about with your Beloved. During this week, when the time is right, take the list out and have loving straight talk about them with your partner.

Please imagine that you are talking about an **innocent and deserving being** (that would be you at your core). Describe how you came to have these particular needs and what it would mean to have them fulfilled. **Describe what it might feel like, look like, and sound like to have one of those needs**

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fulfilled. Ask your partner to specifically take action in a way that would have the most meaning to you.

After your discussion, ask your Beloved about his or her TTLC needs. Ask him or her to do the same kind of sharing that you just did. In this way you can create a give and take that is healing and creates extraordinary love for both of you.

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