

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication Styles

Passive – “People Pleaser”. Others needs are more important than yours. They have rights; you don’t. Their contributions are valuable; yours are worthless. Often fears rejection, feels helpless, frustrated, irritable and/or angry. Resentment towards others who “use” you. Passive people avoid conflict at all costs and often gives others control in relationships.

Aggressive – Expresses self as if any other view is unreasonable or stupid. Most important and justified needs are mine. I have rights; they don’t. My contributions are valuable; theirs are silly, wrong, and worthless. During period of conflict feels angry, overwhelmed, victorious. Later; guilt and remorse for having hurt others. Win at any expense. Gain control.

Passive-Aggressive – Deny personal responsibility for your actions. Fail to meet expectations through deniable means: forgetting, being delayed, etc. I am entitled to get my way, even when I make commitments to others. Fears being rejected if more assertive. Fear of confrontation. Resentment at demands of others. Works to get own way without having to take responsibility.

Assertive – Direct, honest, and genuine expression of needs and wants. Acknowledges and accepts that others will have different views. Not dismissive or insulting. My and others needs are both important. Both have a need for expression and something to contribute. I am responsible for me. Expresses self without having to win. Respect for self and others maintained. No one has to control others.

Assertive Role Beliefs

- I decide for myself what I will and will not do.
- I am my own judge.
- I do not need to justify myself to others.
- Others do not need to justify themselves to me.
- People can ask me anything they want.
- My life is my own, and I can turn down requests made by others if I wish.
- People change their minds.
- Everyone makes mistakes; this doesn’t give control of their lives to others.
- I don’t have to be logical, nor do others.
- I have the right to be alone.
- I don’t know anything, and I don’t have to.
- I have my opinions and convictions, and others have theirs.
- I have the right to protest unfair treatment and criticism.
- I have the right to ask for help or emotional support.
- Others can give advice, but they don’t make my decisions.
- I am not responsible for other peoples’ problems.
- Others are not responsible for solving my problems.
- Being direct is usually the better option.