

Self Assertion

Some Criteria for Self Assertion

You May Need to be Assertive When:

- You feel anxious, angry, tense, disappointed, guilty and intimidated.
- You are in the underdog position.
- You know what you want and are not getting it.
- Your abilities and talents are not recognized/utilized.
- Someone is putting you down.
- You feel used.
- You are putting yourself last instead of first.
- You want to let someone know your values and beliefs.
- You strongly disagree
- You like something or feel warmly toward someone.
- There is a possibility that you can be successful.
- The time is right or you have made the right time.
- Your dignity and integrity are being attacked.

You May Choose not to be Assertive When:

- You see no hope of success.
- The other person is unusually sensitive and vulnerable.
- The other person is having a hard-enough-time already (e.g. In an extreme crowded restaurant service may not be the best).
- You can see that the timing would be poor.
- You choose not to. (Although self-assertion is rewarding, there may be times when for reasons you may not even be able to identify, you don't want to assert. It's good to consider decisions carefully. However, just as it is your right to assert yourself, it's also your right to choose not to assert yourself.)

A Comparison of Non-Assertive, Assertive and Aggressive Behavior*

| | NON-ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR | ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR | AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR |
|---|---|--|---|
| Characteristics of the behavior: | Emotionally dishonest, indirect, self-denying, inhibited | (Appropriately) emotionally honest, direct, self-enhancing, expressive | (Inappropriately) emotionally honest direct, self- enhancing at expense of another, expressive |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Your feelings when you engage in this behavior: | Hurt, anxious at the time & possibly angry later | Confident, self-respecting at the time & later | Righteous, superior deprecatory at the time & later |
|--|--|--|---|

| | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| The other person's feelings about herself when you engage in this behavior: | Guilty or superior | Valued, respected | Hurt, humiliated |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| The other person's feelings about you when you engage in this behavior: | Irritated, pity, disgusted | Generally respect | Angry, vengeful |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|