

DEVELOPING ASSERTIVENESS IS A PROCESS

Speech and Voice

Assertive:

"I" messages; honest statements that are direct and to the point. Well-modulated voice that is congruent with verbal message given. Smooth, flowing speech pattern.

Non-Assertive:

Lots of apologies and "ums," "ers," and "I means." "Beating around the bush" and not coming to the point. Soft "wimpy" voice.

Aggressive: "You" messages. "Loaded" words that start fights. Sarcastic or cocky speech. Tense, loud and demanding voice. Attacking.

Eyes

Assertive:

Open with direct, comfortable eye contact, but not staring.

Non-Assertive:

Downcast or looking away.

Aggressive:

Glaring, staring, cold.

Posture

Assertive:

Relaxed, upright and "good" posture; straight on.

Non-Assertive:

Excessive agreement and head-nodding; stooped; leaning for support.

Aggressive:

Hands on hips; stiff or rigid; feet apart.

Hands

Assertive:

Gestures appropriate with verbal message; relaxed.

Non-assertive:

Fidgety; picking at fingernails; fluttery; clenched tightly.

Aggressive:

Finger pointing; pounding or thrashing; abrupt gestures; touching others.

Examples of Behavior

Assertive:

Giving compliments and accepting compliments; hugging and affirming others; saying no to unreasonable requests; controlling temper when angry; asking for what you want and need; initiating and stopping conversations.

Non-assertive:

Saying yes when you want to say no; going along with others when you don't want to; avoiding others; peace at all costs; apologizing for something you didn't do.

Aggressive:

Condescending; building self up while putting others down; yelling; put downs; name calling; interrupting; demanding; ignoring others; silent treatment; sarcasm; ordering others.

Characteristics of Behavior

Assertive:

Honest, direct, expressive, self-enhancing, pro-active, appropriate.

Non-Assertive:

Inhibited, indirect, emotionally dishonest, self-denying, reactive.

Aggressive:

Self-enhancing at the expense of another, expressive, reactive, depreciates others, makes choices for others.

For more information or help, please call:

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