

Assertive Communication

Communicating assertively means clearly and calmly expressing what you want without either being too passive or too aggressive. Learning to communicate assertively doesn't guarantee you will have your needs met but it makes it more likely, and it can improve your relationships with other people.



Thinking your needs don't matter at all	Recognising that your needs matter as much as anyone else's	Thinking that only your needs matter
Give in	Compromise	Take
Not talking, not being heard	Talking and listening	Talking over people
Trying to keep the peace	Making sure things are fair - for you and others	Looking out for yourself
Allowing yourself to be bullied	Standing up for yourself	Bullying others
Not saying what you think, or not saying anything	Express your point clearly and confidently	Can lead to shouting, aggression or violence
Damages relationships - other people respect you less	Enhances relationships - other people know where they stand	Damages relationships - other people don't like aggression
Damages your self-esteem	Builds your self-esteem	Damages others self-esteem

Tips for communicating assertively

Use "I" statements

Be clear and direct:

"I would like you to give me a refund"

"I think what you have done is good, but I would like to see more of..."

Describe how another person's *behaviour* makes you *feel*

This makes other people aware of the consequences of their actions:

"When you raise your voice it makes me scared ... I would like you to speak softly"

"When you don't tell me what you are feeling it makes me confused"

Stick to your guns - the broken record technique

This involves thinking about what you want, preparing what you might say, then repeating it as necessary:

"I would like a refund ... Yes, but I would still like a refund ... I've heard what you have said but I still want a refund"