

Being Assertive Pays Off

Worksheet (one for each family member)



Some people think they have to act angry or aggressive to get what they want. This is not true. Being assertive, instead of aggressive or passive, in your family communication will build loving relationships, help you feel better about yourself, and get you more of what you want in life.

Use this worksheet to notice the differences in attitude, body language, tone of voice, and words in the different ways of communicating. Then fill in the blanks with ideas you can use.

ASSERTIVE

Attitude: Deep respect for self and concern for others

Body Language: Confident, erect posture, good eye contact; respects others' personal space

Voice tone: Calm, polite, firm, controlled

Words: Clear "I-Messages" that say how you feel, express your needs, or make requests without sarcasm or blaming

AGGRESSIVE

Attitude: Concerned mainly for self; willing to get own way by bullying or threatening others

Body Language: Threatening, "in-your-face," confrontational; points fingers, rolls eyes

Voice tone: Loud, angry, dramatic, accusatory, hostile

Words: Argumentative, threatening, abusive, blaming, sarcastic; interrupts a lot

PASSIVE

Attitude: Fearful, lacks self-respect, allows others to dominate. May be hiding anger.

Body Language: Slumped shoulders, no eye contact, withdrawn, shoulder shrugs

Voice tone: Weak, whiney

Words: Fails to express feelings or needs; goes along with the crowd. May say: "Whatever; I guess so; It doesn't matter anyway."

1. Circle the assertive statements. 2. Cross out the ones that are aggressive or passive by putting a large X over them.

I feel annoyed when you put your feet on my desk. Please take them off.

You don't know what you're talking about!

I'm feeling _____ about _____. Can we talk about it?

I guess it will have to be okay.

Get your stupid feet off my desk!

It's really not okay with me to _____. What I need you to do is _____.

No one cares what I think anyway. Or: I guess I'll just have to do it myself.

I see your point of view. Mine's a little different. Here's how I see it: _____.

Think of a family situation that bothers you. Then write what you could say by being assertive.

Situation: _____

Assertive "I-Message": "I feel _____ when _____"

Request: "Please _____"