

ASSERTIVENESS

- Assertiveness is the sum of behaviors that instigates you to express your needs, talk about your positive and negative feelings, and to establish your boundaries.
- Assertive people respect other people's needs and listen to them as well as they express their needs.
- Assertiveness is a perspective that will help you maintain a control over your life and increase your self-esteem.
- Assertiveness is the right to make decisions about your life.

What will assertiveness do to me?

- Develops your communication skills.
- Increases your self-esteem.
- Helps you gain respect of others.
- Improves your decision-making abilities.

Why do I say "yes" while I want to say "no"?

Sometimes, especially if we have been hurt in the past, people around us may seem scary. These worries may make us comply with their wishes in order to avoid conflict. We may fear from being rejected by people with whom we are or want to be close. We may think that "They won't love me if I refuse to do what they want" Assertiveness brings equality and respect to the relationship.

"No" can sometimes be the hardest thing to say. It is important to draw our boundaries with others. If you start doing things without your wish and will, you may feel angry and abused. Some ways of saying "no":

- I'd prefer not doing it.
- I can't do it right now.
- I promised to finish this paper today, so no.
- No, thank you.

How can I be more assertive?

Nobody can become more assertive over a night. This takes time and requires practice.

1.The first step is to determine how you feel and what you want.

- Recognize what you are feeling and name it.
- Choose the main feeling you are experiencing. Some feelings may be covering other feelings lying beneath.
- Determine the intensity of your feeling correctly.
- Determine what you need regarding other people.

2.The second step is to express your feeling and wish.

- Be open and honest, without blaming the other. "I" statements helps us to express ourselves.

"When you do (behavior), I feel (feeling), it would be better if you do (alternative)"

Examples from the Language of Assertiveness:

- "I" statements:
 - I think
 - I feel
 - I want
- Sentences that include personal reference and meaning:
 - I see it this way.
 - According to me...
 - That's how I feel.
- Sentences that state a desire:
 - "I" want...
 - "I" need...
- Sentences that expect contribution from the other:
 - "I" would like it to be this way, how about you?
 - "I" think...., what do you think?
- Asking for time:
 - "I'd prefer to talk about it an hour later."

- Gain time and use this time to think about what you want.
- Ask for clarification instead of ASSUMING.
- Avoid commanding and blaming attitudes. You make me feel this way.
You should/shouldn't do
It's your fault.
Don't you ever think that.....
If only you were/did

Other Domains of Assertiveness:

- Listenin: Be eager to listen to others and understand what they are really saying.
- Eye contact: Look at the person while you are talking or listening.
- Body language: A straight posture shows that you believe in what you are saying.
- Timing: The timing of the communication is important for the message to reach correctly.

Learning How to Be Assertive

It takes time to learn how to be assertive. It requires practice. Accepting when you are wrong is an important step for being assertive. Probably the most important thing is to be willing to learn.

Some situations are harder than others. Try your new behaviors in situations that you find easy.

It may help to try the techniques you have learned within relationships in which you feel acceptance and trust.

As you try these and improve, you may notice that you feel safer and happier.

For More Information

Psychological Counselling Department

(The services are available only to the students and staff of Ýstanbul Bilgi University.)

e-mail: psycounselling@bilgi.edu.tr

Kustepe Campus

Tel: 0212 311 63 61/ 6470 / 6252

Dolapdere Campus

Tel: 0212 311 5212

santralistanbul

Tel: 0212 311 7671
