

Assertiveness

Assertiveness What is "Assertiveness"? What is not "Assertiveness"?

Assertiveness is the ability to express your ideas, beliefs and needs without violating the rights of others. It is appropriately direct, open, and honest communication which is self-enhancing and expressive. Assertiveness is not being aggressive or expressing your rights at the expense, degradation, or humiliation of another.

How to Develop Assertive Skills

- Be direct, clear, and open about your feelings, opinions and needs. The following statements could help to express yourself effectively:
 - "I want to..."
 - "I don't want to..."
 - "Would you...?"
 - "I have a different point of view..."
- Do not let your relatives, friends, classmates etc impose or reinforce their behaviors, values and ideas on you. Instead, let them know what you think, feel and want in an appropriate way.
- Try saying "no" to unreasonable requests. Explain your reasons to say "no" if you want to. Do not do not make up excuses.
- Try to use "I" statements while explaining yourself or talking over a dispute/argument etc. "I" statements focus on the behavior rather than the personality of the other person which enables us to tell the concrete effects of the behavior of the other person on us. This would lead to an open conversation without any accusations and defenses. Ex: Behavior Concrete Effect Feeling When you don't show up to prepare our group paper as planned I'd have to prepare it all by myself which disappoints and makes me angry
- Ask for feedback. "Am I being clear?" "I wanted to mean, what did you understand?" How do you see the situation?"

Repeat yourself that you have the following rights:

- The right to make your own decisions.
- The right to have your own values, beliefs, opinions, and emotions.
- The right to tell others how you wish to be treated in an appropriate way.
- The right to express yourself and to say, "No,"
- The right to ask for information or help.
- The right to make mistakes.
- The right to like yourself even though you're not perfect, and to sometimes do less than you are capable of doing.
- The right to have positive, satisfying relationships within which you feel comfortable and free to express yourself honestly - and the right to change or

end relationships if they don't meet your needs.

- The rights to change, enhance, or develop your life in any way you determine.

Need Additional Help?

If you feel that you are having problems with assertiveness do not hesitate to ask for professional help. For further information, please e-mail KURES at: kures@ku.edu.tr

References:

Paterson, R. (2000). *The Assertiveness Workbook: How to Express Your Ideas and Stand Up for Yourself at Work and in Relationships*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.