



Assertive Communication

Assertive communication is a healthy and effective way of expressing your thoughts, feelings, and needs directly, while respecting the rights and feelings of others. It helps you communicate in a **clear, honest, and respectful** way, which can improve relationships, reduce stress, and increase self-confidence. Assertiveness allows you to express yourself without being passive (not speaking up) or aggressive (overly forceful). Being assertive helps you:

- **Reduce stress** by expressing needs directly.
- **Increase self-respect** and respect from others.
- **Resolve conflicts** more effectively.
- **Build healthier relationships** by fostering open, honest communication.

I-Statements

An **I-statement** is a way of expressing how you feel about a situation, focusing on your own experience, rather than blaming or accusing others. It helps reduce defensiveness in others and promotes clear, respectful communication. It keeps the focus on your own feelings and needs, rather than criticizing or blaming the other person, and it encourages collective problem-solving rather than conflict.

I feel _____ because of _____ and
what I need is _____

Steps to Presenting an I-Statement:

1. **Start with "I feel" or "I feel like":** Begin by expressing your emotions or thoughts. This centers on your perspective.
Example: "I feel frustrated..."
2. **Describe the situation:** Be specific about the behavior or situation that is affecting you.
Example: "...when I don't get a response to my emails within 24 hours."
3. **Express the impact on you:** Explain how the situation affects you emotionally or practically.
Example: "...because it makes it difficult for me to plan my day effectively."
4. **End with a request:** Ask for what you need or suggest a solution.
Example: "I'd appreciate it if you could let me know when you'll have time to reply to my emails."

Full Example:

"I feel frustrated when I don't get a response to my emails within 24 hours because it makes it difficult for me to plan my day effectively. I'd appreciate it if you could let me know when you'll have time to reply."

Next Steps: Identifying When an Assertive I-Statement is Helpful

To start using assertive communication, identify situations where you need to express your feelings or needs without conflict, such as:

- When you feel frustrated, ignored, or disrespected.
- When your needs aren't being met (e.g., unclear expectations).
- When you want to improve relationships by speaking up calmly.