

# ASSERTIVENESS

*Stand Up, Speak Out, and  
Still Garner Others' Respect*



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## INTRODUCTION

*“If we value independence, if we are disturbed by the growing conformity of knowledge, of values, of attitudes, which our present system induces, then we may wish to set up conditions of learning which make for uniqueness, for self-direction, and for self-initiated learning.” - Carl Rogers*

Assertiveness is considered an important communication skill that relates to respect for personal rights and boundaries with the intention to establish healthy and lasting relationships. An assertive person speaks his own mind to influence others while being respectful of the personal boundaries of others. Likewise, he protects himself against those who would cross over his own line.

Assertiveness requires direct, open, and honest communication between people. This can be between you and an associate, a friend, or a spouse. This kind of open communication will make everyone feel better about themselves and each other. More importantly, it will help develop and maintain healthy relationships with friends, loved ones, and co-workers.

To develop and have healthy relationships, you need to develop communication skills, which includes being comfortable in expressing what you really need and want. This being a two-way process, you need to learn to listen to the wants and needs of others.

Up until recently, there were no seminars on how to become assertive. Most of the time, we depended on various personal or celebrity role models to lead us how to live our own lives. Well, it is no wonder that everyone is still searching for happiness, pursuing fulfillment, and going after unrealistic goals. No one has showed us how to live our lives the right way and some of our role models do not have any clue either. Like us, no one taught them. They just relied on what they know on how to do things. Maya Angelou said, “You did what you knew how to do and when you knew better, you did better.”

Fortunately for us all, not everyone is wandering around oblivious and ignorant about what to do. At last, there is new information available to help everyone learn more and live better. No one wants to live a cookie cutter existence. We all want a life that is fulfilling, exciting, and satisfying. Are you tired of waking up and thinking, “Is this all there is?”

This report is for you. Now is the best time to get excited about your life. It is time to assert yourself and get what you want out of life. This is your life and not a dress rehearsal. It is time to learn new skills on how to do better. It is time to learn how to be more assertive.

## CHAPTER ONE - WHAT'S STOPPING YOU FROM DEVELOPING ASSERTIVENESS SKILLS?

“Assertiveness is not what you do, it’s who you are.” - Shakti Gawain

There is a huge difference between being assertive and being aggressive. Being assertive is a way of living where you get the most out of life without other people telling you how to do it. This simply means: You do not need to be obnoxious, pushy, or rude to get it your own way.

You cannot just jump in with both feet and decide, “Hey, I’m going to be assertive and no one will be pushing me around anymore. No more Mr. Nice Guy.” **Learning how to be assertive requires a new mindset and plan.** Remember, you want to learn to be assertive, not aggressive. So ask yourself these questions:

1. What do I value most?
2. What are my beliefs about how life works?
3. How do I feel about myself?
4. What are my approaches to life? Do these approaches work?

The fact that you purchased this eBook says a lot. It says you are seeking for improvements in life. Change starts with awareness. You are aware that you need to change; you just do not know how to get started. It is time to learn why you do what you are doing and how to turn that around. Remember, you cannot just flip a switch and instantly become assertive and successful in life.

Mark Twain said, “We do not deal much in facts when we are contemplating ourselves.” In order to learn how to become assertive and be in charge of your own life, you must be honest with yourself. Dr. Phil is

always saying that you cannot change what you do not acknowledge. It is time to figure out what you are hiding from yourself.

- Do you consistently fail when it comes to attaining your goals in life?
- Are you just drifting along with no plan, goals, and idea?
- Are you stuck in a comfort zone that gives you no new challenges?
- Are you getting too little of what you really want and way too much of what you do not want?
- Are you living with guilt or frustration and do not know how to change things?

What is at stake here is the quality of your life. Do you want to live it fully and authentically? Or are you okay with someone else calling the shots and making decisions for you for the rest of your life?

Do you feel like you are constantly being pushed around? Do you feel like you are being taken advantage of? Do other people try to run your life? Do you feel that you are ready to start living life in your own terms?

You need not accept burdens like those listed above. You can assert yourself and reach for something better. You have the right and the ability to have what you want out of life. Let me warn you though, change does not come in an instant.

Assertiveness is something that must be learned carefully, one step at a time. This is especially true if you have spent years following others telling you what to do, how to do it, what to think, what to feel, etc. How motivated are you to change and learn to assert yourself?

Think about those people who run our world. Whether it is business, politics, sports, or entertainment, there is one common denominator for all these people. These people know which buttons to push to get what they want. Some of these people are extremely intelligent and articulate, while

others are merely manipulative. Some are unconcerned whether you agree with them and share their views. Others are rabid in demanding that you fall in line with them. They feel that they know best and this gives them the authority to tell everyone what they should be doing and saying. It is their way or the highway.

Be aware that there are risks involved in learning how to be assertive. You will find that many will not agree with you. In fact, you will meet people who are skeptical and pessimistic. They will always argue and try to prove you wrong.

Let us continue with your assessment in life by acknowledging what is wrong in your life. Are you guilty of saying these things to yourself?

- I'm really trying but you know, it's just so hard.
- I guess it could have been much worse.
- It's not what I wanted , but what am I going to do?
- Sometimes you have to do what you have to do.
- We're doing okay, I guess.

Are you making lots of excuses, like:

- It was harder than I expected, I just couldn't do it.
- Maybe I was expecting too much.
- I have too much going on in my life to handle any of this right now.
- I'll tackle that as soon as I have the time and resources.
- I guess what I wanted isn't meant for me.
- Maybe it's not in the cards. It's not my destiny.

- I never seem to get the right break.

It is time to stop whining about bad luck, wrong timing, or how things just never seem to work out for you. Stop hosting pity parties. Realize that the deck is not stacked against you. Stop making excuses. It is time to learn to assert yourself and get what you really, really want.

Okay, let us get down to basics. What exactly are you afraid of? That is easy. People share a universal fear of rejection. The very thought of being rejected can turn the strongest man or woman into a quivering coward.

What does everyone crave for in life? This one is also easy. We all crave for acceptance. We feel lost if we are not accepted. We feel left out, excluded, and ostracized. Acceptance is everything.

We learn about acceptance from infancy. Children will go to any lengths; even do things they dislike just to gain the acceptance of their parents, friends, or teachers. It continues throughout our lives as we grow.

Paul Landres gives us an example of a mindset of an assertive person when he said, "And is the price for your acceptance for me to conform? To be as you would want me to be? You must accept me as I am."

So accepted or not and rejected or not, you have your own destiny to create. You can make it happy or sad, good or bad, successful or not. Your life is your own, and ultimately, you are responsible for how it turns out.

There may be road bumps along the way and not everything will turn out according to your plan. You may have to adjust your road map and come up with a Plan B or even a Plan C. In the end, learning how to be assertive will help you win and get what you want.

Without assertiveness, you will lose control of your life and find yourself living someone else's idea of what life should be. If you shy away from being accountable and taking charge of your own life, someone will step forward to claim responsibility for it. This could be a parent, spouse, or in the case of an elderly person, maybe one of their own children. If you never

master the ability to assert yourself, make your own decisions, and live your own life, someone will surely step forward and do it for you. Is that what you want?

Asserting yourself also does not mean blaming others for your decisions. “My husband left me with nothing when he died, so it’s not my fault that I’ll have to live with my children for the rest of my life.” Rather than take the responsibility for your own decisions, you choose to volunteer for victimhood and blame someone else.

Asserting yourself and taking full responsibility is scary and risky for anyone. “What if I assert myself and try to create my own destiny and it doesn’t work out? Then, what will I do?” It is normal to be a little fearful because it is part of human nature. Keep in mind that all decisions have consequences. As you learn to be assertive, you also learn to trust yourself when making decisions.

Your thoughts influence your world. “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so,” said William Shakespeare. To think is to create. Your thoughts create your reality. Your thoughts influence your actions and behavior. A change in your thoughts leads to a change in behavior and eventually in your world. What do you tell yourself? Do these negative statements sound familiar?

- I’m just not smart enough.
- I’ve never succeeded before, why would now be any different?
- People refuse to listen to women like me.
- People make up their minds and there’s nothing I can do about it.
- I’m too young or too old.

Start by choosing to learn how to be more assertive starting today. With this, you will need a well thought out plan. There will be days when you