

*chosen, adored, celebrated*

*Healthy*  
**BOUNDARIES**  
**WORKBOOK**  
**WEEK #4**

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# WEEK FOUR

## Assertive Communication

What is assertive communication?

Assertive communication is the ability to express your thoughts, feelings, and needs in a clear, direct, and respectful manner, taking into consideration the thoughts, feelings, and needs of the other person.

Assertive communication allows us to take responsibility for ourselves and our feelings. And it allows for effective and respectful conflict resolution.

Assertive Communication	Passive Communication	Aggressive Communication	Passive-Aggressive Communication
I win - You win	You win - I lose	I win - you lose	I win by manipulation - you lose

Assertive Communication follows a process of owning our feelings, creating a boundary, and following through.

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_, when you \_\_\_\_\_. I am asking you to \_\_\_\_\_ or I \_\_\_\_\_."

"I feel disrespected when you speak to me in that tone. I'm asking you to speak more appropriately/respectfully/kindly/etc, or I won't continue this conversation."

I like to add what I refer to as a **benefit of a doubt statement** at the beginning.

A benefit of the doubt statement helps to soften the blow, and keeps your audience open. When we give the benefit of the doubt to someone, they feel understood.

Here's a few ideas:

"I know it's not your intention....."

"I know you don't mean to ....."

"I'm sure you don't want me to feel this way....."

Assertive Communication is essential for boundaries. In fact, boundaries are an example of assertive communication.

Working on moving away from passive, passive aggressive, and aggressive communication will help you feel more in control of your emotions. You will find others take you more seriously, and learn to treat you with more respect.

Remember, we teach people how to treat us.

# WEEK FOUR HOMEWORK

Take the assertiveness quiz below, and notice your communication style as you interact with others this week.

## ASSERTIVENESS QUIZ

(credit to Envision Counselling & Support Centre)

Answer the questions below honestly. And answer according to how you are now, not how you wish to be. Once you've completed the quiz, tally up your score and have a look at the guide below.

Always 5 4 3 2 1 Never

	I can return something I paid for that wasn't exactly what I wanted.
	When someone asks me to do something I don't want to do, I say, "no" without feeling guilty or stressed.
	I am comfortable when speaking to a large group of people.
	I confidently express my honest opinions to teachers, coaches, police officers, etc.
	When I'm sad, frustrated, disappointed, etc., I can talk about my feelings easily.
	I can be angry, without blaming others for "making me mad."
	I am comfortable speaking up in a group situation.
	If I disagree with an opinion, I can share my own opinion without feeling uncomfortable or being rude.
	When I make a mistake, I own up to it.
	I can tell others when their behaviour creates a problem for me.
	Meeting new people in social situations is something I do easily.
	When discussing my opinions, I listen openly to different opinions and don't say they are 'crazy', 'stupid' or 'ridiculous'.
	I am comfortable asking for help if I need it.
	When doing something I have never done, I feel confident I can learn to do it.
	I believe I am as important as others.
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>

# WEEK FOUR HOMEWORK

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## Score Yourself - How Assertive Are You?

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If your total is **60 or higher**, you are consistently assertive and probably handle most situations well.

If your total is **45-60**, you are fairly assertive. There are some situations in which you may be naturally assertive, but through practice you will be able to increase your assertiveness.

If your total is **30-45**, you seem to be assertive in some situations but you are naturally passive or aggressive. You may want to practice new behaviours in order to handle things more assertively in the future.

If your total is **15-30**, you have considerable difficulty being assertive. You need to practice and allow yourself time to grow.