

## UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION STYLES

Every person uses different types of communication styles, depending on who we are speaking with, situations, possibilities, consequences and different factors. That is why it is important for us to analyze these styles, to be able to recognize strategies for communication, which can sometimes produce conflict with others. There are three basic communication styles:

	<b>Aggressive Style</b>	<b>Passive Style</b>	<b>Assertive Style</b>
<i>Mottos and Beliefs</i>	"Everyone should be like me." "I am never wrong." "I've got rights, but you don't."	"Don't express your true feelings." "Don't make waves." "Don't disagree." "Others have more rights than I do."	Believes self and others are valuable Knows that assertiveness doesn't mean you always win, but that you handled the situation as effectively as possible "I have rights and so do others."
<i>Communication Style</i>	Close-minded Poor listener Has difficulty seeing the other person's point of view Interrupts Monopolizing	Indirect Always agrees Doesn't speak up Hesitant	Effective, active listener, States limits, expectations States observations, no labels or judgments Expresses self directly, honestly and as soon as possible about feelings and wants Checks on others feelings
<i>Characteristics</i>	Achieves goals, often at others' expense Domineering, bullying Patronizing Condescending, sarcastic	Apologetic, self-conscious Trusts others, but not self Doesn't express own wants and feelings Allows others to make decisions for self Doesn't get what he/she wants	Non-judgmental Observes behavior rather than labeling it Trusts self and others Confident Self-aware Open, flexible, versatile Playful, sense of humor Decisive Proactive, initiating
<i>Behavior</i>	Puts others down Doesn't ever think he/she is wrong Bossy Moves into people's space, overpowers Jumps on others, pushes people around Know-it-all attitude Doesn't show appreciation	Sighs a lot Tries to avoid conflict Clams up when feels treated unfairly Asks permission unnecessarily Complains instead of taking action Lets others make choices Has difficulty implementing plans Self-effacing	Operates from choice Knows what is needed & develops a plan to get it Action-oriented Firm, consistent Realistic in her/his expectations Fair, just Takes appropriate action towards getting what she/he wants without denying rights of others
<i>Nonverbal Cues</i>	Points, shakes finger Frowns Squints eyes critically Glares, stares Rigid posture Critical, loud, yelling tone of voice Fast, clipped speech	Fidgets Lack of facial animation Smiles and nods in agreement Downcast eyes Slumped posture Low volume, meek Fast when anxious; slow, hesitant when doubtful	Open, natural gestures Attentive, interested facial expression Direct eye contact Confident or relaxed posture Vocal volume appropriate, expressive Varied rate of speech

<i>Verbal Cues</i>	<p>“You must (should, ought better).”  “Don’t ask why. Just do it.”  Verbal abuse</p>	<p>“You should do it.”  “You have more experience than I do.”  “I can’t.....”  “This is probably wrong, but...”  “I’ll try...”  Monotone, low energy</p>	<p>“I choose to...”  “What are my options?”  “What alternatives do we have?”</p>
<i>Confrontation and Problem Solving</i>	<p>Must win arguments, threatens, attacks  Operates from win/lose position  <i>Feelings Felt:</i> Anger, Hostility, Frustration, Impatience</p>	<p>Avoids, ignores, postpones  Withdraws, is silent  Agrees externally, while disagreeing internally  Tries to avoid conflicts that are anxiety provoking  Spends too much time asking for advice, supervision  Agrees too often  <i>Feelings felt:</i> Powerlessness</p>	<p>Negotiates, bargains, trades off, compromises  Confronts problems at the time they happen  Doesn’t let negative feelings build up  <i>Feelings felt:</i> Enthusiasm  Well-being, Even-tempered</p>
<i>Effects</i>	<p>Provokes counter aggression, alienation from others, ill health  Wastes time and energy over supervising others  Pays high price in human relationships  Fosters resistance, defiance, sabotage, retaliation, forming alliances, lying, covering up  Forces compliance with resentment</p>	<p>Gives up being him/herself  Builds dependency relationships  Doesn’t know where he/she stands  Slowly loses self-esteem  Promotes others’ causes  Is not well-liked</p>	<p>Increased self-esteem and self-confidence  Increased self-esteem of others  Feels motivated and understood  Others know where they stand</p>