

# COMMUNICATION STYLES

*understand the different ways we communicate—and choose the one that respects you and others.*

The way we communicate affects our relationships, our boundaries, and how our needs are met. There are four main communication styles:

|  <b>PASSIVE</b>                                                                         |  <b>AGGRESSIVE</b>                                                                               |   <b>ASSERTIVE</b>   |  <b>PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE</b>                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>You put others' needs before your own.</p>                                                                                                                            | <p>You prioritize your needs at the expense of others.</p>                                                                                                                        | <p>You honor your needs AND respect others.</p>                                                                                                                                           | <p>You say one thing but do another.</p>                                                                                                                                      |
| <p><b>SOUNDS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "It's fine."</li> <li>• "Whatever you want."</li> <li>• "I don't want to bother you."</li> </ul>     | <p><b>SOUNDS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Do it now!"</li> <li>• "You're wrong."</li> <li>• "I don't care how you feel."</li> </ul>                    | <p><b>SOUNDS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I need..."</li> <li>• "I feel... when..."</li> <li>• "Can we...?"</li> </ul>                                         | <p><b>SOUNDS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I'm fine." (but you're not)</li> <li>• "You always..."</li> <li>• "Forget it."</li> </ul>                |
| <p><b>LOOKS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding conflict</li> <li>• Saying yes when you want to say no</li> <li>• People-pleasing</li> </ul> | <p><b>LOOKS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking over others</li> <li>• Blaming, yelling, or criticizing</li> <li>• Demanding or controlling</li> </ul> | <p><b>LOOKS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear, calm, confident</li> <li>• Honest without blame</li> <li>• Open to listening &amp; solutions</li> </ul>         | <p><b>LOOKS LIKE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backhanded compliments</li> <li>• Sarcasm</li> <li>• Withdrawing or giving the silent treatment</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>RESULTS IN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resentment</li> <li>• Your needs go unmet</li> <li>• Overwhelm &amp; burnout</li> </ul>               | <p><b>RESULTS IN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damaged relationships</li> <li>• Power struggles</li> <li>• Others shut down or push back</li> </ul>           | <p><b>RESULTS IN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♥ Healthy relationships</li> <li>♥ Needs are met</li> <li>♥ Mutual respect</li> <li>♥ Less stress &amp; guilt</li> </ul> | <p><b>RESULTS IN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Hidden frustration</li> <li>• Unresolved problems</li> </ul>                          |
| <p><b>GOAL:</b></p> <p>Learn to value your needs too.</p>                                                                                                                | <p><b>GOAL:</b></p> <p>Practice kindness with confidence.</p>                                                                                                                     | <p><b>GOAL:</b></p> <p>This is the <u>healthiest choice</u>.</p>                                                                                                                          | <p><b>GOAL:</b></p> <p>Speak openly instead of indirectly.</p>                                                                                                                |



## ASSERTIVENESS = BALANCE

It's not about being "right." It's about being real.

*My needs matter AND your needs matter.*

### SAME SITUATION, DIFFERENT RESPONSES



#### THE SITUATION:

A friend cancels plans last-minute (again).

#### PASSIVE

"It's okay, don't worry about it."

(I feel disappointed but say nothing.)

#### AGGRESSIVE

"You always do this! You're so selfish."

(I attack and blame them.)

#### PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE

"Oh, it's fine. Whatever." (eye roll)

(I hide my frustration and act distant.)

#### ASSERTIVE

"I was really looking forward to our plans. When they change last-minute, I feel disappointed."

(I speak honestly and calmly.)



### Reflection Prompt

What communication style do I use most often? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where does it help me? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Where does it hurt me? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What's one small change I can make to communicate more assertively? \_\_\_\_\_



Clear communication is a form of self-respect. You deserve to be heard, and so do others.