

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR

GOAL. To express key thoughts, feelings, and/or needs in a respectful way when interacting with my peers.

GUIDELINE. Use “I” statements.

An “I” statement focuses on me taking responsibility for my actions, thoughts, feelings.

A “You” statement loses self-focus, shifting focus instead to others’ actions, motives, etc.

EXAMPLE

I feel _____ (my feelings) **when** _____ (your actions, behaviors of the situation) _____.

Because _____ (of the situation’s impact upon me), **I need** _____ (options, solutions, boundaries) _____.

Situation: *You’ve over-slept for work. Your wife is upset about it and won’t talk to you. When you try to apologize and tell her you’re sorry you goofed up, she snaps at you that she doesn’t want to hear it.*

I feel _____ when _____.

Because of _____, I need _____.

Situation: *Your co-worker (an equal) is angry that you are late to work. He gives you a look, and in a demeaning way tells you to pitch in and start helping.*

I feel _____ when _____.

Because of _____, I need _____.

Situation: *Write an example from your own life*

I feel _____ when _____.

Because of _____, I need _____.

Note: When you are in situations where the power is not equal (such as with a boss who would rather fire you than listen, a police officer who has just pulled you over for a minor infraction, etc.) or a potentially dangerous situation (a domestic violence scene, or being threatened by angry person, interactions involving people that have a history of disrespecting you, etc.), this technique may not fit the situation. Managing a crisis would require different responses.