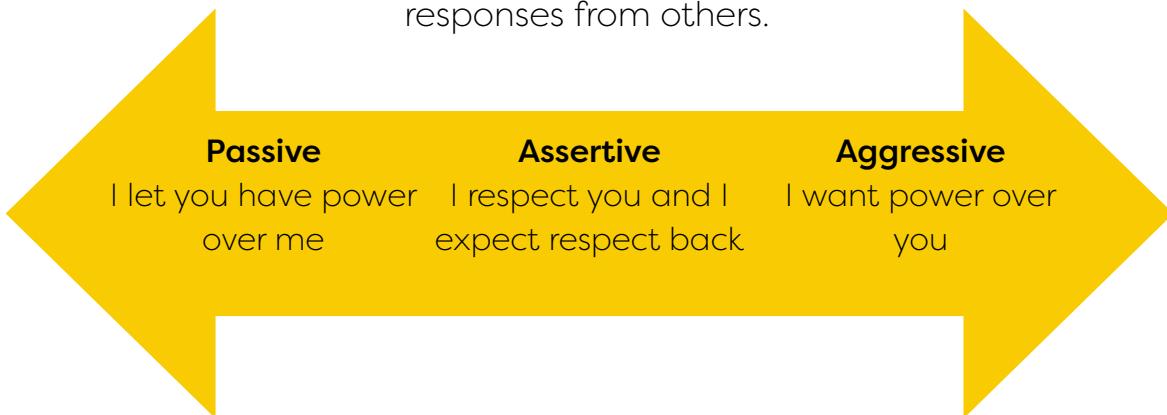


Positive communication

How we communicate has a big impact on our relationships. There are different styles of communication, and they often lead to different responses from others.



Passive	Passive - aggressive	Assertive	Aggressive
Overly apologetic, insecure	Sarcastic, undermining, resentful	Clear, confident and honest	Critical, disrespectful, intimidating
Struggles to express needs or say no	Not honest about feelings	Considers own and others' needs	Raises voice, stares judgementally
Aims to please others	Disregards others' feelings	Respectful to others	Interrupts and talks over others
Appears scared	Unclear emotions	Appears relaxed	Appears angry
"Um, I don't mind, whatever you want."	[sarcastically] "That sounds like a great idea."	"Respectfully, I disagree - this is what I think."	"You're wrong - we are doing it my way."

How to be assertive



Do

- Be honest about how you feel
- Value your needs and others' needs equally
- Be clear and firm about what you think/want
- Say no to things that you don't want to do or don't have time for
- Try to stay calm and relaxed
- Practice active listening when others speak



Don't

- Be intimidated into backing down
- Ignore your own needs or others' needs
- Be aggressive or demanding
- Let other people walk all over you
- Interrupt or talk over other people
- Apologise if you have not done anything wrong

Think about a situation where you were not assertive in your communication and write down how you might do things differently next time:

How to be a good listener

Communication is not just about talking; it is also about how we listen to and understand what other people are communicating to us.

Listening takes more than just being quiet when someone else is talking. Here are some of the things you can practice to make you a great listener!

Clarify

Check what someone means if you don't understand. This shows that you care about what they are saying.

Show empathy and don't judge

People generally don't like talking to people who are judgemental or critical. Be kind and understanding to help your relationships.

Paraphrase/summarise

Summing up what someone has said in your own words shows them that you have listened carefully.

Active listening skills

Ask open questions

An open question cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no'. Start questions with 'what', 'how' or 'why' to learn more information.

Look for non-verbal cues

People communicate not only with their words but also with tone of voice, facial expressions and body language.

Reflect

Repeating certain words, especially emotion words, can show you have heard them.

Show open body language

We can demonstrate our listening through eye contact, nodding, smiling and facing the person who is speaking. Remember that not everyone is comfortable with eye contact so they may show listening in other ways.