
Back pain management programme

Assertiveness worksheet

Step one: identify a problem situation

Think of one situation that is a problem for you right now, one that you would like to handle assertively. Choose a situation that is not too overwhelming, but one that has meaning for you.

Write down your answers to the following questions:

1. **What is the problem?**
2. **Who is involved?**
3. **How does it make you feel?**
4. **What do you want?**
5. **How would you normally handle the problem?**
6. **What do you think would happen if you gave an assertiveness response?**

Step two: plan the assertiveness response

Reminding yourself what you want, and that you have the right to ask for it. List the steps involved in making an assertive response. Writing out your responses ahead of time, especially when you are first learning assertiveness, increases your chances of success.

- Think of a time and place convenient for both of you and write it down. (You may have to ask the other person when you could have 15 minutes to talk).
- Now write down the problem, the way you want to describe it to the other person.
- State the problem objectively and avoid accusing or blaming with 'you'.
- Object to the person's behaviour, not the person.
- State your feelings about the situation using 'I' rather than 'you'.

My problem is:

Step three: write down your request

- Keep the request short and simple.
- Be specific.
- Use "I" statements.
- Ask for one thing at a time.
- Do not explain why you deserve it, or state why the other person should feel obligated to grant your request.
- Do not apologise for making the request.
- Do not demand, command or make ultimatums.
- State positive consequences of getting your request granted.
- If you want to decline a request do it as simply and straight forward as making a request.

My request (or response) is: