

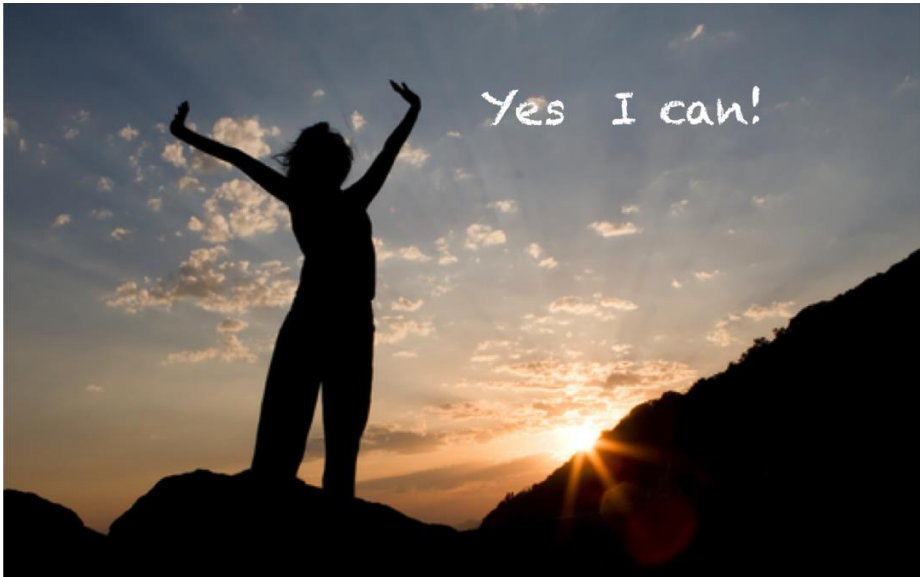
# BUILDING CONFIDENCE & BEING ASSERTIVE

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# WHAT IS CONFIDENCE?



- The feeling or belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something
- Confidence is a belief in oneself, the conviction that one has the ability to meet life's challenges and to succeed—and the willingness to act accordingly. Being confident requires a realistic sense of one's capabilities and feeling secure in that knowledge.
- Projecting confidence helps people gain credibility, make a strong first impression, deal with pressure, and tackle personal and professional challenges. It's also an attractive trait, as confidence helps put others at ease.

# WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

- Confidence is not an innate, fixed characteristic. It's an ability that can be acquired and improved over time.
- A few of the ingredients that determine a person's confidence level include genetics, temperament, cultural background, and early life experiences such as parenting style or a past trauma. Although those elements are generally out of our control, there are still plenty of ways to gain confidence throughout our lives.



# HOW CAN WE LOSE CONFIDENCE OR HAVE LOW CONFIDENCE

- Social Media living
- Negative Thinking
- Perfectionism
- Inability to actualize
- Low self-esteem
- Imposter syndrome
- Poor outcomes to major life events



Someone with low self-confidence will probably have experienced being put down and having their decisions ridiculed in the past. They will probably have been told they would fail by people who revelled in waiting to see them fail so they could say things like, "I told you so" when they did. People with low confidence often see the world as a hostile place where it's difficult to get on.

# BUILDING CONFIDENCE

- Do more
- Set realistic expectations
- Surround yourself with supportive people
- Challenge/reframe negative thinking
- Practice and accept failure as a natural part of learning/growing
- Use a compassionate voice
- Get to know yourself: worth, positive qualities, strengths

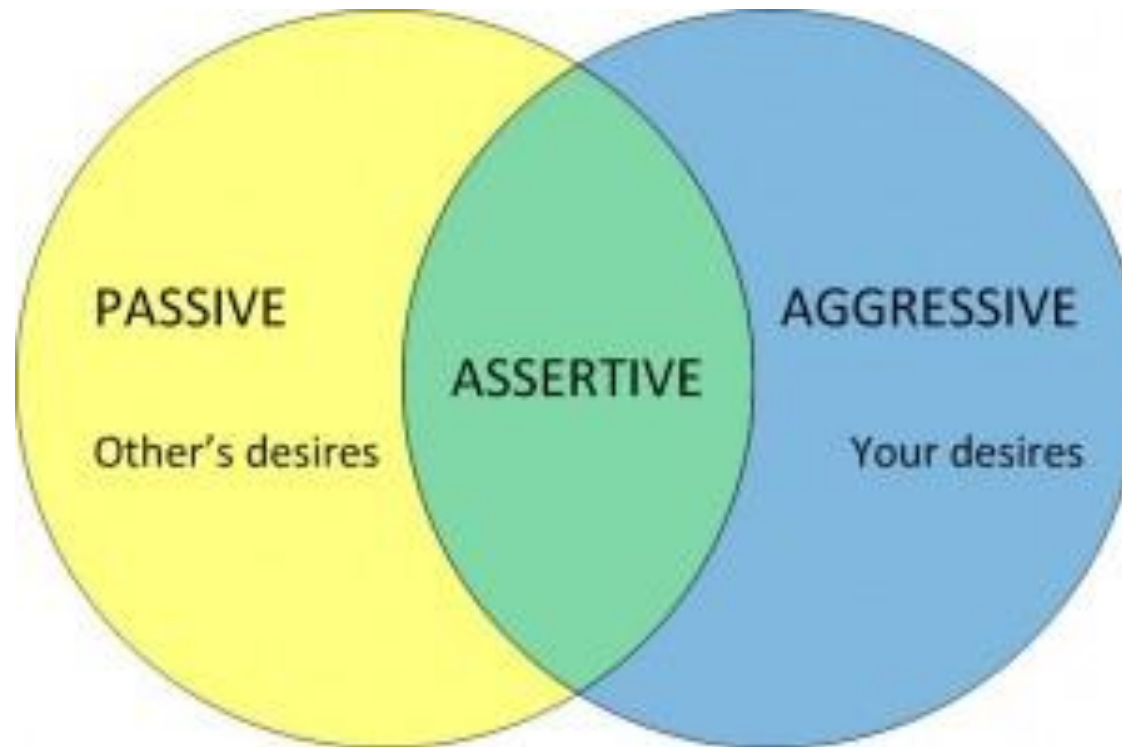


# WHAT IS ASSERTIVENESS?

- Being assertive refers to a person's ability to set and maintain healthy boundaries which usually requires healthy self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence and an ability to communicate effectively. An assertive person is usually capable of setting and maintaining boundaries.
- Assertiveness is about knowing when to say no without imposing yourself on other people either. Being assertive usually requires emotional intelligence. Assertive people are usually able to negotiate better and they suffer less anxiety.



# WHERE DO YOU FALL?



# COMMUNICATION & BODY LANGUAGE STYLES

## Passive:

- not speaking up for yourself, either because you think your views don't matter or for reasons like trying to please everyone or 'keep the peace'
- putting your needs last to the needs of others
- allowing yourself to be bullied or ignored
- speaking quietly or with a hesitating voice, or with body-language like looking at the floor or shrugging the shoulders
- undermining your opinions with passive phrases such as "only if you don't mind" or "but it really doesn't matter that much to me".

# COMMUNICATION & BODY LANGUAGE STYLES

## Aggressive:

- try to dominate others
- use humiliation to control others
- criticize, blame, or attack others
- be very impulsive
- have low frustration tolerance
- speak in a loud, demanding, and overbearing voice
- act threateningly and rudely
- not listen well and interrupt frequently
- use “you” statements
- have an overbearing or intimidating posture

# COMMUNICATION & BODY LANGUAGE STYLES

## Passive-Aggressive:

- mutter to yourself rather than confront the person or issue
- have difficulty acknowledging anger
- use facial expressions that don't match how you feel
- use sarcasm
- deny there is a problem
- appear cooperative while purposely doing things to annoy or disrupt
- use subtle sabotage to get even

# COMMUNICATION & BODY LANGUAGE STYLES

## **Assertive:**

- state needs and wants clearly, appropriately, and respectfully
- express feelings clearly, appropriately, and respectfully
- use “I” statements
- communicate respect for others
- listen well without interrupting
- feel in control of self
- have good eye contact
- speak in a calm and clear tone of voice
- have a relaxed body posture
- feel connected to others
- feel competent and in control
- not allow others to abuse or manipulate them
- stand up for their rights

# SCENARIOS

**A friend asks to borrow your car. This will be a big inconvenience for you:**

- **Passive** – Ummm, yeah. I guess that's fine. Do you need me to fill the tank?
- **Aggressive** – No way! Why would I let you borrow my car? How could you even ask such a thing!
- **Assertive** – I need my car that day, but I should have time to drop you off.

# SCENARIOS

**Your boss asks you to stay late, while everyone else leaves. You're always the one who stays late, and tonight you have plans:**

- **Passive** – Oh, well I guess I can stay if you need me.
- **Aggressive** – That's not fair! I always stay late and everyone else leaves. It's their turn!
- **Assertive** – I have plans tonight so I can't stay late.

# SCENARIOS

**Your partner has left a mess in the kitchen and you are too busy to clean:**

- **Passive** – I guess I have to clean since you cooked.
- **Aggressive** – How can you expect me to finish my work if I also have to clean up after you?!
- **Assertive** – I don't have time to clean up the kitchen due to some important deadlines.

# SCENARIOS

## You're at a restaurant and the server brought you the wrong dish:

- **Passive** – This is not what I ordered, but I guess I'll just eat it anyway.
- **Aggressive** – The server must be an idiot to have messed my order up so badly!
- **Assertive** – I don't really want to eat this, so I'll see what the server can do about it when I mention their error.

## SCENARIOS (NOW YOU TRY!)

**A friend showed up at your flat uninvited. Normally you'd be happy to let them in, but this time you are busy:**

- **Passive –**
- **Aggressive –**
- **Assertive –**

# TURNING YOU'S INTO I'S

The key to assertive dialogue is to maintain the focus of what you are saying on your own needs. Other's can't get defensive if you aren't pointing a finger at them or are asking for something for yourself.

## Example:

“**You** never pull your weight in our group assignments!”

“**I** feel pressured to contribute more than others in our group.”

# TURNING YOU'S INTO I'S

## You Statements:

- 1) Why can't you ever think of anyone else's needs?
- 2) You are too much for me to deal with right now!
- 3) Why can't you do the simplest things I ask of you?

# TURNING YOU'S INTO I'S

## I Statements:

- 1) I feel like my needs aren't being met right now.
- 2) I don't have the ability to support you the way I'd like to right now.
- 3) How should I be asking for support from you?

# SUMMARY

- Confidence is something we develop and it can be gained and lost
- We can bolster our confidence with successes and good support
- Assertiveness is the ability to communicate needs and uphold boundaries
- Passive, Passive-Aggressive, and Aggressive communication styles are more likely to lead to interpersonal tension
- Assertive communication styles can improve confidence with outcomes that support one's values
- To be assertive, remember to speak about your own needs and avoid commenting on the actions of others

# THE UNIVERSITY WELLBEING SERVICE

## What We Do

- **Promote** mental health and wellbeing for all students of the University
- **Provide proactive and reactive wellbeing support** for students who present with health and wellbeing challenges
- Focus on **prevention and early intervention**, as well as mental health promotion and mental health awareness (reducing stigma)
- **Liaise with specialist services** within and outside the University
- **Non-clinical, short to medium-term** input

## Where We Are

- Wellbeing Advisors are based within the Schools
- The Service is based at Bristo Square, in the University Health Centre, 5th Floor



## How You Can Access

- Reaching out to get support isn't always easy: you can reach out to us when you need it so we can help you build your support network
  - Online referral form available to anyone via the website: [Student Wellbeing Service | The University of Edinburgh](#)
  - Through your primary contact in the School

### How we work:

- We support our students as a team, communicating with those services who are involved in your support network.
- We will agree on an action plan with you and support you to achieve your wellbeing goals
- If you are already working with a different wellbeing service (e.g. ResLife), we might not get involved

# WELLBEING HUB

Questions?

# WELLBEING HUB

Remember to sign  
up for our other  
wellbeing sessions!

# CITATIONS

- [Confidence | Psychology Today United Kingdom](#)
- [5 Habits That Kill Confidence | HuffPost Life](#)
- [The difference between self-esteem, confidence and assertive... - Hypnotherapy Directory \(hypnotherapy-directory.org.uk\)](#)
- [Passive, aggressive, or assertive? – It's a God thing... \(itsagodthing.blog\)](#)
- [Assertive communication \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](#)
- [Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Communication \(therapistaid.com\)](#)
- [5 Confidence Tips | Psychology Today United Kingdom](#)