

Assertiveness

Speak Up in a Way That Fits

Adults and teens 13+ | 10 to 15 minutes

Assertiveness can mean asking, declining, disagreeing, or requesting time to decide. It does not require sounding confident or speaking aloud. Choose one low-risk situation. A direct response is one option; written communication, support from another person, or a private next step may fit better.

Choose one message, a suitable format, and a response you can use if the answer is no.

Name the actual request

Keep the message specific: I need the instructions in writing, rather than You never explain anything. You can acknowledge the other person's needs without abandoning your own. Avoid promising more than you want or can provide.

Prepare for a different answer

The other person may disagree or have limited options. Decide whether you want clarification, time, another support route, or a boundary. If refusal could trigger retaliation, seek private help rather than treating directness as a test of courage.

1. What preference, request, or disagreement do I want to express?**2. What words or communication format fit me and the situation?****3. What answer or pressure might I encounter?****4. What safe next step will I take if my request is not met?****Clinical use and adaptation**

Consider hierarchy, culture, disability, age, and actual control over the situation. Do not prescribe confrontation in coercive relationships or reward a particular communication style. For teens, identify safe support and explain relevant privacy limits. Assertiveness cannot guarantee fair treatment or safety.