

Communication Styles

PASSIVE



ASSERTIVE



AGGRESSIVE



DESCRIPTION & EXAMPLES

Avoids expressing own needs/opinions; gives in easily to avoid conflict; downplays own needs while putting others first

'Whatever you want', 'I don't mind', 'you decide', 'don't worry about me', 'it's fine, honestly'

Expresses self clearly and respectfully; balances own needs with those of others; firm but polite and clear communication.

'That's a good idea, but what about if we did this', 'Let's find a compromise', 'No, I'm not able to do that'

Forceful and dominating; disregards others feelings or opinions; talks over others; patronising and lack of respect.

'If you don't like it – tough', 'you don't know what you're talking about', 'I don't care what you think'

BELIEFS & POSITIONS

You're OK, I'm not OK

Feels or acts inferior, believing that others are better or more capable

I'm OK, You're OK

Believes and acts like everyone is equal and deserving of respect.

I'm OK, You're Not OK

Believes acts like their wants/needs are more valuable than others.

BODY LANGUAGE

Avoids eye contact; slouched or withdrawn; closed body language; speaks softly. May fidget or appear anxious displaying a lack of confidence.

Maintains eye contact; uses open and relaxed body language; good posture/sits upright; speaks clearly. Shows confidence and appears comfortable.

Intense eye contact; takes up excessive space; may point or gesture aggressively; rigid posture with folded arms. Appears dominant and confrontational.

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Gives in to others; needs not met; frustration and resentment; self-critical thoughts; low self-esteem.

Healthy relationships; mutual respect; effective conflict resolution; improved self-esteem; able to compromise.

Causes conflicts; damaged relationships; involved in arguments; isolation and loneliness; feelings of guilt/shame.