



Assertive Versus Unassertive and Aggressive Behavior

Many people are concerned that if they assert themselves others will think of their behavior as aggressive.

But there is a difference between being assertive and aggressive. Assertive people state their opinions, while still being respectful of others. Aggressive people attack or ignore others' opinions in favor of their own.

Passive people don't state their opinions at all.

The chart below gives some examples of the differences between passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior.

Differences Between Passive, Aggressive, and Assertive Behavior.

Passive Behavior (The Passive Person) -- Aggressive Behavior (The Aggressive Person) -- Assertive Behavior (The Assertive Person).

The Passive Person	The Aggressive Person	The Assertive Person
Is afraid to speak up	Interrupts and 'talks over' others	Speaks openly
Speaks softly	Speaks loudly	Uses a conversational tone
Avoids looking at people	Glares and stares at others	Makes good eye contact
Shows little or no expression	Intimidates others with expressions	Shows expressions that match the message
Slouches and withdraws	Stands rigidly, crosses arms, invades others' personal space	Relaxes and adopts an open posture and expressions
Isolates self from groups	Controls groups	Participates in groups
Agrees with others, despite feelings	Only considers own feelings, and/or demands of others	Speaks to the point
Values self less than others	Values self more than others	Values self equal to others
Hurts self to avoid hurting others	Hurts others to avoid being hurt	Tries to hurt no one (including self)
Does not reach goals and may not know goals	Reaches goals but hurts others in the process	Usually reaches goals without alienating others
You're okay, I'm not	I'm okay, you're not	I'm okay, you're okay



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