

## Being assertive and communicating well – Some simple suggestions



When you want to communicate effectively from your point of view try the following 3 things:

### **STEP 1**

**When you.....**

**I Feel.....**

**Because.....**

Some examples:

When you talk to me like that....

When you look at me that way.....

When you say....

When you borrow something and don't return it...

I feel angry....(or "a part of me feels angry" or "something in me feels angry")

I feel confused...

I feel hurt.....

I feel frustrated.....

Because it gives me the impression you don't care about me....

Because I get the idea you don't trust me.....

Because it seems like you think you know better than I do what is best for me....

Because I get the impression you were putting me down.....

It is not necessary to be assertive in the moment that the behavior occurs you can raise these things later - tomorrow or next week and sometimes that is better when we ourselves are not being emotionally reactive. It might be helpful to explain why you want to talk: for example; "the reason I want to talk is; 'I know I can get upset when you raise your voice and I care about our relationship'

If the other person is listening, they will hear you and hopefully understand from your point of view.

## **STEP 2**

If they don't or can't listen or if they get reactive or defensive and say something like: "you are too sensitive" or "you are wrong" or "It is stupid to feel that way" a helpful thing to do is to say:

"That may be so" (you are neither agreeing or disagreeing) or  
"I realize that is your perspective" and then follow up with your perception:

"However, that is how I feel" or  
"I see things differently" or  
"I want you to know how your behavior affects me"

## **STEP 3**

If they still say the same type of things you repeat your feelings –

Eg they say again: "you are too sensitive" and you can say:

"Maybe" or "it may seem that way to you, however, I want you to know that when you do that I feel like this"

Of course, this goes both ways so when someone is telling you how they feel when you do or say certain things you also have to listen and try to understand from their point of view.

The listening techniques we have learnt are helpful here.

Eg When someone has said:

"When you talk to me with that particular tone I feel upset because I feel like I am not good enough"

All you would repeat back is:

"Oh, OK, I am hearing you say when you hear this tone in my voice, it upsets you and you don't feel good enough"

From here, there is more possibility of raising awareness, changing behavior, saying sorry, working out different strategies and being kinder to yourself and the other person.

### **Other tips for good communication**

- Gentle eye contact
- Kind facial expression
- Warm tone of voice
- Expressive hand and body gestures
- Relaxed disposition
- Slow speech rate
- Brevity
- The words themselves