

You've Got Skills

Interpersonal Effectiveness

There are several barriers that get in the way of interpersonal effectiveness. Below you will find a checklist of the common ones. Please check off the selections that apply to you.

- Anxious “what if” thinking
- A lack of skills
- Self-doubt and insecurities
- Anger
- Guilt
- Indecision
- Not asking for what you want
- Demanding too much
- saying “Yes” to everything
- saying “No” to everything
- Emotionally reactive
- Fear of not being liked
- Being intimidated by powerful or dominant people
- Fear of your needs or opinions being rejected
- Worries about negative consequences
- Belief that you must sacrifice your self-respect in order to get your needs met

First, it is important to prioritize what is of most important to you in each given situation: 1) The relationship, 2) Your objective or request, 3) your self-respect.

Select a situation in your interpersonal relationship that is a cause of stress or difficulty for you. Prioritize below.

#1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____

Assessment Questions to determine your Interpersonal Goals¹

RELATIONSHIP: What do I have to do to keep this relationship? How do I want to feel in this relationship? How do I want the other person to feel about me after we interact?

_____.

OBJECTIVE: What specific changes or outcomes do I desire from our interaction? What do I have to do or say to get the results I desire? Will it work?

_____.

SELF-CONFIDENCE: How do I want to feel about myself after this interaction is over? What do I have to do to feel that way about myself? What will work?

_____.

¹ Linehan, M. (1993) Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder. New York and London: The Guilford Press.

11 ways to attend to relationships

- Be well tempered in your approach
- Resolve conflicts before they become exacerbated
- Acknowledge and validate the other person's feelings, needs, wants, opinions
- Use relationship skills to address problems
- Don't interrupt. Be patient and sensitive to the other person's desires
- Avoid attacking, threatening or judging the other person
- Don't neglect issues that need to be addressed in your relationship
- Be gentle and courteous toward the other person
- Use humor in your approach, smile and be light-hearted
- Listen attentively and be interested in the other person's point of view, opinion, reasons for saying no or making the request.
- End hopeless and unfulfilling relationships

11 ways to meet your objectives

- Prioritize your objectives as A (important, high priority), B (important, medium priority), C (unimportant, low priority). If you have several A objectives you can have a sub-label of A1, A2, A3...
- Describe the current situation and express your feelings and opinions openly.
- Assert yourself by asking for what you want or saying no confidently and clearly.
- Tell the other person the positive effects of getting what you want and need or the negative consequences of not getting what you want and need.
- Keep asking or saying over and over again without being side tracked. Ignore distractions that take you off topic.
- Appear confident through your vocal tone, physical posture, eye contact and select words that demonstrate your self-assurance.
- As for help, delegate tasks or hire someone to do it for you.
- Create systems to streamline the process to make it more efficient
- Be focused and in action on a consistent basis to meet your goal
- Identify the activities you "want" to do vs. what you "should" do. Make sure to keep both your desires and obligations balanced.
- Brainstorm with your partner. Offer and ask for alternative solutions to the problem.

11 ways to build up your level of confidence and increase your self-respect

- Identify your strengths by asking 25 people what your top 3 strengths are or by taking a Gallup Strengths test
- Stand up for yourself, your beliefs and opinions.
- Set limits and boundaries with others
- Interact with others in ways that make you feel capable and competent, not dependent or helpless
- Practice gratitude in the AM and PM identifying what you like about yourself, your life and positive events from the day.
- Reframe challenging aspects about yourself and your day so you can look at the situation from a compassionate perspective of personal growth and learning
- Maintain a good posture & walk and talk assertively
- Don't be overly apologetic for your opinions, needs, or your request.
- Be fair to yourself while also being respectful to the other person.
- Know your values and stick to them.
- Be truthful to yourself and the other person. Don't make excuses or act helpless.

Checklist: Factors to Consider

Now that you have prioritized and determined your goals for the relationship, objective and self-respect, review the checklist of factors that apply. If you have more items checked off than the intensity of your request will be higher and the likelihood of changing the situation goes up. If you have less items checked off then the intensity of your request will be lower and acceptance of the situation “as it is” is more likely.

- I have determined my #1 priority which is _____
- The person is capable of giving me what I need or want
- It is a good time to ask
- I have done my research and know all the facts to support my request
- I am clear about what I want
- What I want is appropriate to the current relationship
- I am giving at least as much as what I am asking for from the other person
- If I am submissive now to acquire peace it will create more problems in the long run
- I usually do things for myself and am careful to avoid acting helpless when I am not
- I have equal or higher authority over other person to tell them what to do or request what I want
- Is the person required by law or moral code to give me what I want

_____ boxes checked out of 11

Assertive Dialogue Script *(select a time or schedule a time when there will be few distractions and you can have a real conversation regarding this matter)*

Honey, I would like to talk to you about _____. **When we face this situation I feel** *(share your emotion)* _____. **I think** *(briefly share an opinion)* _____. **I would like to brainstorm some solutions with you. What I have discovered so far to resolve this problem is** _____

_____. **What objective I would like to accomplish is** _____

_____.

What I want to suggest is _____.

What are your thoughts regarding resolving this problem?