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A B C MESSAGE ASSERTIVE AND POSITIVE AFFIRMATION MESSAGE

Many people have great difficulty in speaking up for themselves to get their legitimate needs met. Oftentimes, people who don't assert themselves lack full awareness of their feelings, thoughts, values and/or needs. As a result, they frequently develop a pattern of repeatedly not speaking up for themselves but then eventually having an explosive outburst of emotion. The obvious corrective stance is to speak up regularly and appropriately rather than irregularly and inappropriately. An effective tactic to follow is to use **ABC Messages** both to assert oneself and to affirm others.

A+A = Awareness and Affect

1. Take time to quiet yourself to increase your self-awareness of your thoughts, beliefs, and feelings.
2. Say "I feel ?" (one word) or "I am ?" (one word)

B = Non-blameful Description of the other persons Behavior

Say, "When you _____."

(Do not label the other person's behavior; instead, describe it in neutral language.)

C = Change Request

Say, "I'd like you to _____."

C = Change Validation/Affirmation

Say, "I really like it when you _____."

EXAMPLES

Assertive Message:

A = I feel disconnected from you.

B = When you don't look at me when we talk.

C = I'd really like you to look at me when we talk.

Affirming Message:

(Most of us suffer from a deficit of affirming messages; use them often!)

A = I feel loved and special.

B = When you telephone me during the day.

C = I really like it when you call me during the day.