



ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION PRACTICE

DEAR MAN

A step-by-step framework for expressing your needs with clarity, confidence, and care for the relationship.

NAME

DATE

SITUATION / TOPIC

How to use this worksheet: Think of a specific situation where you need to communicate a need, set a boundary, or make a request. Work through each step below in order. Write in complete sentences when possible — the more specific you are, the more prepared you'll feel in the actual conversation.

Describe the Situation

State the facts of the situation clearly and objectively — just what happened, without interpretation or blame. Stick to observable facts, not judgments.

What is the specific situation you want to address? (Who, what, when — just the facts)

D

DESCRIBE

Complete this sentence: "When [specific behavior / event]..."

Express How You Feel

Share your emotional experience using "I" statements. This is not about blame — it's about owning your inner experience. Avoid "you made me feel" language.

What emotions come up for you in this situation?

E

EXPRESS

Complete this sentence: "I feel _____ because _____."

A

ASK

Ask for What You Want or Need

Make a clear, specific, and direct request. Vague requests lead to vague results. Be as concrete as possible — what would a "yes" actually look like?

What do you want to happen?

What do you need from this person specifically?

Write your request as one clear sentence: "What I'm asking for is..."

R

REINFORCE

Reinforce Your Request

Explain why your request is reasonable and how meeting it benefits both of you. People are more motivated when they understand the "why" and see something in it for them too.

What positive outcome will this create for you?

How could this benefit the other person or the relationship?

Tip: Focus on shared values, mutual respect, and what becomes possible when this need is met — not just consequences if it isn't.

M

MINDFUL

Mindfulness — Stay on Topic

Keep your focus on this specific request. Don't bring up past grievances, unrelated issues, or get pulled into tangents. If the conversation drifts, gently return to your point.

What is the ONE focus of this conversation?

What topics or past issues should you avoid bringing up?

If you get off track, how will you redirect yourself? (e.g., "What I want to focus on right now is...")

A

APPEAR

Appear Confident

Your tone of voice, posture, and eye contact all communicate whether you believe in what you're saying. Even if you feel nervous, you can practice appearing calm and grounded.

How do you want your body language to look? (posture, eye contact, facial expression)

How do you want your voice to sound? (pace, volume, tone)

What nervous habits or body language do you want to be aware of? How will you manage them?

N

NEGOTIATE

Negotiate with Openness & Curiosity

Be willing to hear the other person's perspective and look for a solution that works for everyone. Negotiation isn't losing — it's building agreements that last.

What is the minimum you would accept as a fair outcome?

What might the other person's concerns or needs be?

What are you willing to offer, adjust, or compromise on?

Tip: Try asking: "What would work for you?" or "Can we find a way to make this work for both of us?" — curiosity keeps the conversation collaborative.

Put It All Together

Use your answers above to write out what you want to say. Practice saying it out loud before the conversation.

Draft your opening statement (combine D + E + A):

Add your reinforcement (R) — why this matters and the positive impact:

After the Conversation

Reflection helps you grow. Come back to this page after your conversation and note what you observed.

What went well?

What was challenging?

What was the outcome?

What would I do differently next time?

One thing I want to celebrate or acknowledge about how I showed up:

Every courageous conversation is a step toward deeper connection.

DEAR MAN Assertive Communication Worksheet · For coaching use