

## **ASSERT (DEAR MAN Alternative)**

**CORE CONCEPT:** ASSERT provides an alternate model for assertiveness.

In addition to DEAR MAN, assertiveness can be taught through a variety of models. The following model may be more straightforward for some clients to learn or may provide a supplement to the DEAR MAN skill.

Use the acronym ASSERT to remember the building blocks of this skill. These building blocks are described in further detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Ask or Set boundaries  
Say what is needed  
Eye contact  
Respectful  
Timing

### **Ask**

You cannot be assertive without speaking up. You need to ask clearly for what you want and/or need. Do not hint or beat around the bush. Be direct and confident in your request. Or. . .

### **Set boundaries**

Say “no” and set other interpersonal boundaries when necessary. Do not expect others to know or recognize your boundaries. Again, be direct and confident.

### **Say what is needed**

No more or less. Some situations may be benefited by you sharing your feelings, opinions, or detailed explanations. Other situations do not require elaboration. Tailor the amount you share to the context at hand, based on what will be most effective.

### **Eye contact**

Look others in the eye when you speak without staring or having too intense a gaze. Eye contact communicates interest, confidence, and respect in Western cultures. However, be sensitive to other cultures and religions that view eye contact differently. Adjust the amount of eye contact you use accordingly.

### **Respectful**

Choose respectful words, have a respectful tone, and be polite. Disrespectful words and tone will sabotage your efforts to be assertive and reach your goal(s).

### **Timing**

Be thoughtful about timing. Some assertive statements need to happen in the moment, and others will be more effective when you choose timing that benefits your assertiveness goal(s). Generally, address issues that require assertiveness when you and others are in a Wise Mind place.