

Assertiveness: Developing a Written Plan to Become More Assertive

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November 20, 2010

Much information, insight and encouragement, as well as many skills, tips and techniques are readily available to help an individual become more assertive. But once you have your insight, encouragement, skills and techniques, what do you do next? It is time to make the commitment to change, and like most things, you are more likely to follow through with this change if you put it in writing. By doing some introspection and using the following as a guide, you will be able to develop your vital "Written Plan for Becoming More Assertive".

The change(s) I will make to become more assertive are:

What sort of changes will you make in your thoughts about your own feelings? Your rights? What about the feelings of others? What habits will you change? What behaviors will you change? How will you change your style of communication? What about your tone of voice and/or body language? How will you handle criticism? What risks will you take?

Why am I making these changes to be more assertive?

Consider and write the reasons you want to change. What are your motivating factors for wanting to be more assertive?

What other benefits do I hope to achieve with these changes?

Aside for your reasons for change, what benefits do you hope to gain from being more assertive?

Who will I turn to when I need help?

This should be a trusted individual, and one who can provide feedback as you progress to becoming more assertive. What support group(s) can you turn to? Who will be your role model?

How will I know I am succeeding at being more assertive?

What will your success look like? What does it feel like? How will you act, dress and feel during your success?

How will I learn from my mistakes?

How will you apply your mistakes to life-lessons learned? How will you move on? Will you view these mistakes as a temporary force in better learning how to become more assertive?

How will I reward myself for assertive behaviors?

How will you acknowledge and reward yourself for successfully handling awkward or uncomfortable situations in a more assertive manner? What about major situations? Will you reward yourself daily? Weekly? What rewards will you use? (The rewards you choose should be both generous and personally meaningful to you.)

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What expectations do I have for becoming more assertive?

How much time and effort will you put into becoming more assertive? In what time frame do you expect to see results? What expectations do you have of others around you as you make these changes?

How will I handle "going too far"?

What will I do if I go too far and hurt others? What if my behavior is aggressive? How will I handle the situation? (Take feedback seriously, but also take into consideration if this is just a possible strategy by others to get you back to the way you were.)

When do I want to start this change to becoming more assertive?

Set a date and take action!

Now that you have your written plan for becoming more assertive, I recommend you share it with at least one other trusted individual, as you are even more likely to follow through when you become accountable to others. Keep your written plan in a visible place where you can review it often. Also, you are more likely to succeed when you set up practice for yourself, as well as opportunities to look back and learn from mistakes and to celebrate successes. I urge you to get started on your plan to become more assertive today!

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*Dr. Brent R. Coyle is a practicing board-certified adult psychiatrist with over 20 years clinical experience, and the founder of **MyTherapySession.com**.*

MyTherapySession.com is an online resource that provides hope and help to individuals with various emotional health concerns. Through the use of web-based assessment tools and stepwise video learning modules with reflective journal prompts and selected (optional) spiritually sensitive observations, both consumers and healthcare providers can more efficiently and effectively address a variety of essential mental health concerns, including weight management, stress, anxiety and depression, self-esteem and goal setting, assertiveness, anger management, comprehensive addictions treatment, eating disorders, overcoming guilt and shame, and many more.

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