

**SAMPLE CLIENT ASSERTIVENESS COURSE**

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## I. HOW ASSERTIVE ARE YOU NOW?

### A. "THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN"

Respond to the following statements as follows:

4. if this is always the case
3. if this is often the case
2. if this is sometimes the case
1. if this is never the case

- a. People use me for a "doormat."
- b. I am not satisfied with my career progress.
- c. Feeling angry makes me feel disturbed.
- d. Angry people make me feel disturbed.
- e. Being ignored infuriates me.
- f. I find it hard to punish or correct my subordinates.
- g. I cannot express "tender" and "tough" feelings with equal ease.
- h. I can't tolerate looking foolish.
- i. I can't put up with being disliked.
- j. It bothers me to be watched while I work.
- k. I find it more or less difficult to express both tough and tender feelings to the opposite sex.
- l. I cannot criticize a friend.
- m. I prefer to "bottle-up" my feelings.
- n. Being teased annoys me.
- o. Speaking in public frightens me.
- p. Loud voices intimidate or anger me when they are confrontational.
- q. If someone is disturbing me at a concert or movie, I can't bring myself to ask them to be quiet.
- r. My sales resistance is low.
- s. I hesitate to complain about unsatisfactory goods or services.
- t. I find it difficult starting a conversation with a stranger.
- u. I am "bugged" by people who have authority over me.
- v. Making mistakes, in general, makes me feel angry, stupid or anxious.
- w. People act as if they find me boring.
- x. When a friend makes an unreasonable request, I am unable to refuse.
- y. I am incapable of requesting favors from my friends.
- z. The idea of being criticized upsets me.
- \* Anything else \_\_\_\_\_

Circle what you believe to be your seven most troublesome problems. Be sure to enter any additional problems on the space provided.

**B. Your basic equipment**

1. Accepting compliments
2. Asking for specifics
3. Asking why?
4. Disagreeing passively
5. Disagreeing actively
6. Using appropriate non-verbal language
7. Avoiding unnecessary justification
8. Asserting your "Inalienable Rights"

**YOUR INALIENABLE RIGHTS**

- You have the right to judge your own behavior and feelings.
- You have the right to take on the responsibility for the consequences of your thoughts and actions.
- You have the right to preserve your dignity.
- You have the right to ask for the things you want.
- You have the right to initiate problem-solving steps when you own the problem.

Curtis J. Romanowski, *Uncommon Sense* (Kansas City, MO.: Leca Publications. Pending.)

9. Hanging-in there
10. Making greeting talk
11. Talking about yourself
12. Talking about your feelings

**Self-Disclosure:** A skill that teaches the acceptance and initiation of discussion of both the positive and negative aspects of your personality, behavior, lifestyles and intelligence, to enhance social communication and reduce manipulation.

**Benefit:** Allows you to comfortably disclose aspects of yourself and your life that previously caused feelings of ignorance, anxiety, or guilt.

**Free Information:** A skill that teaches the recognition of simple cues, given by a social partner in everyday conversation to indicate what is interesting or important to that person.

Manuel J. Smith, WHEN I SAY NO, I FEEL GUILTY (New York-Dial, 1975)

### C. Assessing your interactions with other people

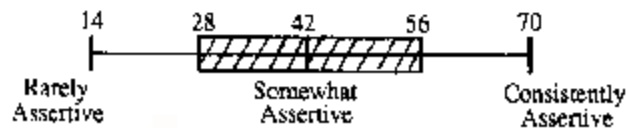
Think about some of the complaints or conflicts you've had with others in the last few weeks. Read over the following list of statements and rate how well each statement describes your behavior as follows:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 5. if the behavior almost always occurs          | 2. if the behavior occurs some of the time |
| 4. if the behavior occurs most of the time       | 1. if the behavior almost never occurs     |
| 3. if the behavior occurs about half of the time |  |

When I've had specific complaints, I have:

- shown concern for the other party.
- used suitably strong gestures.
- expressed my feelings in a controlled way.
- stated my complaint.
- attempted to avoid misunderstanding by questioning the other party about the problem situation.
- expressed myself in a commanding voice.
- avoided put-downs and blaming behaviors.
- held-off on acting until I had a clear idea of where I'd like the conversation to go.
- described the problem behavior to the other party without making a personal attack.
- avoided speculations about the other party's motives or intentions.
- thought about the possible and probable consequences of going forth, prior to speaking up.
- stated my case briefly and simply.
- discussed my specific needs, or negotiated a compromise.
- looked directly at the other person.

Your assertiveness quotient: \_\_\_\_\_



### D. Recognizing problem interaction patterns

1. The Scattergun

- "Wordy"
- Has unclear goals
- Uses indirect communication patterns

2. The Super-polite "NICE GUY"

- Appears "open"
- Seems extroverted
- Kicks self and others about true feelings



3. The Perplexed

- Has well-defined goals
- Knows what should be done
- Capable of action

**BUT...**

- Has incorrect ideas
- Is confused about relationships
- Worries about worry
- Moralizes
- Believes that virtue equals interpersonal success



4. The Ostrich

- Avoids eye contact
- Avoids small talk
- Can't start a conversation
- Avoids conflict



5. The Doormat

- Gets pushed around
- Can't speak up
- Remains passive in all situations

6. The Mis-matcher

- Says right thing at wrong time
- Creates distance vs. closeness
- Open to exploitation and hurt
- Appears to be self-centered



## II. THE PRINCIPLES OF ASSERTION

### A. Characteristics of the assertive person



### C. Universals of assertiveness

1. Self-inspection
2. Separate the goals of aggression from those of assertion
3. Practice new skills in low-risk situations
4. Maintain your ethics
5. See if your behaviors in successful situations are transferable to previously unsuccessful situations or circumstances
6. Pause between stimulus and response, and choose
7. Use both tough and tender behaviors situationally
8. Reveal as much of your personal self as is appropriate to the situation and the relationship.

### III. LEVEL ONE: FOUNDATIONAL TECHNIQUES

#### A. The Broken Record



A skill that, by calm repetition -- saying what you want over and over again-- teaches persistence without having to rehearse arguments or angry feelings beforehand, in order to be "up" for dealing with others.

1. Non-assertive people tend to get bogged down in excess verbiage and give up easily when someone:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Be persistent
  - Keep saying what you want without getting angry, irritated or loud.
  
3. Ignore guilt-producing statements and manipulative questions
  - Try these "stock responses"
  - *"I understand, but I'm not interested in buying."*
  - *"Yes, but I still want my refund."*
  
4. Practice
  
5. **Benefit:** Allows you to feel comfortable in ignoring manipulative verbal side traps, argumentative baiting and irrelevant logic, while sticking to your desired point.

### B. Fogging

A skill that teaches acceptance of manipulative criticism by calmly acknowledging to your critic the probability that there may be some truth in what (s)he says, yet allows you to remain your own judge of what you do.

1. Don't deny any criticism
2. Don't counterattack with other criticism
3.
  - Agree with truth
  - Agree with probability
  - Agree in principle
  - Agree with something!

4. Practice (Tip: Agree with content)

• *"I see you are dressed in your usual sloppy manner."*

Fogging: \_\_\_\_\_

• *"You stayed out late again. I tried to call you at 1:30 in the morning."*

Fogging: \_\_\_\_\_

• *"If you stay out late so much, you might get sick again."*

Fogging: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Recall a critical statement that you've heard directed at you or toward another, where you feel FOGGING might be a good approach. Write the critic's words in the space provided.

Critic: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fogging: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. **Benefit:** Allows you to receive criticism comfortably without becoming anxious or defensive, while giving no reward to those using manipulative criticism.

## IV. AUTOGENIC CONDITIONING

*"Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve." - Napoleon Hill*

Part 1: Check the "WHO'S," "WHAT'S" AND "WHENS" corresponding to your difficulty. Please make your checkmarks on the BLANKS to the left of each entry. (The parentheses "( )" are for use later on, so leave those blank for now.)

### A. Who are the people with whom you have difficulties?

- \_\_\_ ( ) work colleague(s)
- \_\_\_ ( ) spouse; mate
- \_\_\_ ( ) neighbor; acquaintance
- \_\_\_ ( ) physicians; lawyers; other professionals
- \_\_\_ ( ) relative
- \_\_\_ ( ) children; child (specific)
- \_\_\_ ( ) sales people; waiters; other service providers
- \_\_\_ ( ) repairmen; plumbers; other hired help
- \_\_\_ ( ) total strangers
- \_\_\_ ( ) employer; employee
- \_\_\_ ( ) friend(s)
- \_\_\_ ( ) club member(s)
- \_\_\_ ( ) collection agents
- \_\_\_ ( ) other? \_\_\_\_\_

### B. What topics prompt you to feel uncomfortable?

- \_\_\_ ( ) your mistakes
- \_\_\_ ( ) others' mistakes
- \_\_\_ ( ) sex
- \_\_\_ ( ) politics
- \_\_\_ ( ) finances
- \_\_\_ ( ) death; illness of others
- \_\_\_ ( ) health problems
- \_\_\_ ( ) marriage; living arrangements
- \_\_\_ ( ) divorce; domestic problems
- \_\_\_ ( ) religion; philosophies on life
- \_\_\_ ( ) societal ills and civic mismanagement
- \_\_\_ ( ) career choice
- \_\_\_ ( ) educational matters
- \_\_\_ ( ) leisure activities; hobbies
- \_\_\_ ( ) household difficulties; homeowner's problems
- \_\_\_ ( ) sports; entertainment
- \_\_\_ ( ) critiques of theatre, movies, recitals, concerts
- \_\_\_ ( ) your achievements
- \_\_\_ ( ) others' accomplishments
- \_\_\_ ( ) differing tastes, aesthetics
- \_\_\_ ( ) the generation gap
- \_\_\_ ( ) human anatomy (frank discussions)
- \_\_\_ ( ) bringing up children
- \_\_\_ ( ) personal grooming and style
- \_\_\_ ( ) prejudice and bigotry
- \_\_\_ ( ) sex roles, rights or stereotypes
- \_\_\_ ( ) other? \_\_\_\_\_

**C. When do you typically have difficulties?**

When you are asking for ....

- \_\_\_ ( ) service
- \_\_\_ ( ) constructive criticism of yourself
- \_\_\_ ( ) group participation
- \_\_\_ ( ) response from professional authorities
- \_\_\_ ( ) personal approval
- \_\_\_ ( ) favors
- \_\_\_ ( ) a promotion or raise
- \_\_\_ ( ) a refund or price adjustment
- \_\_\_ ( ) cooperation
- \_\_\_ ( ) reconciliation
- \_\_\_ ( ) information
- \_\_\_ ( ) clarification
- \_\_\_ ( ) a date
- \_\_\_ ( ) assistance; adoration
- \_\_\_ ( ) other? \_\_\_\_\_

When you are ....

- \_\_\_ ( ) participating in group discussion
- \_\_\_ ( ) returning unsatisfactory merchandise
- \_\_\_ ( ) protesting an emotional "tantrum."
- \_\_\_ ( ) coping with "pigheadedness"
- \_\_\_ ( ) asserting your independence
- \_\_\_ ( ) issuing instructions or orders
- \_\_\_ ( ) complaining about "unnecessary roughness"
- \_\_\_ ( ) refusing shoddy goods or services
- \_\_\_ ( ) just saying "no" to various requests
- \_\_\_ ( ) stopping an attempted "guilt infusion"
- \_\_\_ ( ) protesting irritating habits
- \_\_\_ ( ) giving and receiving praise
- \_\_\_ ( ) getting interviewed
- \_\_\_ ( ) cutting off unjust criticism
- \_\_\_ ( ) offering your ideas and opinions
- \_\_\_ ( ) explaining your ideas and opinions
- \_\_\_ ( ) verbally expressing positive feelings
- \_\_\_ ( ) verbally expressing negative feelings
- \_\_\_ ( ) expressing a differing opinion
- \_\_\_ ( ) other? \_\_\_\_\_

When your "audience" consists of ....

- \_\_\_ ( ) a group of total strangers
- \_\_\_ ( ) one stranger
- \_\_\_ ( ) a group of acquaintances
- \_\_\_ ( ) one acquaintance

Your answers to this segment provide an overview of your perceived strengths and weaknesses. They will help you pinpoint the kinds of subjects and situations you find bothersome, as well as your personal sensitivities to audience type and size.

**Part II:** Review only the items you have checked above. Assign a discomfort rating to each, entering a 1, 3 or 5 into the parentheses provided as follows:

- 5. if the item is highly discomforting or if it troubles you daily
- 3. if the item is annoying or if it troubles you weekly
- 1. if the item is a nuisance or if it troubles you only about every two weeks

Part III: The Autogenic Conditioning Method

- A. **Select a highly discomforting "5" item for autogenic work.**
- B. **Sit with eyes closed and relax**
- C. **Inhale and exhale very deeply**
- D. **Talk your arms and legs into a deep state of relaxation, or countdown.**
- E. **Alternate methods:**
  1. **While relaxed, clearly affirm the goal you want to accomplish (a highly discomforting item to which you'd like to react positively).**
    - a. **Affirmation design prerequisites (to be accepted by the subconscious)**
      - Personal
      - Positive
      - Present tense
  2. **Use index cards to track multiple outcomes**
  3. **Form a clear mental image and visualize yourself with the desired attributes and outcomes**
    - a. **See, hear and feel performance consistent with your very best self**

## V. LEVEL TWO: FOUNDATIONAL TECHNIQUES

### A. Negative assertion

A skill that teaches acceptance of your errors and faults (without having to apologize) by strongly and sympathetically agreeing with hostile or constructive criticism of your "negative" qualities.

1. Change verbal behavior when confronted with your errors
2. Non-assertive individuals automatically link guilt with having made a mistake
3. Non-assertive people can be manipulated through their guilt and anxiety feelings into:
  - Denial
  - Defensiveness
  - Countercriticism
  - Seeking forgiveness
  - Offering reparations

4. Practice (Tip: Agree with Label/Characterization)

• "You didn't do too well in dealing with that heckler."

Negative assertion: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

• "Sis, for a young girl with a good figure, you sure walk like a fullback!"

Negative assertion: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

• "You know ... that new suit makes you look terrible!"

Negative assertion: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Recall a critical statement that you heard directed at you or toward another, where you feel NEGATIVE ASSERTION might be a good approach. Write down the critic's words in the space provided.

Negative assertion: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. **Benefit:** Allows you to look more comfortably at negatives in your own behavior or personality without feeling defensive or anxious, or resorting to denial of real error, while at the same time reducing your critic's anger or hostility.

**B. Negative Inquiry**

A skill that teaches the active prompting of criticism in order to use the information (if helpful) or exhaust it (if manipulative) while prompting your critic to be more assertive and less dependent on manipulative ploys.

1. Reduces the use of "Right/Wrong" structure by those dealing with you
2. Desensitizes you to criticism, so you can listen to what they tell you
3. Extinguishes repetitive manipulative criticism, so it doesn't drive you up the wall!
4. Practice

· *"I noticed the way you appear today.  
It doesn't look good."*

Negative inquiry: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

· *"You didn't deserve a merit increase."*

Negative inquiry: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

· *"You're making all the typical mistakes that a 'New Guy' usually makes."*

Negative inquiry: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Benefit:** Allows you to more comfortably seek out criticism about yourself in close relationships, while prompting the other person to express honest negative feelings and improve communication.

## VI. EXPRESSION OF INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Behaviors  
Emotions

Thoughts  
Requests  
Uses  
Editions

Curtis J. Romanowski, *Language Sense* (Kansas City, MO: LECA Publications, Pending)

### A. Behaviors

#### 1. "Door-openers"

- "I need your help."
- "I'd like to discuss something with you now."
- "Are you aware that ...?"
- "I've noticed that ..."

#### 2. Formats:

##### a. "you..."

Example: "As I understand it, you are asking that I chair five different committees."

##### b. "I..."

Example: "I have been working for this company for over three years without a raise."

##### c. "I...you..."

Example: "I have been trying to discuss this with you for the past two weeks. You have assured me that we would talk about this before the first of the month, but so far I have not heard back from you."

##### d. "When you..."

Example: "When you use my car and don't refill the gas tank..."

##### e. "We..."

Example: "We have just been through another debate that has ended without any plan for action."

3. Practical tips:

- use simple, concrete terms
- don't accuse of bad faith
- avoid guessing at motives
- avoid vagaries
- avoid absolutes

4. Behaviors script: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Emotions**

1. Feelings can be dealt with empathetically.

2. Format: "I feel ... (emotional experience)."

3. Practical tips:

- be accurate about type of emotion
- be accurate about degree of emotion
- avoid "guilt objective"
- avoid emotional outbursts

4. Emotions script: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Thoughts**

1. Facts can be dealt with logically.

2. Formats:

a. "(Emotions) ... Because ... (tangible effect)."

Example: "I feel frustrated (emotions) because my time is wasted while I wait for you."

b. "I think ... (beliefs)"

Example: "I think that those remarks lead us away from our problem."

3. Practical tips:

- be sensitive to skill issues
- avoid sarcasm, hurtful language and blame-fixing
- avoid excessive justification
- assume a positive perspective

4. Thoughts script: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Requests**

1. Define the problem in terms of your needs not solutions.

2. Format: "I need ..."

Example: "I need to have the grounds of our facility free from debris."

3. Practical tips:

- only make a few requests at a time
- be concrete and explicit about your request for a change
- focus on problem vs. person

-Problem focus: "I need you to stop playing so loudly."

-Person focus: "I need you to stop being so inconsiderate."

- request large changes in achievable steps

- reasonable
- controllable

- be prepared for counterrequests

4. Requests script: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**E. Uses**

1. Explain consequences of compliance in a polite, non-judgmental way

2. Format: "If... (compliance), then ... (consequences)"

3. Practical tips:

- Reward/Reinforcement

- explicit
- social

- Punishment/Extinction

- implicit
- mild and brief
- realistic and believable
- significant at personal level
- "fits the crime"
- suitable action for you (not a sacrifice!)

4. Uses script: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**F. Editions**

1. Reference "Be True" table of editions  
-correct rule violations

2. Review "aurality"  
-listen for natural, non-judgmental tone  
-alter word choice or phrasing as needed

3. Edit for effectiveness

- concise
- simple
- precise
- clear

<b>"BE TRUE"</b>	
Behaviors:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Emotions:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Thoughts:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Requests:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Uses:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Editions:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**“BE TRUE”  
TABLE OF EDITIONS**

	Code	Do	Don't
<b>BEHAVIORS</b>	B1	· Use simple, concrete terms	· Use “fuzzy,” abstract terms
	B2	· Assume positive intent	· Accuse of bad faith
	B3	· Describe observable behavior	· Judge or label behavior
	B4	· Specify time, place, frequency of behavior	· Use generalities and absolutes
<b>EMOTIONS</b>	E1	· Accurately express the type of feeling you are having	· Confuse one kind of feeling for another
	E2	· Accurately express the degree of your emotions	· Exaggerate or underplay your emotions
	E3	· Take full ownership of your feelings	· Try to make the other person feel guilty
	E4	· Express your honest emotions calmly	· Vent your emotions, perhaps explosively
<b>THOUGHTS</b>	T1	· Remain focused on the problem behavior	· Use sarcasm, hurtful language and blame-fixing
	T2	· Explain your feelings briefly	· Over justify your feelings
	T3	· Reference tangible effects of current behavior	· Attempt to “sell” your values
	T4	· Assert your beliefs in a positive, goal-oriented way.	· Aggressively state your beliefs, stressing “right/wrong” issues.
<b>REQUESTS</b>	R1	· Define the problem in terms of your needs	· Insist on your solution
	R2	· Make only one or two requests at a time	· Request broad, sweeping change
	R3	· Be concrete and explicit about your request for a change	· “Beat around the bush”
	R4	· Be sensitive to the other's situation	· Ignore the other's needs and proceed selfishly
<b>USFS</b>	U1	· Clearly explain positive consequences, rewards	· Only “hint at” positive consequences
	U2	· Explain benefits of compliance, change	· Offer only punishment and threats
	U3	· Imply undesired consequences or “missing out” on reward	· “Spell-out” threats and negative consequences
	U4	· Use social reinforcers: e.g. “I’d feel a lot better.”	· Use bribery; e.g. “I’ll give you... (tangible items)”
	U5	· If necessary, use realistic and believable punishment	· Use excessive or self-defeating punishment

Curia J. Romanowski, *Uncommon Sense* (Kansas City, MO: LECA Publications, pending)

**G. Contingency plan**

1. Possible replies to your "behaviors" script:

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Possible replies to your "emotions" script:

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Possible replies to your "thoughts" script:

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Possible replies to your "requests" script:

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Possible replies to your "uses" script:

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your counter-reply: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Please use the space below to enter at least one "Be True" statement, reply or counter-reply that you feel will allow you to be more confident in your challenge situation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## VII. ACTION PLAN FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?

If I am for myself only, what am I?

If not now - when?

-Hillel, ancient Jewish sage

**A. Recollection:** Use Appendix A to develop a list of action items. Select one important item for immediate attention.

**B. Assessment:** Use Appendix B to specifically describe an important challenge situation.

**C. Critique:** Use Appendix C to carefully inventory and critique your own feelings, so you can conduct a risk/benefit analysis of your situation prior to making any decision about asserting yourself.

**D. Decision:** Taking all the above factors into consideration, are you willing to risk asserting yourself in your challenge situation? (Remember: nonassertive people tend to overestimate the likelihood of failure and anticipated punishments.)

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ no

Note: If your answer is "NO", go back to Appendix A, and select a different challenge situation. Work through Appendices B-C as before.

### E. Commitment

You can always find a hundred reasons for not doing things, so that over time you become quite skilled at creating an empty life. As your actions change, often your feelings will also.

I will commit myself to SPEAK UP in my challenge situation

\_\_\_\_\_ within the week

\_\_\_\_\_ within 2 weeks

\_\_\_\_\_ within 4 weeks

### F. DO IT!

**APPENDIX A**

**PHASE I: RECOLLECTION**

Following your recollection, review and rating of the items in the Autogenic Conditioning segment of your text (pages 9-10), please continue by answering these additional questions:

1. What physical changes have you experienced in highly discomforting "5" scenes?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> heart palpitations  | <input type="checkbox"/> fatigue        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> elevated pulse      | <input type="checkbox"/> "colon-mouth"  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> high blood pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> the shakes     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nausea              | <input type="checkbox"/> the sweats     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "butterflies"       | <input type="checkbox"/> anything else? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flushing            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tingling sensations | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hot flashes         | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pain                | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> weakness            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____          |

2. What observable behaviors do you display during these intense scenes?

- altered facial expression (automatic)
- altered vocal tone (automatic)
- affected language choice: obscenity
- exaggeration
- altered body posture
- tensing of body and extremities
- crying
- launching personal attacks
- silence
- impeded speech; stammering; sputtering
- disorganized speech
- reluctance to make eye contact
- physical acting out
- asking "manipulative questions"
- anything else

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What were your most compelling reasons for rating an item as "5" highly discomforting?

(You can check more than one.)

- The frequency of your troubled reaction.
- The intensity of your troubled reaction.
- The duration of your troubled reaction.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. During these highly discomforting scenes, what are some of the thoughts you experience?

- irrelevant, distracting thoughts
- I wonder what the other person(s) is/are thinking about me
- I wonder about how I'm handling myself and the appropriateness of my "image"
- I'm very self-conscious
- I wonder about the long-term effects of the encounter
- I feel insecure, guilty, inept, angry
- I wish I were somewhere else'
- Anything else?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

5. What categories generally trouble you the most?

- the WHOS?
- the WHATS?
- the WHEN'S?

6. Enter your Assertiveness Quotient from page 4: \_\_\_\_\_ .

7. Go to the items you checked and rated 1, 2, 3, or 5, on pages 9 - 10 of your text.

- If your Assertiveness Quotient is between 14 and 27, select five "nuisance" items (items you rated "1") that are important to you to correct.
- If your Assertiveness Quotient is between 28 and 56, select five "annoyance" items (items you rated "3") that are important to you to correct.
- If your Assertiveness Quotient is between 57 and 70, select five "highly discomforting" items (items you rated "5" ) that are important to you to correct.

8. In selecting your "action" items, choose items that correspond to particular examples from your life that you'll be able to describe clearly and specifically. Rank-order these items according to the degree of discomfort they produce.

MOST DISCOMFORT: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

LEAST DISCOMFORT: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B  
PHASE II: ASSESSMENT  
DESCRIBING YOUR CHALLENGE SITUATION**

Consider the item you selected in Appendix A. It's now essential that you clearly and specifically describe that situation.

In describing a situation, first concentrate on who said or did what, when and where. Then, specify your problem behavior in that situation and state your assertion goal.

Begin by answering the following questions about your challenge situation:

1. Who are the people involved? You and who else?

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2. What was the time and place?

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3. What was the subject of your conversation?

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4. What exactly did the other person(s) do or say? (List the other person(s)' problem behavior)

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5. What exactly did/didn't you say or do? (List your problem behavior)

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**APPENDIX C**  
**PHASE III: CRITIQUE**  
**TAKING AN EMOTIONAL INVENTORY**

Refer to Appendix B, and recall your challenge situation, focusing in details such as the clothes being worn, sounds, temperature, exact location, lighting and emotions. While reviewing your emotions, complete the following inventory.

1. What physical changes do you recall having during the challenge situation?

<input type="checkbox"/> jumpiness (hypervigilance)	<input type="checkbox"/> shaking (tremors)
<input type="checkbox"/> perspiration	<input type="checkbox"/> blushing
<input type="checkbox"/> "crawling" skin	<input type="checkbox"/> tingling sensations
<input type="checkbox"/> aggravated eye conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> hot flashes
<input type="checkbox"/> rapid breath	<input type="checkbox"/> shallow breathing
<input type="checkbox"/> increased pulse	<input type="checkbox"/> pounding heart
<input type="checkbox"/> migraines, backaches, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> anything else?
<input type="checkbox"/> dryness of mouth	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> stomach discomfort	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> weakness, fatigue, weariness	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

2. What negative "pictures" of yourself did you imagine while recalling the challenge situation? Describe your behaviors:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

3. What negative "self-talk" or "internal dialogue" do you remember having during the challenge situation. Write the words you used in talking to yourself below:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Answer the following questions as if your challenge situation were to come up again in the future:

- a. Would the negative feelings you listed prevent you from asserting yourself?
- b. Would the negative images or "mental pictures" you described prevent you from asserting yourself?
- c. Would your negative "self-talk" discourage you from asserting yourself?
- d. If you assert yourself in your challenge situation, what is/are the other(s) likely to do or say?

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- e. If you assert yourself in your challenge situation, what damages or negative expenses might you incur?

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- f. If you assert yourself in this same situation, what positive benefits are likely to come your way?

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- g. If you do assert yourself in this situation, what would you say your chances are for improving the situation over the long term? \_\_\_\_\_%

- h. On a scale of 1 (not important) to 10 (critically important), how important to your feelings of self-worth and happiness is it to improve your challenge situation? \_\_\_\_\_

When you have completed your work on Appendices A-C, you will be ready to commit to your ACTION PLAN FOR PERSONAL GROWTH, located in Section VII of your note-taking guide.  
GOOD LUCK!

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