





DIFFUSING CONFLICT

TO REDUCE STRESS, CHOOSE THE RIGHT COMMUNICATION STYLE

DEFINITION	PASSIVE 	AGGRESSIVE 	PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE 	ASSERTIVE 
	We are unable or unwilling to express ourselves.	We express ourselves in a demanding, hostile way.	We express ourselves with indirect, subtle aggression.	We express ourselves directly and respectfully without judgment.
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	<p>Poor eye contact</p> <p>Threatened body language (e.g. hunched shoulders)</p> <p>Low voice volume, scared to talk</p> <p>Language is soft, submissive</p>	<p>Glaring, staring</p> <p>Threatening body language (e.g. standing too close, finger pointing)</p> <p>Loud voice volume, cold or angry tone, talking over others</p> <p>Language is harsh, abusive, demanding, demeaning</p>	<p>Eyeroiling, side-eye</p> <p>Closed body language (e.g. crossed arms & legs, pouting)</p> <p>Suppressed voice volume, insincere tone, refusing to talk</p> <p>Language is vague, resistant, sarcastic, underhanded</p>	<p>Good eye contact</p> <p>Open body language (e.g. straight posture, facing others directly)</p> <p>Moderate voice volume, steady tone, inviting others to talk</p> <p>Language is clear, confident, warm, friendly</p>
GOAL	AVOIDANCE "Don't rock the boat"	CONTROL "My way or the highway"	CONTROL "You're a jerk if you don't do it my way"	UNDERSTANDING "Let's create a win-win"
IMPACT ON RELATIONSHIP	VIOLATES one's own rights in the relationship	VIOLATES the other person's rights in the relationship	VIOLATES everyone's rights (one's own & the other person's) in the relationship	VALIDATES everyone's rights (one's own & the other person's) in the relationship
IMPACT ON OUR STRESS	FEEDS emotional stress and does not resolve relationship stress	FEEDS relationship stress and does not resolve emotional stress	FEEDS both emotional and relationship stress	RESOLVES both emotional and relationship stress

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

- What conflicts are you facing right now? What communication style are you using?
- What impact is it having on the relationship and on your stress levels?
- What changes would you like to make to protect everyone's rights in the relationship?

