

## Teacher Notes Passive, Aggressive and Assertive Behavior

The Following Lesson Plan is adapted from

<http://www.sigmasigma.org/files/PS001.pdf>

Show students that on one side of the room, or spectrum is one extreme way of communicating and the other side is another extreme way of communicating, but in the middle is a balanced fair way of communicating.

Assertive is a very basic concept. **Assertiveness is believing we have a right to have ideas and feelings. Assertiveness is standing up for our rights and still respecting the rights of others.**

We will look in more detail at each of the other behaviors first.

Aggressive is: When I take my own rights into account and not the other person's. Let's compare what you said on the posters to that definition.

Show Power Point illustrations of Aggressive

Ask a couple of students to role play Aggressive behavior.

Now let's look at Passive. **Passive can be defined as when I take the other person's rights into account and NOT my own.** Let's look at what you wrote about passive behavior. Debrief info on poster. Show Passive Power point

Ask a couple of students to role play and model Passive Behavior.

And Now Finally **Assertive is when I take my own rights into account and the rights of the other person also.**

Let's see what you said about Assertiveness on the poster.

Recap with Power Point.

Ask Students to role play Assertive Behavior

Possibly have students take an assertiveness quiz to see what their natural style is now.

When they have finished Quiz, discuss findings and let students realize that no one is 100% of the time any one style. Have students brainstorm ideas about when aggressive or passive communication may be beneficial. Include these ideas.

The aggressive style is essential at certain times such as:

- when a decision has to be made quickly;
- during emergencies;
- when you know you're right and that fact is crucial;
- stimulating creativity by designing competitions destined for use in training or to increase productivity.

Passiveness can sometimes be used:

- when an issue is minor;
- when the problems caused by the conflict are greater than the conflict itself;
- when emotions are running high and it makes sense to take a break in order to calm down and regain perspective;
- when your power is much lower than the other party's;
- when the other's position is impossible to change for all practical purposes (i.e., government policies, etc.).

What are some reasons that you can think of that people might be naturally passive or aggressive?

Do you use the same style of communication with everyone? Why or why not?

What ideas do you have about how to be Assertive?

You have learned several positive communication skills in this unit. All of these are part of the Assertive Communication Model.

Be sure to include

1. Use I Messages
2. Say "and" rather than "but"
  - a. Give an example
3. State complaint
4. Say what you want to happen
5. Express concern for other

In pairs practice saying written Assertive messages to role plays.

Ask how it felt

For assignment, give a couple of new situations, and have students write their own assertive response.

How could using these assertiveness skills assist you in a conflict resolution?

What are some passive Techniques that some people try to use in conflict?

- a. Pretending there isn't a problem
- b. Avoiding the problematic person
- c. Saying "It doesn't matter" when feeling hurt.
- d. Silent Treatment
- e. Ignoring the problem
- f. Giving in to keep the peace

Why do they do it?

What is the usual result? (\_\_\_You\_\_\_\_\_ Win \_\_\_\_I\_\_\_\_\_ Lose

Does it resolve the problem or make it stop?

How do you feel when you are dealing with a passive person?

What are some aggressive things someone might do in a conflict?

- a. Yelling
- b. Name Calling
- c. Manipulating
- d. Coersion
- e. Hitting
- f. Power
- g. Refusal to listen
- h. Bringing up past problems
- i. Etc.

Why do they do it?

What is the usual Result? (\_\_\_\_I\_\_\_\_\_ - Win \_\_\_\_You\_\_\_\_\_ - Lose)

How do you feel when dealing with an Aggressive Person in conflict?

When people use POWER to win, what are responses from the other person?

How have you felt, or what have you done, when someone with more power than you “won” a conflict?

- a. Fight Back
- b. Flight/Avoidance
- c. Quiet Obedience/ Shutting down.

Do any of those feel good to you? Can you see why it is important not to use control and power against people.

What are some ways that an Assertive person might handle a conflict?

(\_\_ We Both \_\_\_\_\_ Win \_\_ No One \_\_\_\_\_ Loses)

- a. I Messages
- b. Reflective Listening
- c. Remaining Calm
- d. Listening
- e. Sticking to the current issue and facts
- f. Etc.

Now, we are going to do a little game.

Call up 2 volunteers. “Here are the rules. Put your right elbow on the table and grasp the hand of the person across from you. (looks like arm wrestling) When the back of a hand touches the table you get one point. For every three points you earn a candy. You will have one minute. (have one student be the timekeeper). On your Mark, Get Set, Go!”

After one minute, probably not many points or candies will be earned. Ask another set of volunteers to try. This may take several rounds for them to figure out that if they co-operate together they will have a greater chance of winning candy for both of them.

Questions:

- 1. What were the instructions?
- 2. Why did you fight or resist at first?
- 3. How was your score when you were opposing each other?
- 4. What was your score when you were cooperating?
- 5. Which was better?
- 6. How does this relate to real life?

I’m going to share with you a Poem

### **Hug O' War**

By Shel Silverstein  
I will not play at tug o' war  
I'd rather play at hug o' war,  
Where everyone hugs  
Instead of tugs  
Where everyone giggles  
And rolls on the rug,  
Where everyone kisses  
And everyone grins  
And everyone cuddles  
And everyone wins.

Shel Silverstein, the gifted and versatile favorite of children and adults, died suddenly in.

What do you think is the message of this poem?  
How do you think you can have everyone win?

What are some things that you argue about in your relationships?

Home  
Parent  
Brother/Sister  
Boy/Girl Friend  
Best Friend  
Neighbor  
School  
Other?

Generate a List. And put on the board

Choose one of them and use it to work through the Win-Win Conflict Resolution Technique.

Who remembers the Decision Making Process from a couple of weeks ago?

- Remind them
1. Identify the Problem
  2. Brainstorm possible Solutions
  3. Evaluate the solutions
  4. Make a choice and Act upon it
  5. Take responsibility for your choice
  6. Evaluate and either stick with it or choose again.

The Win Win Conflict Resolution Process is similar to that, but it entails two people working on the solution instead of one.

Pass out worksheet. This is a description of a homework assignment you will have in which you will resolve some sort of conflict and report back on it.

Because there are two people involved, instead of just you, you will need to do some preparation steps in advance.

Let's get a clear idea of what we are doing.

## **PowerPoint**

Definition :Discuss

Who Owns the Problem.

Look at list of conflicts on the board and ask in several cases, Who owns the problem? The answer is "You do", What is Your responsibility? "To start the resolution process." Why?

Many people think that if the other person is causing the problem, then they own it. Why? However, the other person may not even know that there is a problem. Even if they do, it is YOUR responsibility to start the process to take care of it.

Example:

1. If your sister borrows your clothes without permission and they get dirty,  
Who Owns the Problem?  
You do!
2. If your brother borrows your car and doesn't put gas in  
Who owns the problem?
3. If your parents are worried about you because you have not called home by curfew and it is now 2:00 AM,  
Who Owns the Problem  
Your Parents, because they are worried and inconvenienced.  
What is their responsibility?  
To initiate a problem resolution process with you.

Because you are the one who is inconvenienced or irritated, you "Own the Problem" and must be the one to initiate the resolution process. There are some basic steps that you need to take to get the ball rolling in preparing to do this. Depending on the degree of the problem, it may be more formal or informal than this.

Both Parties need to agree not to look for ways to "Win" and have the other "lose". Both Parties need to not use their position of Power to exert their will.

Remember a time in your life when someone with more power, (even a parent or teacher) exerted control over you to prove their point or get their way.  
How did you Feel?  
How Did you react?  
Generate as many responses from class as you can.

There are three typical responses that people do when forced by a greater exhibition of power to comply.

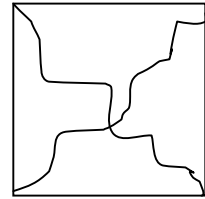
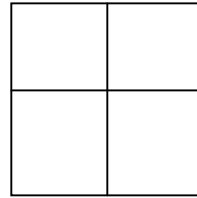
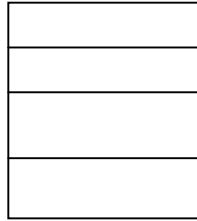
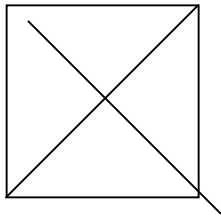
1. Fight Back. (How many of you felt like fighting back? How did that go? If you couldn't physically hurt the other person, did any of you think of ways that you could "get even")
2. The Next one is called "Flight or Avoidance" Perhaps you have heard about the "Fight or Flight Response". This is a natural reaction to being forced against your will into compliance. How many of you have just walked out of a room, or refused to talk to the other person if you lost an argument or fight? Who wins then? It's another way of fighting back or getting even isn't it?
3. Or the Third Way is just Silent Obedience or Shutting Down. This is often the way a Passive Person reacts. Inside they are still hurt, but will keep silent to keep the peace. It's also another way of Emotionally using the "Flight or Avoidance Response". Your Power Figure thinks you are complying and OK, but silently you are boiling up inside.

None of those responses is OK, and so we are looking for a Win-Win solution where everyone come out feeling like a winner instead of one "winner and one loser".

So the Preparation steps are (on handout and Power Point). Read and discuss reasons why each is important.

Read and discuss steps on "Identify the Problem" slide.

### Activities and ideas for “Brainstorm Possible Solutions. Cake Cutting.



Or try cutting the cake in layers, See if they come up with any more? Be creative.

#### Driving

1. One person could drive the other to their destination and pick them up later.
2. One person could get a ride from another person going to same destination
3. Meeting or Friend Visit at home
4. Taxi or Bus or Trax
5. Any more?

Each of these alternatives would meet the needs of both parties and neither would have to suffer.

Use the next slides of optical illusions, if you like to illustrate that people do not always see things from the same perspective. It doesn't mean that they are wrong, but are just looking at things differently than you are.

Read poem of the Blind Men and the Elephant by John Godfrey Saxe.

Discuss, Were any of the men “right”?

Have any of you been in an argument or conflict where something similar has happened?

How do you avoid this type of conflict?

Complete discussion of the rest of the PowerPoint Presentation.

Give assignment for students to complete Win Win Conflict resolution at home with someone they have a disagreement with, and report back next time.