



When we choose assertive relationships, we build trust, we treat ourselves and others fairly and people respect us.

### **How do we build assertive behaviour?**

Assertive people are:

- confident
- have good self esteem
- have an attitude of fairness
- value their relationships with others
- express themselves clearly

If you have a situation where you would like to be more assertive, there are several steps to take:

1. Check out the reasons why you are either passive or aggressive in this situation.
2. Reflect on what you are losing in this relationship. How does this affect other areas of your life?
3. Consider what you will gain in this relationship once you are assertive. How will this affect your life?
4. Practise behavioural rehearsal.

### **What is Behavioural Rehearsal?**

When we are trying a new behaviour, it is useful to practise this new behaviour in the same way that actors rehearse their lines before their first performance.

1. Prepare a script i.e. what you will say when you are being assertive.
2. Ask someone whom you trust, to practise your script with you.
3. Place two chairs in a room. Each of you stand beside your chair and just before sitting in the chair, say to yourself, ‘When I am in that chair, I am Assertive (your name) and have your friend say silently, ‘‘When I am in that chair, I am (the name of the person they are playing)
4. Practise the script.
5. After the first practice, get feedback from your friend, about the language you are using, the manner in which you speak, how you use your body.
6. Practise the script again, making changes suggested by the feedback until your friend tells you that you are speaking in a confident, respectful manner.

Practise your behavioural rehearsal at least three times until it feels natural.