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EFFECTS OF ASSERTIVENESS
TRAINING ON MARITAL ADJUSTMENT

by

Valerie H. Mead

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Psychology

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1978

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Valerie H. Mead

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ABSTRACT

The Effects of Assertiveness Training on
Marital Adjustment

by

Valerie H. Mead, Master of Science

Utah State University, 1978

Major Professor: Dr. William R. Dobson
Department: Psychology

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of assertive training on the marital adjustment of those participating. It was of particular interest to identify the effects of training wives only as compared to training couples jointly in assertiveness.

There were a total of 56 subjects sampled for this study, constituting 28 marriages, all investigated for marital adjustment. All of the subjects were volunteers and were obtained through the Women's Center at Utah State University. The subjects were placed in one of two treatment conditions depending upon the condition for which they volunteered. The wives only treatment condition provided assertiveness training exclusively for the wives of the couples participating. Both husbands and wives received training in the couples treatment condition. All of the 56 subjects, both husbands and wives, completed the Marital-Adjustment Test during the first and last session of assertive training. The assertive training groups met for six weeks for two hours each week.

An analysis of covariance was used to analyze the data for the first two hypotheses. The pretest scores for both treatment conditions for husbands and wives were held constant and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test were compared for both husbands and wives of the other treatment condition.

The Z test for significant differences in correlations was used to test the following questions: (a) Is there a difference in the amount of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment condition? and (b) Is there a difference in the amount of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition?

It may be concluded that there is no advantage for marital adjustment when husbands and wives are both given assertiveness training as opposed to the wife only receiving training.

There was a statistical difference (beyond the .01 level of significance) between the correlations of the pretest and posttest scores for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment condition. No difference in amount of correlation was found between pretest and posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition.

It was concluded that when spouses were trained together, no change in perceptions of marital adjustment occurred. When wives were trained alone, perceptions of marital adjustment between spouses was in greater agreement.

No evidence was found that marital adjustment was affected by teaching assertion skills to the wife only as opposed to teaching the couple.

(121 pages)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The assertive individual was first described by Salter in 1949. He conceptualized behavior in terms of excitatory and inhibitory rather than the current terms - assertive and nonassertive (passive). Salter described the excitatory personality as follows:

The excitatory person is direct. He responds outwardly to his environment. When he is confronted with a problem, he takes immediate constructive action. He is energetic, but there is nothing hyperthyroid about it. He sincerely likes people, yet he does not care what they may think. He talks of himself in an unaffected fashion, and is invariably underestimated by the inhibitory. He makes rapid decisions and likes responsibility. Above all, the excitatory person is free of anxiety. He is truly happy. (p. 45)

Salter further explained that the excitatory individual respects the rights of others and is able to share in an intimate love relationship.

The inhibitory personality as perceived by Salter (1949), "...suffers from constipation of the emotions" (p. 47). He prevents the natural expression of feelings that are part of the healthy personality. The inhibitory person remains disconnected from others and does not fight for his own personal rights. He finds it difficult to say "no" and often finds himself doing things he does not want to do. Relaxing seems arduous for the inhibitory; feeling tense and uncomfortable with others is more typically the case. Gaining acceptance by others is of great importance to the inhibitory personality, yet when it occurs he often does not believe the caring

is real. The inhibitory criticizes himself frequently, has tremendous difficulty in making decisions, and rarely leaves the neutral position when expressing himself. The inhibitory individual goes through life with the brakes on, just in case he should need to stop suddenly.

Six excitatory reflexes were proposed by Salter to reduce inhibitory responses. Each of these reflexes when practiced by the client, helped release the healthy, excitatory spontaneity available to all. The six reflexes described were (1) "feeling talk" (i.e., spontaneous, expression of emotions), (2) "facial talk" (i.e., the nonverbal expression of feelings), (3) "contradict and attack" (i.e., the ability to disagree with someone), (4) "I" statements (i.e., using "I" as opposed to "you"), (5) the ability to accept praise and compliments as well as praise oneself, and (6) "improvisation" (i.e., the ability to be spontaneous and live in the present. Salter's book, Conditional Reflex Therapy, contains 57 case studies where these excitatory reflexes were used in the treatment of various symptoms such as claustrophobia, depression, low self-deficiency, sexual problems, shyness, stuttering, and alcohol addiction.

Another major contribution to the study of assertion training was made by Wölpe (1958). He developed reciprocal inhibition as a therapeutic principle and explained it in the following way:

If a response antagonistic to anxiety can be made to occur in the presence of anxiety-evoking stimuli so that it is accompanied by a complete or partial suppression of the anxiety responses, the bond between these stimuli and the anxiety responses will be weakened. (p. 71)

The systematic use of this principle in the life situation encompassed three types of responses antagonistic to anxiety - assertive responses, sexual responses and relaxation responses. Assertive responses were appropriately used against anxieties within a patient's interpersonal relationships, sexual responses against sexual anxieties, and relaxation responses were appropriate for anxieties from any other source.

Wolpe (1973) defined assertive behavior as "the proper expression of any emotion other than anxiety towards another person" (p. 81). He instructed his patients to respond to social situations with any feeling other than anxiety such as anger and affection. Each time the patient responded in this new way, the bond between the social stimuli and the anxiety response was weakened.

The third primary contribution that completed the basis for all further research in assertion training was made by Wolpe and Lazarus (1966). The assertive rights of an individual were discussed by the authors. They wrote that if these rights were not expressed, not only would anxiety result, but other somatic symptoms in predisposed organs might occur. Wolpe and Lazarus also described various treatment techniques currently used in assertion training (e.g., behavioral rehearsal, modeling, homework assignments, and audio feedback).

Since the foundations of assertion training research were established, many authors have attempted to define assertion in very similar terms, and thus have indicated similar treatment modalities.

Rathus (1973) defined nine areas in which he found individuals need help: (1) assertive talk (hostile and commendatory statements), (2) spontaneous expression of feelings, (3) greeting others, (4) disagreement, (5) asking why, (6) talking about oneself, (7) rewarding others for compliments, (8) refusing to justify opinions, and (9) looking people in the eye.

Seber (1972) added to the description of assertive behavior by delineating six types of nonverbal behavior and described a procedure to facilitate the learning of these behaviors. The nonverbal components of assertiveness were: (1) loudness of voice, (2) fluency of words, (3) eye contact, (4) facial expression, (5) body expression, and (6) distance from the person with whom one was speaking.

Many researchers confirm these current descriptions of assertive behavior (Bloom, 1975; Bower & Bower, 1976; Fensterheim & Baer, 1975; Lang & Jakubowski, 1976; Smith, 1975). Two other components of assertion should not be overlooked, however. Gordon (1975) described the importance of listening in facilitating communication. The final aspect of assertion is maintaining a rational system of beliefs (Ellis & Harper, 1975; Lange & Jakubowski, 1976). Nonassertiveness is often a result of irrational thinking that arises from inaccurate assumptions. These assumptions are that it is "terrible" and "catastrophic" if we or others do not meet our expectations or if we do not meet the expectations of others. Cognitive restructuring in assertion training allows trainees to be free of responding from these faulty assumptions.

A widely cited book on assertiveness, Your Perfect Right (Alberti & Emmons, 1974), explained assertive, nonassertive, and aggressive behavior most clearly as follows:

Behavior which enables a person to act in his own best interests, to stand up for himself without undue anxiety, to express his honest feelings comfortably, or to exercise his own rights without denying the rights of others we call assertive behavior. The non-assertive person is likely to think of the appropriate response after the opportunity has passed. The aggressive person may respond too vigorously, making a deep and negative impression and may later be sorry for it. (p. 2)

A review of literature has shown that a number of areas concerning assertiveness have been investigated. The greatest amount of research has focused on the relative effectiveness of different techniques in training: behavioral rehearsal (Lazarus, 1966), overt modeling (McFall & Twentyman, 1973), covert modeling (Kazdin, 1974), videotaped feedback (Gormally, Hill, Otis, & Rainey, 1975), and client coaching (Flowers, 1974). No one mode of training seems to be exclusively effective in teaching assertive behavior. All the techniques seem to be helpful in assertiveness training.

It may also be concluded from the research available that assertive training does change behaviors in individuals (McFall & Marston, 1970; Rathus, 1973; and Rathus, 1972). Apparently assertiveness training is effective in changing individual behavior in "normal" populations as well as in clinical populations (Eisler, Hersen, & Miller, 1973; Edward, 1972; Lazarus, 1971). Significant change in verbal and nonverbal behavior has occurred in a number of different populations - students, children, psychiatric patients, and professional women. However, the effects of assertiveness

training on significant relationships has received little attention. Because the behavior of individuals does change due to assertiveness training, certain shifts in the interpersonal relationship patterns would be expected. The most likely target for such shifts would be the marriage relationship. Such an intimate relationship would be more sensitive to any individual changes.

There is some evidence that assertiveness training does affect the marriage relationship. Most of the evidence is in the form of case studies. Eisler, Miller, Hersen, and Alford (1974) found that marital interaction improved for two couples when the husband received assertiveness training. Fensterheim (1972) reported improved sexual and marital relationships for a couple who received assertiveness training. The improvements in the marriage were maintained through a one year follow-up. Muchowski and Valle (1977) found that spouses and assertiveness trainees (wives) reported positive and negative effects of training on their interpersonal relationship. It has been shown that assertiveness training does change behavior and seems to affect the marriage relationship. The exact effects of assertiveness training on the marriage relationship is unclear. There is certainly a need for further research investigating what does happen to the marriage relationship when one or both spouses receive assertiveness training. This study was an effort to gain more insight in this area.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of assertive training on the marital adjustment of those participating.

It was of particular interest to identify the effects of training wives only in assertiveness as compared to training couples in assertiveness. Some differences were suspected to occur in marital adjustment after assertive training as a result of these different training conditions.

The following four questions were specifically investigated in this study: (1) When the wives' pretest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test are held constant, will there be a difference in the posttest scores for wives in the couples treatment condition as compared to the wives in the wives only treatment condition? (2) When the husbands' pretest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test are held constant, will there be a difference in the posttest scores for the husbands in the couples treatment condition as compared to the husbands in the wives only treatment condition? (3) Is there a difference in the magnitude of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment condition? (4) Is there a difference in the magnitude of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition?

The first two questions were concerned with measuring the change in marital adjustment after assertive training for both husbands and wives and comparing that change between the two treatment conditions. The latter two questions dealt with how closely husbands' and wives' perceptions of their marital adjustment matched for each treatment condition before and after training.

Four hypotheses were appropriate in studying the problem previously described: (1) There would be no difference in the adjusted scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for wives in the couples treatment condition and wives in the wives only treatment condition. (2) There would be no difference in the adjusted scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands in the couples treatment condition and husbands in the wives only treatment condition. (3) In the wives only treatment group there would be no difference in the correlation coefficient of pretest scores and posttest scores on a marital adjustment test for husbands and wives. (4) In the couples treatment condition there would be no difference in the correlation coefficient of pretest scores and posttest scores on a marital adjustment test for husbands and wives.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature will report studies in several areas: (1) components of techniques of assertiveness training, (2) assertive training with the clinical population, (3) sex and sex roles as related to assertiveness, and (4) the marriage relationship and assertiveness. Each of these areas of study provides relevant information to make clear the pertinence of this research.

The review of literature suggests that assertion training is effective in changing behaviors as well as altering relationships and self image. There are a number of powerful assertive training techniques, but no one procedure is necessary to produce results. The studies reviewed further suggest that the effectiveness of assertion training is not limited to a few target behaviors or populations but can induce change in many kinds of behaviors and types of clients. Again the vast impact of this type of training is confirmed. Also indicated in the research is that the reaction towards another's assertiveness is somewhat determined by the individual's sex. This can certainly contribute to spouses' differential reactions to the change in the assertive component in a marriage relationship. The research concerning marital relationships and assertive training supports the assumption that the training does have an effect on the marital relationship. However, the research did not provide adequate information about the conditions

under which assertiveness training is most effective in improving marital adjustment or if damage can be done to the relationship under certain conditions.

Components of Assertiveness Training

Much of the research in assertiveness training deals with the relative effectiveness of different techniques in training. Behavioral rehearsal, as a component of assertiveness training, has received considerable attention in the study of assertive training effectiveness. The initial study in this area was conducted by Lazarus (1966). He randomly assigned 75 patients to one of three treatment groups to work on the management of specific interpersonal problems. The three treatments were nondirective therapy (reflection and interpretation), advice, and behavioral rehearsal. The results indicated that behavioral rehearsal was significantly more effective in treating specific social and interpersonal problems than the advice or nondirective conditions respectively. Lazarus (1966) does consider the possibility of experimenter bias since he conducted the three groups as well as evaluated their relative success.

A similar study by Rathus (1972) corroborates, in part, the findings in the previous study. Rathus selected 57 college women who wanted to be more assertive or less fearful of social confrontations. The assertive training treatment group met once a week for seven weeks and discussed nine types of assertive tasks and their profitable application in the lives of the women in the group. They were also assigned to do 25 such tasks per week during

training and discussed their success in the following session. Behavioral rehearsal was used to prepare trainees to complete the assigned tasks. The discussion group met the same number of times and discussed the nature of fear of confrontation and its acquisition and elimination. The control groups did not meet or have assignments. The assertive training group scored significantly higher gains on the posttest Rathus Assertiveness Scale than the discussion or no treatment groups. Significant reduction of general fear and fear of social confrontation was reported for the assertiveness group as compared with the control group. No significant difference in fear reduction was found between the assertive and discussion groups. Again, however, the methodology may be in question. The subjects were taken from the experimenter's own university class and he served as the therapist for both experimental conditions.

Hedquist and Weinhold (1970) investigated the efficacy of two types of behavioral counseling groups for highly anxious and unassertive college students. The behavioral rehearsal group included role playing specific situations, modeling, coaching by all, and homework assignments. The subjects assigned to the social learning group agreed to several rules: honesty, responsibility for own actions, helpfulness and completion of assignments. The leader's task was to model a method for problem solving. The control group discussed teaching and interpersonal behavior that influences teaching. A self-report behavioral record was kept by each subject and served as the dependent measure. No significant difference between the behavioral approaches was indicated. The behavioral groups were superior to the control group.

The effects of six different treatment conditions were investigated by McFall and Twentyman (1973). The conditions were (1) rehearsal, modeling and coaching; (2) rehearsal and modeling; (3) rehearsal and coaching; (4) rehearsal only; (5) modeling and coaching; and (6) coaching only. Subjects were seen for two sessions, one week apart for 45 minutes. The rehearsal and coaching treatments were both found effective on assertive behavior. The effects were both independent and additive. Audio modeling was found to add little if anything to the treatment success.

In 1970, McFall and Marston also considered the behavioral rehearsal technique. They asked, "Is simple rehearsal alone sufficient to produce significant and desired changes in the problem behavior?" (p. 296). Forty-two nonassertive college students were randomly assigned to one of four treatment conditions. The conditions were behavioral rehearsal with performance feedback (audio playback of tape recorded rehearsal responses), behavioral rehearsal with no performance feedback, placebo (insight therapy), and no treatment control. The two behavioral treatments, when results were combined, were found to be significantly more effective than the control procedures on behavioral (semiautomated role playing task), self-report (Wolpe-Lazarus Assertiveness Questionnaire), psychophysiological (pulse rate), and "in vivo" (resistance to high pressure telephone salesmen) measures of assertion. The value of behavioral rehearsal in assertiveness training was again established.

A final study dealing with the efficacy of behavioral rehearsal was made by McFall and Lillesand (1971). This study investigated

the effects of symbolic modeling and therapist coaching as added to behavioral rehearsal in assessing the development of one aspect of assertiveness, the ability to refuse unreasonable requests. The experimenters assigned 33 subjects to one of three treatment groups: overt rehearsal with modeling and coaching, covert rehearsal with modeling and coaching, or assessment-placebo control. The results showed that both experimental groups improved drastically more than the control group in the development of one aspect of assertiveness. There was also evidence that covert rehearsal may be even more effective than overt rehearsal. This experiment generally supports the therapeutic efficacy of assertive training and behavioral rehearsal as a treatment approach. The previous research presented corroborated these findings.

Another study (Winship & Kelley, 1976) dealt with a verbal response model in increasing assertiveness. Subjects in the assertive training group were taught three different kinds of verbal statements (empathy, conflict, and action statements) by modeling, behavioral rehearsal, videotape feedback, and positive reinforcement. The attention control group discussed assertiveness in a client-centered therapy style and the no treatment group did not meet. A significant difference was found to exist between the assertive training group and the attention control group as well as the assertive training group and the no treatment control group on all measures. No significant difference was revealed between the attention control group and the no treatment group on any measure. This experiment confirms the effectiveness of assertive training, but does not determine

which component of the assertive training group was responsible for the success. Several studies do approach this question; specifically investigating the effects of modeling in assertion training (Friedman, 1971; Kazdin, 1974; McFall & Twentyman, 1973; Rathus, 1973).

Rathus (1973) compared the effects of assertive training (modeling nine assertive behaviors plus homework assignments and discussion), placebo therapy (insight therapy), and no treatment. The subjects in the assertive training group showed significantly greater pre-post changes on the Rathus Assertiveness Scale than the subjects in the placebo and no treatment conditions. An audiotaped question and answer session was also used to evaluate 16 randomly selected subjects. Independent judges rated subjects' overall assertiveness and confirmed the superiority of the assertive training group. Modeling was found to be an effective component in assertion training.

Kazdin (1974) reported in his study of the effects of covert modeling and model reinforcement, therapeutic support of covert modeling as a treatment technique. The 23 female and 22 male volunteers completed three self-report measures to assess the degree they assert themselves and participated in a behavioral role-playing test. The subjects were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: covert modeling (imagined scenes in which a model responded assertively), covert modeling plus reinforcement (imagined scenes in which a model responded assertively with favorable consequences following), no modeling (imagined scenes with neither assertive modeling or favorable consequences), or a delayed treatment (no treatment controls who later received either covert modeling or modeling plus reinforcement).

It was concluded that both modeling and modeling plus reinforcement conditions improved significantly on self report and role playing tests of assertiveness. The investigation lends support of covert modeling as a treatment technique.

Other experimenters (Friedman, 1971; McFall & Twentyman, 1973), however, have shown evidence that modeling was not the most impactful technique in assertion training. McFall and Twentyman (1973) investigated three treatments; covert rehearsal, modeling, and coaching; covert rehearsal and coaching; and covert rehearsal only. They found that modeling added little if any, to increased assertiveness gained by rehearsal and coaching. In another experiment McFall and Twentyman compared audio modeling with audio-visual modeling and found that videotaped models did not improve the treatment results.

In further support of the previously presented studies Friedman (1971) compared the following treatments; (1) modeling, (2) modeling plus role playing, (3) directed role playing, (4) improvised role playing, (5) assertive script, and (6) nonassertive script. The results indicated that modeling plus role playing condition showed significantly more changes on the Sum Assertion Measure than all other groups. There was no significant difference on the measure, however, between the modeling plus role playing and the improvised role playing groups. The experimenter concluded, "The most promising procedures, however, would appear to be the modeling plus directed role playing and improvised role playing procedures" (p. 167).

It seems that modeling alone may not be the most powerful technique in assertiveness training, but is additive in effecting success.

Another technique used in assertion training is videotaped feedback. This procedure effectiveness has been investigated with opposing evidence. In one study by Gormally, Hill, Otis, and Rainey (1975) a microtraining approach with videofeedback was evaluated for training situationally nonassertive clients in assertive expression. The microtraining procedures included reading brief instructions on the skill, modeling, role playing practice that was videotaped, videotaped replay with trainer comments and reinforcement, and additional practice. The 24 subjects were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: microtraining with videotape playback, microtraining with no videotape, or a control group which received insight oriented counseling. The results showed a significant difference between the three groups on seven out of ten scales of assertiveness. The two training groups did not differ in amount of change. It appears that a microtraining approach to assertive training does significantly increase a client's ability to respond assertively in a situation identified as problematic by the client. Videotaped feedback does not appear to be essential in the training of assertion.

Another study (Galassi, Galassi, & Litz, 1974) investigated the effectiveness of group assertiveness training with nonassertive college students. The dependent measure was the College Self-Expression Scale. The authors compared an assertion group (videotape modeling; behavioral rehearsal; video, peer, and trainer feedback; homework; and group support) and a control group. The subjects who received assertive training were significantly more assertive

than the control subjects. Video feedback was not singled out in the training procedures, but played an important role in training.

Other procedures have been investigated other than behavioral rehearsal, modeling, and video feedback in the search for effective assertion training techniques. Flowers (1974) studied the use of client coaching in assertive training. The participants were assigned to one of three conditions: (1) behaviorally rehearsed on assertive role while being coached by another fellow participant, (2) client-coached as well as served as a coach, and (3) behaviorally rehearsed an assertive role and coached by professional, but didn't coach others. Flowers found that, "Client coaching is thus superior to professional coaching in two ways. It is superior for the coached subject in terms of minimum need for later assistance and it is superior for the coaching subject in terms of later choosing the correct strategy to maximize success in an assertive interaction" (p. 416).

Holmes (1976) examined the effectiveness of anger induction as a component added to assertiveness training. He found that an assertive training group with anger induction was effective, but not as successful as a standard assertive training treatment (behavioral rehearsal; counselor modeling, and social reinforcement).

A further aspect of training was researched by Nietzel and Bernstein (1976). Their experiment was designed to determine the effects of instructionally mediated demand on the behavioral assessment of assertiveness. Low demand subjects were told to react to role-play situations by using the response they would use

in real life. High demand subjects were asked to respond as assertively as the most assertive person would. The results indicated that demand level had a significant effect on assertive performance.

The review of current literature indicated that many components of assertiveness training are effective in changing behavior, but none seem to be ultimately more powerful and essential than any other technique. Ideally, each effective component would be used in conjunction with the other proven effective techniques and provide an assertive training procedure that would encompass all powerful procedures.

Assertiveness Training with Clinical Population

Much of the research previously reviewed has dealt with the "normal population." College students have served as the subjects for a number of studies (Hedquist & Weinhold, 1970; McFall & Lillesand, 1971; McFall & Marston, 1970; Rathus, 1972; Winship, 1976). There have been experiments made using clinical populations as well. Assertiveness training has been found to be useful in mental hospitals as a part of patients' treatment plan. Eisler, Hersen, and Miller (1973) compared patients who observed an assertive videotaped model, patients who practiced their assertive responses only, and untreated controls on eight verbal and nonverbal components of assertiveness measured by a variety of stimulus situations. The modeling group improved on five of eight components of assertiveness including overall assertiveness. No differences were found between the practice and no treatment control groups. The effectiveness

of an assertive model in the training nonassertive psychiatric patients was shown.

Bloomfield (1973) also encouraged the development of assertive training groups for psychiatric patients. In his article in Behavior Therapy, he described an effective assertive training group for chronic schizophrenics. Bloomfield described the success of one group member in confronting a neighbor who had made an unreasonable request.

The reduction of anxiety and personal space as a function of assertion training with severally disturbed neuropsychiatric inpatients was investigated by Booraem and Flowers (1972). The results indicated that the assertion trained group changed significantly in the predicted direction on all dependent measures (an anxiety questionnaire and a personal space measure). The control group showed no significant changes. The groups did not differ significantly, however, when compared using the dependent measures.

Another study (Lamont, Gilner, Spector, & Skinner, 1969) investigated the effects of assertion therapy and insight therapy with psychiatric patients on the posttest results of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the Leary Interpersonal Checklist (ICL). The assertive training group showed greater absolute change on the clinical scales of the MMPI than the insight therapy group, but the difference was not statistically significant. The insight therapy condition did not show test change in personality characteristics as a result of assertion training, but the amount of change and type of change is unclear.

Several individual cases, as opposed to group studies, have been reported in which assertive training helped in treating personal as well as interpersonal problems (Edward, 1972; Eisler, Hersen & Miller, 1974; Lazarus, 1971; Macpherson, 1972; Stevenson & Wolpe, 1960).

Eisler, Hersen, and Miller (1974) shaped components of assertiveness (eye contact, speech duration, loudness of voice, behavioral requests of interpersonal partner) with instructions and immediate feedback through a miniature radio receiver placed in the ear of a 28 year old male psychiatric inpatient. The results showed a substantial increase in the four target behaviors and overall assertiveness. A nine month follow-up indicated the assertive behaviors learned had helped in resolving marital difficulties and improved behavior at work.

Edwards (1972) dealt with interpersonal anxieties which interfered with normal heterosexual functioning which led to pedophilia, with assertive training and thought stopping. In this case a physician was sexually active with his three sons and had been for ten years. The pedophilia began shortly after he learned of his wife's infidelity. In examining the marital relationship, it was evident that the wife was domineering and in response to her unreasonable demands the husband withheld his hostile feelings. After 13 sessions of assertive training the patient changed in the following ways: (1) he expressed himself when angry, (2) was not involved in pedophilic activity, (3) improved the sexual relationship with his wife, and (4) generally improved the marital relationship.

An interesting technique was used by Macpherson (1972) to teach a patient to be assertive rather than submissive with her mother and assertive rather than aggressive with her husband. Punishment (faradic shock) was used to eliminate passive verbal responses to imaginary situations involving the patient's mother; while assertive responses were unpunished and later reinforced verbally by the therapist. The same procedure was used when practicing situations involving the patients' husband and where aggressive behavior was eliminated. The patient became normally assertive after her training with her husband and her mother. A one and two year follow-up confirmed that the new behaviors were maintained.

The literature suggests that assertiveness training has been effective in treating many different types of populations with various target behaviors. Assertiveness training has even been used in helping socially withdrawn and anxious children (Dorman, 1973; Johnson, Tyler, Thomason & Jones, 1971; O'Connor, 1969; Patterson, 1972; Ross, 1971).

Sex as Related to Assertiveness

Recently, research has increased in the area of sex and sex roles as they relate to assertiveness. Wolfe and Fodor (1975) believe that women's sex role training teaches them to be passive and dependent rather than assertive. Block (1973) supports this position. He espouses that men are taught to be assertive, independent, and competitive whereas the socialization process for women encourages submissive, docile, and nurturant behavior and discourages achievement oriented, assertive behavior. Wolfe and Fodor (1975) further

explain that the early conditioning of passivity makes it difficult for a woman to abandon the stereotypic female role. Women tend to punish themselves for assertive behavior and feel they are being "selfish", "unfeminine" or "aggressive". This fear of being successful or losing other's approval has been corroborated by Horner (1969). He found in his research that common fears women experience were the fear of social rejection, and the fear of not being feminine and normal.

To ameliorate the special problems women have in assertiveness, Wolfe and Fodor (1975) suggest a program including the following: (1) direct training in the specific assertive skills lacking in their response repertoires, (2) education in the rights women have, and (3) identification and challenge of irrational ideas and attitudes concerning assertion.

Tolor, Kelly & Stebbins (1976) researched sex-role stereotyping, self-concept, and assertiveness. Contrary to Wolfe and Fodors' (1975) belief, they found that there was no significant difference between high and low sex-role stereotyping women on assertiveness. They found the same true for men. Low sex-role stereotyping women were found to be more assertive (Rathus Assertiveness Schedule) than low sex-role stereotyping men. The results also indicated that high assertive men compared with low assertive men had more favorable self concepts. High assertive women compared with low assertive women had significantly more favorable self-concepts. Low sex-role stereotyping women did not have a significantly more favorable self-concept than high sex-role stereotyping women. The investigation

also found that low sex-role stereotyping women had a more favorable self concept than low sex-role stereotyping men. This study concludes that sex-role stereotyping within each sex does not effect assertiveness, that high assertiveness for both sexes increases self-concept, and that women have a significantly more positive self-concept.

Another important experiment done in 1975 (Rosina, Upchurch, Corwin, & Grossnickle) investigated the effects of sex and the level of assertiveness on ratings of intelligence and likeability. The subjects were 643 undergraduates. Subjects were asked to rate videotaped models on a nine point scale for intelligence and likeability. All four of the experimenters hypotheses were supported: (1) males were judged to be more intelligent than females, (2) assertiveness had different effects on ratings of perceived intelligence for men and women. Medium assertiveness was associated with the highest level of perceived intelligence for both sexes but high assertiveness led to the impression of lower intelligence in females and high intelligence in males, (3) males were judged to be more likeable than females, and (4) assertiveness had a different effect on the ratings of perceived likeability for males and females. A medium level of assertiveness was associated with the highest level of perceived likeability and high assertiveness in females had a much more negative effect on perceived likeability than in males. Sex-role stereotyping has not been found to affect womens' assertiveness, but assertiveness has affected how women are perceived concerning intelligence and likeability.

Sex differences in the area of assertiveness were also pursued by Hollandsworth and Wall (1977). They used a self-report measure of assertiveness to identify several situations in which sex differences in assertiveness appear to occur. The investigators administered the test to 702 subjects from four universities then computed t tests for each of the 48 items from the test for all four samples. A consistent sex difference was said to occur for an item if a t test for an item was significant at the .05 level for two or more samples. Twenty-two items did not show significance for any of the four samples. A significant difference for one sample only was found for 14 items. Of the 12 items meeting criterion, men reported themselves as being more assertive on nine items and women reported themselves more assertive on three. There seem to be specific areas of assertive behavior in which men and women differ.

Hartsook, Olch, and Wolf (1976) assessed the difference in personality characteristics using the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) among women in general (1959 norms), women seeking assertiveness training, and women seen in vocational counseling. They found that the assertive training group scored significantly higher on the succorance scale and significantly lower on the achievement, order, and exhibition scales than the women entering vocational counseling. Order, exhibition, and succorance scales significantly differentiated the assertive training group from college women in general. The investigation suggests that women participating in assertive training do have different needs from other women. How these needs change after training is completed is not known at this time.

The training needs of professional women have been assessed by Brochway (1976). He found that professional women entering assertive training have average to above average levels of assertiveness prior to training, high anxiety, and moderate satisfaction with assertiveness. After training the women increased ratings of assertiveness 17%, decreased anxiety 40%, and increased satisfaction 28%. The control group did not change significantly in any area. The results indicate professional women seeking training need techniques aimed primarily at decreasing anxiety and changing attitudes about assertiveness rather than verbal skill training.

The recent awareness of assertiveness and its impact through training has stimulated a great deal of research aimed at distinguishing the effects and differences of assertion between sexes and of variables within sexes. Sex differences have been found with the variables of self-concept, intelligence, likeability, and specific behaviors as they relate to assertiveness. More research would make this area of study more complete.

The Marriage Relationship and Assertiveness

Relatively little research has been done with assertive training and its effect on the marital relationship or interaction. Eisler, Miller, Hersen, and Alford (1974) approached the issue in part by a study they conducted using three passive male patients in which the experimenters assessed their interaction with their wives following assertive training. The couples were videotaped while discussing their marital conflicts before and after the husbands received

assertive training. Specific behavioral deficits in the husbands' responses were cited in the couples' initial interaction. Training consisted of role playing interpersonal encounters with instructions, behavioral rehearsal, and feedback. In all cases the behavioral tests revealed a substantial improvement in the husbands' assertiveness. In two of the cases, increased assertiveness produced marked changes in the couples' marital interaction. The results of this study are somewhat less impactful because of the very small sample size. The couples' interaction may have changed because training was based on simulated interactions relevant to the couples' interpersonal difficulties. It does suggest that assertion training for one spouse does have an effect on marital interaction or communication.

Alberti and Emmons (1974) suggest that "there is a potential for damage to an intimate relationship from a significant behavior change by one partner. If the spouse is not properly prepared, and possibly willing to change to some degree himself, a marital break-up is a definite possibility" (p. 31). It was not made clear in the Eisler, Miller, Hersen, and Alford (1974) article what preparation for change in the relationship was made with each of the wives. Perhaps adequate pretreatment advisement was made with the wives in the study.

Fensterheim (1972) reported one case study of a couple in marital counseling with communication problems. The couple were married six years at the time of treatment. The husband had difficulty expressing feelings and controlling his temper whereas the wife was moody

with chronic low grade depression and resentment toward her husband. The couple were trained for 16 sessions over a four month period in problem solving, open and direct expression of feelings, listening, making requests, and giving compliments. Role reversal was also used in the sessions. After a one year follow-up the gains made in their marriage and sexual relationship had been maintained. Both spouses reported they had never felt closer and the wife's depression and the husband's anger outbursts had ceased. This case illustrates the effectiveness of mutual assertiveness training for a couple and its positive impact upon the marital relationship.

During the same year (1972), Eisler and Hersen presented a case that showed similar results. They examined the effects of assertive training for one spouse on various behavioral measures of marital interaction. The couple was comprised of an overly critical wife and a submissive husband. A 24 minute videotape of the couple interacting revealed a number of target behaviors in which the husband was to be trained (looking, speech, questions, smiles, positive statements, and negative statements). The husband was instructed to role play with a surrogate wife and to discuss typical marital conflict situations. The patient was encouraged throughout the training to improve in the target behaviors. This procedure was repeated for four sessions of training. A post-training 24 minute tape was made with the actual wife and showed increases in the husband's duration of speech, duration of eye contact, and number of questions asked. Even though the wife was not treated, both spouses evidenced an increase in smiling and positive statements and a decrease in negative statements. The study does not deal with the

marital relationship per se and only deals with a few target behaviors with no follow-up data. The generalizations from this case are limited.

Many of the major contributors in the area of assertiveness, describe the impact of assertiveness training on the marital relationship when only one spouse receives treatment. The results may be a deterioration within the marriage.

Fensterheim and Baer (1975) said that:

If you have an unsatisfactory life-style and you change it, you disrupt the status quo. For example, a man might have gotten used to living with a destructive wife. A woman might have become accustomed to henpecking her husband. As either of these situations changes, disruption occurs in the relationship with these possible consequences:

- (1) Each partner welcomes the change.
- (2) The partner who did not undergo AT also changes and grows. Both partners develop better life styles.
- (3) The partner may be unwilling or unable to make the necessary changes. With the last consequences there is apt to be trouble. I have seen situations where AT has led to separation and divorce? (p. 35)

Fensterheim and Baer (1975) illustrate the danger of only one spouse receiving training that may effect the marriage relationship.

Bach and Golberg (1975) confirm this idea:

When one spouse, for example, makes a significant shift in the direction of expressing real feelings and deeply felt needs, the other spouse is pressured to change if he or she wishes to maintain a workable balance. If he or she remains the same, the relationship is bound to deteriorate significantly (pp. 319 and 320)

Jakubowski and Spector (1973) also corroborates the other experts' opinions concerning the effects of assertiveness on the marriage relationship:

If a woman's relationship with another person is dependent upon her continuing to act non-assertively, then

her becoming assertive may very well end the relationship unless the other person can also reciprocally change. When the relationship is with an intimate mate and the woman wants to maintain the relationship, it is advisable that the therapist also see the male in an attempt to prepare him for the experience and to help him change. (p. 81)

It is clear from the research currently available that assertiveness training is effective in changing behavior and does effect the marriage relationship. Whether training one or both spouses is most beneficial, has not yet been determined. Muchowski and Valle (1977) have approached this area in a study of the effects of assertive training on trainees and their spouses as viewed by both partners. They selected 22 subjects who volunteered to participate in a four week, six hour assertive training class. The participants were all wives and were screened to include only nonassertive individuals. The Wolpe-Lazarus Assertive Inventory, the Hipple Interpersonal Relationship Rating Scale, and a Content Inventory (designed by the authors) were administered to all subjects before and after training.

The Hipple Interpersonal Relationship Rating Scale (HIRRS) was administered to both husbands and wives (the husbands rated their wives and the wives rated themselves). The scores were the sum of the ratings by husbands and wives. The instrument was used to determine if a change in interpersonal relating occurred post-treatment.

The Content Inventory consisted of 23 communication areas which were scores by wives' self-ratings and husbands' ratings of their wives. Each area was rated as aggressive, assertive, or non-assertive according to the response style used most frequently by the wife.

A Homogeneity of Variance Test was used on pre and posttest scores of spouse ratings of the HIRRS. No significant variance was found on pretest scores. Significant variance occurred on posttest scores. Some spouses rated their wives higher and others lower on the test after training. "The authors conclude that assertive training, from the perspective of spouses, can be for better or worse" (p. 58). The inclusion of the significant other in training is suggested by the results.

The same variance in ratings was found for the self-ratings of the Hipple Scale. A significant decrease in the discrepancy in ratings between husband and wife was found on the posttest of the Content Inventory.

The conclusions drawn from this study are somewhat vague and do not clearly follow the results. The results of the Wolpe-Lazarus Assertive Inventory were not even reported. This study merely breaks the surface on the area of assertiveness and how it effects the marriage relationship. Continued research is necessary to answer the many questions posed concerning assertiveness training and its impact on the marriage relationship.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Sample

There were a total of 56 subjects sampled for this study with 28 marriages investigated for marital adjustment. All the subjects volunteered for training and were obtained through the Women's Center at Utah State University by advertizing the assertiveness training classes locally.

Of the total sample 57% were between the ages of 20 and 30. The remaining 43% were over 30 years of age (see Table 1). The oldest subject was 61 years old.

Regarding the education of the subjects, the average number of years of school completed was 16 years (see Table 2). The degrees received ranged from a high school diploma to a Doctor of Philosophy.

Concerning the number of years the couples participating in the study had been married, the sample ranged from less than one year of marriage (one couple) to 29 years of marriage (see Table 3). Fifty-five percent of the subjects had been married between 1 and 9 years.

The greatest percentage of the subjects in this study were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) - 41% (see Table 4). No religious affiliation was reported by 29% of the subjects.

Table 1
Age of Subjects

Years of Age	<u>N</u>	Percent of Total Sample
20-30	32	57
31-40	7	12
41-50	14	25
51-60	2	4
Over 60	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	56	100

Table 2
Years of School Completed by Subjects

Completed Yrs of School	N	Percent of Total Sample
13-14	14	25
15-16	18	32
17-18	16	29
19-20	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	56	100

Table 3
Number of Years Subjects' Married

Years Married	N	Percent of Total Sample
Less than 1	2	4
1-9	31	55
10-19	6	11
20-29	15	26
30-39	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	56	100

Table 4
Religious Affiliation of Subjects

Religious Affiliation	N	Percent of Total Sample
LDS	23	41
Protestant	13	23
Roman Catholic	3	5
Other	1	2
None	<u>16</u>	<u>29</u>
Total	56	100

Table 5
Occupational Classification of Sample

Occupation	N	Percent of Total Sample
Professional	20	36
Nonprofessional	18	32
Student	13	23
Homemaker	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>
Total	56	100

The occupational status of the participants varied considerably (see Table 5). The minority of subjects were homemakers (9%). The occupations reported, for example, were secretary, salesman, bookkeeper, business owner, university professor, mechanic, and carpenter.

Thirty-four of the subjects had children. The largest number of children reported by a couple was nine. Almost half of the participants did not have any children. The average number of children was two.

Procedures

The subjects were placed in one of two treatment conditions depending upon the condition for which they volunteered. The wives only treatment condition provided assertive training exclusively for the wives of the couples participating. A husbands only treatment condition was not provided because of the lack of demand for

assertive training by husbands exclusively. In the couples treatment condition, both the husband and the wife received assertive training. All of the 56 subjects that participated, both husbands and wives, completed the Marital-Adjustment Test during the first and last session of assertive training. This requirement also included those husbands of the wives in the wives only treatment condition.

The subjects were randomly assigned to one of two assertive training groups (classes). One group consisted of eight husbands and eight wives in the couples treatment condition and nine wives in the wives only treatment condition. The total class size was twenty-five. The second training class included five husbands and five wives in the couples treatment condition and six wives in the wives only treatment condition. The total size of this group was sixteen. The particular class each participant was placed in was determined by participant convenience. The groups were trained using the same class format. The two groups were provided so that maximal effectiveness in assertive training could be maintained. The groups included subjects from each of the two treatment conditions (wives only treatment condition and couples treatment condition) so that the assertive training experience would be equivalent for both groups. Both groups had the same two trainers, the developer of the assertive training program at Utah State University and the experimenter for this study who is a graduate student in Psychology.

In assessing the marital adjustment of couples participating, the protection of individual privacy was upheld. All husbands and wives were asked not to discuss the test or their particular responses.

They were informed that they were participating in an experiment and that both spouses were required to complete the Marital-Adjustment Test during the first and last sessions of training. The trainers explained to the participants that the research data was to be used confidentially and would only be available to the trainers. The groups were also informed that the data would be reported in group form to assure greater confidentiality. The subjects were advised that the test forms were coded with numbers that were matched with the participants names in order to provide further protection of confidentiality.

The assertive training groups met for six weeks for two hours each week. The following is a description of the assertive training procedures for each consecutive session.

Session One

All participants in the study completed the Marital-Adjustment Test. The training group was divided into small groups of four or five participants. The subjects in the couples' treatment condition were placed in separate small groups throughout the training program. As a result, each spouse was less inhibited in practicing and learning successful assertive behavior. The small groups were first instructed to learn the first name of each member of their group. The training group was informed that reaching out to learn another person's name and letting yourself be known to them is assertive behavior.

A lecture followed this opening exercise. The lecture explained the male and female roles in society and how they are developed and

nurtured throughout childhood. The male's role was described as being one of achievement and goal-oriented behavior, while females are primarily involved in the establishment and maintenance of relationships. Males receive the greatest amount of reinforcement from others when they successfully accomplish tasks, make decisions, and succeed in completion. It was explained that females, conversely are encouraged to attend to the feelings of others and respond with concern about the relationships of those involved when making a decision. The behavior of males is shaped to be characteristically aggressive and that of females to be passive.

An assertiveness inventory was distributed and completed by the group. The inventory assessed the individual's level of assertiveness.

A discussion of the purposes of the training was included. The purposes of the training were to learn what assertiveness is and is not; to distinguish among assertive, nonassertive, and aggressive behaviors; and to develop the skill of assertiveness. Assertive training does not provide personal therapy, sensitivity training, or suggest a theory for changing the behavior of others.

Eye contact, as an important component of assertive behavior, was the final topic. The assignment for the week included practicing eye contact and reading the first and second chapters of Your Perfect Right (Alberti and Emmons, 1974).

Session Two

The session began with a discussion of eye contact. The following questions were the outline for the discussion: (1) What

did you learn about eye contact? (2) When did you avoid eye contact? (3) When did you notice others avoiding eye contact? and (4) How can you use eye contact to your advantage?

The participants were then instructed to form dyads in which one member self-disclosed information about himself and the other practiced listening skills. The behaviors were related as necessary functions of assertiveness. The participants changed partners and practiced the remaining skill. Each member introduced to the group the person that self-disclosed to him. The group discussed which role was more comfortable and why.

Handouts were distributed to the group that described and differentiated among assertive behavior, nonassertive behavior, aggressive behavior, and passive-aggressive behavior. The four behaviors were explained and role played by the trainers and then discussed by the group. The trainers closed the session with the discussion of two topics related to assertiveness. The first topic was concerned with the idea that an individual has the right to choose the behavior wished that seems appropriate for the specific situation. An individual may find that at times assertive behavior may not be the most appropriate mode. Aggressive behavior may be the alternative of choice in particular situations. Learning appropriate behavior for different situations was emphasized in this discussion.

The congruence of verbal and nonverbal behavior was stressed in the final discussion: The participants were asked to become aware of the messages that their bodies are sending and the degree

that the messages correspond with their verbal messages. The group recalled past experiences in which they were responding with verbal and nonverbal behavior. They were asked to recollect the incongruities that existed. Chapters three and four were assigned and they were asked to fill out an assertive-behavior hierarchy handout. The hierarchy handout left space for the participant to describe five situations in which he would like to increase his assertiveness.

Session Three

The trainers asked for any feedback or discussion about the assertive behavior hierarchy that was assigned the previous week.

The giving and receiving of compliments was introduced to the group as a topic for discussion. The skill of giving and receiving compliments is an assertive behavior. As acknowledged in The Assertive Woman by Phelps and Austin (1975) everyone has the right to his own feelings, and if they are positive toward another person, they should be accepted. No one has the right to deny others of their feelings. By not accepting a compliment, you are communicating that the complimentor has poor judgment.

The participants formed dyads and role played the following situations:

- (1) A person gives a compliment and the receiver does not verbally respond;
- (2) A person gives a compliment and the receiver responds by saying thank you;
- (3) A person gives a compliment and the receiver responds by saying thank you plus a positive remark.

The group discussed how each position made them feel and what response made the complimentor and the complimented person feel most comfortable. The discussion was continued by brainstorming possible positive remarks that could follow saying "thank you".

The trainers then called the group's attention to the importance of accepting responsibility for one's feelings. The distinction between "I" messages and "you" messages was described. The group practiced sending both types of messages. They were encouraged to notice their feelings while sending the different types of messages.

The session was concluded with a review of the assertive skills practiced thus far in the training. The group was asked to consider their strengths in assertiveness and their particular weaknesses. The following questions were presented to the group: (1) In the large group introduction exercise, did you find it easier to listen or self-disclose? (2) What have you learned about your nonverbal behavior? (3) Where are your strengths and weaknesses in congruent verbal communication? (4) When you completed the assertiveness inventory, did you notice certain situations in which you were more assertive? (5) When you practiced giving and receiving compliments, did you find one role more comfortable than the other?

The group was instructed to work on their hierarchy sheets and to practice "I" statements.

Session Four

In the fourth session, the group role played their situations they described on their personal hierarchy sheets. The trainers began the session by asking for one person to volunteer to role

play one of the situations on his list in front of the group. The trainer role played the volunteer in the situation and demonstrated assertive behavior. The volunteer role played the person with whom they would like to be more assertive. The other trainer acted as a coach and asked a participant to also coach. Throughout the demonstration the coaches corrected and made suggestions to the assertor. The trainer who had been role playing then reversed roles with the volunteer. The volunteer then role played the assertor after observing a demonstration of appropriate assertive behavior in the situation. The group discussed the demonstration and then divided into small groups. They practiced the situations on their hierarchy sheets while two coaches helped them maintain assertive behavior. The remaining two members of the small group were observers. The trainers rotated among the groups and emphasized actual role playing while discouraging discussion not related to role playing.

Session Five

The role playing experience of the previous session was discussed. The group talked about the successes and the insufficiencies in their role-playing experiences.

The trainer introduced the model "broken record" as an effective assertive behavior. Broken record as explained by Manuel Smith in When I Say No, I Feel Guilty (1975) is being persistent in what you want when in a conflict situation. It is communicating the same message repeatedly without anger, irritation, or loudness. The group split into pairs and practiced sticking to the point to

be communicated and ignoring all divergent issues presented by the person they were asserting.

The group discussed the difference between valid and invalid criticism as described by Phelps and Austin in The Assertive Woman (1975). The assertive techniques of "fogging" and "negative assertion" were introduced and discussed as means of dealing with criticism. These terms were developed and described by Manuel Smith (1975). Fogging is a powerful assertive skill used to cope with criticism. The individual simply agrees with any truth in the statements people use to criticize, agrees with any possible truth in these statements, and agrees with any general truth or principle in the manipulative statements of others. Smith (1975) defines negative assertion as an individual's ability to cope with negative points about himself or errors he has made by assertively accepting these.

The trainers closed the session by suggesting that assertiveness is a process and may be described as "click, click, click". An individual in a conflict situation progresses through three steps prior to assertive responding. These steps are (1) becoming aware of what is happening in the situation; (2) attending to the way the situation makes the individual feel; and (3) becoming aware of what the individual would like to happen. By understanding this process toward assertive behavior, an individual can mentally re-enact these steps in a situation previously experienced or plan a responding strategy for a situation in the future.

Chapters five, six, and seven in Your Perfect Right were assigned.

Session Six

The objectives of the training were stated to the group as follows: (1) to teach the group to understand and recognize the differences among assertion, aggression, and nonassertion, and (2) to teach the skill of assertion. The group was asked to respond to the following questions in the form of a written evaluation:

- (a) Did the assertive training meet the stated objectives?
- (b) What was the most important idea, concept, or behavior you learned from the training?
- (c) Describe briefly one instance in which prior to this training you did not respond assertively but have now demonstrated assertive behavior;
- (d) How could this training be improved?
- (e) Comments.

The group discussed the assertive skills learned and specific situations in which assertive behavior worked well.

The class then formed small groups and role played the situations on their personal hierarchy sheets.

The final task presented to the group consisted of having each participant develop a new list of hierarchy situations for them to practice in the following two months. This encouraged personal growth beyond the training sessions.

All participants in the study completed the Marital-Adjustment Test.

Research Design

A quasi-experimental design was used in this study because the random assignment of subjects to treatment conditions was not

being employed. The subjects for this study were volunteers. This sample was appropriate since the results are generalized to a population consisting of volunteers for assertive training. The subjects were allowed to select the treatment condition they preferred to participate in because the population is comprised of people choosing their desired type of assertive training group.

The nonequivalent control group design was the particular quasi-experimental design that was appropriate. In this design the two groups are given a pretest of the dependent variable, the experimental treatment is initiated and completed, and the groups are given a posttest of the dependent variable. The design was appropriate for the study in that the Marital-Adjustment Test was given to all subjects, the assertive treatment under both conditions was initiated and completed, and the Marital-Adjustment Test was again administered.

Analysis

An analysis of covariance was used in analyzing the data for the first two hypotheses. The pretest scores for both treatment conditions for husbands and wives were held constant and posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test were compared for both husbands and the wives of the other treatment condition. This showed the change in marital adjustment as reported by each spouse in the two treatment conditions. The relative change in the happiness of each spouse with their marriage was indicated.

The product-moment correlation was used in testing the third and fourth hypotheses. The husbands' and wives' pretest scores

were correlated for each treatment condition and compared with the correlation coefficient for the husbands' and wives' posttest scores for each treatment condition. The change in the amount of correlation or agreement within couples concerning their perception of their marriage was assessed. A test of significance was used to determine any difference in the correlations of the two treatment conditions.

Instrumentation

The measure used for the study was the Marital-Adjustment Test. This test was designed by Locke and Wallace (1959). Throughout their study they developed a short but reliable and valid marital adjustment test. They define marital adjustment as the "accomodation of a husband and wife to each other at a given time" (p. 252). In developing the test they reviewed marital and prediction studies and selected the most fundamental items, modified them slightly, and tested their reliability and validity by applying them to a new sample. Fifteen items were finally selected to comprise the Marital-Adjustment Test. The weighted multiple choice items make possible scores for the test range from 2 - 158. Their sample of 236 marriages consisted of 118 wives and 118 husbands who were not related spouses. The sample subjects were predominately young (\bar{X} age = 29 years), educated, native-white Protestant, white-collar and professional, urban group, with no children or one child. No cases were included that were married less than one year. The split-half reliability, corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula, was .90. Forty-eight of the 236 marriages were known to be maladjusted (extensive case data corroborated this for 31 cases,

11 more were recently divorced, and 6 separated). The 48 in the maladjusted group were matched with 48 well adjusted couples. The mean score for the well adjusted couples group was significantly higher ($\bar{X} = 136$) than the mean score for the maladjusted group ($\bar{X} = 72$). The evidence clearly indicated that the short marital adjustment test differentiates between persons who are well adjusted and those who are maladjusted in marriage. The test has high reliability and validity since it seems to measure what it purports to measure.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data collected in this study was the pre- and posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test. All subjects in the experiment were administered the test. The results were then determined by the use of two statistical tests: the analysis of covariance and the product-moment correlation. The following is a summary of the information made available by the statistical analysis of the data.

The first hypothesis tested was that there is no difference in the adjusted scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for wives in the couples treatment condition and wives in the wives only treatment condition. The analysis of covariance used to test this hypothesis indicates that the null hypothesis is supported. There appears to be no statistical difference between the adjusted scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for wives in the couples treatment condition as compared with the wives in the wives only treatment condition. The results are summarized in Table 6.

Hypothesis 2 stated that there is no difference in the adjusted scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands in the couples treatment condition and husbands in the wives only treatment condition. As evident on Table 7, the F -ratio of 2.48 was less than the necessary F value of 4.24 at the .05 level of significance and failed to reject the null hypothesis. No statistical difference was found between the adjusted scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for

husbands in the couples treatment condition as compared with the husbands in the wives only treatment condition.

There was also no difference found between pretest and posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for either the wives only or the couples treatment condition (see Table 8). It is evident that no change in marital adjustment occurred after assertiveness training for either group. The marital adjustment scores ranged from 92 to 109. The designers of the Marital-Adjustment Test, Locke & Wallace (1959), reported the mean scores for well adjusted couples as 136 and the mean scores for the maladjusted couples on the Marital-Adjustment Test as 72. The subjects in this study scored between these two extremes. Evidently the participants in the study can not be said to be very adjusted or maladjusted in their marriage.

The results of the analysis of Hypothesis 1 and 2 suggest that there is no advantage for marital adjustment when husbands and wives are both given assertiveness training, as opposed to the wife only receiving training.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 were analyzed by using the product-moment correlation test. The results are presented in Table 9.

The null form of Hypothesis 3 stated that in the wives only treatment group there would be no difference in the correlation coefficient of pretest scores and posttest scores on a marital adjustment test for husbands and wives. The results indicate that the null hypothesis is rejected and that a statistical as well as a practical significant difference occurred between pretest and posttest scores for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment

Table 6
 Analysis of Covariance of Wives' Scores
 on the Marital-Adjustment Test with
 Pretest Scores as Covariant

Source	df	Adjusted Mean Square	F-ratio
Treatment	1	475.59	3.48
Error	25	137.44	

Table 7
 Analysis of Covariance of Husbands' Scores
 on the Marital-Adjustment Test with
 Pretest Scores as Covariant

Source	df	Adjusted Mean Square	F-ratio
Treatment	1	467.91	2.48
Error	25	188.70	

Table 8
Means on Marital-Adjustment Test

Treatment Condition	Mean	
	Pre	Post
Wives Only		
Wives	96	96
Husbands	92	98
Couples		
Wives	104	106
Husbands	109	109

Table 9
Correlations of Husbands' and Wives'
Scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test

Treatment	Pre	Post	z score
Wives Only	.25	.79	5.27*
Couples	.38	.40	ns

*difference in correlations significant beyond .01 level

condition. The Z test for significant differences in correlations confirmed this difference. Husbands and wives in this treatment condition more closely agreed on the state of their marital adjustment after the wives only received assertiveness training as compared to before the wives received training.

Hypothesis 4 investigated the amount of agreement concerning couples perceptions of their marital adjustment for those in the couples treatment condition. The null form of Hypothesis 4 stated that in the couples treatment condition there would be no difference in the correlation coefficient of pretest scores and posttest scores on a marital adjustment test for husbands and wives. As a result the null hypothesis was retained. The husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition did not show a significant difference in their correlation scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test before as compared to after both spouses received assertiveness training.

The results indicate that null Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 were retained. The advantage for marital adjustment by training both husbands and wives together in assertiveness was not supported. It further appears that when spouses are trained in assertiveness together, no change in perceptions of marital adjustment occur. When wives were trained alone, perceptions of marital adjustment between spouses was in greater agreement. The possible explanations for the results will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The first two hypotheses were concerned with measuring the change in marital adjustment after assertive training for both husbands and wives and comparing that change between the two treatment conditions. The pretest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test were equalled statistically in order to assess change in posttest scores. The results showed no difference for husbands or wives on the Marital-Adjustment Test between the two treatment conditions (wives only treatment condition and couples treatment condition).

There are a number of possible explanations as to why there is no apparent difference on marital adjustment when couples receive assertiveness training as compared to wives only receiving training. One possibility is that the assertiveness training class was not of sufficient length to significantly affect a marriage relationship positively or negatively. The class was completed in six weeks. Perhaps an eight to ten week course may have been more effective in producing behavioral change and as a result had more impact on the marital adjustment of participants.

Another alternate explanation deals with the sensitivity of the test instrument. The Marital-Adjustment Test may not have been sensitive enough to assess the kinds of changes in marriage that assertiveness training affects. The instrument used tested marital

agreement (always agree to always disagree) on handling family finances, matters of recreation, demonstration of affection, friends, sex relations, conventionality, philosophy of life, and ways of dealing with in-laws. Further questions asking how time is spent, who gives in when disagreements arise, etc., were also included. These tend to deal with long term behavioral patterns that may not significantly change until months after assertiveness training is completed. Immediate changes in marital adjustment may occur in areas such as communication, which was not extensively surveyed, while long term patterns such as agreement on friends and sexual relations may not show change until later.

The results may have occurred as they did because the subjects were not completely candid when taking the pretest of marital adjustment. Most of the participants appeared ill-at-ease during the first session, particularly at the beginning when the test was administered. The subjects may not have felt sufficiently comfortable to reveal aspects of their marriage at that point, even though confidentiality was insured. By the last session when the posttest was administered, the participants were more comfortable and an atmosphere of trust had developed between students and between students and instructors. Also, the importance of honesty with self and others was part of the training and may have influenced the test-taking mental set of each participant.

In considering the results of the first and second hypotheses, the focus of the training must be examined. The training could have had greater impact on marital adjustment had the focus been on the

marriage relationship and how assertiveness training can enhance that relationship. Assertiveness training and the marital relationship were not discussed directly but only in adjunct to many other topics (how to deal with authorities, friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc). If a clear association had been made between assertiveness and the marital relationship, perhaps there would have been a difference found on marital adjustment between couples receiving training and wives only receiving training.

The results seem to indicate that having a significant other (spouse) in assertiveness training does not enhance or harm a marital relationship. In further speculation, perhaps the importance of a significant other's presence in assertiveness training is only felt when a severely passive or extremely aggressive partner is part of a marriage and only the wife receives training. If this were the case, a greater amount of change or effort for change would probably occur in the marriage. The more average in assertion a participant or spouse of participant, the less impact on the marriage assertiveness training would have since margin for change would be reduced. The subjects used in this study were not screened for level of assertiveness, so the possibility of few highly passive or aggressive participants is evident. The majority of the subjects may have been moderately assertive prior to training.

Another possible interpretation of the results is that the subjects used their assertive skills to affect change in other areas of their life but did not use what had been learned in the marriage relationship. The marriage relationship may be the last

area to change as a result of assertiveness training. A participant may have to feel very competent assertively by practicing in other areas of their life before approaching assertion in marriage. As the literature indicates, the more intimate the relationship, usually the more difficult it is to assert oneself because greater risks are involved.

There is no apparent difference on marital adjustment for husbands and wives between those who take assertiveness training as a couple and those in which wives only take the training. The evidence suggests that taking assertiveness training as a couple does not enhance marital adjustment and cause test scores to increase after training. Also, having only the wife take the training does not cause negative effects on marital adjustment. This is an important finding since previous research indicated the possibility of considerable damage to the marriage relationship when only one spouse received assertiveness training. The advantage of including a significant other (the husband) was not supported in this study.

The latter two hypotheses dealt with how closely husbands' and wives' perceptions of their marital adjustment matched for each treatment condition before and after training. Specifically, Hypothesis 3 asked if there was a difference in the amount of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment condition. The results were not as would be expected in that there was a clear increase in the correlation of posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test between husbands and wives in the

wives only treatment condition. These results are particularly surprising since no difference in correlations were found for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition. The interpretation of these results is purely speculative since they were so unexpected.

One possible reason correlations were greater after training for the wives only condition may be that when one spouse alone initiates change in a relationship because of assertive training, the defensive of the other partner is less than if both initiated change due to training. In this situation the other spouse may be more amenable to change, show greater flexibility, and as a result offer less conflict. When both spouses take assertive training and become aware of how much their relationship needs to change they may not be as open to how each individually contributed to their problems. As a result, they may approach their partner in an aggressive way explaining, "Look how I have been mistreated". It is not uncommon for participants to go beyond the boundaries of assertiveness and respond aggressively when having first acquired new skills.

The women in the study may have been primarily passive (which is typical of women in general) and simply needed to let their spouses know how they felt. As a result, they reached greater agreement on their state of marital adjustment. It is possible that in the couples treatment condition spouses learned and practiced the skill of self-expression while failing to practice the skill of listening. Both were taught in the assertiveness training class, and the failure

to use the latter skill may explain why the couples in the couples treatment condition did not achieve higher correlations on the posttest scores of the Marital-Adjustment Test.

Another explanation may clarify the results of the third hypothesis. The wives in the wives only group may have shifted from a dependent, passive role to a more active, assertive role in the marital relationship and this change may have encouraged the husbands to respond with equal openness. This would allow for a closer agreement in the perceptions of the marriage relationship by husbands and wives.

Hypothesis 4 asked if there was a difference in the amount of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition. The results indicated there was no difference in the pretest and posttest correlations.

It is possible that when both spouses receive assertiveness training they may use the skills of communication they learn as weapons rather than tools to get closer to others. The skills taught may be misused as any other knowledge may. The couples in training may have used their power of expression to criticize and hurt their mate rather than to achieve greater harmony. A previously passive partner may recognize through training how he or she has allowed the partner in marriage to take advantage. As a result, the self power gained in class may be used to "even the score". This is an unfortunate consequence and may be avoided by the trainers discussing the misuse of skills and warning against it.

A final interpretation of the fourth hypothesis is that the pretest score correlation (.38) was so low in the first place that relationship patterns may have been too powerful to shift with a skill building class. A more traditional therapy group may have been necessary to affect the communication styles of husbands and wives. This assertiveness class did not deal directly with couples or their marital relationship.

The results of this study were somewhat unexpected so the conclusions indicated are startling. The results suggest that training wives alone in assertiveness does not affect marital adjustment any differently than training couples together. Apparently, the need for a significant other (husband) in training is not supported. The marriage relationship is not damaged by teaching assertion skills to the wife only. This is an important finding since previous research suggested the real possibility of marital discord or upheaval as a result of only training one spouse.

It is also concluded that when wives are trained in assertiveness without their spouse, greater agreement in the perceptions of marital adjustment occurs between marriage partners. It is evident that an increase in communication must occur after wives only are trained to account for the increase in agreement on the Marital-Adjustment Test. To understand how wives only group participants increased their agreement on posttest scores of marital adjustment can only be made clear through further research. Recommendations for further research and investigation are in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of assertive training on the marital adjustment of those participating. It was of particular interest to identify the effects of training wives only as compared to training couples jointly in assertiveness.

There were a total of 56 subjects sampled for this study, constituting 28 marriages, all investigated for marital adjustment. All of the subjects were volunteers and were obtained through the Women's Center at Utah State University. The subjects were placed in one of two treatment conditions dependent upon the condition for which they volunteered. The wives only treatment condition provided assertiveness training exclusively for the wives of the couples participating. Both husbands and wives received training in the couples treatment condition. All of the 56 subjects, both husbands and wives, completed the Marital-Adjustment Test during the first and last session of assertive training. The assertive training groups met for six weeks for two hours each week.

An analysis of covariance was used to analyze the data for the first two hypotheses. The pretest scores for both treatment conditions for husbands and wives were held constant and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test were compared for both husbands and wives of the other treatment condition. The results indicated that there was no difference between the adjusted scores on the Marital-

Adjustment Test for wives in the couples treatment condition. There was also no difference found in the adjusted scores for husbands in the couples treatment condition and husbands in the wives only treatment condition. It may be concluded that there is no advantage for marital adjustment when husbands and wives are both given assertiveness training as opposed to the wife only receiving training.

The Z test for significant differences in correlations was used to test the following questions: (a) Is there a difference in the amount of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment condition? and (b) Is there a difference in the amount of correlation of the pretest scores and the posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition? The results indicated that there was a statistical difference beyond the .01 level of significance between the correlations of the pretest and posttest scores for husbands and wives in the wives only treatment condition. No difference in amount of correlation was found between pretest and posttest scores on the Marital-Adjustment Test for husbands and wives in the couples treatment condition. It is concluded that when spouses were trained together, no change in perceptions of marital adjustment occurred. When wives were trained alone, perceptions of marital adjustment between spouses was in greater agreement. No evidence was found to indicate marital adjustment was affected by teaching assertion skills to the wife only as opposed to teaching the couple.

Limitations

There are several limitations evident in this study. The results of the study could have been generalized with greater assurance had the sample been larger. A sample size twice as large as the one used would have improved the procedural format.

Secondly, a husbands only treatment condition was not included in the research design. Without this treatment group the results of the wives only treatment group are not known to be generalizable to both spouses. Perhaps different effects on marital adjustment would be found if husbands only were trained in assertiveness. This treatment condition does need to be tested in order to have greater understanding of the effects of assertiveness training on marital adjustment.

A third limitation of this study was the failure to assess the subjects' level of assertiveness prior to and after training. This information would give valuable insight into the components present in a marriage and the different combinations of assertiveness, passiveness, and aggressiveness. After collecting this data, each type of marital match could be assessed as to how it was effected by assertiveness training. Perhaps this would allow the results obtained to be more clearly explained.

The length of the training class may have also been too short to allow for a full impact upon the marriage relationship. Two to four more sessions might be sufficient.

The final limitation of this study was the measure of marital adjustment. It may not have been in depth enough to register the

changes that may have occurred in the marriage relationship immediately following training. An interview or questionnaire might serve this purpose in conjunction with the Marital-Adjustment Test.

Recommendations

After considering the conclusions and limitations of this study the following recommendations for further research are:

1. A replication of this study using a larger sample size, longer training, and including a husbands only treatment condition is suggested.
2. A detailed formalized interview to be given to couples before and after training would be helpful in order to isolate the causes of the results obtained.
3. The assessment of assertiveness, aggressiveness, and passiveness operating within a marriage prior to training would render valuable information that could also increase the understanding of the results of the study.
4. It is also recommended that at least a part of the assertiveness training be focused on the marriage relationship and how assertiveness may be used to enhance or damage the relationship.
5. A posttest follow-up three to six months after assertiveness training completion is also suggested.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Number _____

INFORMATION SHEET

NAME _____

AGE _____

EDUCATION _____

OCCUPATION _____

RELIGION _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MARRIED? _____

NUMBER OF CHILDREN _____

Appendix B

MARITAL-ADJUSTMENT TEST

1. Check the dot on the scale below which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered in your marriage. The middle point, "Happy" represents the degree of happiness which most people get from marriage, and the scale gradually ranges on one side to those few who are very unhappy in marriage, and on the other, to those few who experience extreme joy in marriage.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Very Unhappy			Happy			Perfectly Happy

State the appropriate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your mate on the following items. Please check each column.

	always agree	almost always agree	occasion disagree	frequent disagree	almost always disagree	always disagree
2. handling family finances	*	*	*	*	*	*
3. matters of recreation	*	*	*	*	*	*
4. demonstrations of affection	*	*	*	*	*	*
5. friends	*	*	*	*	*	*
6. sex relations	*	*	*	*	*	*
7. conventionality (right, good, or proper conduct)	*	*	*	*	*	*
8. philosophy of life	*	*	*	*	*	*
9. ways of dealing with inlaws	*	*	*	*	*	*

10. When disagreements arise, they usually result in: _____ husband giving in, _____ wife giving in, or _____ agreement by mutual give and take.

11. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?
 _____ All of them, _____ Some of them, _____ very few of them, _____ None of them.

12. In leisure time do you generally prefer: _____ to be "on the go", _____ to stay at home? Does your mate generally prefer: _____ to be "on the go", _____ to stay at home?

13. Do you ever wish you had not married? _____ Frequently,
_____ Occasionally, _____ Rarely, _____ Never.
14. If you had your life to live over, do you think you would:
_____ marry the same person, _____ marry a different person,
_____ not marry at all?
15. Do you confide in your mate: _____ almost never, _____ rarely,
_____ in most things, _____ in everything.

Appendix C

Session I

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT

The following questions will help assess your assertiveness. Circle the number that best describes you. Key: 1 means never; 2 means rarely; 3 means sometimes; 4 means usually and 5 means always. Be honest in your responses.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I do my own thinking and make my own decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | I can be myself around wealthy, educated or prestigious people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I am poised and confident among strangers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | I freely express my emotions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | I am friendly and considerate toward others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | I accept compliments and gifts without embarrassment or a sense of obligation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | I freely express my admiration of others' ideas and achievements. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | I readily admit my mistakes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | I accept responsibility for my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | I make decisions and accept the consequences. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | I take the initiative in personal contacts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | When I have done something well, I tell others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | I am confident going for job interviews. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | When I need help, I ask others to help me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | When at fault, I apologize. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | When I like someone very much, I tell them so. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | When confused, I ask for clarification. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | When someone is annoying me, I ask that person to stop. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | When someone cuts in front of me in line, I protest. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

20. When treated unfairly, I object. 1 2 3 4 5
21. When I am underpaid, I ask for a salary increase. 1 2 3 4 5
22. When I am lonely or depressed, I take action to improve my mental outlook. 1 2 3 4 5
23. When working at a job or task I dislike intensely, I look for ways to improve my situation. 1 2 3 4 5
24. I complain to the management when I have been overcharged or have received poor service. 1 2 3 4 5
25. If something in my house or apartment malfunctions, I see that the landlord repairs it. 1 2 3 4 5
26. If I am disturbed by someone smoking, I say so. 1 2 3 4 5
27. If a friend betrays my confidence, I tell that person how I feel. 1 2 3 4 5
28. I ask my doctor all of the questions I want answers for. 1 2 3 4 5
29. I ask for directions when I need help finding my way. 1 2 3 4 5
30. I maintain a relationship when there are problems rather than cutting it off. 1 2 3 4 5
31. I communicate my belief that everyone in the home should help with the upkeep rather than doing it all myself. 1 2 3 4 5
32. I make sexual advances toward my spouse or lover. 1 2 3 4 5
33. When served food at a restaurant that is not prepared the way I ordered it, I express my dissatisfaction to the food server. 1 2 3 4 5
34. Even though a clerk goes to a great deal of trouble showing merchandise to me, I am able to say "no" if I do not really want to purchase the merchandise. 1 2 3 4 5
35. If I discover that I have purchased defective merchandise, I return it to the store. 1 2 3 4 5

36. When people talk too loud in a theater, lecture, or concert, I am able to ask them to be quiet. 1 2 3 4 5
37. I maintain good eye contact in conversations. 1 2 3 4 5
38. I would sit in the front of a large group when the only remaining seats are located there. 1 2 3 4 5
39. I would speak to my neighbors when their dog is keeping me awake with its barking at night. 1 2 3 4 5
40. When interrupted, I comment on the interruption and then finish what I was saying. 1 2 3 4 5
41. When a friend or spouse makes plans for me without my knowledge or consent, I object. 1 2 3 4 5
42. If I miss someone, I express the fact that I want to spend more time with that person. 1 2 3 4 5
43. If a person asks me to loan something and I really don't want to, I refuse. 1 2 3 4 5
44. If a friend invites me to join him or her and I really don't want to, I turn down the request. 1 2 3 4 5
45. When friends call and talk too long on the phone, I can terminate the conversations effectively. 1 2 3 4 5
46. When someone criticizes me, I listen to the criticism without being defensive. 1 2 3 4 5
47. When people are discussing a subject and I disagree with their points of view, I express my difference of opinion. 1 2 3 4 5
48. When someone makes demands on me that I don't wish to fulfill, I resist the demands. 1 2 3 4 5
49. I tell my children the things I like about them. 1 2 3 4 5
50. When my children make endless demands on my time and energy, I establish some firm notions about the amount of time I am willing to give. 1 2 3 4 5

51. When my spouse/roommate calls to tell me he/she is bringing home an unexpected guest for dinner and I am very tired, I level with him/her about my feelings and request that alternative plans be made. 1 2 3 4 5
52. When one friend is not meeting all of my needs, I establish meaningful ties with other people. 1 2 3 4 5
53. When my own parents or in-laws freely give advice, I handle the situation effectively. 1 2 3 4 5
54. When someone completes a task or job for me with which I am dissatisfied, I ask that it be done correctly. 1 2 3 4 5
55. If I object to political practices, I take action rather than blaming politicians. 1 2 3 4 5
56. If I am jealous, I explore the reasons for my feelings and look for ways to increase my self-confidence and self-esteem. 1 2 3 4 5
57. If someone tells me they envy me, I accept their comments without feeling guilty or apologizing. 1 2 3 4 5
58. When I am feeling insecure, I assess my personal strengths and then take action designed to make me feel more secure. 1 2 3 4 5
59. I accept my spouse's or lover's interests in other people without feeling I must compete with them for his/her attention. 1 2 3 4 5
60. I speak up readily in group situations. 1 2 3 4 5

Session II

BECOMING ASSERTIVE

"There is so much more to be gained from life by being free and able to stand up for oneself, and from honoring the same right for others."
 Alberti and Emmons, Your Perfect Right

Assertive Behavior

-Direct, honest, and appropriate expression of one's feelings, opinions, and beliefs

Self-enhancing
 Expressive
 Feels good about self
 Chooses for self
 May achieve desired goal
 No one is hurt

Nonassertive Behavior

-Violation of one's own rights
 -Permission for others to infringe on one's rights

Self-denying
 Inhibited
 Hurt, anxious
 Others choose for him/her
 Doesn't achieve desired goal
 Self-punishing (guilt)

Aggressive Behavior

-violation of other's rights

Self-enhancing at expense of another
 Expressive
 Depreciates others
 Chooses for others
 Goal is achieved by hurting others
 Punishes others (humiliation)

Areas of Assertiveness

Expressing appreciate
 Receiving appreciation
 Making requests
 Refusing requests
 Presenting one's ideas

Indirectly Aggressive Behavior

-indirect, sneaky way to get what one wants
 -passive-aggressive

Components of Assertiveness

Body language
 Facial expression
 Gestures
 Timing
 Message content

Areas of Assertiveness

Expressing controversial opinions
Disagreeing with another
Taking criticism
Giving criticism

Components of Assertiveness

-appropriateness
-"I" message
-fully attentive
"'I'm okay'"

NONASSERTIVE, ASSERTIVE, AND
AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIORS: A SUMMARY

NONASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IS:

That type of interpersonal behavior which enables a person's right to be violated in two ways: (a) we violate our own rights when we permit ourselves to ignore personal rights which are actually very important to us or (b) we permit others to infringe on our rights.

WHEN YOU ACT NONASSERTIVELY:

you may feel hurt and anxious at the time
you may be angry later
you allow others to choose for you
you do not generally achieve desired goal

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIM/HERSELF WHEN YOU ACT NONASSERTIVELY:

guilty or superior.

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU ACT NONASSERTIVELY:

irritation, pity, disgust.

NONASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR MAY:

be a subtle type of manipulation--i.e. person abdicates rights to influence certain kinds of behavior from other person. These kinds of unspoken bargains are seldom explicitly stated and the other person generally takes self-sacrifice for granted. The nonasserter can then end up feeling bitter and cheated.

spoil the person to whom the remark was made by training them that they can make unreasonable demands and get away with it.

create a "nice" but nonrespected image which is hard to break from. Others begin to expect nonassertion as your norm.

because the true feelings are not expressed carry over to other situations and/or result in an angry outburst at a later time.

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IS:

that type of interpersonal behavior in which we stand up for our legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of another are not violated.

behavior which enables us to act in our own best interests, to stand up for ourselves without undue anxiety, to exercise or stand up for our rights without denying the rights of others.

direct, honest appropriate expression of one's feelings, opinions, or beliefs. Shows consideration, but not deference for another person. Communicates respect for person but not necessarily for person's behavior.

appropriately emotionally honest, direct, self-enhancing, expressive.

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IS NOT:

behavior which violates the rights of others

behavior which allows your rights to be violated

- a. when you are taken advantage of by not saying no
- b. when you fail to assert your needs

WHEN YOU ACT ASSERTIVELY:

you feel confident

you feel self-respecting at the time and later

you choose for yourself

you may achieve your goal

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIM/HERSELF WHEN YOU ACT ASSERTIVELY:

valued, respected

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU ACT ASSERTIVELY:

generally respect

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IS:

that type of interpersonal behavior in which we stand up for our rights in such a way that the rights of the other person are violated.

an attack on the person rather than on the person's behavior.

inappropriately emotionally honest, self-enhancing at the expense of another, expressive

WHEN YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY:

you may feel righteous, superior, deprecatory at the time

you may feel guilty later

you choose for others

you may achieve desired goal by hurting others

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIM/HERSELF WHEN YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY:

hurt, humiliated

THE OTHER PERSON'S FEELINGS ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU ACT AGGRESSIVELY:

angry, vengeful

ASSERTIVE TRAINING HINTS

IN YOUR LIFE SITUATIONS OR IN THE GROUP-
BEHAVE ASSERTIVELY!!!

USE "I" - IT'S AN ASSERTIVE WORD!

LOOK THE OTHER PERSON IN THE EYE.

DON'T ACT APOLOGETIC.

DON'T SMILE OR GIGGLE IF YOU'RE
EXPRESSING SOMETHING SERIOUS.

LET YOUR FEELINGS SHOW! IF YOU'RE ANGRY, LET IT
APPEAR ON YOUR FACE AND IN YOUR POSTURE.

USE NAMES IN TALKING WITH OTHERS.
IT'S LESS EASY TO BE IGNORED.

Credit: Jan Tyler, Brigham Young University, 1976

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR
IDEAS TO KEEP IN MIND

1. Assertive behavior is often confused with aggressive behavior; however, assertion does not involve hurting the other person physically or emotionally.
2. Assertive behavior aims at equalizing the balance of power, not in "winning the battle" by putting down the other person or rendering him/her helpless.
3. Assertive behavior involves expressing your legitimate rights as an individual. You have a right to express your own wants, needs, feelings, and ideas.
4. Expressing your own wants, needs, feelings and ideas in an assertive manner leads to an enhanced feeling of self importance and self esteem.
5. Remember: other individuals have a right to respond to your assertiveness with their own wants, needs, feelings, and ideas.
6. An assertive encounter with another individual may involve negotiating an agreeable compromise.
7. By behaving assertively, you open the way for honest and more intimate relationships with others.
8. Assertive behavior not only is concerned with what you say but how you say it.
9. Assertive words accompanied by appropriate assertive "body language" makes your message more clear and impactful.
10. Assertive body language includes the following:
 - a. maintaining direct eye contact
 - b. maintaining an erect posture
 - c. speaking clearly and audibly
 - d. making sure you do not have a whiney quality to your voice
 - e. using facial expression and gestures to add emphasis to your words
11. Assertive behavior is a skill that can be learned and maintained by frequent practice.

A BILL OF ASSERTIVE RIGHTS

From When I Say No I Feel Guilty, by Manuel J. Smith

1. You have the right to judge your own behavior, thoughts, and emotions, and to take the responsibility for their initiation and consequences upon yourself.
2. You have the right to offer no reasons or excuses for justifying your behavior.
3. You have the right to judge if you are responsible for finding solutions to other people's problems.
4. You have the right to change your mind.
5. You have the right to make mistakes--and to be responsible for them.
6. You have the right to say "I don't know".
7. You have the right to be independent of the goodwill of others before coping with them.
8. You have the right to be illogical in making decisions.
9. You have the right to say, "I don't understand."
10. You have the right to say, "I don't care."
11. You have the right to say "no" without feeling guilty.

BILL OF RIGHTS

From material taken from a workshop on assertiveness training by Patricia Jakubowski-Spector, July 1976, University of Maryland.

1. You have the right to refuse requests from others without feeling selfish or guilty.
2. You have the right to your feelings--all of them--and to the expression of them.
3. You have the right to make mistakes.
4. You have the right to ask for consideration, help, and/or affection from others.
5. You have the right to decide your own needs.

6. You have the right to be treated as an adult.
7. You have the right to the time you need to sort out your reactions--to develop and use your own time space.
8. You have the right to determine your own value system.
9. You have the right to have your opinions and ideas treated with respect and consideration.
10. You have the right to ask others to change their behavior.

THE LOVE RELATIONSHIP

I love me; my need to do my own thing, and my right to be me, are immeasurably, precious to me. The thoughts I think, the words I speak, the emotions I feel, the actions I take are mine; all are freely chosen by me, and for them I am fully responsible. Whether satisfying or not, they are "my thing", my experiment in actualizing my own being, my opportunity to learn from my own experience, my expression of me.

But - I also love you; your need to do your own thing, and your right to be you, are equally precious to me. The thoughts you think, the words you speak, the emotions you feel, the actions you take are yours, all are freely chosen by you, and for them I am in no way responsible. Whether satisfying or not, they are "your thing", your experiment in actualizing your own being, your opportunity to learn from your own experience, your expression of you.

Now I am aware that behind my resentment I feel in our relationship is my demand that you change - my demand that you think and speak and feel and act the way I prescribe. I am also aware that this is both unfair and unsatisfying; it would be far better, in love, to negotiate a compromise that is satisfying to us both. So, to restore my attitude of love I here and now cancel that demand, and affirm that you are not in this world to live up to my expectations; now am I in this world to live up to your expectations.

You are you; and I am I, and if in being ourselves we find each other from time to time, it's beautiful. If not, it's sad, but it can't be helped. For such a "finding" can only come in that moment of love when, simultaneously, you and I fully appreciate, and fully affirm, the other AS HE IS. This can happen. It has happened before. I hope it does happen again - to us - and I willingly assume whatever responsibility is mine for its happening. I cherish that prospect. But - if it never happens, I am relaxed in the freedom of loving me, and loving you, as we are. For because I "know" in my innards, and affirm with all my being the TRUTH that LOVE is THE ATTITUDE with which to perceive you, as well as me, I am FREE - free to be me, and free to affirm your freedom to be you.

John R. Landgraf

(adapted from the "awareness process" in Gestalt therapy as formulated by Frederick S. Perls and as interpreted by Frank W. Kimper)

My Hierarchy of Assertive Situations

Level V. Most Difficult Situation
(A real risk but it's worth it to
you - you've got the skill to
handle it!!!)

5.

Level IV. Even More Difficult Situation
(Tougher, but you're ready for it!!!)

4.

Level III. Somewhat More Difficult Situation
(A bigger challenge, but you can handle it !!!)

3.

Level II. Slightly More Difficult Situation
(Risk a little, but don't overdo it!!!)

2.

Level I. Relatively Easy Situation; High Chance of Success
(Set yourself up to succeed!!!)

1.

Session III

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR

If I behave assertively,

- I value myself
- I stand up for my own feelings, ideas, beliefs, needs, etc.
- I take responsibility for meeting as many of my needs as I can; most people have as one of their needs to relate to others respectfully and to assist them in meeting their needs (especially people in "helping relationships" women, others). It is important to note that in order to respond to this need to care about others, I must first and continuously actively value all of my other needs.
- I work to equalize the balance of power in relationships; not putting another person down or winning a battle; in relationships both must win for one to win.
- I express my legitimate rights as a person, my own wants, needs, feelings; and to respect others legitimate rights to express theirs.
- I seek open, honest relationships with others.
- I choose my own behavior-look at the possible consequences and choose my own response.

ASSERTIVE
BEHAVIOR

OTHER
PERSON

WHAT'S IN IT
FOR ME

Honest, direct

Respects what I say, can count on my communication (may listen more)

I feel good when I'm honest and direct. I don't have to hide who I am, my feelings, ideas, beliefs. I don't have to remember what I have said and what I haven't said.

Express my feelings, ideas and beliefs

Feel I trust them when I want to share what is important to me.

I value my own opinions, feelings, ideas, beliefs.

Want to know me, value my opinions, feelings, etc.

I feel good sharing my feelings with others. I would like to be understood.

Express positive feelings about others

Appreciate knowing directly my positive feelings.

I feel confident with opinions and feelings.

ASSERTIVE
BEHAVIOROTHER
PERSONWHAT'S IN IT
FOR ME

Express negative feelings about others

Appreciate knowing directly my negative feelings which are usually difficult to communicate.

I feel good sharing good feelings

I value my own feelings; I value my relationships with others, sometimes negative feelings can jeopardize a relationship and it is important to share those feelings even when they are difficult to share because I do not want to hurt others. I feel relieved that I can express difficult feelings.

Choose my own behavior

Respect the relationship

Can count on my taking responsibility for myself; they can be responsible for themselves.

I respect the relationship.

I feel in control of myself. I can choose to put my needs first or to put someone else's needs first. I can choose not to be assertive and if I choose not to behave assertively I still feel in control because I have made the choice.

AGGRESSIVE
BEHAVIOROTHER
PERSONWHAT'S IN IT
FOR ME

Disregards other persons communications

Feels hurt; feels defensive; feels humiliated; feels disrespected; needs are not acknowledged; needs are not chosen; feels angry, vengeful, defensive.

I feel disrespectful; I get what I want, at the expense of others; I feel guilty; I put others down, have power over others. Few if any close relationships.

NON-ASSERTIVE
BEHAVIOR

Do not express
myself thoughts,
ideas, feelings,
needs.

OTHER
PERSON

Does not know me;
Does not respect me.

WHAT'S IN IT
FOR ME

I don't risk
- getting rejected
- being openly
disrespected
- being told I'm
wrong
may get others to
speak for me.

- NOTE: 1. Many times the pressure of not acting assertively literally explodes into aggressive behavior. Often a person will shift back and forth.
2. Not being able to assert oneself directly may lead to passive-aggressive responses such as sarcasm.

WELSH-DESJARDINS

DEFENSES AND BEHAVIORS THAT BLOCK ASSERTIVENESS

<u>Non-Assertiveness</u>	<u>Aggressive</u>
1. I wouldn't want to hurt anyone.	1. If I don't get my two cents in now I never will.
2. She/he already knows how I feel.	2. Who cares if anyone else suffers, I have rights too.
3. What if I say the wrong thing.	3. She/he deserves to get it.
4. It's too risky. . .I'm not sure how people will respond.	4. Nice guys don't win ball games.
5. People will think I'm pushy.	5. If you want to get ahead, you have to step on a few toes.
6. I'd feel stupid.	6. He can't make me mad, I just won't speak to him for a few days.
7. He/she doesn't really care to hear how I feel.	7. I'll come on strong, then no one will know how scared I am.
8. I might not get the approval I need.	8. So I monopolize the conversation, my own opinion is important.
9. Suppose I'm wrong about the way I feel.	9. He/she might have gotten the best of me this time. Next time I'll have a good sarcastic comment all ready.
10. I don't want to rock the boat.	10. I'm the mother, I know what's best.
11. It's so hard to know what to say.	11. I won't say anything now but one more comment and I'll really let him/her have it.
12. What could I say in front of all those people that is really important.	
13. Suppose someone gets defensive or aggressive in response to what I say.	
14. I've never been able to express myself.	

REASONS FOR NOT BEING ASSERTIVE

1. I think someone will consider my behavior inappropriate.
2. My behavior may be harmful to others.
3. It may not be worth my efforts, time, energy.
4. I fear others will reject me.
5. I fear the response others might make to my behavior.
6. I might lose control of myself - cry, get angry.
7. Other people might fall apart.

Session IV

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR CHANGE FORM

1. Describe an important situation in which you want to change your non-assertive or aggressive behavior to assertive behavior.

2. Describe what you typically say or do in this situation.

3. Describe how you feel in this situation. And how you feel later.

4. Describe how you would like to feel in this situation. And later.

5. Describe what you would like to be able to say and do in this situation.

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR SKILL TRAINING

COACHING ROLE

The coach focuses on what the person does that is assertive. This person then practices these assertive behaviors. The coach may describe behaviors the individual might try. In general, positive responses promote skill development. Once in a while it may be important to describe some behaviors to be avoided.

OBSERVING BEHAVIOR

I. NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR

- A. Eye Contact
- B. Posture
- C. Gestures and Physical Movement
- D. Facial Expressions

II. VERBAL BEHAVIOR

- A. Content
- B. Voice
- C. Speech Flow
- D. Quickness or Latency of Response

III. UNITY OF VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR

Do they go together? Do they say the same thing?

OBSERVATION OF VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR

NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR

- A. Eye Contact
 - look directly at the person being spoken to
 - generally maintain eye contact during interaction
 - look across the shoulder of the person being spoken to
 - look away - not directly facing the person being spoken to
 - look down at the floor or feet
 - unnatural staring
- B. Posture
 - Standing - usually more assertive than sitting
 - comfortably standing with weight on both feet, generally erect
 - leaning, for example against a wall
 - standing very straight and erect but stiff and uncomfortable

Sitting

- comfortably sitting erect
- sitting slumped down in a chair
- sitting very straight, stiff and uncomfortable

C. Gestures and Physical Movement

- stepping forward or backward or leaning back or forward while seated.
- hand gestures
- placing hand on hip
- keeping head down
- chin up or down
- fidgeting
- ring twisting or hand wringing, etc.

D. Facial Expressions

- facial expression goes with verbal content
- facial expression does not go with verbal content (smile, frown, seriousness, humorous)
- chronic grin
- smiles excessively

VERBAL BEHAVIOR

A. Content

- repeating words
- ideas expressed precisely
- rambles rather than getting to the point

B. Voice

- loud enough or too soft
- mumbling
- pitch too low or too high
- whiney
- squeaky (showing anxiety)
- good quality

C. Speech Flow

- too fast, too slow
- hesitations, pauses
- repeating words
- speech duration - 1 or 2 words or enough to get point across

D. Quickness or Latency of Response

UNITY OF VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR

- person gives the impression she/he means what she/he says
- non-verbal behavior inconsistent with verbal content

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

Between Session Practice Report

NAME:

DATE:

DESCRIBE THE SITUATION IN WHICH YOU WERE ASSERTIVE:DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SAID AND/OR DID:DESCRIBE HOW THE OTHER PERSON RESPONDED TO YOUR ASSERTIVENESS:DESCRIBE HOW YOU FELT DURING THE INTERACTION:DESCRIBE HOW YOU FELT AFTER THE INTERACTION:

Rate this situation in regard to the following:

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY FOR YOU:

 Easy 1 2 3 4 5 Difficult

DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP:

 Impersonal 1 2 3 4 5 Personal

DEGREE OF SUCCESS:

 Little 1 2 3 4 5 Great

Session V

PRACTICE EXERCISE USING "BROKEN RECORD"

Salesperson: (at door) Hello. I'm selling Child's World Encyclopedias. May I have a moment of your time to tell you about them?

You: Thank you for stopping by, but I am not interested.

Salesperson: But these encyclopedias are designed especially for children like yours. You do want your children to learn faster, don't you?

You: I understand what you are selling. But I am not interested.

Salesperson: Your children's teachers could want your child to have this set of books. They have even been endorsed by several teachers from your school district.

You: I understand, but I am not interested.

Salesperson: It's awful hot out here. Do you mind if I come in?

You: I understand how you feel, but I am not interested.

Salesperson: You obviously don't understand, or you would want to hear about these encyclopedias so that your children would have an opportunity to learn faster. Over 5,000 families have bought sets like this during the past year and we have had nothing but praise from many satisfied people. I have here several letters of recommendation. May I give these to you.

You: I understand what you are saying, but I am not interested.

Salesperson: You just keep saying "I understand". Can't you say anything else?

You: I understand what you are asking, but I am just not interested.

Salesperson: Let me ask you one question. How old are your children?

You: I'm not interested.

Salesperson: Won't you even tell me how old your children are?

You: I understand what you are asking. But I am not interested.

Salesperson: I don't understand you. You keep repeating yourself.

- You: I understand how you must feel. But I'm not interested.
- Salesperson: Let me put it this way. I need to meet everyone on this block. Can you tell me if your neighbors are home?
- You: I understand what you are asking. I am not interested.
- Salesperson: You mean you are not going to answer even one question that I ask?
- You: I'm not interested.
- Salesperson: Do you think that your neighbor would be interested in a set like this?
- You: I understand what you are asking, but I am not interested.

Credit; Manual J. Smith,
When I Say No I Feel Guilty
Chapter 4

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Recognizable weapons used by others to manipulate

1. Rapid Takeover: Immediate domination of situation, salesperson putting foot in door, interrupting.
2. Labeling: Defining a person as he or she always or never is: "You're always late." "You never are supportive." Don't accept the definition. Ask the person to be specific; try fogging ("I may have been late on occasion.")
3. Flattery: "Why don't you do this job; you do it so well." "You're the only one who can do this job right."
4. Ridicule: "I thought Women's Libbers didn't get emotional." "You're a crybaby, just like a woman." Don't buy into defending attacks on your character.
5. Psychoanalysis: "I understand why you're doing that; you're taking assertive training." Don't let people tell you why you do things, or why you think something.
6. Helplessness or Weakness: "I'm terrible at math; would you please do these forms?"
7. Illness: "You are giving me a headache." "You make me sick."
8. Guilt Induction: "Go out and have a good time; don't worry for a minute about the fact that I'm all alone and have a heart murmur."
9. Seduction: "Start working for me at this low salary, and when the company makes more money I'll pay you more."
10. Smoke Screen: The art of being vague and unwilling to be specific. "Take my word for it." without reasons.
11. For your own good: "You'll be better off if you do this." "It's for your own good."
12. Over the Barrel: "Take it or leave it." Backing a person into a corner.
13. No Fight: A. The Pacifist: Refuses to interact.
B. The Colluder: Pretends to agree, but doesn't.

Credit: Peggy-Ann Neumann, Hollins College, Virginia

PRACTICE EXERCISE USING "FOGGING" TO COPE WITH CRITICISM

Critic: I see you are dressed in your usual sloppy manner.

You: That's right. I am dressed in my usual way.

Critic: Those pants! They look like you stole them off the Goodwill rack without pressing them.

You: They are a bit wrinkled, aren't they.

Critic: Wrinkled is the understatement of the week. They are positively dreadful.

You: You're probably right. They do look a bit worse for wear.

Critic: And that shirt! Your taste must be all in your mouth.

You: That's probably true. My taste in clothes isn't one of my strong points.

Critic: Anyone who dresses like that obviously hasn't got much going for them.

You: You're right. I do have a lot of faults.

Critic: Faults! Is that what you call them? They are more like chasms. Your personality is one empty Grand Canyon.

You: You could be right. There are a lot of things I could improve.

Critic: I doubt if you are able to do a job effectively if you can't even dress properly.

You: That's true. I could improve my work on the job.

Critic: And you probably pick up your paycheck each week from the poor boys you are ripping off without feeling any guilt.

You: I don't feel any guilt at all.

Critic: What a thing to say. You should feel guilty!

You: You're probably right, I could feel a bit guiltier.

Critic: You probably don't budget the salary you cheat other people, hard-working people, not loafers like you, out of.

You: You're probably right, I could budget my money better, and I do loaf a lot.

Critic: If you were smarter and had some moral sensibility you could ask someone how to buy better clothes so you don't look like a bum.

You: That's true. I could ask someone how to buy better clothes, and I certainly could be smarter than I am.

Critic: You look nervous when I tell you things that you don't like.

You: I'm sure I do look nervous.

Critic: You shouldn't be nervous, I'm your friend.

You: That's true, I shouldn't be as nervous as I am.

Critic: I'm probably the only person who would tell you these things.

You: I'm sure you're right about that!

Critic: You were being sarcastic.

You: That's true, I was.

Critic: You are not here to learn to be sarcastic, you already know that! You are deliberately resisting how to FOG.

You: You're right, I already know how to be sarcastic and I probably am fighting learning something new.

Critic: Only someone dumb does that.

You: You're probably right, that may have been dumb of me.

Critic: You'll never learn to do this.

You: You're probably right, I may never be any good at it.

Critic: You're scratching your ear again.

You: That's true.

Critic: And you quickly pulled your hand away when I pointed it out.

You: I did, didn't I.

Critic: And my pointing it out made you nervous again.

You: I guess you're right.

Critic: You're hopeless.

You: You may be right.

Critic: And what kind of hair style is that you have? It looks like one of those worn by those dirty hippies.

You: It does, doesn't it.

Critic: And it looks just as dirty, too.

You: That's true. It could be much cleaner, couldn't it?

Critic: You probably would like to live like them; never having to wash and rolling in sex.

You: You could be right. Maybe I should think about that!

Critic: And you probably would enjoy all the sexual perversions they perform!

You: That's a point. You may just be right there!

Critic: Now that I think of it, you seem like the type that wouldn't have to join a band of hippies to be taught sexual perversions. You probably know about them already.

You: That's true. I've made a lifelong study of sex.

Critic: Yes, but I can see from your sneaky, beady eyes that you have already put some of them into practice.

You: (By this time grinning from ear to ear) You may be right.

Critic: You shouldn't grin when you are told what's good for you.

You: That's true, I shouldn't.

Critic: All you do is agree with me.

You: You're right.

Critic: You sound like a yes-man with no spine or personality of his own.

You: I do sound like that, don't I?

Critic: You don't sound like one, you are a yes-man!

You: You may be right.

Critic: You're doing it again.

You: That's true, I am.

Critic: I don't think you can say anything but "Yes" to someone!

You: I can certainly see why you think that.

Critic: Well, can you say "No" and mean it?

You: Perhaps.

Critic: Don't you know?

You: We'll have to see won't we?

Credit: Manuel J. Smith, When I Say No I Feel Guilty, Chapter 6.

PRACTICE EXERCISE USING "FOGGING" AND BROKEN RECORD

Setting: You purchased your first pair of leather boots specially to wear to several parties during the holiday season. Midway through the first party, the heel on the left boot fell off. This defect infuriated you at the time and prompted you to vow that you were going to get back the money that you paid for this shoddy merchandise.

Clerk: Can I help you?

You: Perhaps, but I'd prefer to speak to the manager of the shoe department. (FOGGING)

Clerk: He's busy right at the moment. Do you have a complaint?

You: I'm sure he is busy, but I'd still like to speak to him. (FOGGING AND BROKEN RECORD)

Clerk: (Silent for a moment) Let me see if I can get him for you.

You: Good, I'd like to see him. (BROKEN RECORD) (Clerk disappears into doorway behind counter for a few minutes and then reappears and speaks to you.)

Clerk: He will be with you in just a minute.

You: (Looking at your watch) Thank you. (Five minutes pass. You approach the clerk again and speak to her)

You: What is the manager's name?

Clerk: (looking distressed) Oh! He's Mr. Simon.

You: I would like you to tell Mr. Simon that I still want to speak to him. If he will not see me now, I want to know when he will see me or when I can see his supervisor. (BROKEN RECORD AND WORKABLE COMPROMISE)

Clerk: (Quickly disappears into room behind counter. She reappears a few moments later followed by Mr. Simon. Mr. Simon walks up to you and speaks.)

Manager: (Smiling) What can I do for you?

You: (Showing manager defective boots) I want a refund on these boots I bought from you last week. They are defective. The heel fell off the first time I wore them.

Manager: (Examining boots) Umm. . .This has never happened before to any of this line of boots. (Possibly implying: "What did you do to them?")

You: I'm sure that this has never happened before, but it has happened now so I'm really not interested in the other boots you sold. I am only concerned about this pair and I want my money refunded. (FOGGING, SELF-DISCLOSURE AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: (Putting boots back in bag) Well, we like to see if we can fix anything defective before we make a refund. Let me send these to our repairman and we'll see what he can do.

You: I'm sure that you would like to see if you can fix them before refunding my money, but I'm not interested in getting them fixed. I want my money back. (FOGGING, SELF-DISCLOSURE AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: It's not our policy to accept damaged merchandise for a refund.

You: I'm sure that is your policy, but these boots are unacceptable and I want a refund on my account. (FOGGING AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: (Looking curiously at you) You say you just wore them once?

You: Yes, and I want a refund. (BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: Were you dancing in them?

You: I don't understand. What is it about dancing that is bad for these boots? (NEGATIVE INQUIRY)

Manager: Well, some people mistreat boots when they are dancing.

You: I'm sure that's true, but are these boots constructed so poorly that they shouldn't be danced in? (FOGGING AND NEGATIVE INQUIRY)

Manager: No. . .You should be able to dance in them.

You: I'm very glad you told me that. It convinces me that this is shoddy merchandise. I want a refund. (SELF-DISCLOSURE AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: I'm sure we can get them fixed perfectly for you.

You: I'm sure you feel that way, but when I pay this much money for merchandise and it is defective, it is totally unacceptable to me. I want a full refund to my account. (FOGGING, SELF-DISCLOSURE AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: Well, let me see what I can do. (He walks away. You look at your watch, and then look around you. Behind you is another woman holding a pair of boots with one seam torn and an elderly woman in a sable coat sitting a few feet to one side. Noting that both women are paying attention to your confrontation with the manager, you begin to feel a little sheepish and embarrassed. This feeling is quickly dispelled when the older woman in the fur coat leans forward and says softly: "Stick to your guns, dear. Don't let him get away with it." After a few minutes, the manager reappears and walks up to you and speaks to you.)

Manager: I realize this is inconvenient to you, but I just spoke to our repairman. His shop is in the Wilshire district. If you take them to him now he can repair them immediately. This would save you a wait of a week if we sent them down.

You: I can see that, but I am totally uninterested in having these boots repaired. I will only accept a full refund on my account. (FOGGING, SELF-DISCLOSURE, AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: But we can't make a refund. The manufacturer won't allow us to make a refund that way.

You: I'm sure the manufacturer won't allow a refund. But I'm not interested in whether or not the manufacturer makes a refund. I want you to make the refund. (FOGGING, SELF-DISCLOSURE, AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: But that's the problem. If the manufacturer won't reimburse us I can't give you a refund.

You: I'm sure you do have a problem with the manufacturer. But that's your problem, not mine. I am not interested in your problems with the factory. I am only interested in you making a total refund. (FOGGING, SELF-DISCLOSURE, AND BROKEN RECORD)

Manager: I cannot make a refund. I don't have the authority.

You: I believe you, so I would like the name of your superior who can make a refund. (FOGGING AND WORKABLE COMPROMISE)

Manager: (Silent)

You: Will you give me his name or shall I get it from somebody else? (WORKABLE COMPROMISE)

Manager: Let me see what I can do. (The manager disappears into the stockroom behind the counter for a minute, reappears, and speaks to you.)

Manager: We don't do this as a regular procedure, but if you will give me your sales slip, I will send a refund voucher for the boots up to Accounting.

You: Thank you. (Turns and smiles to the young woman behind her holding another pair of defective boots.)

GUIDELINES FOR GIVING FEEDBACK

1. Start off with the strengths of the person's performance. Specify exactly which behaviors were positive.

Verbal Behaviors

- a. Was the statement direct and to the point?
- b. Was the statement firm but not hostile?
- c. Did the statement show some consideration, respect, or recognition of the other person?
- d. Did the statement accurately reflect the speaker's goals?
- e. Did the statement leave room for escalation?
- f. If the statement includes an explanation, was it short rather than a series of excuses?
- g. Did the statement include sarcasm, pleading, or whining?
- h. Did the statement blame the other person for the speaker's feelings?

Nonverbal Behaviors

- a. Was eye contact present?
 - b. Was the statement filled with pause?
 - c. Did the speaker look confident or were nervous gestures or inappropriate laughter present?
 - d. Was the statement flat or expressive?
-
2. After all positive feedback has been given, specify exactly which nonverbal and verbal behaviors needed improvement.
 - a. Describe the behavior rather than give a label. Be objective rather than judgmental.
 - b. Offer a possible way of improvement, a concrete suggestion. The positive suggestion should be expressed in a tentative rather than absolute manner. Do not impose a suggestion.
 - c. Ask the person for their reaction to the suggestions. Give them room to accept, refuse, or modify the suggestion.

NOTE: Stick to the basic assertive problem and do not get involved with long and complex descriptions of the history of the problem or the anticipated negative reactions of the other person.

Taken from a workshop done by Patricia Jakubowski, University of Missouri-St. Louis

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

Between-Session Practice Report

NAME:

DATE:

DESCRIBE THE SITUATION IN WHICH YOU WERE ASSERTIVE:DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SAID AND/OR DID:DESCRIBE HOW THE OTHER PERSON RESPONDED TO YOUR ASSERTIVENESS:DESCRIBE HOW YOU FELT DURING THE INTERACTION:DESCRIBE HOW YOU FELT AFTER THE INTERACTION:

Rate this situation in regard to the following:

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY FOR YOU:

Easy	1	2	3	4	5	Difficult
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DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP:

Impersonal	1	2	3	4	5	Personal
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DEGREE OF SUCCESS:

Little	1	2	3	4	5	Great
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Session VI

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT

The following questions will help assess your assertiveness. Circle the number that best describes you. Key: 1 means never; 2 means rarely; 3 means sometimes; 4 means usually and 5 means always. Be honest in your responses.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I do my own thinking and make my own decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | I can be myself around wealthy, educated or prestigious people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I am poised and confident among strangers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | I freely express my emotions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | I am friendly and considerate toward others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | I accept compliments and gifts without embarrassment or a sense of obligation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | I freely express my admiration of others' ideas and achievement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | I readily admit my mistakes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | I accept responsibility for my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | I make decisions and accept the consequences. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | I take the initiative in personal contacts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | When I have done something well, I tell others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | I am confident going for job interviews. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | When I need help, I ask others to help me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | When at fault, I apologize. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | When I like someone very much, I tell them so. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | When confused, I ask for clarification. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | When someone is annoying me, I ask that person to stop. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | When someone cuts in front of me in line, I protest. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

20. When treated unfairly, I object. 1 2 3 4 5
21. When I am underpaid, I ask for a salary increase. 1 2 3 4 5
22. When I am lonely or depressed, I take action to improve my mental outlook. 1 2 3 4 5
23. When working at a job or task I dislike intensely, I look for ways to improve my situation. 1 2 3 4 5
24. I complain to the management when I have been overcharged or have received poor service. 1 2 3 4 5
25. If something in my house or apartment malfunctions, I see that the landlord repairs it. 1 2 3 4 5
26. If I am disturbed by someone smoking, I say so. 1 2 3 4 5
27. If a friend betrays my confidence, I tell that person how I feel. 1 2 3 4 5
28. I ask my doctor all of the questions I want answers for. 1 2 3 4 5
29. I ask for directions when I need help finding my way. 1 2 3 4 5
30. I maintain a relationship when there are problems rather than cutting it off. 1 2 3 4 5
31. I communicate my belief that everyone in the home should help with the upkeep rather than doing it all myself. 1 2 3 4 5
32. I make sexual advances toward my spouse or lover. 1 2 3 4 5
33. When served food at a restaurant that is not prepared the way I ordered it, I express my dissatisfaction to the food server. 1 2 3 4 5
34. Even though a clerk goes to a great deal of trouble showing merchandise to me, I am able to say "no" if I do not really want to purchase the merchandise. 1 2 3 4 5

35. If I discover that I have purchased defective merchandise, I return it to the store. 1 2 3 4 5
36. When people talk too loud in a theater, lecture, or concert, I am able to ask them to be quiet. 1 2 3 4 5
37. I maintain good eye contact in conversations. 1 2 3 4 5
38. I would sit in the front of a large group when the only remaining seats are located there. 1 2 3 4 5
39. I would speak to my neighbors when their dog is keeping me awake with its barking at night. 1 2 3 4 5
40. When interrupted, I comment on the interruption and then finish what I was saying. 1 2 3 4 5
41. When a friend or spouse makes plans for me without my knowledge or consent, I object. 1 2 3 4 5
42. If I miss someone, I express the fact that I want to spend more time with that person. 1 2 3 4 5
43. If a person asks me to loan something and I really don't want to, I refuse. 1 2 3 4 5
44. If a friend invites me to join him or her and I really don't want to, I turn down the request. 1 2 3 4 5
45. When friends call and talk too long on the phone, I can terminate the conversations effectively. 1 2 3 4 5
46. When someone criticizes me, I listen to the criticism without being defensive. 1 2 3 4 5
47. When people are discussing a subject and I disagree with their points of view, I express my difference of opinion. 1 2 3 4 5
48. When someone makes demands on me that I don't wish to fulfill, I resist the demands. 1 2 3 4 5
49. I speak up readily in group situations. 1 2 3 4 5

50. I tell my children the things I like about them. 1 2 3 4 5
51. When my children make endless demands on my time and energy, I establish some firm notions about the amount of time I am willing to give. 1 2 3 4 5
52. When my spouse/roommate calls to tell me he/she is bringing home an unexpected guest for dinner and I am very tired, I level with him/her about my feelings and request that alternative plans be made. 1 2 3 4 5
53. When one friend is not meeting all of my needs, I establish meaningful ties with other people. 1 2 3 4 5
54. When my own parents or in-laws freely give advice, I handle the situation effectively. 1 2 3 4 5
55. When someone completes a task or job for me with which I am dissatisfied, I ask that it be done correctly. 1 2 3 4 5
56. If I object to political practices, I take action rather than blaming politicians. 1 2 3 4 5
57. If I am jealous, I explore the reasons for my feelings and look for ways to increase my self-confidence and self-esteem. 1 2 3 4 5
58. If someone tells me they envy me, I accept their comments without feeling guilty or apologizing. 1 2 3 4 5
59. When I am feeling insecure, I assess my personal strengths and then take action designed to make me feel more secure. 1 2 3 4 5
60. I accept my spouse's or lover's interests in other people without feeling I must compete with them for his/her attention. 1 2 3 4 5

