INTRODUCTION

In life one faces many situations. The modalities of dealing with them vary with individuals. Some people like to deal with a problem, issue, conflict or a situation in an aggressive way, some want to evade it and some have the courage to face and confront it.

Smith (1975) said, "not only is it natural to expect that we will have problems in living, it is also natural to expect that we all have the ability to cope with these problems."

If human beings did not, inherently, have the ability to cope with their problems then the human species would have found it difficult to survive let alone flourish. According to Smith (1975), "Fighting and running away from danger are the responses inherited from our prehuman ancestors. Verbally communicating with one another and working out our problems/in an assertive manner instead of fighting or running away is that part of our evolutional inheritance passed down from our early human ancestors. In short, you have the human option to talk with others and in that way to cope with what is bothering you."

When we try and cope with conflicts by aggression or flight, we soon realise the futility of our actions as there is very little external pay-off in acting out these feelings. The key to coping with our problems is ASSERTIVENESS.
Historical Background of Assertion

Assertive training has its roots in the Pavlovian model of learning behaviour. Pavlov (1927) found that behaviour (salivation) demonstrated in the presence of one stimulus (food) could be elicited by another stimulus (bell) if the second was repeatedly paired with the first stimulus. Ultimately, the sound of the bell caused the dog to salivate. This new learned reflex was called the conditioned reflex. Fensterheim and Baer (1975) said that translated to everyday life, what Pavlov meant by conditioned reflex was that as life’s situations change, we must learn to change with them. Pavlov also used the concepts of excitation and inhibition wherein, "Excitation is the brain process, which heightens new activity and facilitates the formation of new conditioned responses. Inhibition is a dampening process, which decreases activity and new learning" (Fensterheim and Baer, 1975).

This perspective was further refined in the works of Andrew Salter (1949), Joseph Wolpe (1958), and Arnold Lazarus (1966) who developed various concepts of assertiveness training which leaned heavily on Pavlovian learning theories.

Salter (1949), in his book Conditioned Reflex Therapy, presented in-depth procedures for increasing "excitatory" behaviour and decreasing "inhibitory"
behavior. Present assertiveness training has its roots in Andrew Salter's excitatory model. He maintained that excess of excitation produced people who were emotionally stable and capable of meeting life on their own terms. An excess of inhibition produced confused people who were unable to express their emotions properly. For psychological well-being it is important to strike a balance between the excitatory and inhibitory processes in the brain.

"Disinhibition, in the Salter - as - derived from - Pavlovian model, involves a relearning process directed toward deliberate excitatory behaviour. Repeated excitatory actions result in increased freedom and awareness of excitatory feelings and a corresponding decrease in inhibitory actions and feelings. Thus Salter's behavior change procedures (using now common assertiveness training methods of exhortation, behavior rehearsal, relaxation and suggestion) lead to change in neural activity (per Pavlov's notion that excitation is a function of neural connections in the brain) which develops a new freedom of thought, feeling and further behaviour change" (cf Kelley, 1979, p.286).

Joseph Wolpe (1958) was the first to use the term assertive while talking of interpersonal behaviour. He invoked the principle of reciprocal inhibition wherein he stated that "the organism can unlearn anxiety through the pairing of anxiety-evoking stimuli with anxiety-inhibiting
responses. Both Wolpe (1973) and Salter (1949) proposed a model of unassertive behaviour which presumed that a person had the required skills but conditioned anxiety in assertive situations inhibited assertive responding.

Lazarus (1966) advocated "emotional freedom" a term in which he included, "all forms of affective thoughts, feelings, and behaviour." Assertive behaviour, in Lazarus’s view, referred to that part of "emotional freedom" where one learnt to stand up for one’s rights. (cf Kelley, 1979, p.287).

Alberti and Emmons (1974) depended heavily on Wolpe’s concepts of behaviour while drawing their behavioural humanistic approach for helping people to secure their "perfect rights".

Concept Of Assertion

A number of definitions have been offered by different authors of assertive behaviour. According to Webster’s Third International Dictionary, the verb "Assert" means "to state or affirm positively, assuredly, plainly or strongly".

Wolpe (1969) defined assertive behaviour as "the proper expression of any emotion other than anxiety towards another person."
Alberti and Emmons (1974) defined assertion as, "behaviour which enables a person to act in his own best interests" (p.2).

Rich and Schroeder (1976) gave a more precise and functional definition when they said, "assertiveness can be measured by the degree to which the behaviour is effective in producing, maintaining or enhancing reinforcement."

Fiedler and Beach (1978), defined assertiveness as "refusal to comply with an unreasonable request".

Kelley (1979) gave a more comprehensive definition when she said, "assertion involves self-expression and respecting the rights of others and oneself in any situation. It follows that an assertive response is also honest and appropriate to the culture, the situation and the other people involved".

Assertiveness is simply the behaviour based on valuing yourself enough to insist on getting what you want and need by using reasonable and fair means -- Porat and Quackenbush, 1979 (cf Kelley 1979, p.40).

According to Sundel and Sundel (1980), "being assertive means being able to express your feelings, stand up for your rights and those of others, and state your opinions without abusing or taking advantage of others. It does not mean being selfish, aggressive or belligerent."
According to Rathus and Nevid (1980), "Assertive behaviour involves the expression of your genuine feelings, standing up for your legitimate rights, and refusing the unreasonable requests of others. It also involves withstanding undue social influences, such as pressures to conform and to obey authority figures."

Caminada, (1986), described assertive behaviour as the effective expression of one's own rights without fear and without violating the rights of others.

Byrum (1988), defined assertiveness as "the ability to express oneself honestly without denying the rights of others."

The common thread which runs through all the definitions is that assertive behaviour does not involve hurting others. It only involves standing up for one's own rights and showing respect towards one's own self and respecting the rights of others. An assertive person has courage of convictions and integrity to own them.

The Three Response Styles

Assertive behaviour is very different from aggressive or unassertive behaviour. Rathus and Nevid (1980) have given a comprehensive and clearcut differentiation between assertive behaviour, unassertive behaviour and aggressive behaviour which is as follows: "assertive behaviour involves the expression of your genuine
feelings, standing up for your legitimate rights and refusing the unreasonable requests of others.

Alternatives to assertive behaviour include non-assertive (submissive) behaviour and aggressive behaviour. When we are submissive our self-esteem plummets. Sometimes failure to express our feelings can lead to smouldering resentments which may eventually catch fire and lead to inappropriate shortlived outbursts. Self-condemnation resulting from outbursts then further lowers our self-esteem. Aggressive behaviour includes physical and verbal assaults, threats, insults and belittling. We sometimes get our way by inducing fear when we act aggressively, but too often we foster the justified condemnation of others. And most of us know when we have been bullies; we are then disapproving of our own behaviour, also contributing to lowered self-esteem" p.315.

Jakubowski-Spector (1973) suggested that "assertiveness elicits respect from others while aggressiveness elicits responses of anger, hurt and humiliation. Non-assertiveness is said to produce irritation, disgust and pity from others."

Alberti and Emmons (1974) felt that every individual has the freedom to "choose for himself" how he will act in any given circumstance. If his "polite restraint" response is too well developed, he may be unable to make the choice as he would like to. If his aggressive response is over-developed, he may be unable to achieve his
own goals without hurting others. This freedom of choice and exercise of self-control is made possible by the development of assertive responses for situations which would have previously produced anxiety based non-assertive or aggressive behaviour. They further clarified the difference between aggressive, assertive and non-assertive behaviour with the help of the following table:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-assertive Behaviour</th>
<th>Aggressive Behaviour</th>
<th>Assertive Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-denying</td>
<td>Self-enhancing at expense of another</td>
<td>Self-enhancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhibited</td>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td>Expressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurt, anxious</td>
<td>Depreciates others</td>
<td>Feels good about himself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows others to choose for him</td>
<td>Chooses for others</td>
<td>Chooses for self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not achieve desired goal</td>
<td>Achieves desired goal by hurting others</td>
<td>May achieve desired goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**As acted upon**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guilty or angry</th>
<th>Self-denying</th>
<th>Self-enhancing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depreciates actor</td>
<td>Hurt, defensive, humiliated</td>
<td>Expressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieves desired goal at actor's expense</td>
<td>Does not achieve desired goal</td>
<td>May achieve desired goal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A look at the comparative table shows that "in the case of a non-assertive response in a given situation, the actor is typically denied himself, and is inhibited from expressing his or her actual feelings. He often feels hurt at his inadequate behaviour ...." In aggressive behaviour he "accomplishes his ends usually at the expense of others..., he usually hurts others in the process by making choices for them and minimising their worth as persons... In contrast, appropriately assertive behaviour in the same situation would be self-enhancing for the actor and an honest expression of his feelings" (Alberti and Emmons, 1974).

They further said that "when the consequences of these three contrasting behaviours are viewed from the perspectives of the person "acted upon" (i.e. the individual towards whom the behaviour is directed) a parallel pattern emerges. Non-assertive behaviour often produces feelings ranging from sympathy to outright contempt toward the actor.. In contrast, a transaction involving assertion enhances feelings of self-worth and permits full expression of self."

Sundel and Sundel (1980) gave the following figure to illustrate the range of under assertive, assertive and over-assertive behaviour.
Under assertive Assertive Over assertive

Passive --------- > Active < ------- Aggressive
Submissive --------- > Direct < ------- Hostile
Meek --------- > Self-confident < -- Arrogant


Sundel and Sundel (1980) explained the table thus; "Assertive behaviour falls in the middle region of a continuum ranging from underassertive behaviour at one extreme to over assertive behaviour at the other extreme (see Fig.). Underassertive individuals are typically described as meek, passive or easily manipulated; Overassertive people seem aggressive, hostile or arrogant. Assertive behaviour is described as active, direct and self-confident".

Byrum (1988) gave a four-fold table to illustrate the contrast between Passive, Aggressive, Passive-aggressive and Assertive styles of behaviour. The non-verbal and verbal cues of assertion, non-assertion and aggression have also been upheld by Kelley (1976) in a similar model. Byrum’s (1988) table was as given on the following page:
### Introduction 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Aggressive</th>
<th>Passive-aggressive</th>
<th>Assertive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Rights</td>
<td>Gives up own</td>
<td>Usurps others</td>
<td>Sneaks to usurp others</td>
<td>Maintains own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphor</td>
<td>Doormat</td>
<td>Steam-roller</td>
<td>Doormat with spikes</td>
<td>Pillar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal behaviour</td>
<td>Qualifies, apologises</td>
<td>Blames, Accuses</td>
<td>Uses sarcasm indirect put downs</td>
<td>Speaks mind openly directly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbal behaviour</td>
<td>Averted gaze, soft voice, draws back</td>
<td>Stares, loud voice, invades space</td>
<td>Sideways glance, sarcastic tone shifts</td>
<td>Direct gaze varied voice balanced stance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Fight</td>
<td>Hit and Run</td>
<td>Engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source**: The 1988 Annual: Developing Human Resources Edited by Pfeiffer J.W. San Diego, CA: University Associates

### Situational And General Non-Assertiveness

There were two concepts associated with unassertiveness which were useful in developing more adaptive responses to life situations.

In the first category came situational non-assertiveness - a term used to refer to those people who typically behaved in an adequate and self-enhancing manner but for whom certain situations generated a great deal of anxiety which prevented them from responding adequately to that particular situation.
The second category of generalized non-assertiveness referred to those people who typically behaved in an unassertive manner.

"The generally non-assertive person, therefore, is one who finds his own self-esteem very low, and for whom very uncomfortable anxiety is generated in nearly all social situations. His feelings of inadequacy, his lack of acknowledgement of his own self-worth, and his physical discomfort brought on by generalized anxiety may call for in-depth treatment...... The situational non-assertor may readily recognize his problem and without too much preparation or prompting, successfully initiate assertion. He also has a tendency to recognize ways in his life to assert himself with others spontaneously without being specifically instructed to do so." Alberti and Emmons, 1974). According to Kelley, (1979) "situational non-assertion or aggression means that the response is not part of an overriding pattern (generalized nonassertion or aggression) but occurs only in certain types of situations. It is not the result of a deep emotional problem, and basic interpersonal skills are not lacking".

Fiedler and Beach (1978) found that in deciding how to behave people weighed the consequences of being assertive. Also, those who chose to respond assertively did so as they feel there was a higher probability that bad
consequences would occur rather than their evaluation of how
good or how bad those consequences would be.

Kolotkin and Wielkiewicz (1985) concluded that
assertive performance is strongly influenced by situational
and cognitive variables.

Lobel, Kashtan and Gilat (1988) found that "both
situational and dispositional factors contribute to
determining assertiveness of behaviour."

Zane et al. (1991) found that the differences in
assertion among Asians and Caucasians were situationally
specific with greater differences occurring in interactions
with strangers.

Affect Of Socialization On The Development Of Assertive
Behaviour

The socialization process had a profound affect on
development of assertive behaviour. Kelley (1979, p.121)
pointed out that "many counter productive or erroneous
beliefs are reinforced by society." Alberti and Emmons
(1974, p.6) said, "the institution of society has so
carefully taught the inhibition of expression of even one's
reasonable rights that one may feel badly for having stood
up for himself."

How socialization messages may negatively affect
assertion could be seen from the following table given by
### How Socialization Messages May Negatively Affect Assertion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialization Message</th>
<th>Effect on Rights</th>
<th>Effects on Assertive Behavior</th>
<th>Healthy Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think of others first; give to others even if you're hurting. Don't be selfish.</td>
<td>I have no right to place my needs above those of other people.</td>
<td>When I have a conflict with someone else, I will give in and satisfy the other person's needs and forget about my own.</td>
<td>To be selfish means that a person always places her/his needs above other people's. This is undesirable human behaviour. All healthy people have needs and strive to fulfill these as much as possible. Your needs are as important as other people's. When there is a conflict over need satisfaction, compromise is a useful way to handle the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be modest and humble. Don't act superior to other people.</td>
<td>I have no right to do anything which would imply that I am better than other people.</td>
<td>I will discount my accomplishments and any compliments I receive. When I'm in a meeting, I will encourage other people's contributions and keep silent about my own. When I have an opinion which is different than someone else's, I won't express it; who am I to say that my opinion is better than another's.</td>
<td>It is undesirable to build yourself up at the expense of another person. However, you have as much a right as other people to show your abilities and take pride in yourself. It is healthy to enjoy one's accomplishments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be understanding and overlook trivial irritations. Don't be a bitch and complain.</td>
<td>I have no right to express anger or even feel anger.</td>
<td>When I'm in a line and someone cuts in front of me, I will say nothing. I will not tell my boyfriend that I don't like his constantly interrupting me when I speak.</td>
<td>It is undesirable to deliberately nitpick. However, life is made up of trivial incidents and it is normal to be occasionally irritated by seemingly small events. You have a right to your angry feelings, and if you express them at the time they occur, your feelings won't build up and explode. It is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Help other people. Don't be demanding. I have no right to make requests of other people. I will not ask my friend to reciprocate babysitting favors. I will not ask for a pay increase from my employer.

Be sensitive to other people's feelings. Don't hurt other people. I have no right to do anything which might hurt someone else's feelings or deflate someone else's ego. I will not say what I really think or feel because that might hurt someone else. I will inhibit my spontaneity so that I don't impulsively say something that would accidentally hurt someone else.

It is undesirable to incessantly make demands on others. You do have a right to ask someone else to change their behavior if their behavior affects your life in a concrete way. A request is not the same as a demand. However, if your rights are being violated and your requests for a change are being ignored, you have a right to make demands.

It is undesirable to deliberately try to hurt others. However, it is impossible as well as undesirable to try to govern your life so as to never hurt anyone. You have a right to express your thoughts and feelings even if someone else's feelings occasionally get hurt. To do otherwise would result in your being phony and in denying other people an opportunity to learn how to handle their own feelings. Remember that some people get hurt because they're unreasonably sensitive and others use their hurt to manipulate you. If you accidentally hurt someone else, you can generally repair the damage.

Characteristics Of Assertive Behaviour

Different behaviour therapists have given their own description of the characteristics of assertive behaviour.

Fensterheim and Baer (1975) listed the following characteristics of a truly assertive person:
1. He feels free to reveal himself.
2. He can communicate with people on all levels—with strangers, friends, family.
3. He has an active orientation to life.
4. He acts in a way he himself respects.

Fensterheim and Baer (1975) have also given the concept of the NEUROTIC SPIRAL which is as follows:

- Inadequate thoughts
- Self doubts
- Disturbed Feelings
- Inadequate actions
- Self Doubts
- Disturbed feelings

By demonstrating the whirlpool effect of the neurotic spiral they have attempted to enumerate the characteristics of an unassertive person as follows:

1. Constantly placates others.
2. Allows others to manipulate him.
3. Cannot express his legitimate wishes.
4. Feels the rights of others are more important than his own.
5. Is self-conscious before superiors.
7. Often feels miserable but does not know the reason.
8. Feels people push him around.
9. Feels lonely due to inability to form close relationships.
10. Feels inferior.

Bloom, Coburn and Pearlman (1975, p.138) have illustrated the circular dynamics of assertion in the following diagram:

A similar diagram has also been given by Fensterheim and Baer (1975, p.31)
Kelley (1979) gave the following characteristics of assertiveness:

1. Assertiveness is a characteristic of behaviour, not of persons;
2. Assertiveness is a person-and-situation specific not a universal, characteristic;
3. Assertiveness must be viewed in the cultural context of the individual, as well as in terms of other situational variables;
4. Assertiveness is predicted upon the ability of the individual to freely choose his/her actions,
5. Assertiveness is a characteristic of socially effective, non-hurtful behaviour.

Byrum (1988) characterised an assertive person with:

1. Feeling better about himself.
2. Getting more cooperation.
3. Being in a position to help team effort.
4. Not being under much stress.
5. Being honest.
6. People knowing where he stands.
7. Being able to show others that he cares about them.
Rights

The assertive training movement gained impetus with "the explicit recognition and definition of assertive behaviour as a right" (Rakos, 1979). He further defined rights as "behaviour for which systematic external controlling consequences are absent in certain situations." Hollandsworth (1977) opined that assertion, which is a legitimate power, is concerned with norms, values and "the socially defined rights of the individual." Many clinicians use rights to differentiate between assertion and aggression. In assertion, not only does the person respect his own rights, he respects and acknowledges other people's rights and does not try to brazenly violate them (Alberti and Emmons, 1974; Fensterheim and Baer, 1975 Lange and Jakubowski, 1976).

The issue of assertive rights had been handled differently by different psychologists. Lazarus said, "assertive behaviour emerges as that aspect of "emotional freedom" that concerns standing up for your rights. This involved:

1) Knowing your rights.
2) Doing something about it.
3) Doing this within the framework of striving for emotional freedom" (cf. Fensterheim and Baer, 1975).

Failure to stand up for his rights made a person feel uncomfortable and, sometimes, his craving for freedom may result in sudden and inappropriate outbursts of emotion.
Fensterheim and Baer (1975) felt that "assertive rights must always be based on the personal situation, the persons in the situation, and the possible consequences; but you always had five basic rights.
1. You have the right to do anything as long as it does not hurt someone else.
2. You have the right to maintain your dignity by being properly assertive.
3. You always have the right to make a request of another person as long as you realize that the other person has the right to say "no".
4. You must realize that there are certain borderline cases in interpersonal situations where the rights are not clear. But you always have the right to discuss the problem with the person involved, and so clarify it.
5. You have the right to attain your rights.

Kelley (1979) held, since human activities were varied, it is possible to have many rights. Basic human rights could be expressed in a number of ways but those chiefly concerned with assertion are :-
1. The right to be left alone.
2. The right to be independent.
3. The right to be successful.
4. The right to be listened to and taken seriously.
5. The right to get what one pays for.
6. The right to have rights i.e to act in an assertive manner.

7. The right to refuse requests without feeling guilty or selfish.

8. The right to ask for what you want.

9. The right to make mistakes and to be responsible for them.

10. The right to choose not to assert yourself.

Kelley (1979) said that once the rights had been recognised, a power base had to be identified and developed with regard to exercising each right. This was succinctly explained with the help of the following figure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some Rights</th>
<th>Some Powers of Others</th>
<th>Others' Powers Checked By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right to have and express one's own</td>
<td>To physically gag or restrain a person from speaking</td>
<td>Existing laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feelings and opinions</td>
<td>To make laws against freedom of speech</td>
<td>Desire for equal treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Belief in the right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to be left alone</td>
<td>To physically invade a person's privacy</td>
<td>Existing laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To hassle the person</td>
<td>Assertor's ability to move elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assertor's refusal to join others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Desire for equal treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to be listened to and taken</td>
<td>To refuse to listen, laugh, or disregard one's comments</td>
<td>Authority figures who enforce right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seriously</td>
<td>To leave</td>
<td>Desire for equal treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assertor's direct power to deny same right</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LOW Belief + Co-operation from others.

An Assertor's Power Continuum.
"The right may be based on a potential ability one has as a human being and need only be given the freedom to use, or it may be based solely on a humanistic assertion belief system, in which case others must co-operate to give this right. Or the right may be supported by law or other legitimate backing (in a family, parents, in an office, the boss). The power-bases of rights are not always clear-cut but generally can be placed on a continuum from high (belief in the right with attendant power to act on the belief) to low (belief in the right with the need for co-operation from others)" (Kelley, 1979).

Rathus and Nevid (1980) gave a contemporary woman’s bill of rights which was as follows:
1. The right to express your genuine needs and feelings.
2. The right to assert yourself in the business world.
3. The right to handle money.
4. The right to complain if others are being insensitive to your needs.
5. The right to negotiate household chores.
6. The right to negotiate child-rearing chores.
7. The right to ask for more information to make decisions.
8. The right to ask for more time to make decisions.
9. The right to say ‘No’.
10. The right to say ‘Yes’.
Byrum (1988) listed the following rights of assertiveness:

1. To express thoughts and feelings.
2. To have thoughts, rights and feelings respected.
3. To be listened to and taken seriously.
4. To ask for what one wants.
5. To make mistakes.
6. To ask for information.
7. To say "no".
8. To make a decision on one's own terms.
9. To not feel guilty.
10. To choose not to be assertive.

Responsibilities And Obligations

Psychologists agreed that implicit responsibilities or obligations existed in the exercise of one's rights. A description of an individual's legitimate rights and also the recognition of other people's rights implied "that other behaviours—namely obligations—are functionally related to the emission of rights behaviour." (Rakos, 1979). Also, "since rights in society are contingent upon emission of obligations, simply defining the rights is insufficient to define socially appropriate behaviour." He further said that "assertive behaviour involves (1) the emission of rights (expressive) behaviour ...(2) the emission of functionally
related antecedent and subsequent obligation behaviour." The antecedent obligations included:

1. Engaging in sufficient overt and covert behaviour to determine the rights of all participants;
2. Developing appropriate verbal and non verbal behaviours with which to influence the other person's offending behaviour, but not the evaluation of his worth;
3. Considering the potential negative consequences to other people of expressive behaviour (Rakos, 1979).

There were other obligations which followed the emission of rights behaviour. Rakos (1979) said "a person must emit behaviour which:

1. provides brief, honest explanations for acting expressively when it may be helpful to the other person.
2. minimizes hurt, anger, and unhappiness in the other person by providing alternate interpretations of expressive behaviour.
3. protects the other person's rights if that person cannot; and
4. seeks mutually acceptable compromise when legitimate rights conflict."

A number of other investigators agreed that responsibilities were implied in the exercise of one's rights (e.g. Kelley, 1979; Back, 1982; Chenevert, 1983).
Jakubowski-Spector (1973) offered a comparative table of rights, limitations and responsibilities which was as given below.

Comparison of Rights, Limitations and Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERPERSONAL RIGHTS</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have a right to use your own judgement to decide whether another person's request is reasonable. You have a right to deny the request without feeling guilty. You have these rights even if the other person (a) badly wants you to grant this request, (b) is an authority figure, or (c) has &quot;emotional problems&quot;.</td>
<td>It is unclear whether you have the right to change your mind midstream about fulfilling commitments you've made.</td>
<td>You may have the responsibility to fulfill the commitment if the other person will be seriously inconvenienced by your changing your mind.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You have a right to tell someone else what your needs are even if the other person (a) feels that your needs are illogical or unwarranted (b) doesn't want to hear about your needs, (c) feels hurt or upset about your needs, or (d) if you feel that you "ought" not to have these needs |

It is unclear whether you have the right to always demand that the other person fulfill your needs once you've expressed them. It may depend on the nature of your relationship with that person (whether a friend, lover, acquaintance) how often you make the demands, etc. |

You may have the responsibility not to take advantage of someone else's willingness to take care of your emotional needs. You may have the responsibility to be sensitive to another's needs without letting this sensitivity cow you into being a martyr. |


As can be seen, any discussion of assertive behaviour would be incomplete without impressing upon the rights and obligations which are implied in learning and
maintaining assertive skills. As Rakos (1979) said, "In society—the "natural environment" — rights do not exist independently of the obligations: if the antecedent obligations are not emitted, the emission of rights behaviour in controlled."

Conclusion

In the end, it could be emphasised that assertion was not to be confused with aggression or manipulation. "Assertion in its original sense ...... is based on humanistic values" (Kelley, 1979, p. 1). It was a skill which can be learned, modified and developed through experience and practice. "Although a person can formulate an assertive, verbal, non verbal, and cognitive response on the spot, confidence must be built up over time. "Kelley, 1979 p. 5. If a person did not believe in his own worth it was near impossible for him to believe he had rights and to act in an appropriate manner. His lack of self confidence tended to make him act in a non-assertive or aggressive manner.

Thus, "identifying one’s basic human rights and those of others" and also developing "core assertion skills" formed the basis of training to be assertive (Kelley, 1979, p.5).