



Four Different Techniques To Deal With Life

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Frequently I help clients to learn about four different ways of approaching life and how each of these either helps the individual or slows their progress. Following are summaries of each of these.

1. **PASSIVE** - Imagine that your life is like a football field. There aren't any boundaries to protect the turf which takes a beating as players and fans run onto it after the game. Those individuals who are passive, usually either don't know their personal needs or don't have skills to ensure that they are met. They allow other people to run all over them and tend to feel good about themselves only when there is peace in their environment or other people are happy. A low self-image can keep them trapped in the idea that they are less important than others or not deserving. Often they "settle" or suffer in silence while their needs are unmet.

2. **AGGRESSIVE** - Everyone has witnessed the self-centeredness of an individual who is loud, demanding and impatient with others. That person knows what they want and is prepared to get it even at the expense of others. They can be found as bullies on the school playground, abusive partners or arrogant employers who do not consider the needs of staff. Although it might seem, at first glance, that they are confident people with strong self-image, further examination usually reveals people who are insecure and lacking the skills that would help them live a healthier life.

3. **PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE** - Some people are insecure but hate conflict so much that they harm others in indirect ways rather than confronting or communicating with them. Resentment and other negative emotions combined with "sneaky" behaviours are used to get even with others who may not even know that the person is upset with them. For example, a person who is passive-aggressive may gossip about others, make promises that they don't fulfill to hurt the other person or use indirect actions to disgrace the other person. I often use the example of a cook who doesn't like the customer and instead of dealing with the differences between them, just spits in the customer's soup!

4. **ASSERTIVE** - People who are aware of their needs and know how to ensure they are met in a healthy manner, show respect for themselves and others while dealing with issues. They speak firmly but politely while staying focussed on resolving problems. Preservation of self-esteem for themselves and others is a result of using assertive techniques that include honest communication.

If you are unhappy and feel that some or all of your relationships are in trouble, perhaps learning more about assertiveness will help you. Remember, in order to live a happy and assertive life, you need to know your needs and be able to ask in a healthy manner for them to be met.

Try learning about and using assertiveness. I'm sure you will be glad that you did!