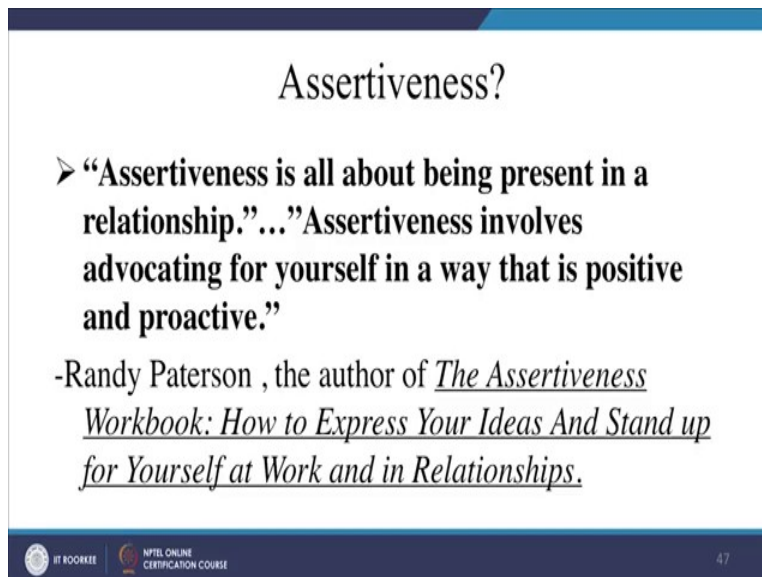


Interpersonal Skills
Prof. Smita Jha
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology-Roorkee

Lecture-29
Assertiveness - I

I am here once again to discuss assertiveness. We are doing interpersonal skills and while doing interpersonal skills we have seen that how important it is to have command over language and it is not only a matter of language or communication it is a matter of entire your personality. So, when we talk of the entire of your personality assertiveness is the term that is the key gesture which is very important to establish your identity.

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Assertiveness?

➤ **“Assertiveness is all about being present in a relationship.”...“Assertiveness involves advocating for yourself in a way that is positive and proactive.”**

-Randy Paterson , the author of *The Assertiveness Workbook: How to Express Your Ideas And Stand up for Yourself at Work and in Relationships.*

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What is assertiveness? Assertiveness is all about being present in a relationship. The assertiveness is something about how to express your ideas and stand up for yourself at work and in relationships. In other words, you are able to articulate your wants and needs to the other person and you welcome their wants and needs as well that is boldness. Being assertive is a starkly different from being passive or aggressive. This is very important point because people tend to confuse between assertive and aggressive.

Well a famous psychologist and coach Paterson has a helpful analogy that distinguishes the difference between assertiveness and aggressive. In the passive style all the world is allowed on a stage but for you. Your role is to be the audience and supporter for everyone else. In the aggressive style you are allowed on a stage but you spend most of your time showing the others of like in a lifelong sumo match.

With the assertive style everyone is welcome on a stage you are entitled to be a full person including your uniqueness and so are others. Assertiveness involves advocating for yourself in a way that is positive and proactive. Assertiveness is a social skill it is a social skill you need to develop and that is why I said that when you need to establish your identity you need to be assertive. So, it is a social skill that relies heavily on effective communication while simultaneously respecting that thoughts and wishes of others.

People who are assertive clearly and respectfully communicate their wants needs positions and boundaries to other boundaries your limitations your area. There is no question of where they stand no matter what the topic. From a cognitive standpoint assertive people experience fewer anxious thoughts even when under stress. From a behavioural standpoint assertive people are firm without being rude, they react to positive and negative emotions without becoming aggressive or resorting to passivity.

Individuals who are high in assertiveness do not shy away from defending their point of view or goals or from trying to influence others to see their side. They are also open to both compliments and constructive criticism. Assertiveness is often associated with higher self esteem and confidence. People can improve their assertiveness through practical exercises and experience.

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The question is how to be assertive because we discussed in length that what do we mean by assertiveness. Being assertive is associated with a number of benefits ranging from less anxiety and depression to a greater sense of urgency and better relationship. Assertiveness is often confused with behaving aggressively but they are not the same at all. A person who is assertive clearly communicates his or her wishes and sets boundaries but does not necessarily make demands of other people or lash out if requests are not met.

Recent research explores the pitfalls of not asserting oneself while offering practical advice for how best to do.

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How to Be Assertive?

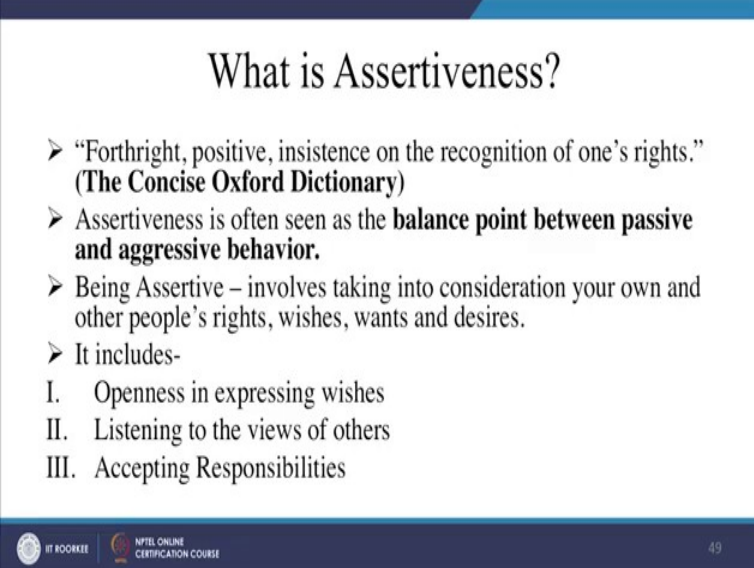
- Clearly communicating what you want
- Expressing your feelings , needs and opinions.
- Standing up for your rights.

So, clearly communicating what you want is the sign of assertiveness. As I said, do not get confused between being assertive and being aggressive. Clarity in communication expressing your feelings needs an opinion very firmly that is also a part of assertiveness. Is standing up for your rights when they are threatened or taken advantage of that is assertiveness that is to say that you speak of your right?

You know what is your right and how to protect your right it is a skill regularly referred to in social and communication skills training very important for HR people, for management people for Humanities people. Being assertive means being able to stand up for your own or other people's rise in a calm and positive way without being either aggressive or passively accepting wrong. Passively accepting wrong that is that you do not have guts to raise your voice against something that is wrong, that is unjustifiable.

Assertive individuals are able to get their point across without upsetting others or becoming upset themselves. Although everyone acts in passive and aggressive ways from time to time such ways of responding often result from a lack of self-confidence and are therefore in appropriate ways of interacting with others.

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What is Assertiveness?

- “Forthright, positive, insistence on the recognition of one’s rights.”
(The Concise Oxford Dictionary)
- Assertiveness is often seen as the **balance point between passive and aggressive behavior.**
- Being Assertive – involves taking into consideration your own and other people’s rights, wishes, wants and desires.
- It includes-
 - I. Openness in expressing wishes
 - II. Listening to the views of others
 - III. Accepting Responsibilities

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So, the concise Oxford Dictionary defines assertiveness as forthright positive insistence on the recognition of one's right keep in mind forthright positive insistence on the recognition of one's rights. In other words, assertiveness means standing up for your personal rights expressing thoughts feelings and beliefs in direct honest and appropriate ways. It is important to note that by being assertive we should always respect the thoughts feelings and beliefs of other people.

Those who behave assertively always respect that feelings and beliefs of other people as well as their own. That is to say, protecting other benefits as well as one's own. Assertiveness concerns being able to express feelings, wishes, want,s and desires appropriately and is an important personal and interpersonal skill. In all your interactions with other people whether at home or at work with employers, customers or colleagues, assertiveness can help you to express yourself in a clear open and reasonable way.

Without undermining your own or others rights; Assertiveness enables individuals to act in their own best interest to stand up for themselves without undue anxiety to express honest feelings comfortably and to express personal rights without denying the rights of other. Assertiveness is

often seen as balance point between passive and aggressive behaviour but it is probably easier to think of the three as a point of a triangle.

That is assertive, passive and aggressive. Being assertive involves taking into consideration your own and other people's wishes, needs, desires. It means encouraging others to be open and honest about their views wishes feeling so that both parties act appropriately. Being open in expressing wishes thoughts and feelings and encouraging others to do likewise, listening to the views of others and responding appropriately whether in agreement and those views or not.

Accepting responsibilities and being able to delegate to others. Responding in a passive or non assertive way tends to mean compliance with the wishes of others and can undermine individual rights and self-confidence. Many people adopt a passive response because they have a strong need to be liked by others such people do not regard themselves as equals because they place greater weight on their eyes of the wishes and feelings of others.

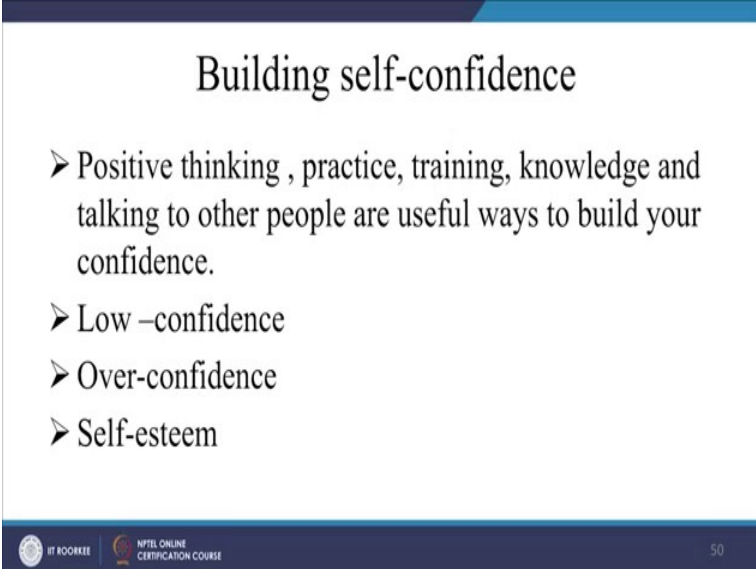
When you respond passively you present yourself in a less positive light or put yourself down in some way. If you constantly belittle yourself in this way you will come to feel inferior to others that is responding passively. While the underlying causes of passive behaviour are often poor self confidence and self esteem. In itself it can further reduce the feeling of self-worth creating a vicious circle. Being passive results in failure to communicate thoughts or feelings and result in people doing things they really do not want to do in the hope that they might please others.

This also means that they allow others to take responsibility to lead and make decisions for them. Why do people avoid being assertive sometimes they get confused but even though knowing the real definition of assertiveness or the meaning of assertiveness people feel shy or confused. Many people avoid being assertive because they confuse being assertive with being aggressive .Naturally, aggressive is not a very good word.

Aggressiveness violates the rights of others. Assertiveness is a respectful communication of your own rights. Another reason why people avoid asserting themselves is fear of upsetting others or damaging relationship. However, avoiding assertiveness may damage relationship more in the long run by causing feelings of resentment or mistrust to build. Being assertive empowers you to express yourself in an honest way with others.

It also allows others to know what you want or need from them making it more likely that they will meet your needs in other words assertiveness can be a great tool in helping you built a strong respectful supportive relationship with loved ones, classmates and co-workers. This aspect of assertiveness is applicable not only to the youngster they student but also to the professionals. A number of people hesitate. They feel shy and cannot even protect their own right.

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The slide is titled "Building self-confidence" and lists four key points:

- Positive thinking , practice, training, knowledge and talking to other people are useful ways to build your confidence.
- Low –confidence
- Over-confidence
- Self-esteem

At the bottom of the slide, there are logos for IIT ROORKEE and NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE, along with the number 50.

So, knowing this aspect of assertiveness is must. Confidence is not something that can be learned like a set of confidence is a state of mind positive, thinking, practice, training, knowledge and talking to other people are all useful ways to help improve or boost your confidence levels. Confidence comes from feelings of well-being because whenever we talk of personality enhancement it is very important to boost up your confidence.

Acceptance of your body and mind, your self-esteem and belief in your ability is skills and experience. So, confidence comes from such feelings. Confidence is an attribute that most people would like to possess and the reason behind that not only in professional life but also in personal life it matters a lot. This is the high time to know what is self-confidence again not aggressiveness although self-confidence can mean different things to different people.

In reality, it simply means having faith in yourself confidence is in part a result of how we have been brought up and how we have been taught. We learn from others how to think about ourselves and how to behave these lessons affect what we believe about ourselves and also other people. So, confidence is a result of our experience and how we have learned to react to different situations. Self-confidence is not a static measure. Our confidence to perform roles and tasks and deal with situations can increase and decrease and some days we may feel more confident than others.

Low confidence can be a result of many factors including fear of the unknown criticism being unhappy with personal appearance, self-esteem, feeling unprepared, poor time management, lack of knowledge and previous failures that are already there in your mind. Often when we lack confidence in ourselves, it is because of what we believe others will think of us that is the self-obsessed image. What others think of us and naturally conscious of our past failure.

Our confidence can be a problem; if the low confidence is a problem overconfidence can be a problem. If it makes you believe that you can do anything even if you do not have the necessary skills abilities and knowledge to do it well that can lead to failure. In such situations overconfidence can lead to failure. Being overly confident also means you are more likely to come across to other people as arrogant or egotistical, that is arrogance.

People are much more likely to take pleasure in your failure if you are perceived as arrogant.

Naturally, they do not like you and when you get failure, they will be happy because this time they are going to satisfy their ego. Confidence self-esteem are not the same thing although they are often linked. Confidence is the term we use to describe how we feel about our ability to perform roles functions and tasks.

Self-esteem is how we feel about ourselves the way we look, the way we think whether or not we feel worthy or valued. People with low esteem often also suffer from generally low confidence but people with good self-esteem can also have low confidence. It is also perfectly possible for people with low self-esteem to be very confident in some areas. Interestingly enough self-esteem has little to do with actual talent or ability.

It is quite possible for someone who is good at something to have poor self-esteem while it is someone who struggles at a particular topic might have good self-esteem. Well in the first case the person might think I have to give a speech tomorrow and I am dreading it. 'I know, I am not good' even though they are experienced and successful. The other person may be determined to give a good speech and focuses on the feeling more confident about the result even though they display less talent than the first person that is overconfidence.

Perhaps others will laugh at us or complain or make fun if we make a mistake. Thinking like this can prevent us from doing things we want or need to do because we believe that the consequences are too full or embarrassing. Well being assertive reduces stress and then it gives in result to make your communication better than how it is. Assertiveness can help you control stress and anger and improve coping skills because you have confidence you have the right and you have a sense of satisfaction that is very important.

Recognize and learn assertive behaviour and communication is going to boost up your personality and that will give you a sense of satisfaction in your professional and personal life. Being assertive is a core communication skill, being assertive means that you express yourself

effectively and they stand up for your point of view while also respecting the rights and beliefs of others. It can also help to boost your self-esteem and earn others respect that is why I said that being self esteemed means that you have satisfaction.

This can help with a stress management especially if you tend to take on too many responsibilities because you have a hard time saying no. This is another important aspect. Some people seem to be naturally assertive but if you are not one of them you can learn to be more assertive. Why assertive communication makes sense that is emphatic? We generally say he says emphatically means with conviction.

Because assertiveness is based on mutual respect it is an effective and diplomatic communication style. Being assertive shows that you respect yourself because you are willing to stand up for your interest and express your thoughts and feelings. Of course, it is not just what you say your message but also how you say it that is important. Assertive communication is direct and respectful being assertive gives you the best chance of successfully delivering your message.

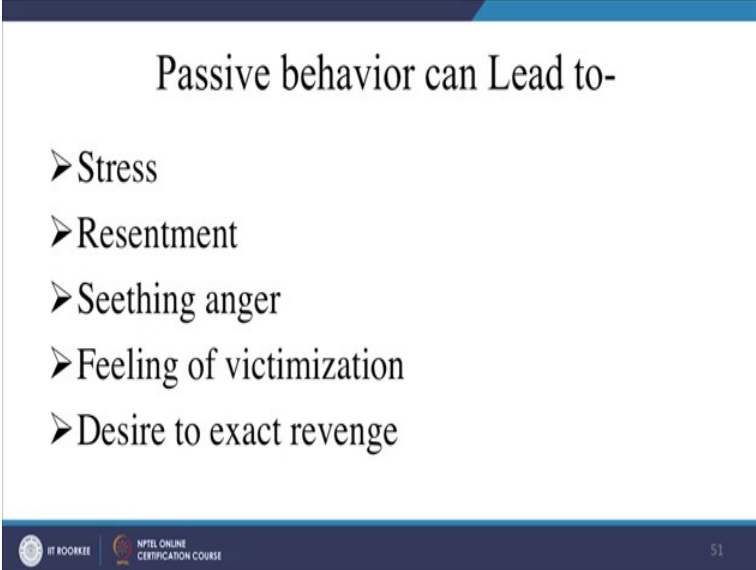
If you communicate in a way that is too passive or too aggressive true or untruth your message may get lost because people are too busy reacting to your delivery. If your style is passive you may seem to be shy or overly is he going you may routinely say things such as I will just go with whatever the group decide means you want to be very good but this is not goodness you must put your words emphatically to suggest some idea and what you are worth?

You tend to avoid conflict. Why is that a problem and for this in some of the organization people do not take even decision 'let it be it will go like this year's and year months and month' why because they want to avoid conflict but this is not at all healthy. If the conflict is inevitable let it be. There are various ways to sort it out. So, you tend to avoid conflict why this has become a problem because the message you are sending is that your thought and feelings are not as important as those of other people.

In a sense when you are too passive you give others the license to disregard your wants and needs. Considered I mean whatever I mean this example I am going to share with you. You say yes when a colleague asks you to take over a project even though your plate is full you are heavily occupied you do not have time and the extra work means you will have to work overtime and miss your family your intention may be to keep the peace means you do not want any kind of argument.

So, at the cost of suffering you have accepted the proposal despite the fact that you are heavily overloaded. Think this is not a very good thing for your mind for your career. The internal conflict that can be created by passive behaviour can lead to stress because you keep on thinking that I should not have accepted this proposal but you have and now you do not have courage to say no.

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Passive behavior can Lead to-

- Stress
- Resentment
- Seething anger
- Feeling of victimization
- Desire to exact revenge

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So, it may lead to such kind of behaviour, a stress, resentment, anger, the feelings of victimization, desire to exact revenge later on you will spoil your relationship with your friend well friend I think that these are the very important point I have shared with you that is to say

that aggressiveness or assertiveness what do they mean and what kind of differences there in these two very important to know to boost up your personality.

You are not meant to suffer in life. You mean to achieve substantial whatever you deserve and for that you need to improve your communication skills to be assertive. I am sure that you must have learnt a lot until this time I must say goodbye have a nice day and be assertive in your college, at your workplace we are meeting next time with more good points regarding assertiveness, thank you very much.