

PERSONAL BILL OF RIGHTS

We all have the right to respectfully...

- ✘ Express our needs and attempt to meet them ourselves, without violating others.
- ✘ Ask people to help us or do things for us, in order to get our needs met.
- ✘ Ask for what we want.
- ✘ Make decisions for ourselves.
- ✘ Ask questions when we are confused.
- ✘ Say "I don't know."
- ✘ Request others to correct mistakes which impact us.
- ✘ Persevere with unanswered or unacknowledged requests.
- ✘ Ask for privacy and quiet.
- ✘ Ask for a "time-out" – time to think things over before responding, especially in an argument, or if someone has made a request of you.
- ✘ Not give in to pressure or manipulation.
- ✘ Change our minds.
- ✘ Realize that we are not responsible for other adult's behavior or feelings.
- ✘ Take responsibility for our mistakes.
- ✘ Request that people hear our opinions.
- ✘ State our beliefs and opinions clearly and appropriately even if it is unpopular or opposes others' beliefs.
- ✘ Feel good about ourselves and our accomplishments.
- ✘ Hold a differing opinion than others.
- ✘ Express our feelings, even if they are unpleasant (using "I" Statements).
- ✘ Say "no" to a request.

We must remember and be prepared that:

- ✘ Even though we may request something from someone in order to get our needs met, we may not get it from them. We can and should always ask for what we need and want, but we may not necessarily get it! At this point, we must figure out another way to get our needs met, or evaluate the importance of the need. It is always our own responsibility to soothe ourselves through a situation when we do not get what we want.
- ✘ Other people may act aggressively with us, but this requires more assertiveness, NOT aggressiveness on our part. This is harder than it sounds. If we say we want to improve our behavior, then we must live up to what we say we want. We cannot decide our responses based upon other people's level of response. **We cannot wait for other people to change their behavior before we change our own.** When we are faced with aggressive behavior – if we respond in kind, we are violating our own integrity when we join in the aggressiveness. We must model the behavior that we expect from others in order to have any hope of seeing it in them – and even if we don't ever see it in anyone else, at least we can have respect for ourselves for not choosing behavior that we claim we do not want to see in others.
- ✘ When we change our behavior pattern from Passive or Aggressive, to Assertive, those who are accustomed to our old way of relating will need time to adjust to our new, assertive behavior. They are likely to try and push us back into more aggressive or passive styles of relating because it is familiar and unthreatening. It can be even harder to commit to new, healthier behaviors when those around us pressure us to change back. We must re-double our efforts to act assertively, and PRACTICE!

*Liza M. Shaw, MA, LMFT. © 2008.
Marriage and Family Therapy Services: 828-302-2978*

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