

# CARING/COPING/CONNECTING

A newsletter from WRDSB Social Work and Psychological Services

*"The better you know yourself, the better your relationship with the rest of the world."*

*- Toni Collette*



## ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION!

Have you ever had trouble telling friends and family what you need? Have you ever lost sight of your own needs as you've tried to meet others' expectations? It can be hard to navigate. The strategy below can help you ask for something from someone, resolve conflict, and say no when you need to, all while keeping good relationships.

### DEAR MAN

Assertive communication skills

(based on Interpersonal Competence Skills from Dialectical Behavior Therapy- DBT)

**Describe:** Describe the situation in a simple way. Stick to the facts.

**Express:** Express your feelings using "I" statements ("I feel . . .," "I would like . . ."). Stay away from "you should . . .".

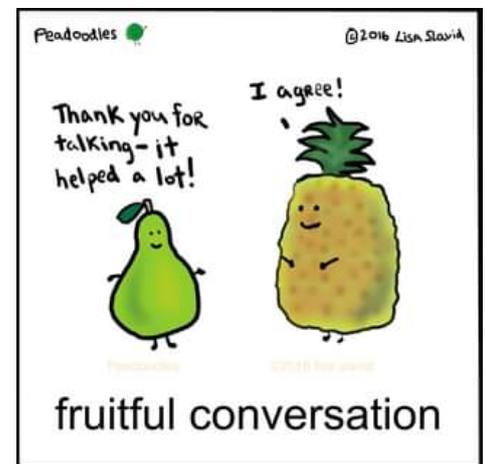
**Assert:** Ask for what you want or say "no" clearly. Be direct. Remember, the other person cannot read your mind.

**Reinforce:** Reinforce what is in it for the other person. Explain how getting what you want can be positive for your relationship and/or for the other person.

**Mindful:** Keep your focus on the present issue. Don't bring up past events and avoid going on a rant. Ignore distractions. If the person starts acting defensive, try to keep the conversation on topic.

**Appear Confident:** stand or sit up straight, make eye contact. Use a confident tone of voice.

**Negotiate:** You might need to change your request to make it more appealing to the other person. Ask for the other person's input and try to resolve the problem together, finding a solution that works for both of you. *(See Page 2 for a shortened version!)*



*These practices are supported by research and we encourage folks to give them a try! BUT, we also acknowledge that we all have different backgrounds and experiences. This may make your strategies and practices look different in your family.*

Can't remember DEAR MAN?

Want to use it with younger kids?

Try this shortened version of assertive communication skills to help set boundaries:

**WIN formula for communication**

**W - WHEN You:**

briefly describe the situation that you want to discuss

**I - I feel:**

Use I messages to explain how it made you feel

**N - I NEED:**

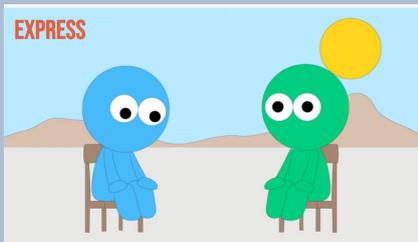
set a clear boundary. What do you need from the person

When we communicate clearly, we all WIN!

**Community  
Events  
Woolwich  
Counselling**

- [Understanding and Preventing Eating Disorders](#)
- [Nurturing Empathy in our Children](#)
- [Navigating Society Pressures Around Eating, Exercises, & Health](#)
- [Helping Teens Conquer Anxiety](#)
- [What is Mindfulness?](#)
- [Be You!](#)

Check out these YouTube videos if you want to learn more:



DEAR MAN  
(~5 min)



I Statements  
(~4 min)

**MINDFUL MINUTE**

The Breathing Space  
by Jon Kabat Zinn  
(~3 min)

**Lunch & Learns with WRDSB Psychology Dept**

**Wednesdays 12:15 to 12:45**

[Zoom Meeting link](#) Meeting ID: 544 193 0058 Password: WRDSB

**Feb. 16:** Mindfulness - Living in the Present Moment

**Feb. 23:** Secrets of Reinforcement: Your Parenting Gold Star!

**Mar. 2:** Self-Compassion - Good for Parents, Good for the Kids

Missed a newsletter? Check out the previous newsletters [here](#)

*Need some help?*

**Here 24/7:** 1-844-437-3247

**Kids Help Phone:** 1-800-668-6868 or text "CONNECT" to 686868

**Front Door:** 519 749 2932, and press "1"

**For urgent matters call 911  
or go to your local  
emergency room**

**We would love your feedback!** Please click **SURVEY** to share your thoughts and ideas. For more information about this newsletter contact Mary Murphy at 519-570-0003, ext. 4172.