

HANDOUT 10.5: THE PROCESS OF ASSERTIVENESS

In our most significant relationships, choosing to be compassionately assertive of our needs always implies a kind of dance with the other and their needs. Just as in the three flows of compassion, assertiveness also has flows: I can be validating and assertive of my needs, help the other to be validating and assertive of theirs, and open up to the other's effort to recognize the validity of my own needs. In this way, compassionate assertiveness becomes much more than a mere communication style to "defend myself from excessive requests (threat system) or express my needs efficiently (drive system); it transforms into a means to grow in relationships and make them more authentic and safe (soothing system).

THE PROCESS OF COMPASSIONATE ASSERTIVENESS



Think back to an argument you recently had.

Try to go through the four steps of the process of assertiveness for both yourself and the other. Write down the words that you feel would help you for each step.

Remember to first practice embodying your compassionate self.

RECOGNIZE	
Your needs and fears	
The needs and fears of the other	

ALLOW	
Your needs and fears	
The needs and fears of the other	

VALIDATE

Your needs and fears

The needs and fears of the other

EXPRESS

Your needs and fears

The needs and fears of the other