

Asking For Clarity In Relationships

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These suggestions provide a format in which you can ask for what you prefer/need in relationships when behaviors become intrusive or offensive.

1. Speak up while your preference/need is current.
2. Object to specific behavior that infringes your preference/need. Avoid over-generalizing.
3. Be brief and to the point making clear concise statements.
4. Avoid bringing up the past; deal with the present.
5. Never apologize for expressing your preference/need; you are responsible for asking for what you need although you may not always get it.
6. When you do not get what you prefer/need, avoid threats and aggressive behavior, as this is an infringement upon others.
7. When someone infringes on your preference/need respectfully tell them how the behavior affects you; be sure to share how you feel.
8. Be sure that your body, eyes, your facial expression and voice tone all say the same thing.
9. Use "I" statements expressing thoughts and feelings openly.
10. Be ready to work at receiving criticism and compliments comfortably.
11. Let your yes be yes and your no be no without feeling guilty. This is especially true when you feel others are making unreasonable requests.
12. Take time to identify and respect not only your preferences/needs, but also, those of the others around you.
13. Express yourself firmly yet friendly initially. If necessary, increase your intensity or seek assistance from someone with greater authority.
14. Remember that unless you have made a contract that says otherwise, your preferences are equal to the preferences/needs of others. Check yourself as well as trust the Holy Spirit to check you when this becomes unbalanced.

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