



# TIP #101

## *Assertive, Non-Assertive, Aggressive—Can You Tell Them Apart?*

This checklist offers examples that characterize the three types of communication. Next to each item, write the initials of which behavior it describes and then check your answers with the key at the bottom.

A - Assertive: Respectful and tactful

AG - Aggressive: Controlling and tactless

NA - Non-Assertive: Anxious, self-denying, avoiding

1. Giving the cold shoulder.
2. Beating around the bush, being indirect.
3. You decide not to assert yourself when your friend's behavior bothers you, not out of fear, but because you see this person very little and decide you do not want to say anything
4. You don't say anything about something that bothers you, because you know it might set the person off.
5. You say, "I feel like you are hurting my feelings all the time and you don't even know it!"
6. You take offense when your coworker jokes about things that are bothering you, and you say, "Why don't you take me seriously?"
7. Too nervous to make a mistake, you remain silent in a meeting.
8. Someone says to you, "You've been anxious about this ever since I met you, and you still are!"
9. Your parent tells you that you are too sensitive.
10. When your family member tells you that you are too sensitive, you say, "That isn't right to label me—that's aggressive!"
11. It is hard for your spouse to forgive you for something that you have already apologized for many times, and you ask, "When are you going to move on from the past and get over it?"
12. You are frustrated with your child's rudeness and say, "You can't talk to me that way!"
13. Your friend is late again and you say, "Why are you so late again?"
14. Your boss criticizes you and you say, "I do not mind you correcting me, but I feel disrespected and am asking you to be less personal about my shortcomings."
15. "I felt very uncomfortable when you said that to me."

ANSWER KEY: 1.AG, 2.NA, 3.A, 4.NA, 5.AG, 6.AG, 7.NA, 8.AG, 9.AG, 10.AG, 11.AG, 12.AG, 13.AG, 14.A, 15.A