

Communication 2: Asking Honestly for What You Want

Grades 7 and 8, Lesson #17

Time Needed

One class period or less

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to...

1. Formulate an assertive request.
2. Describe how it feels to risk rejection.
3. Appreciate that, in risking rejection, one stands a chance of getting acceptance or resolution.

Agenda

1. Use the *Asking Honestly for What You Want Reference Sheet* to introduce the four steps involved in making an assertive request.
2. Explain the focus of today's lesson (Steps A and B).
3. Play *The Asking Game*.
4. Optional: Assign homework.

Materials Needed:

Classroom Materials: (1 per class)

- Asking Game Cards

Student Materials: (1 per student)

- *Asking Honestly For What You Want Reference Sheet*
- **OPTIONAL:** *Family Homework Exercise: Communication 2*
- **OPTIONAL:** *Communication Worksheet 2*

Activities

1. **Hand out the Asking Honestly For What You Want Reference Sheet.** Either read it aloud, as students follow along, or, if you have no “reluctant readers,” have students read it to themselves, or have students take turns or volunteer reading aloud.
2. **Explain that, today, you’ll be practicing steps A and B, “stating a fact or a feeling” and “asking straight for what you want.”**
3. **Play The Asking Game.** You will have made 32 “asking game cards” (two single sided photocopies of each page, cut into four parts, so that you have two copies of each situation, 32 slips of paper in all representing 16 different situations). This is a NON-COMPETITIVE game.

Give each person a game card. You will have some extra cards left over, unless there are 32 students. Give the class four minutes to try filling in the blanks on their slips.

Then you have two options:

- a) Have a student volunteer to begin. She/he reads the situation aloud, and reads the assertive request (A & B). Then whoever has the same situation reads their assertive request aloud. Then have someone else volunteer. Don’t forget to collect all 32 cards when you are done -- for tomorrow’s class; or
- b) Gather the cards and read and role play them yourself. We recommend the more participatory version, unless your class is too rambunctious for it to be productive. Having two people address each situation allows you to demonstrate that there is more than one possible way to phrase an assertive request. Summarize by pointing that out.

Homework

Students’ options:

- **Family Homework Exercise: Communication 2**
- **Communication Worksheet 2**
- Make a poster or collage of the word “PLEASE” in as many languages as you can. Or in Ameslan (the sign language of the deaf ... i.e. draw or paint the hand sign).

Asking Honestly For What You Want Reference Sheet

Have trouble asking assertively for what you want? Afraid you might get turned down? Just remember, if you don't ask, people can't read your mind. And if you "ask" in a manipulative or aggressive way, you turn people off. It's easy to ask assertively. There are four steps:

1. State a fact or a feeling.
2. Describe what you'd like. If they say, "No"...
3. Ask for your second choice. If they still say, "No"...
4. Accept it gracefully.

For example: Jackie and P.J. are in the same home room. Jackie doesn't feel like walking home from school. P.J.'s father is giving P.J. a ride home.

- A.) JACKIE STATES A FACT OR A FEELING: "I heard that your father is going to pick you up this afternoon."
- B.) JACKIE ASKS STRAIGHT FOR WHAT SHE WANTS: "Would you mind if I asked him for a lift as far as my house?"
SUPPOSE P.J. SAYS "I'd rather you didn't ask. He's in a hurry."
- C.) JACKIE ASKS FOR HER SECOND BEST CHOICE: "What if he dropped me at your house and I walked from there?"
SUPPOSE P.J. SAYS "I don't think so, Jackie. Not today."
- D.) JACKIE ACCEPTS "NO" GRACEFULLY: "OK, thanks anyway."

Got the idea?

Of course, it takes practice. Plenty of ADULTS still haven't figured out how to ask assertively. Let's look at some soap operas.

Sue is passive. She and Kevin have been married for three years. She has been using birth control pills, but she forgets them every now and then. She knows it is risky and she wishes Kevin would use condoms. But she doesn't know how to bring the subject up. Kevin has no idea how annoyed Sue is getting over the years. It has never occurred to him to offer to use condoms, but he would be glad to if he thought it could save his marriage! Here's how it would work:

- A.) SUE STATES A FACT OR A FEELING: "Honey, I forgot my pill again today."
B.) SUE DESCRIBES WHAT SHE'D LIKE: "I really wish you'd try using condoms."
KEVIN MIGHT SAY: "Oh, hmm, alright. I'll pick some up after work."

Asking Honestly For What You Want Reference Sheet, continued...

Mario is manipulative. He and Juanita have been dating for six years. He would like it if she wouldn't date other men, but he's afraid if he came right out and asked, she would turn him down. So he just pouts when she goes out with other people, or he gets "sick" so she will pay him more attention.

Juanita might or might not agree to see only Mario if he would ask. Still she doesn't like being manipulated and one of these days she may stop seeing him altogether if he doesn't start being honest with her. He could do it this way:

- A.) MARIO STATES A FACT OR A FEELING: "Juanita, I heard you went out with Paco last night."
- B.) MARIO DESCRIBES WHAT HE'D LIKE: "How would you feel about dating only me?"
JUANITA MIGHT SAY: "Mario, I love you, but no. I want to see other people, too."
- C.) MARIO ASKS FOR HIS SECOND CHOICE: "Well, would you consider not kissing and, you know, making out with anyone else?"
JUANITA MIGHT AGREE: "Sure honey. You don't have to worry. They're just my friends."

Doug is aggressive. He starts out assertive. When he wants touch, or sexual intercourse, he asks his wife, LaDonna, in a fairly honest way. But if she doesn't feel like it, if she says "no," he keeps badgering her. After two "no's," asking again is unfair ... it's aggressive. He doesn't know how to gracefully accept a "no."

LaDonna would give anything to hear Doug just once say, "OK, honey." His pushing turns her off ... she really doesn't want to touch when he pushes. What if he tried this:

- A.) DOUG STATES A FACT OR A FEELING: "LaDonna, I'm turned on."
- B.) DOUG DESCRIBES WHAT HE'D LIKE: "Let's make love."
SUPPOSE LaDONNA SAYS: "No, I'm too tired."
- C.) DOUG ASKS FOR HIS SECOND CHOICE: "How about holding me for a while, then?"
LaDONNA MIGHT STILL SAY NO: "Oh, baby, I just want to go to sleep."
- D.) DOUG ACCEPTS IT GRACEFULLY: "OK. I understand."

Asking Honestly For What You Want Reference Sheet, continued...

Today, we'll focus on the first two steps.

A. State a fact or a feeling.

That makes me uncomfortable.
When you _____, I feel _____.
I feel _____.
I heard that _____.
You once said _____.
I understand that _____.
I get in trouble when you _____.
I don't like it when you _____.
It bothers me when you _____.
I'm feeling _____.

B. Ask straight for what you want.

I'd like it if you would _____.
Would you _____?
Let's _____.
Could I _____?
Could you _____?
Would it be OK if _____?
Would you mind _____?
May I _____?
I wish you would _____.
How would you feel about _____?
I really wish you would _____.
Why don't we _____?
How about if you _____?
Is that OK with you _____?

<p>1. You're at a party with someone you like. You want to hold hands, but every time you reach over, they seem to move their hand a fraction of an inch away.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>2. You want your grandmother to give you a ride to your friend's house.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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Asking Straight Game Cards (rehearsal exercise)

<p>3. Your mother tells you your father got a new job. You feel like giving him a hug. He walks into the room.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>4. You feel like holding your niece in your lap and reading her a story.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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5. You would like to go to a basketball game with a certain girl or guy.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

6. You would like to borrow your friend's bike to go to the store for candy.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

Asking Straight Game Cards (rehearsal exercise)

7. You just got off the phone from breaking up with your girlfriend or boyfriend. You feel awful and you need a hug. Your older sister walks into the room.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

8. You have three projects due at once and you'd like permission to turn in your science paper a couple of days late.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

<p>9. You want your mother's roommate to help you with your math homework.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>10. You would like the dessert your friend doesn't seem to want.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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Asking Straight Game Cards (rehearsal exercise)

<p>11. You would like one of your classmates (who isn't really a 'friend' yet) to come "hang out" at your house after school.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>12. You like to earn money babysitting for your new neighbors.</p> <p>a) State a fact or a feeling:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>b) Ask straight for what you want:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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13. You would like your mother to give you money for a new pair of really great running shoes.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

14. You have been mowing your neighbors' lawn for two years and you think you deserve a raise.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

Asking Straight Game Cards (rehearsal exercise)

15. You want to shoot baskets with your older brother and his friends.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

16. You want to cuddle up with your head in your mother's lap while you watch TV.

a) State a fact or a feeling:

b) Ask straight for what you want:

A Family Homework Exercise: Communication 2

ALL FAMILY HOMEWORK EXERCISES ARE OPTIONAL.

First read this aloud together:

Sometimes the members of a family hurt or anger one another without realizing it. Below are two lists of phrases ... phrases guaranteed to turn a parent off and phrases guaranteed to turn a teen off. See if you can think of a few to add to each list.

Phrases guaranteed to turn a teen OFF.

- You're so lazy (uncoordinated, ungrateful, stupid, sloppy, etc.)
- When I was your age _____.
- If I've told you once, I've told you a million times _____.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Phrases guaranteed to turn a parent OFF.

- You're so mean (stingy, stupid, picky, old-fashioned, etc.)
- You never _____.
- You always _____.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Now: Each of you admit which one of the above you say most often. Don't accuse each Other. Speak only about what you do, not what the other person does. (For example, "I guess I call you 'lazy' pretty often.")

Finally: Promise to try not to say your special killer phrase for at least three days. Whoever succeeds in going three whole days wins a kiss, or some other simple reward.

NOTE: Turn in a Family Homework Confirmation Slip by _____ if you want credit.

Communication Worksheet 2

Name _____ Due date _____

Directions: Watch TV for one hour (commercials count, too). Write down at least eight things you see people do or say that could be described as aggressive, passive, manipulative, or assertive. Like so:

<u>Character/Show</u>	<u>Action or Statement</u>	<u>Kind of Behavior</u>
Carla ("Cheers")	Smashes an egg in her ex-husband's face, when he invites her to Hawaii with him and his new wife.	Aggressive
Cliff ("Cosby")	Tells Rudy, "This is mine. I don't want you to touch it, use it, or look at it."	Assertive
1. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
2. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
3. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
4. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____

Communication Worksheet 2, continued...

<u>Character/Show</u>	<u>Action or Statement</u>	<u>Kind of Behavior</u>
5. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
6. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
7. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
8. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____
9. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____