

Your Rights and Responsibilities

To be assertive, you need to believe in both your individual rights and the rights of others. This balance between rights and responsibilities is summarized below.

I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

I have the responsibility to treat others with the same dignity and respect I desire from them.

I have the right to decide what is best for me.

I have the responsibility to allow others to decide what is best for them.

I have the right to have and express my own feelings and opinions.

I have the responsibility to express those feelings and opinions in a way that does not insult or put others down.

I have the right to ask for what I want and need.

I have the responsibility to allow others the right to refuse my request even though I might not like being refused.

I have the right to say "NO" without feeling guilty.

I have the responsibility to allow others the right to say "no".

I have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.

I have the responsibility to listen to others and take them seriously.

I have the right to make mistakes.

I have the responsibility to accept the consequences of those mistakes.

I have the right to all of my human weaknesses and limitations without guilt or shame.

I have the responsibility to allow others their weaknesses without ridiculing or resenting them.

I have the right to do what is necessary to protect my physical and mental health even though this sometimes requires non-assertive or aggressive behaviour and discomforting others.

I have the responsibility to do this in a way that causes the least amount of harm to both myself and others.

Material adapted (2009) from Peurifoy, Reneau Z. Anxiety, phobias, & panic: A step-by-step program for regaining control of your life. (2005). New York: Warner.