

NPTEL

NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE

Course Name

Stress Management

by

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**Lecture 15: Life Situation Intrapersonal:
(Assertiveness, Time Management)**

Hello everybody welcome to the final module of this week this is on assertiveness training.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:26)

OUTLINE

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

WHAT IS ASSERTIVENESS?

HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM AGGRESSIVENESS?

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

So this is the fifth module on developing resilience to stress and here we will talk about what is assertiveness how does it differ from aggressive behavior and finally we will discuss about assertive communication.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:39)

WHAT IS ASSERTIVENESS?

Asking for what one wants or
Acting to get what one wants...
...in a way that respects
the rights and feelings
of other people



So what is a certain asst assertiveness is asking for what one wants are acting to get one wants what one wants in a way that respects the rights and feelings of other people so what is very important is respecting without losing respect or without being abusive towards somebody else you are also being very formed so you are firmly expressing what you want or you acting in a way that you desire to without hurting others.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:16)


Test your Assertiveness

Now I hope you all have a pen and paper in hand and you can see.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:21)

TEST YOUR ASSERTIVENESS

- Can you express negative feelings about other people and their behaviors without using abusive language?
- Are you able to express and exercise your strengths?
- Can you easily recognize and compliment other people's achievements?



For how many of these behaviors do you put a yes so that will be a test of your assertiveness so can you express negative feelings about other people and their behaviors without using abusive language are you able to express and exercise your strengths can you easily recognize and complement other people's achievements.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:50)

TEST YOUR ASSERTIVENESS

- Do you feel comfortable accepting compliments?
- Are you able to stand up for your rights?
- Are you able to refuse unreasonable requests from friends, family or co-workers?



Do you feel comfortable accepting compliments are you able to stand up for your rights are you able to refuse unreasonable requests from friends family or coworkers do you have the confidence to ask for what is rightfully yours can you accept criticism easily without being defensive can you comfortably start and carry on a conversation with others and you ask for resistance when you need it so if you need help you actually ask for it.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:24)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE NON ASSERTIVE?

PASSIVE

Individuals not committed to their own rights

More likely to allow others to infringe on their rights

-than to **STAND UP** and **SPEAK OUT**

AGGRESSIVE

Defend their own rights and work to achieve own goals

Likely to disregard rights of others

Blame others for problems instead of offering solutions

(Refer Slide Time: 02:25)

TEST YOUR ASSERTIVENESS

- Do you have the confidence to ask for what is rightfully yours?
 - Can you accept criticism easily without being defensive?
 - Can you comfortably start and carry on a conversation with others?
 - Do you ask for assistance when you need it?
-

Now these will tell you if there are too many yeses yes you know that you are assertive if it is not then you will have to change your ways to more of assertive behavior the many times when I talk about assertiveness with people the first thing that people tell me is after understanding the definition understanding the meaning of assertiveness I can't say no to others ma'am so if I have a friend who is asking for my mobile to call his family every day several times of the day I give it to him with a grudge but I do not know how to say no.

So this is such a thing happening to you as well or are you if you've been taken for granted by people are you being able to express it now mind you there are some others who will say that oh I see it very abruptly and I said that I cannot give it to you but after that I see many people are angry with my behavior so if it is that you are saying it occasionally and you are after keeping your grudges with you for a long time you are expressing it abruptly then people may be unaware of what is bringing this behavior and that may increase more of relationship conflicts.

So if your form and polite from day one when people will know what you want so and sometimes another thing that happens is people are not aware that they are aggressive instead of being assertive they feel that they are being assertive but most of the times we come across

students specially who are non assertive by nature so now that brings us to the difference between being passive and aggressive or what is non assertive behavior so an individual being known as it if it could either be passive that is they are not committed to their own rights and or aggressive so defend their own rights and work to achieve own goals that is perfectly all right as far as assertiveness goes then what is the difference.

The difference is they disregard aggressive people disregard the rights of others while passive people will allow others to infringe on their rights so this as I was talking about taking the mobile or using somebody's laptop constantly even when you are in need of the laptop if somebody is taking yours and is irrespective disregarding your needs then that person is being aggressive in his behavior while you are being passive.

So both people are being non assertive and passive people generally do not stand up or speak out they are quiet and passive while aggressive people blame others for problems instead of offering solutions so it is more like the statements are more like you this we will talk about assertive communication.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:48)

BEHAVIOUR STYLE OF PASSIVE INDIVIDUALS

- Hoping to get what you want without actually having to say it
 - Giving in to the will of others
 - Leaving it to others to guess or letting them decide for you
 - Taking no action to assert your own rights
 - Putting others first at your expense
 - Giving in to what others want
 - Remaining silent when something bothers you
-

Now some of the behavioral styles of passive individuals they hope to get what they want without actually having to say it so somehow they assume that the other person will understand that they are having trouble they give in to the will of others leave it to others to guess or letting them decide for him or her they take no action to assert their own rights and putting others first at your expense or at his or her expense.

Now this may be considered by society as a positive trait several times we are taught to let the others have the opportunity first rather than going and grabbing it by yourself that's a good thing to follow but if it is at the expense of really harming yourself or letting your wants or your needs being unrecognized or unchecked then you need to put a stop to that and giving in to what others want that is perfectly all right as long as it is not harming you.

Now assertive lack of assertiveness may bring about stress may bring about low mood may bring about a grudge against others which may come out as a dirtied expression later on so in the knowledge that if behavior in this case passive behavior may really may bring about several psycho physiological problems or bodily problems so it is very important to be assertive so remaining silent when something bothers you so this is also a style of passive individuals.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:45)

BEHAVIOR STYLE OF PASSIVE INDIVIDUALS

> Acting submissive

> Apologizing a lot

E.g. : Talking quietly, Laughing Nervously, Sagging shoulders, Avoiding disagreement, Hiding face with hands etc...



Also acting sub missive apologizing a lot so you often come across individuals who keep saying I'm really sorry this happened so maybe many times these things are not related to that person so say suppose you have decided to take everybody to a movie and when you go to the movie hall and you find out that well that day's show is canceled for some reason so a passive individual may start taking all the blame and constantly apologize to everybody.

Now it is not what he is what is he doing he is personalizing the situation we spoken about cognitive errors of personalization you see this is an example of personalization where he is personalizing the event and apologizing to people for as if it is his fault so it is taking the blame so these are some of the passive features are of passive styles of individuals talking some of the examples being talking quietly laughing nervously sagging shoulders avoiding disagree and hiding face with hands etc.

So I do not want to others to see my facial expressions drooping so shoulders so please back up and sit properly all of you.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:15)

BEHAVIOR STYLE OF AGGRESSIVE INDIVIDUALS

- > Expressing your feelings, opinions, or desires in a way that threatens or punishes the other person
- > Standing up for your own rights with no thought for the other person
- > Putting yourself first at the expense of others
- > Overpowering others
- > Reaching your own goals, but at the sake of others
- > Dominating behaviors

E.g.: Shouting, Demanding, Not listening to others; Saying others are wrong; Leaning forward; Looking down on others; Wagging or pointing finger at others; Threatening or Fighting

Now behavioral style of aggressive individuals aggressive individuals express their feelings opinions and desires in a way that threatens or punishes the other person so the way they are stating things is very abusive standing up for their own rights but with this regard to others putting himself first at the expense of others overpowering others so aggressive individuals are Morris most of the time very dominating as well reaching towards his own goals but at the sake of others.

So a passive individual is exactly the opposite of an aggressive individual where he is giving onto the ones and desires of the others at his own expense while the aggressive individuals goes strives towards his goal but at the sake of others and we've spoken about dominating behaviors so some of the behavioral manifestations of aggressive individuals are shouting demanding not listening to others saying that others are wrong leaning forward while talking now that does not necessarily mean that it is aggressive behavior it may be that the person is also very eager to expresses view but aggressive individuals also have a very forceful way of presenting themselves.

So the way they talk their expressions there intonations their behavior non verbal actions are very forceful looking down at others wagging or pointing fingers at others this is a very common way of talking threatening or fighting so these behaviors are generally seen in aggressive individuals.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:04)

BEHAVIOR STYLE OF ASSERTIVE INDIVIDUALS

- Telling someone exactly what you want in a way that does not seem rude or threatening to them
 - Standing up for your own rights without putting down the rights of others
 - Respecting yourself as well as the other person
 - Listening and talking
 - Expressing positive and negative feelings
 - Being confident, but not pushy
-

Assertive individuals we spoken of the two types of nonnative behavioral style of non-native individuals as passive and aggressive and now let us see how initiative individual behaves and as if individual is more firm so telling someone exactly what they want in a way that does not seem rude or threatening to them so the assertive individual may not be very obliging and polite as if like drooping down that would be more of a passive individual but assertive individual you cannot point out that he has been rude to me he will not be rude to you he will be polite but firm standing up for your own rights without putting down the rights of others respecting yourself as well as the other person.

So it is not like you are good or I am good you are good and I am also good listening and talking so on the contrary as compared to an aggressive individual will constantly talk and not let the other talk and the passive individual who will listen and not talk at all so the aggressive the assertive individual will have a partial of both so he will also listen and talk so that just indicates that he expresses his feelings when listening to others feelings so you are regarding others that is you not disregarding others and you are also giving paying heat to your own emotions and positive and negative feelings being confident but not push pushy.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:49)

BEHAVIOR STYLE OF ASSERTIVE INDIVIDUALS

- Staying balanced knowing what you want to say
- Watching out for terms that are used E.g. 'I feel' not 'I think'
- Being specific. Using 'I' statements
- Talking face-to-face with the person
- No whining or sarcasm
- Using body language that shows you are standing on your ground, and staying centered



So staying balanced and knowing what you want to say watching out for the terms that I used example I feel and not I think being very specific so unlike aggressive individuals who use a lot of you statements the assertive individuals use a lot of I statements passive individuals also use a lot of I statements but their statements are more like I apologize I sincerely hope I real feel sorry but here assertive individuals use I statements but they are very specific talking face to face with the person rather than avoiding passive individuals hide their face.

Most of the time while talking or they avoid eye contact now certain individuals generally maintain eye contact and talk face to face with that person they do not use any sarcasm or not even whining in their behavior now sarcasm is used by aggressive individuals whining is used by passive individuals using body language that shows that you are standing on your ground that is that the individual is confident of what he or she is saying and staying centered.

Now that means he is focused on the conversation rather than drifting away to other things so one very simple example of talking communicative style of assertive individuals is that you can easily notice they talk more slowly and more grounded in a more grounded way so it is not like I am talking about this end and they don't keep repeating the words so they have thought about

what they wish to talk and then they firmly express the statement and there was conversation is focused to what they are talking about.

So it does not drift it does not become circumstantial they do not move from one topic to the other again their way of talking it's not on a high amplitude or high frequency it is not like yes I i was saying so it will not go up it will be more to as a basal level and they are more firm and steady in their conversations so why is it important to practice assertiveness.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:18)

WHY PRACTICE ASSERTIVENESS?

- let others boss us around
 - react to the things that other people expect of us
 - Unable to express feelings, thoughts
 - Not using ability to think 'out of the box'
 - Become dependent on others for decision making
 - Low on confidence
-

So that is because it's not right to let others boss us around it is not react to things that other people expect of us. So it is not always that you will have to do what other people request so that way we either become more dependent or we become more defensive in our behavior patterns so and if you do not practice assertiveness you are unable to express your feelings and thoughts so people would not get to know how you are feeling during a situation and what happens is that brings about more of keeping things within and that increases stress and anxiety.

So also you know it is you are restricting your thought process if you say in a group situation if there is a brainstorming situation a group activity if you do not present your ideas people will

also not get to know that you have the potential also that you can think out of the box that that you can think out of the box that you have a creative ability it not only is known by others if you are result if but it is also a feedback to yourself that yes I can do it so that will also increase your confidence.

So becoming dependent on others for decision-making if you are not assertive so you will start going by the thoughts and feelings and decisions of others if you are not assertive so maybe that is not to your liking maybe you had a better idea maybe you had a better plan to deal with things and that overall non assertive behavior brings about low confidence so how do practice assertiveness.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:06)

Practicing assertiveness

Assertive Listening

- To let the other know that you want to understand his or her point of view
- To understand accurately what another person is saying
- To let the other person know that he or she has been understood

For Example:

I'd like to hear your views on...

Could you tell me about them?

Would you tell me more about how you see the situation?

I think we are approaching this from two different perspectives...

What does the situation look like from your perspective?

I'd like to hear your thoughts on...

So we will start with assertive listening to let the others know that you want to understand his or her point of view. So that is very important when you are talking about assertiveness and we are talking about expressing assertive behavior it starts with a sort of listening then to understand so you are communicating to the other that you are eager to know his or her point of view so during a conversation it is not like yes it is it is on an equal status rather than like this in the case of an aggressive individual this is the aggressive individual the other person on the other side of the

conversational end is at a lower rung in the case of a passive individual the other is upper in an upper position and the non assertive passive individual is Nan do lower rung for an assertive individual.

When you are talking or interacting with the other you are in a same plane so to understand accurately what another person is saying this is very important especially in group situations where you're working as a team because maybe if you if your nonassertive and you did not use say that I did not understand you properly that may create other communication problems later on or may actually affect your be a work pattern if you have not understood what was being said by the other person in the group.

So if you do not understand anything that the other person is saying it is always better to ask him or to tell him express it clearly rather than keeping it within yourself and to let the other person know that he or she has been understood so it is also important to communicate that well I have got the point that you are trying to make so there are two things one is when you are communicating that you got the point that it is one is that you are telling that person that you have understood what he wants to say the other is that you are also giving the feedback acknowledging that you have listened to the conversation properly.

So some of the ways assertive conversations go on is I did like to hear your views on something so you are actually opening up the conversation could you tell me more about them so you are trying to find out more letting allowing the person to talk would you tell me more about how you see the situation see these are all open ended so you are actually exploring or generating ideas from another person contrasting to an aggressive individual and assertive individual allows the other person to talk you will see most of the managers and leaders following as a dev behavior and following these styles of behavior.

I think we are see if you are not agreeing to a point of view I think we are approaching this from two different perspectives so you can instead of saying I do not agree with you and you are not right you can say it this way what does the situation look like from your perspective I would like

to hear your thoughts on something so you are again exploring what the person wants to say and you are listening to that individual.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:26)

BODY LANGUAGE AND ASSERTIVENESS

- **Maintaining direct eye contact**
- **Maintaining erect posture**
- **Speaking clearly and audibly**
- **Not Whining!!!**
- **Using facial expressions and gestures to add emphasis to words**



We spoke in about body language and assertiveness but maintaining die direct eye contact again we will just take a look maintaining direct eye contact erect posture. So rather than grouping shoulders and bending speaking clearly and audibly as I was saying that saying the words very clearly very slowly very specifically not whining using facial expressions and gestures to add emphasis to the words but not being forceful like aggressive individuals asking what you want.

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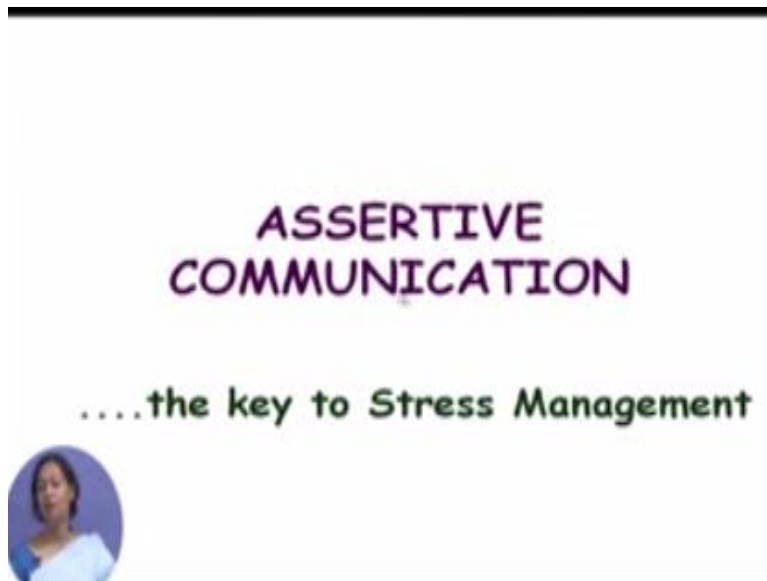
BODY LANGUAGE AND ASSERTIVENESS

- Asking for what you want (Clear and Direct)
- Avoiding Negative Phrasing
- Dressing like you mean business
- Eye contact is crucial-
- Avoiding nervous body language-keep hands quiet and relaxed
- Emphasizing on not what you say but how you say
- Choosing words carefully, speak clearly, be concise

Clearly and directly without using too many complex sentences and too many compound sentences so it is more like short precise sentences being very specific avoiding negative paraphrasing I do not think you will like instead of saying that I I think this would be better or I feel so it is not going the negative starting in a negative tone dressing like you mean business so you are being very formal and letting down the loose ends.

So being very formal in the approach when there is a requirement for assertive communication eye contact is important we spoken about that avoiding nervous body language so less fidgety soles of movement of hand putting in the pocket taking it out or looking here and there scratching your head or things like that emphasizing or not what you say but how you see it so choosing the words carefully speak lie speaking clearly and being concise.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:17)



Now that brings us to a more elaborate study of assertive communication.

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Assertive Communication can...

- **Improve interpersonal relationships**
- **Reduce conflicts/anxiety**
- **Enhance self esteem**
- **Retrain self respect**
- **Minimize stress**
- **Treats others respectfully**
- **Reduce feelings of helplessness/depression**
- **Gives a sense of control**

How does the communication health we spoke of spoken about assertiveness actually helping interpersonal relationship reducing conflicts and anxiety enhancing self-esteem because when you are speaking firmly when you're speaking politely people take notice of what you are talking and that helps you to feel better also you feel more confident retrain self-respect so it you actually get respect from others as well as you start respecting yourself it minimizes stress you treat others respectfully.

So that increases your interpersonal relationships and reduces feelings of helplessness and depression so you are in control you are whatever you are saying you know what you are saying so you need to know what you are saying first then say it with confidence and gives a sense of control.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:19)

Four styles of communication Postures

- **PASSIVE** - "I don't count"
- **AGGRESSIVE** - "I count, but you don't count"
- **PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE** - "I count, You don't count, but I'm not going to tell you about it"



ASSERTIVE - "I count and you do too"

So there are four styles of communication postures so one is passive I do not count aggressive I count but you do not count passive aggressive so it could be a mixture of both I cannot you do not count but I am not going to tell you about it so passive-aggressive people are more dangerous in their way okay what they do is they generally do not express that they are not like an aggressive individual overtly they do not passive-aggressive people do not express that they are not liking you.

But you will gradually understand through the non verbal nonverbal behavior so it is like I count you do not count so I do not care what you say but I am not going to tell you that that you don't count but neither am I going to behave in away to make you feel that you count as if individuals are very clear I count and you count too so I am confident about what I am saying and I respect what you are saying so it's not like you know I do not care.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:41)

5- Steps to Assertive Communication

When approaching someone about behavior you'd like to see changed, stick to factual descriptions of what they've done that's upset you, rather than labels or judgments

- **Situation:** Your friend, who habitually arrives late for your plans, has shown up twenty minutes late for a lunch date
- **Inappropriate:** "You're so rude! You're always late."
- **Assertive Communication:** "We were supposed to meet at 11:30, but now it's 11:50."



So five steps these we will discuss the five steps to assertive communication so when approaching somebody about behavior you would like to see changed stick to factual descriptions that's very important of what they have done that subset you rather than labels or judgments so say if there is a situation by your friend who habitually turns up late has shown up 20minutes late for a plan for a lunch date say for a movie or whatever one way to say it would be you are.

So rude you are always late so what have you done you actually stuck to labeling his behavior or her behavior now in a circle communication we are supposed to focus on this exact situation so you to being specific in assertive communication it could be put like we were supposed to meet at so-and-so time but now it is so-and-so time that is shows that this individual is late so you do not need to actually directly say and put it as a you statement most of the times.

When we are saying negative statements with you it seems like a blimp so the survey way of saying it would be just steady sticking to the factual descriptions so if a person is late you can actually say that without mentioning the word late but rather the way of expressing the difference in time when he was supposed to come and when he has arrived.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:23)

5- Steps to Assertive Communication

The same should be done if **describing the effects of their behavior**. Don't exaggerate, label or judge; just describe:

Inappropriate: "Now lunch is ruined."

Assertive Communication: "Now I have less time to spend lunching because I still need to be back to work by 1pm."



The same can be done if you are describing the effects of the behavior for example if the person has turned up late and you have missed the lunch or if you have missed the movie it one way of saying it would be now lunch is ruined. So basically you have actually focused on what was damaged on the other hand the assertive communication would be that now I have less time to spending lunch to spend in lunch with you because I need to go back to work by so-and-so time so if you or you know if the movie is missed.

So it could be or the lunches means you could put it down to how much time has been reduced again you are sticking to the factual information rather than going by expressing your feelings on the negative effects the negative aspects of the situation so in this case what you are doing you are describing the effects of the behavior of the other rather than labeling the behavior now to going to the next one.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:33)

5- Steps to Assertive Communication

Use "I Messages"

Simply put, if you start a sentence off with "You", it comes off as more of a judgment or attack, and puts people on the defensive.

If you start with "I", the focus is more on how you are feeling and how you are affected by their behavior. Also, it shows more ownership of your reactions, and less blame.

'You Message': "You need to stop that!"

'I Message': "I'd like it if you'd stop that"



As you will see it's important to use I messages we were talking about this. So if you start a sentence off with you it comes off as a judgment or attack just I had mentioned right now but if you start with I the focus is on more how you are feeling and how you are affected but it is not more of apologetic so you are just stating the facts so also it shows more ownership of your reactions and less blame.

so less use of you in a negative situation actually a certain that you are not blaming the person you're rather is specifically carping the event and the resultant causal effect of that event so the you message could be something like you need to stop that I message on the other hand which an assertive person does is I would like it if you would stop that so you could say that instead you could if you if you were using too much of you statements you can start it with a nice statement from henceforth.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:40)

5- Steps to Assertive Communication

Here's a great formula that puts it all together:

"When you [their behavior], I feel [your feelings]."

When used with factual statements, rather than judgments or labels, this formula provides a direct, non-attacking, more responsible way of letting people know how their behavior affects you

For example:



"When you yell, I feel attacked."

So that the next one is how do you put this all together so when you that is their behavior is then I feel you could phrase your sentence like this your feelings so this there is a negative behavior like when you are late for lunch so that is the behavior I feel something whatever it happens I feel I spend less time with you or whatever so when used with factual statements rather than judgments or labels this formula provides a direct on attacking more responsible way of letting people know how their behavior affects you another example when you yell I feel attacked.

So here yell is there the individual individual's behavior and I feel your feelings so I feel attacked so when you are late for everything not late for the movie and now in the factual situation I feel I have less time to spend or I have I can feel I we talk less.

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5- Steps to Assertive Communication

A more advanced variation of this formula includes the results of their behavior (again, put into factual terms), and looks like this:

"When you [their behavior], then [results of their behavior], and I feel [how you feel]."

example:



"When you arrive late, I have to wait, and I feel frustrated."

So a more advanced variation could be the results of the behavior again you will remember that you need to put these in very factual terms so as in describing the event. So when you when you are stating it you that is their behavior when you arrive late then results of the behavior I have to wait and I feel frustrated so again going back to the old example of the launch date or a movie you could put it like when you arrive late.

so that is the behavior that you are not happy with so remember that whenever you are putting this in assertive communication you need to put it as you can write this statement down as when you then the behavior that you are not happy with then again the results of the behavior that you are not happy with then what happens again it has to be a factual information. So in this case if a person arrived late you have to wait or if somebody is taking your phone then how do you feel so when you take my phone to make your personal calls then the result of the behavior.

How is it affecting you I have to spend money on your calls and I feel whatever how you feel so you feel frustrated or you feel angry so what you have done is you have expressed it very clearly.

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to Summarize....

- Assertiveness
- Assertive communication

So in today's session what we have primarily discussed is what is assertiveness being very important for managing stress so or rather if you are not assertive then it affects it affects your anxiety and if there is more of non assertive behavior we keep things within and many times it may come out as aggressive behavior so today we discussed about what is assertiveness and what are the assertive styles what are the behavioral styles of passive individuals aggressive individuals and assertive individuals and how to be more assertive in behavior.

And what are what is the sort of communication so how do we frame our statements are communication to be more assertive in day-to-day life I hope this session was interesting this was not more of theory but it is more of a practical that you could do you can implement and you can ask others to implement and I hope you will do it henceforth thank you.