

# Finding your confidence and assertiveness

Supporting students, walking your talk.

## Sometimes you loose it!

**How does this happen?** One day you are so sure of yourself and the next day or week you wonder if you are able to keep doing what you do – a relationship changes, a challenge by someone or a situation undoes you - and in the next moment, you are again able to be all you want to be. It is normal for people to have changing levels of confidence and assertiveness. Being able to accept this and know that you will be ok is helpful. Allow yourself to notice the uncomfortable feelings; name them, think about what has caused them and why, as doing this will allow the emotions power over you. These emotions will pass.

The challenge to confidence and assertiveness can come from anywhere. I will look at 3 types of typical unhelpful responses and provide strategies and tools that may help.

*You can be powerful and ask for help at the same time.*



## 1. Fear of failure or inadequacy.

Usual ways of coping are to numb it, perfect it, or pretend, but these things really don't work to solve the problem in the long run.

What does work is:

- Letting yourself be seen- that means that you need to show your vulnerable side – so be really open to stating what the problem is – if you cannot acknowledge to yourself what the true issue is, then you cannot find the correct solution.
- Practice gratitude and joy - choose your response to your world every single day. Once it becomes a habit, the choice becomes more automatic.
- Love with your whole heart – each moment of each day.
- Believe that you are enough - name your competencies and attributes.

## 2. Pushy or aggressive personalities.

Frequent ways of coping are avoidance, retaliation, moaning to others, or accommodating and becoming resentful, but these things really don't help to resolve the issue.

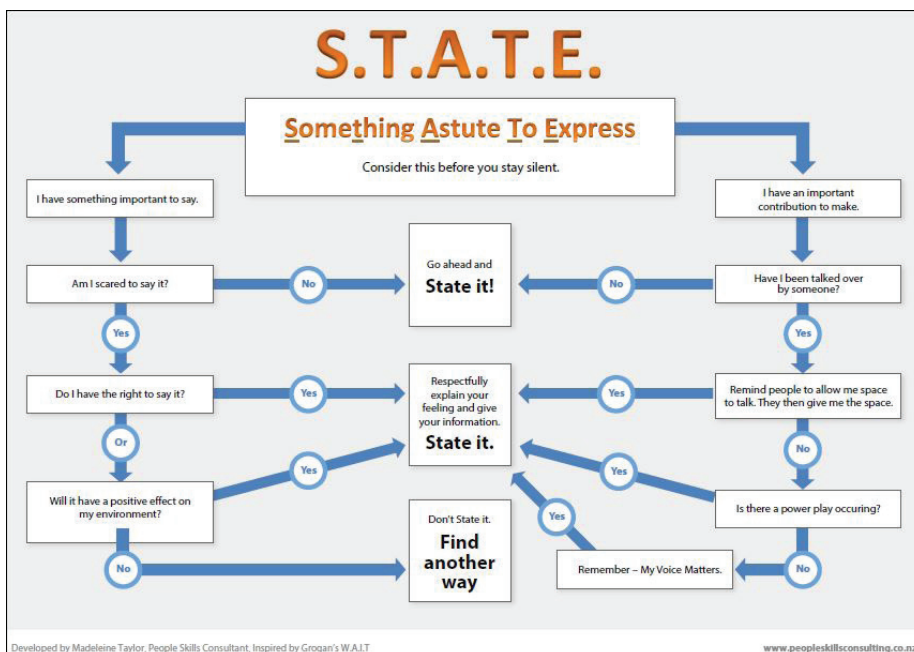
What does work is:

- Being assertive – standing up for yourself in such a way as the rights of others are not violated.
- Here are two assertiveness tools for you to try:

### Use the LADDER tool.

- Look at your rights and goal in the situation
- Arrange a time and place to discuss the situation
- Define the problem specifically
- Describe your feelings
- Express your request simply and firmly
- Reinforce the other person to give you what you want.

### Use the STATE tool.



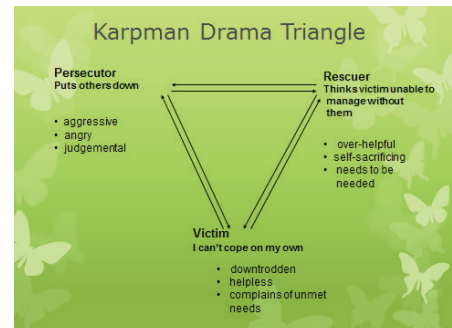
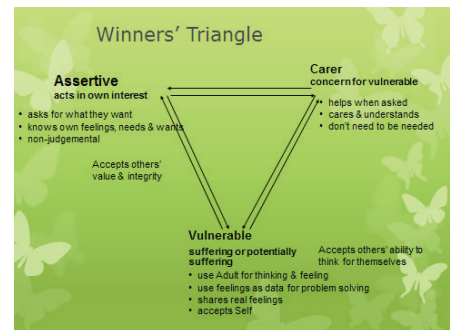
## 3. Unreasonable demands

Unhelpful ways of coping are: avoidance, , accommodating and eventually choosing to leave the situation. Once again, none of these helps to resolve the problem.

What does work is:

- Clarifying and agreeing the process of how you work together – what are your agreements around behavioural standards?
- Knowing criteria that is fair to help you make decisions
- Managing your boundaries and setting limits
- Learning about the drama triangle.

Each of these tools will enable you to explore and support your development of your confidence.



Madeleine is a parent of three children, in their early 20's and late teens and works as a People Skills Consultant. Madeleine is an accomplished workshop facilitator and long-time trainer of negotiation and influencing skills and managing difficult conversations.

She has been teaching assertiveness, resilience and stress management all her professional life.

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