

# DEAR MAN Prep



It is possible to share what you want in a calm and assertive manner. The technique “DEAR MAN” is a way to share what you need or want in a straightforward manner, that is respectful to both you and the person you are speaking with.

The key to this is to know WHAT IT IS THAT YOU WANT or NEED before you begin the conversation. Ask yourself, what is the purpose of the conversation, or what is the outcome that I need?

## **Prepping for the Conversation - Questions to Ponder**

What is the problem that you want to address? What is important about this to you?

What emotions do you have in response to the problem?

What did the other person actually do or say?

What are your assumptions about their motivations?

Do you have any other assumptions about them?

What can you do to make it comfortable for the other person to express themselves or feel respected?

What are some open-ended questions that you could ask?

How might you be contributing to the problem in some way?

# DEAR MAN Conversation



D



## Describe

Describe the current situation (if necessary). Stick to the facts. Tell the person exactly what you are reacting to.

E



## Express

Express your feelings and opinions about the situation. Don't assume that the other person knows how you feel.

A



## Assert

Assert yourself by asking for what you want or saying "No" clearly. Do not assume that others will figure out what you want. Remember that others can't read your mind.

R



## Reinforce

Reinforce (reward) the person ahead of time by explaining the positive effects of getting what you want or need. If necessary, also clarify the negative consequences of not getting what you want or need.

**M**

## Mindful

Mindful keep your focus on your goals. Maintain your position. Don't get distracted. Don't get off topic. You may need to speak like a "Broken Record" to get your point across. Keep repeating yourself and asking for what you want. You may need to say "No" and express your opinion over and over. Stay calm and focused. Ignore attacks or flared up emotions. If the other person attacks, threatens, or changes the subject, just repeat what it is that you want.

**A**

## Appear Confident

Appear confident, calm, and competent. Use a confident tone of voice and physical stance, make eye contact, and hold your head and chin up. Remember to breathe and stay grounded.

**N**

## Negotiate

Negotiate be willing to give to get. Offer and ask for other solutions to the problem. Know your threshold of what you are willing to be flexible on ahead of time, and remain open to the conversation. Listen to what the other person has to say.



# Considerations

## **While in the conversation - Listening and Responding**

- Be nice, respectful and treat the other person as an equal.
- Be an active and empathetic listener.
- Be sensitive to what's not being said. Try to imagine what the other person might be feeling or thinking.
- Show that you understand the other person's emotions, thoughts and behaviors based on their past experiences, even if you don't approve.
- Normalize the person's emotional reactions. Put yourself in the other person's shoes and acknowledge the validity given the facts of the situation.

## **Helpful Tips**

- Take a few nice deep slow breaths before you start and remember what type of tone you want to bring to the conversation.
- Give the other person the benefit of the doubt and assume good intentions.
- Be genuinely curious about the other person's point of view.
- Listen carefully, give the other person space to share, stay present. Don't start planning what you will say in response (if you do - you aren't listening).
- Bring in empathy for you and the other person.
- Take responsibility for your feelings.
- Acknowledge their feelings and validate what you hear. You don't need to agree with what they say, they need to know you heard. This can be done by summarizing what you heard and asking if you heard them right. "I heard you say....., do I have that right? Anything else?"
- Try to work on mutual goals so that both of you have your needs met.
- If you come to a wall in the conversation and no movement is happening, take a pause. Go for a walk, move your body, get some fresh air, schedule another time to restart the conversation.

## **Barriers to Asking for What you Want or Saying "No".**

Do any sound familiar? If so, can you create an alternative thought that would be more supportive to you and also true?

- If I ask for what I want or say 'no', the other person will be mad at me.
- I won't be able tolerate it if the other person says 'no' to my request.
- I don't want to be an aggressive person.
- I don't deserve to ask for what I want or say 'no'.
- I don't have a right to ask for what I want or say 'no'.