

### PART - The Communication Model

With communication between two people, assaultive behaviour can be viewed as a two-way pattern of communication that sets up a "victim" and an "aggressor". This can be done with either verbal or non-verbal forms of communication.

The importance of this perspective in observing assaultive incidents is that it helps us to see signs and signals of impending assault. Use of this model allows for early intervention in the assault cycle and may prevent violent expression. The following diagram can illustrate the relationship between various forms of communication that lead to violence or its prevention:



**Withdrawal:** Withdrawn forms of communication are non-verbal and include: stares, "dirty looks", gestures, isolation and self-destructive behaviours such as "cutting", drug overdoses, dangerous games, etc. Sometimes people cause others to avoid them through poor hygiene, grotesque appearance or muttering in angry tones.

**Passivity:** Passive forms of communication include: whining, expressions of feeling victimized, "poor me", blaming "you" messages, turning to others for problem solution, etc. An inability to say "no", even when saying "yes" may hurt, is also a hallmark of passivity.

**Aggression:** Aggressive forms of communication include: loud/angry blaming of others, yelling, name calling, hostile "you" messages, such as, "You'd better watch out." or "You'd better be careful or my buddies will come and get you."

**Assault:** Assaultive forms of communication are non-verbal and include hitting, kicking, throwing objects at people, etc.

**Assertion:** Assertive communication is the healthy, balance point between aggressive/assaultive patterns and withdrawn/passive patterns. Assertion is incompatible with communication at either end of the scale. Assertive communication includes: accepting responsibility rather than blaming or dumping hostility, using "I" messages, making and giving others choice, etc.

Assertive behaviour is incompatible with assault. If you communicate assertively, you are not as likely to provoke or become involved in assault.

Think about someone with whom you have had difficulty relating to - **do not use real names for confidentiality purposes**. Think about one of their behaviours that "pushes your buttons".

Think about how you would respond assertively.

source: *Professional Assault Response Training (PART) program*®

### Safety Talk Discussion

**Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!**