

## Guidelines for Relationship Effectiveness: Keeping the Relationship

A way to remember these skills is to remember the word “**GIVE**”:

(Be) Gentle  
(Act) Interested  
Validate  
(Use an) Easy Manner

- (Be) Gentle** Be courteous and temperate in your approach.
- No attacks*** No verbal or physical attacks. No hitting, clenching fists. Express anger directly.
- No threats*** No “manipulating” statements, no hidden threats. No “I’ll kill myself in you...” Tolerate a no to requests. Stay in the discussion even if it gets painful. Exit gracefully.
- No judging*** No moralizing. No “if you were a good person, you would...,” No “you should...,” “You shouldn’t...”
- (Act) Interested** LISTEN and be interested in the other person. Listen to the other person’s point of view, opinion, reasons for saying no, or reasons for making a request of you. Don’t interrupt, talk over, etc. Be sensitive to the other person’s desire to have the discussion at a later time. Be patient.
- Validate** Validate or ACKNOWLEDGE the other person’s feelings, wants, difficulties, and opinions about the situation. Be non-judgmental out loud: “I can understand how you feel, but...”, “I see that you are busy, and...”
- (Use an) Easy manner** Use a little humor. SMILE. Ease the person along. Be light-hearted. Wheedle. Use a “soft sell” over a “hard sell.” Be political.

## Guidelines for Self-Respect Effectiveness: Keeping Your Respect for Yourself

A way to remember this is the word “**FAST**”:

- (Be) Fair** Be fair to YOURSELF and to the OTHER person.
- (No) Apologies** No OVERLY apologetic behavior. No apologizing for being alive, for making a request at all. No apologizing for having an opinion, for disagreeing.
- Stick to values** Stick to YOUR OWN values.
- (be) Truthful** DON’T LIE, ACT HELPLESS when you are not, or EXAGGERATE. Don’t make up excuses.