

11 Core Personal Rights that

Empower you to Attain Fulfilment

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“The concept of individual rights is so new in human history that most men have not grasped it fully to this day”. Ayn Rand

Many of us seek personal and fulfilling relationships that enable us to be our self, express our self, say no to situations without feeling guilty, and to choose our priorities to live a life that is authentic. These are examples of personal rights that we as individuals possess.

Rights are things we can be, to do or to have, simply by being human. Personal rights are based on The Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a standard of concern for people. They are fundamental inalienable rights that we possess. Yet, many people are not aware of their rights, or do not value them for a range of individual reasons. Some people operate with myths that they have been brought up with which are ingrained into their thinking and behaviour, which may not always be appropriate. These myths prevent us from living our life to our full enjoyment, or from reaching our potential at work.

Applying these personal rights at work and in our personal life is the foundation of positive relationships that promotes effective communication and assertive behaviour. When we assert our self, we live a life of respect towards our self and others, to ensure that the rights of others are not violated in the process. This is the foundation of assertive behaviour that enables us to have positive and fulfilling relationships.

Assertion theory is based on the premise that every individual possesses basic rights. There are over 100 rights from which the following eleven rights have been derived.

1. The right to act in ways that promotes your dignity and self-respect

We act in ways that maintain our self-esteem to enhance our self, our wellbeing, and relationships. We let people know what behaviour is acceptable, and what is not.

2. The right to be treated with respect

We are treated as a person of intrinsic value and worth. We are listened to, are treated equally to others, and have our beliefs and ideas respected. We are validated and feel like we count.

3. The right to say no and not feel guilty

It is challenging to say ‘no’ to others, and many may feel bad, anxious or uncomfortable. By setting boundaries, we respect our self mentally, physically and emotionally. We take responsibility for our self, not how others react to the response.

4. The right to express your feelings

Some people struggle with expressing their feelings. There are usually ingrained reasons that go back to childhood that may have to do with self-esteem, perfectionism, personal protection or rejection. However, by expressing our feelings, we connect with others to talk through situations to build rapport and relationships.

5. The right to change your mind

With life in a constant stage of change, it is best to give yourself permission to change your mind. Few things are etched in concrete, so it is liberating to change and respond to the ‘here and now.’

6. The right to take your time to slow down and think

In a fast paced life, we are conditioned to believe that we need to hurry. However, it takes a toll on us. By taking time, we respect that we work to our time frame and energy level. We control the pace of our thinking and response. Our mind has the space to absorb information, produce creative thinking, and importantly reduce stress.

7. The right to ask for what you need

We ask for what we need to obtain the support of others. We can't do it on our own. Before you ask, become clear on what you need, and pick up the courage to ask for it respectfully and confidently. You may be surprised how helpful people can be.

8. The right to work at your human capacity

As individuals, we have our limits of what we can do. During busy periods we extend these. For personal wellbeing and to attain life fulfilment, it is important to balance work and life, to leave time for family, friends, hobbies, exercise or time to just 'be.'

9. The right to ask for information

As we all have limited information, an important life skill is to obtain further information by asking questions to clarify information or develop our thinking about a situation. Having the correct information will guide you to make accurate decisions.

10. The right to make mistakes (as long as others are not harmed).

As humans, there will be times that we make mistakes. We become tired, we are subjective with our thinking, and have cognitive limitations. Unfortunately, it results in making mistakes. If these are *non-deliberate*, instead of being self-critical, we can have an attitude to learning from mistakes. Through mistakes, we can grow and develop to learn the 'right' way.

11. The right to choose how to spend your time

We need to make decisions about how we spend our time based on our priorities and what is important to us. Our life is unique to us, and we are responsible to claim our life as having meaning for our self.

By understanding and respecting our personal rights and that of others, it results in greater self-confidence, positive relationships and a life of fulfilment.

How do these personal rights assist you in your work and personal life? Please feel free to share your experiences and insights.



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