CARING FOR CAREGIVERS SERIES

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION:
THE BALANCING ACT

Presenters: Dr. Shivajan Sivapalan, M.D., C.C.F.P.
&
Kira Vimalakanthan, M.A.

Autism ONTARIO
Communication Styles

- Passive
- Passive-Aggressive
- Aggressive
- ASSERTIVE
Passive VS. Aggressive

PASSIVE

OTHERS’ NEEDS

YOUR NEEDS

AGGRESSIVE

OTHERS’ NEEDS

YOUR NEEDS
Passive-Aggressive Communication Style

• “That’s fine with me, but don’t be surprised if someone else gets mad”
Assertive Communication Style

Others’ Needs  Your Needs
AGGRESSIVE

High Openness to Communication

Your Needs

“I win, you lose”

PASSIVE

Low Openness to Communication

Others’ Needs

“You win, I lose”

A “WIN-WIN”
STRATEGIES

Actively Listen
Learn to say no
Voice your needs
Rehearse
Body Language
Benefits of being Assertive

- Improve self-confidence/self-esteem
- Insight into your feelings
- Improve communication
- Create win-win situations
- Improve decision-making skills
- Empowering
Cultural Context

• May have differing values around assertive communication
• May exacerbate the problem
• Might be met with hostility
Culturally Responsive Strategies

- Situation-specific
- Acknowledge cultural norms
- Preface statements
- Validation

CAREGIVERS LEARNING THROUGH SHARED EXPERIENCES
CARES will teach you

• How to effectively communicate and be assertive
• The skills to help balance your needs with the needs of your family