The purpose of this project is to give you a chance to improve your assertive/responsive behavior and recognize when to more deliberately and sparingly use aggressive/nonassertive behavior. This assignment is for all students to complete. This will support you in being more conscious as well as being able to describe the ineffective and effective behaviors. Some possible relationships to consider may include a parent, a sibling, a friend, a significant other, a roommate, a co-worker, supervisor, subordinate. Look for conflicts, inability to express your feelings, inability to say no or to stand up for yourself, defensiveness when receiving feedback/criticism, influencing others. These are just a few of the more common areas we find ourselves reacting in a more aggressive &/or nonassertive manner. No doubt, these behaviors have become patterns and this is the opportunity to make some changes.

Each stage is worth 25 points, accumulating to 100 points. Stages 1, 2, 4 must be typed, double-spaced, error free, and turned in on time. If the content meets the requirements of the assigned stage, it will be valued at 25 points. Anything less will result in a reduced score, e.g., typing errors, grammar & content issues, and not turning it in on time. Stage 3 will be done in class and your communication will be evaluated in a role-play situation.

STAGE 1 includes the following:
1. The history/background of the relationship you are choosing.
2. The various behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal that you recognize as ineffective, negative, nonproductive. Please be specific with your behavioral descriptions—use real examples to assist you in explaining what it is that you do.
3. Discuss how and why the behavior didn’t work and doesn’t currently work.
4. Discuss how it makes you feel and what it is doing to the relationship.
5. Discuss what you want to do differently—how would you really like to verbally and nonverbally communicate with this relationship? What would your behavior look like? Please note: the more specific you are with this goal statement, the more you will recognize other choices to make when you are communicating with this individual. The more abstract statements do not say much about who, what, where, when, etc. AND remember, this is about your reactions and you potentially changing, NOT the relationship you are choosing to use for this project.

STAGE 2 includes the following: over a few weeks time period (see syllabus due dates), you will
1. Record a communication log that describes your communication scenarios with this relationship you have chosen for this project.
2. Each encounter will describe when, where, the verbal & nonverbal responses that you used and include the result of the interaction, consequences, preferred behavior if appropriate, and any other observations you have about your choices. You need to capture at least 4 interactions with this individual. If you are getting close to the due date and are not communicating with him/her, you will probably have to initiate the conversations. Realize the minimum is 4 encounters from the time the project began until Stage 2 is due.

3. The final paragraph of this stage is an overall observation of your behavior during these encounters. What do you see?—the triggers, the patterns, the challenges, your commitment level. This will clarify your focus and whether you are on track in achieving your behavioral goal(s).

**STAGE 3** will be conducted in class. You will need to prepare some notes. I will give you a better idea when we arrive at this stage. We will break into small groups and do a behavior rehearsal. This will prepare you for the final stage.

**STAGE 4** includes the following:

1. You will implement the conversation you practiced in Stage 3 in a very conscious way, using your new and improved assertive/responsive behaviors.
2. Then you will write this all up and include the discussion of what happened, how it went, the reactions, and any essential information to paint a complete picture. Discuss both nonverbal and verbal.
3. Then discuss the value of this assignment overall. What did you learn? Was it worth it?
4. Finally, imagine where you might use this project again in your life to continue improving your behavior in a mindful and more effective way.