**HELLO, DAY NINE!**

**SELF-ADVOCATING**

Imagine Dave asks his property manager to help. He makes a polite, indirect request.

**“Please, can you come to my apartment? Some tiles are broken. Can you send somebody to repair them?”**

He does everything right. But, the property manager says no thanks. Or ignores him. Or says he can’t help for two weeks…

…then what does Dave do?

**Discussion.**

“Self-advocacy”: getting your needs or interests met.

Sometimes, it is easy to get your needs met. You ask for help and people help you.

Sometimes, it isn’t so easy. Sometimes, people don’t want to help because it is “too much effort” or “too expensive”, etc. If they can, they will “do the bare minimum” or ignore your needs.

Then, in the U.S., you have to self-advocate. You have to “stand up for yourself”.

Here are some parts of self-advocacy in U.S. culture. In your group, rank them from 1-6, #1 being most important to do. Discuss why it might be important. Is it different in other cultures? Are you comfortable doing this?

- know your rights - don’t give up - plan a strategy

- get support - express yourself clearly

- stay calm and polite, but assertive

Be ready to share:

1. Our group’s #1 and #2 are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_...
2. This style of self-advocacy is similar to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ culture/family/life because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_... It’s different because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_...

*self-advocacy is influenced by personality importance of community*

*in US, push kids to be independent parent make most decisions about kid’s life*

**Resource to know your rights (in many languages!):**

<https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/your-rights-as-a-tenant-in-washington#c>

**Helpful language frames.**

<https://www.londonschool.com/blog/5-tips-polite-and-diplomatic-language/>

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| **Very direct** | **Softer** | **Reasoning** |
| I disagree. | Yes, but… | It seems more understanding. |
| That’s a bad idea. | I don’t think that’s such a good idea. | It uses more positive words. |
| No, that’s wrong. | Sorry, but I don’t really agree. | Using sorry sounds more polite. |
| I don’t like it. | I *just* don’t *really* **prefer** it. | Adding little words softens it. |
| You don’t understand. | Maybe I’m not explaining myself well. | It avoids saying ‘you’ and seems less aggressive. |

**Problem-solving.**

Imagine Dave’s conversation with his property manager went differently. Then, Dave has to problem solve. In each alternative conversation, two options are assertive but polite. One option is a bit rude. One option is polite but passive.

How could he respond to assert himself? Why did you choose that option?

**Alternative conversations:**

1. **Dave: “I have a problem with my fridge door. Would you like to see and then fix it, please?”**

PM: What is the problem?

Dave: My fridge is leaking.

PM: Have you tried changing the temperature?

Dave: Yes, I have changed it. It doesn’t help.

PM: Okay, well try changing it again. Come back tomorrow if it is still leaking.

1. Dave: I’m sorry, but I don’t think that’s necessary. I know changing the temperature doesn’t help. (M)
2. Dave: I just told you that doesn’t help. I want to fill out a request now.
3. Dave: I can change it again, but I still want to fill out a maintenance request now, please. (G)(S)(L)
4. Dave: Okay, I will try that. Thank you.

aggressive (1) – assertive (2) – passive (1) Choose your favorite option. Explain why.

1. **“Hello. Can you help me, please? My central heating doesn’t work. Can you send a repairman?”**

PM: Hello. What time can maintenance come to your apartment?  
Dave: I’m free after work, around 5 pm.

PM: Hmm, maintenance is very busy in the evenings. The next available appointment time is next week at 7 pm.

1. Dave: No, that is too late. I want you to come tomorrow. What time is available tomorrow?
2. Dave: I understand, but I need this fixed now. My food doesn’t stay cold. Could they come on Saturday?
3. Dave: Okay, I understand. What day next week?
4. Dave: I don’t think that will work for me. Is it possible for them to come early in the morning?