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# The efficacy of verbal assertiveness training on reducing risk of sexual assault

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THE EFFICACY OF VERBAL ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING ON REDUCING RISK  
OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

by

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Bachelor of Arts, University of North Dakota, 2006  
Master of Arts, University of North Dakota, 2008

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements


for the degree of

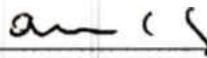
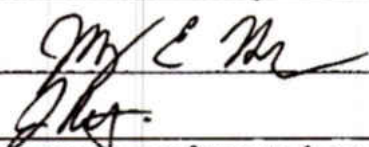
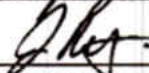
Doctor of Philosophy

Grand Forks, North Dakota  
December  
2011


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This dissertation, submitted by Holly M. Rusinko in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

  
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This dissertation meets the standards for appearance, conforms to the style and format requirements of the Graduate School of the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

  
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## ABSTRACT

Sexual assault is a common problem faced by women. Research has suggested 1 in 4 women will experience a sexual assault at some point during their life (Casey & Nuris, 2006; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998; Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000). College females are one of the highest risk groups for experiencing a sexual assault. Currently, self defense courses are offered on college campuses. Self defense courses have proven to reduce depression and anxiety as well as increase a participant's self esteem (Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). The current study assessed the efficacy of a novel assertiveness training program on reducing sexual assault risk. The current study had 54 female, undergraduate participants who were designated to an experimental or wait-list control condition. Participants who were given the assertiveness training program were compared to those who were not. The current study found the assertiveness training program increased general assertiveness and increased positive communication in romantic relationships. This finding has important implications for the future of sexual assault prevention programming offered on college campuses.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal relationships are common elements in human lives. More specifically, societies promote romantic interpersonal relationships that can occasionally include negative elements such as domestic violence and sexual assaults. Women have been socialized to be more passive in relationships and not assert their wants and desires with their partners; this may lead to unwanted sexual contact. Recent studies have found the percentage of women having reported experiencing some form of sexual victimization (sexual assault, molestation, rape) during their lifetime ranges anywhere between 18 and 44 percent (e.g. Casey & Nuris, 2006; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998; Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000). Further, incidents of completed rape are reported by 15% of women (Rozee & Koss, 2001). Almost half of the female population reports experiencing a sexual assault but only 15% are being reported to the police making sexual assault a highly underreported crime. The reason a woman does not report a sexual assault varies from person to person; one common reason for underreporting is a victim's fear of not being believed (Grub & Harrower, 2009). Although women report fear of not being believed, recent statistics from the Bureau of Justice Statistics suggest the number of incidents reported to the police has increased 2-3 times in the past ten years. This means

10-15% of sexual assaults are being reported to the police (BJS, 2005); this number is still low but it is a positive increase from previous statistics.

There are two commonly discussed types of sexual assault; those perpetrated by a stranger and those perpetrated by an acquaintance. Most sexual assaults reported to the police are stranger assaults; however the number of acquaintance sexual assaults reported to the police is on the rise. Stranger sexual assaults account for 7.7% of the all sexual assaults (Gavey, 1991). The most common sexual assault scenario involves an individual known to the victim. Koss (1988) found 84% of sexual assaults involved a man known to the woman. Statistically speaking, an acquaintance sexual assault is much more common of an occurrence than a stranger assault. Even though most sexual assaults are perpetrated by an acquaintance most women fear, and spend time preparing themselves for, an assault from a stranger (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1997). Since women are preparing themselves for a stranger attack, the risks associated with an acquaintance perpetrator are not given much attention. Nurius (2000) suggested women have beliefs about where harm is coming from and how vulnerable to that harm they are based on how they interpret the environmental cues. She argues that women experience a discrepancy in their cognitive processing when it comes to social interactions with male acquaintances. When in a social situation, such as a party or date, the woman's risk perception is competing with her desire for intimacy, friendship and entertainment making the sexual advances of an acquaintance perpetrator viewed as sexual interest, rather than sexual aggression, in the eyes of the woman (Nurius, 2000).

In a college environment, social interactions such as dating and parties occur on a regular basis. This makes college age woman vulnerable to an acquaintance sexual

assault. Koss (1988) identified characteristics of a “typical” sexual assault for college women. In college samples, she found the sexual assault most often took place in the home of one of the parties and is typically preceded by consensual kissing. The assault typically involves one perpetrator, who does not use a weapon, but instead holds the victim down or twists her arm; the victim feels she has emphasized her non-consent clearly and will continue to resist through reasoning or physically struggling (Koss, 1988). Even when a woman has identified a situation as an acquaintance sexual assault, she may not respond in as effective of a manner as she would if it were a stranger (Vanzile-Tamsen, Testa & Livingston, 2005). Nurius, Norris, Young, Graham and Gaylord (2000) examined victimization incidents from college undergraduates. Their research found women are more likely to resist in an acquaintance scenario when the perpetrator uses physical force and she is not concerned about maintaining the relationship. Women responded in a diplomatic manner when they were self-conscious about their response and the perpetrator used verbal coercion rather than physical force (Nurius et al., 2000). The findings of this study suggest unwanted sexual advances from a dating partner or acquaintance are viewed as less forceful than a stranger; a woman will use more diplomatic responses. Women may also be more reluctant to be assertive with an acquaintance because they want to maintain the relationship or not offend the man (Livingston & Testa, 2000; Norris et al., 1996). Women are not given tools, such as communication and boundary setting skills, to prepare them for situations involving an individual they know. While ultimately the perpetrator is to blame for the assault, research on how to give women helpful tools to assist in self-protection is an important aspect of sexual assault prevention.

Research has focused on risk factors associated with being a perpetrator and victim of sexual assault. Ultimately the perpetrator is to blame for the sexual assault and sexual assault interventions need to focus on identifying perpetrators and stopping them before they act. The current study, however, is focused on giving tools to women that will help to protect them from sexual assaults until we can have interventions that efficiently identify perpetrators of sexual assaults. There are a variety of risk factors associated with being a victim of sexual assault including a previous history of sexual assault (e.g. Miller, Markman & Handley, 2007; Tjaden & Thoenes, 2000), acceptance of gender role stereotypes (e.g. Weis & Borges, 1973; Koss & Dinero, 1989) and alcohol (Abbey et al., 1996).

Women who have been previously victimized are at a higher risk for experiencing a sexual assault again (Miller, Markman & Handley, 2007). The traumatic experiences hypothesis is one explanation for the higher risk of a woman who has been previously sexually assaulted being sexually assaulted in the future. The hypothesis asserts women who have previously experienced violence (i.e. a previous sexual assault) may be at a higher risk for revictimization because they have a difficult time identifying the risk cues (Koss & Dinero, 1989). A recent study offers another possible explanation as to why some women who have been previously sexually assaulted are at a greater risk for revictimization. The study found that the degree of self-blame associated with a sexual assault that occurred in adolescence predicted revictimization over a 4.2 month follow-up period (Miller, Markman & Handley, 2007). Miller, Markman & Handley (2007) recruited 167 undergraduate female students who reported one or more sexual assault experiences resulting in intercourse since the age of fourteen on the Sexual Experiences

Survey (Koss & Oros, 1982). Women who have higher levels of self blame had a higher risk for being revictimized within the 4.2 months between the researcher's two administered screenings due to have a diminished ability to identify cues associated with sexual assault (Miller, Markman & Handley, 2007).

Additionally, research has shown that assertiveness is lower in women who have been victimized before which may be another reason they are experiencing future sexual assaults (Katz, May, Sorensen & DelTosta, 2010; Vogel & Himelein, 1995). Personality traits, such as assertiveness, have been examined as a possible risk factor for experiencing a sexual assault. Research suggests that low assertiveness is a product of victimization rather than a predictor of an assault (Vogel & Himelein, 1995). Katz and colleagues (2010) found women who have higher self blame and lower sexual refusal assertiveness after the initial sexual assault are at a greater risk for becoming a victim again. Their research suggests this is especially true for women at the college level (Katz, et al., 2010). Teaching a woman to know her response was appropriate to a sexual assault, as well as teaching her the sexual assault is not her fault, may be a beneficial course of action in reducing the amount of self blame that occurs after an attack.

Women also need to be trained on what their rights are as a woman in order to reduce adherence to rape myths and the traditional female role. Rape myths are stereotyped, prejudicial or faulty beliefs about the rape itself, the victim or the perpetrator of the rape (Burt, 1980). Rape myths are often used as explanations for the man's behavior of sexual aggression toward the victims (i.e. the woman may be blamed for the assault based on the way she was dressed, etc.). Individuals who are high in their rape myth acceptance will accept the use of force in their relationships and believe that sexual

assault is to be expected in certain situations, thus allowing these individuals to have an easier time blaming the victim (Morrison, 2001). The acceptance of rape myths has been associated with higher rates of victimization in women. Adherence to rape myths may be directly related to how closely an individual identifies with their perceived gender role. Weis and Borges (1973) suggest women who adhere closely to traditional female roles and accept rape myths are at a greater risk for sexual assault victimization. Koss and Dinero (1989) called these women "safe victims" because women who adhere to traditional female roles expect a man to be dominant; they act passively toward men and do not pick up on the cues that their current situation will lead to a sexual assault. In contrast, some studies on adherence to gender roles have failed to find differences between victims and non-victims on gender role beliefs and rape supportive beliefs (Koss, 1985; Runtz, 1987: as cited in Koss & Dinero, 1989). Although it is unclear if adherence to gender roles places a woman at a higher risk for sexual assault it may be beneficial for females, whether a previous victim or non-victim, to learn how to assert both positive and negative emotions to their partner.

Sexual assaults that involve alcohol are common, especially among the college population. Research has been conducted on the differences between sexual assaults that involve alcohol consumption and those that do not. Sexual assaults that involve alcohol consumption result in a higher rate of sexual assault between a man and a woman who do not know each other very well (i.e. casual dates or acquaintances) whereas sexual assaults that do not involve alcohol use typically happen between people who know each other well (i.e. friends or have steadily dated for at least a month: Abbey et al., 2001).

Researchers assert that alcohol use is linked directly to sexual assault by a) impairing the



woman's ability to identify risk factors early in the situation b) making men more aggressive c) lowering inhibitions and d) impairing a man's ability to understand the woman's verbal communication (e.g. Abbey et al., 2001). The current study focused on risk factors related to the woman's ability to identify a dangerous situation early on as well as ambiguous verbal communication that may be misunderstood.

Perpetrators of sexual assault often adhere to the rape myth that women who consume alcohol are more promiscuous than women who do not drink; thus they are viewed as targets for sexual aggression (Abbey et al. 1996). This perception is how some men view women but is this perception true? Characteristics of victims, as highlighted by Abbey et al. (2001) have found that female victims are much more likely to have been exposed to sexual assault in childhood and may consume heavy amounts of alcohol in order to deal with the sexual situation they are placed in by the perpetrator. As highlighted before, some men view women who drink heavily as easy, if not deserving, targets of sexual assault and the women drink because they are ambivalent about the sexual situation they are faced with. This is a vicious cycle that propagates the continuation of sexual assault; however, through the use of prevention programming, the cycle can be examined and broken. Sexual assault prevention programming is aimed at teaching women safe drinking habits (i.e. keeping control of their beverage at all times and telling friends where you are) that will reduce their likelihood of being sexually assaulted. In order to assist women in gaining knowledge of self protection and assertion, classes such as IMPACT which is a self defense course offered on some college campuses, assertiveness training and other self defense classes have been offered throughout the country to increase a woman's assertive behavior.

Other habits that are addressed in self defense courses and assertiveness training courses are the communication tendencies women have in romantic relationships. Researchers have specifically examined two communication tactics utilized in sexual relationships: token resistance and compliance. Token resistance is defined as a woman saying no to sex even though she fully intends to engage in the sexual activity (saying no when she means yes; Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988; Osman & Davis, 1999; Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1994). O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1994) expand on the idea of token resistance by defining what it is not. Token resistance is not when a woman indicates an unwillingness to engage in sexual activities she does not want to engage in nor is it when a woman indicates an unwillingness to engage in sexual activities because she is confused or uncertain about her desire to engage in the sexual activity (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1994). The way in which our society views traditional gender roles plays a part in the incidence of sexual assault. The traditional sexual script dictates the woman should not act very interested in sex and should resist the sexual advances of the man. The man should then continue the sexual advances despite the resistance of the woman (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988; Check & Malamuth, 1983; Schur, 1983) until the woman acquiesces to the man's advances. It is understandable the research indicates many men do not believe a woman when she says no to sex (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). Men believe that women are engaging in token resistance instead of taking the female's resistance to the sexual activity seriously.

Assertiveness training programs and self-defense courses can decrease how often token resistance is used by teaching women to talk openly, with their potential sexual partner, about how far she is comfortable taking the relationship physically and the use of

birth control. Krahe, Scheinberger-Olwig and Koplin (2000) investigated how ambiguous sexual communication (i.e. token resistance and compliance) affects the likelihood of a woman becoming sexually victimized (defined as unwanted sexual contacts). The authors had a total of 526 sexually experienced participants of both genders filling out questionnaires on their use of token resistance and compliance. Of the female respondents, 51.6% reported having used token resistance at least one time in their life and 33.2% reported compliance (Krahe, Scheinberger-Olwig & Koplin, 2000). The authors found this type of behavior increases the physical aggressiveness of the man and greatly increases the likelihood of a more severe sexual assault (Krahe, Scheinberger-Olwig & Koplin, 2000). Token resistance is an important consideration when putting together a self-defense course or sexual assertiveness training session. Women need to be taught to deviate from the typical sexual script and communicate on a regular basis their wishes and desires when it comes to sexual contact.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to distinguish between token resistance and compliance. Compliance is when a woman says “yes” but she means “no” (Krahe, Scheinberger-Olwig & Koplin, 2000; O’Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998; Shotland & Hunter, 1995). An aspect of compliance is bargaining. Bargaining involves a woman who does not want the sexual activity but, for any number of reasons (e.g. fear of the man not liking her, confusion, etc.), is unable to say “no” directly. Instead, the woman agrees to a lower level of sexual activity but indicates wanting to stop after that (e.g., “I’m not really in the mood. We could kiss for a while but I don’t want anything else.”). When the man pushes for further activity, the woman may acquiesce again with new limits (e.g. after kissing, the man places his hand on the woman’s chest. The woman says “No I don’t want to do

that. Well, alright, but only on top of my shirt and then I want to stop.”). Previous research has focused on compliance. Shotland and Hunter (1995) found that 38% of their female participants reported compliance and other research studies have found similar percentages (O’Sullivan and Allgeier, 1998). Compliance and token resistance are common forms of communication used in sexual relationships that need to be taken into consideration when teaching a self-defense or assertiveness training program to women.

### Assertiveness Defined

Assertiveness has been defined as an individual’s tendency to defend, stand up for and act according to his/her own personal interest, values, preferences and goals (Ames & Flynn, 2006). Other definitions of assertiveness have focused more on personality characteristics such as independence, dominance, leadership and control (Twenge, 2001). The idea of assertiveness originated from Wolpe (1958) who not only created the concept of assertiveness but also formalized assertion training. Wolpe (1973) defines assertiveness as the proper expression of any emotion other than anxiety toward another person. The expressed emotions can be positive or negative; this is in contrast to how most people think of assertive behavior. For the purposes of this analysis, assertiveness will be viewed as Wolpe (1973) defined it. The theories on the underlying causes of assertiveness are limited. Wolpe (1958) believed that nonassertive behavior resulted from a punishment of past assertive behavior and simultaneous conditioning of an anxiety response to cues related to assertiveness. Although much of the early research suggested the presence of a neurotic anxiety is what inhibits the assertive response in a majority of cases, it has also been acknowledged that some individuals have never had the chance to

learn the appropriate assertive response or have been modeled nonassertive responses such as passive or aggressive communication (Galassi & Galassi, 1978).

In conceptualizing assertive behavior, Galassi and Galassi (1978) suggest assertive behavior is a product of behaviors, persons and situations within a culture or subculture. It is important when examining assertive behavior to consider all elements of the person going through the assertion training program. Historically, men and women have had different behaviors modeled and reinforced. Men tend to have assertive role models in their fathers and other male figures in their life where as women may not have an assertive female role model. In recent years there has been a push for young women to become more assertive but these women typically grew up with nonassertive modeling and reinforcement for not directly stating their feelings to others. People assume women can just start being assertive, both generally and sexually, without any training in how to do it.

As stated before, men are historically more assertive than women. Also linked to assertion is status. In a meta-analysis, Twenge (2001) identified men and high status people as the type of people more likely to be assertive. Assertiveness was assessed in the meta-analysis by using the Rathus Assertiveness Scale (1973) and the College Self-Expression Scale (Twenge, 2001). Status has been linked to the likelihood to exhibit assertive behavior by several researchers (Eagley, 1983; Eagley & Steffen, 1986; Eagley & Wood, 1982; Miller, 1986; Slater, 1970 as cited in Twenge, 2001). Twenge's (2001) results are important in our understanding of who is exhibiting assertive behavior and what factors are contributing to those findings. High status is often associated with a man which is a contributing factor as to why men tend to display assertive behavior more

often than women. Assertiveness is viewed differently across genders. Gender role stereotyping has led men and women to act in very different ways interpersonally. Men are expected to be dominant, know what they want and be vocal about their wants and needs. Women, on the other hand, are expected to be more submissive, not speak their mind too much and be compliant with what is going on around them. When an individual violates society's gender role stereotype, society tends to have an initially adverse reaction to the violation. Women, especially, have learned they should not be assertive which can have adverse effects on all areas of life: work, romantic relationships, family and friendships. Through the use of meta-analytical techniques, Twenge (2001) found that women's assertiveness varies with their status and role in society at the time. Women still do not have the same status as men in society today suggesting women are still not able to engage in assertive behavior because it is not expected.

When it comes to sexual situations there are two types of assertiveness to be considered: verbal assertiveness and physical assertiveness. Verbal assertiveness focuses on how individuals vocalize their needs and desires in a variety of situations. For example, a woman who is able to openly discuss the use of contraceptives with her sexual partner is exhibiting verbal assertiveness. Research on the use of verbal assertiveness by women in sexual situations has found that verbal assertiveness is the most common avenue a woman uses in first trying to stop her partner's advances (Ullman & Knight, 1993; Masters et al., 2006). Ullman and Knight (1993) examined the resistance strategies used by women who have been raped or avoided rape by a stranger by looking at the police reports or testimonies of 274 women. The resistance strategies examined by Ullman and Knight (1993) include physically fighting back, fleeing, screaming, pleading,

crying or reasoning. Statistical analysis of the types of resistance used by the women found that women who fought back forcefully were more likely to avoid a rape by a stranger although they were more likely to sustain an injury in the process. Women who screamed or fled when confronted with a weapon experienced less severe sexual abuse by the perpetrator in a stranger scenario. The women who were more at risk for physical injury were the women who pleaded, cried or attempted to reason indoors with the stranger (Ullman & Knight, 1993). The verbal resistance taught in IMPACT classes is effective in fending off a stranger rape; however, this does not tell us about how effective the use of physical resistance or screaming is in an acquaintance situation.

Zoucha-Jensen and Coyne (1993) researched how resistance strategies used by women affected the outcome of their sexual assault. The authors used data from the Omaha Nebraska police department to obtain data on 150 women who were sexual assaulted in a year. The resistance levels exhibited by the women were divided into 5 categories for the purpose of the analysis: no resistance, non-forceful verbal resistance (pleading, crying), forceful verbal resistance (screaming and/or yelling), physical resistance and fleeing (running away from the situation: Zoucha-Jensen & Coyne, 1993). The most frequently used resistance level was physical resistance (44.3%); also fleeing, forceful verbal resistance and physical resistance were associated with avoiding the sexual assault where as no resistance or non-forceful verbal resistance were associated with being sexually assaulted (Zoucha-Jensen & Coyne, 1993). The findings of this study suggest forceful verbal resistance is just as effective as physical resistance. This type of verbal resistance is often focused on in self-defense courses and can be very effective. The verbal assertiveness that is taught in self-defense classes is often more effective for

stranger situations. Women are taught to yell “No” at their attacker, which in a stranger situation is highly effective; however may not be the verbal approach many women would think of using with an acquaintance. Many authors have suggested the use of verbally assertive behavior early in the dating situation is associated with an overall lower risk of sexual assault. Verbal assertiveness that is used later in the dating scenario may be viewed as too late resulting in the victim being viewed as more to blame for her situation. Therefore, general verbal assertiveness skills (as used in many areas of one’s life) can lower one’s risk of being assaulted in acquaintance situations.

In a recent study, Bradley and Rusinko (2008) have conducted structured interviews with women who qualify as being sexually assaulted based on the Sexual Experiences Survey by Koss and Oros (1982). The women in this study gave a narrative of the sexual experience they had involving unwanted sexual intercourse with men (Bradley & Rusinko, 2008). Although a few women had experienced physical violence (i.e. being hit, physically restrained or thrown into something) a majority of the women reported the sexual experience as being due to the continued pressure of their boyfriend of the time telling them “how good it will feel” or threatening to end the relationship if they would not engage in the sexual activity (Bradley & Rusinko, 2008). The women reported giving in to the sexual act because they felt it would be easier and “it wasn’t that big of a deal” even though the women who qualify as being sexually assaulted had higher scores related to post-traumatic stress, depression and anxiety (Bradley & Rusinko, 2008). The findings of this study suggest women are experiencing sexual assaults that are not overtly threatening where the cues to engage in resistance behavior are much different than what is trained in self-defense. With alcohol being involved in many of the



acquaintance scenarios where cues are already being missed, it is important women become trained for dealing with a potential sexual assault in a variety of contexts and the cues associated with them.

The other type of assertiveness women use in sexual situations is physical assertiveness. Physical assertiveness focuses on the body language of the individual. How a person stands, how much personal space they take up, the amount of eye contact they make, etc. are all related to physical assertiveness. In research studies, women report they will use physically assertive behavior if their verbal assertions do not stop their partner's unwelcome advances (Ullman & Knight, 1993; Masters et al., 2006). There are two types of training programs in the literature that are discussed in relation to assertive behavior: self defense courses and assertiveness training programs. Although the two types of programs are often lumped together in the literature, there are important differences between the programs. Physical assertiveness is typically placed in the self defense category.

### Self-Defense

Self defense training assists women in becoming physically and psychologically prepared to handle a potential assault (Follansbee, 1982). Cummings (1992) identified what are considered to be main goals of self-defense courses for women. These goals include (1) identifying reality and myths in relation to sexual assault and violence against women; (2) giving information to women about the basic attitudes and attributes of self defense that include assertiveness, self-reliance, confidence and physical fitness; (3) learning how to identify threatening and high risk situations; (4) skill building that utilizes mental, verbal and physical self defense techniques; (5) teaching of strategies for

specific situation they may encounter (i.e. campus situations if the course is being taught to college students); and (6) spreading knowledge about resources available for women who have been or may be abused or assaulted (Cummings, 1992). It appears the main goals of self-defense training relates to the spreading of knowledge and preparing women to fend off an attack. These are important skills for women to have in order to assist in female empowerment in relation to their own safety.

Self defense training can be conducted in a variety of ways including brief single-session classes, "Model Mugging" (involves the padded attackers), semester long college courses and multi-year martial arts classes (Brecklin, 2008). With such a variety of courses that are offered, self defense training is able to be fit into any busy woman's schedule yet self defense training is still not readily available to women across the country or even on most college campuses (Cummings, 1992). Women are not entering into the self defense courses even though there is great reward for them related to self protection and increased assertiveness and awareness of sexual situations. It is possible that women do not view the acquaintance sexual assault as one that requires self defense courses. As stated previously, women are typically raped and sexually assaulted by men they know (whether it be friend or romantic partner) and may be viewing self defense training as a way to fend off stranger attacks even though the self defense training would assist women in a variety of sexual situations.

The assertiveness that is taught in self defense training is primarily physical, nonverbal assertiveness and is typically embedded in self defense courses that are offered to women in order to help protect themselves against threats or intimidations they may face. Literature on the effectiveness of self defense classes has found the women who

take the classes are prepared mentally and physically for potential assaults through the use of role playing, discussion and simulation exercises (Follansbee, 1982; Cummings, 1992; Peretz, 1991; Thompson, 1991, Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). The training received by women in self defense training is beneficial to not only allow women to feel safe but it has also increased the mental health of the women who have completed the training. The women who complete self defense classes have shown increases in: assertiveness, self-esteem, self-efficacy, self defense skills, physical dominance and decreases in anxiety, depression, hostility, fear and avoidance behaviors (Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). A majority of the research on self defense classes indicates positive behavioral and psychological effects for the women who take them but the question remains as to whether self defense can reduce sexual assaults.

Using a national sample of 3,187 college females, Brecklin and Ullman (2005) examined how self defense classes or assertiveness training relate to the experiences of sexual assault among women in the study. The results of their study found women with previous self-defense or assertiveness training were more likely to experience an attempted, rather than completed, sexual assault than women with no previous training; this implies the women with the previous training were able to prevent their situation from escalating compared to the women with no previous training (Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). Brecklin and Ullman (2005) also found the women with previous self defense training were more likely to credit their resistance as the reason that the assault did not happen. This result suggests that the women who have taken self defense are more aware of the situation they are in and feel confident enough to use the techniques learned in the training classes. The findings also suggest women who have taken self defense courses

are able to reduce their likelihood of being assaulted in acquaintance rape situations which is not only positive for the reduction of sexual assaults but also the psychological well being of the women (Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). Women who take self-defense courses report feeling more self-efficacy related to their ability to handle themselves in response to an attack suggesting these women would be better able to defend themselves against an attack (Brecklin, 2008).

Orchowski, Gidycz and Raffle (2008) evaluated a self-defense program's efficacy for reducing sexual assaults. The program that was evaluated in this study was a revision of a self defense program designed by Gidycz, Rich, Orchowski, King and Miller (2006). The original study was designed for two sessions where participants learned sexual assault risk factors and self-protective behaviors (Gidycz, et al., 2006). The self defense course was effective in increasing women's self protective behaviors and reducing self blame for women who were sexually assaulted; there was no difference in sexual assault rates between the participants who took the self defense course and those that did not (Gidycz, et al., 2006). The self defense course was revised to be longer and include more information on asserting oneself resulting in a decrease in the rate of sexual assaults experienced by women who took the self defense course (Orchowski, 2008). It is clear self-defense training has many immediate positive benefits for the women that participate. These benefits include increased self-esteem, assertiveness, decreased anxiety about future attacks and overall confidence although more research needs to be conducted about the long-term effects or benefits of self-defense training.

An important aspect in evaluating assertiveness training and self-defense classes is related to the type of women enrolling in these courses. The motivation to take a self-

defense or assertiveness training course may only occur when a woman has previously experienced a sexual assault or has felt taken advantage of by someone. If this is the case, then self-defense classes and assertiveness training should be viewed as a way to break the cycle of revictimization. In a correlational study of participation in self-defense and assertiveness training courses for sexual assault survivors, Brecklin and Ullman (2004) found women may choose to enroll in such a course when their past resistance was unable to prevent the sexual assault. Women who were likely to enroll in the self defense training post-assault also were more likely to have experienced aggression from the offender suggesting that more severe attacks lead women to seek self-defense training after they have been assaulted (Brecklin & Ullman, 2004). These correlational findings are accurate considering women tend to match the level of aggression the offender takes part in with their resistance levels (Brecklin & Ullman, 2004). It is important to understand this last point. The typical sexual assault is between acquaintances or established dating partners where verbal threat of physical harm is not the prevalent form of aggression exhibited by the offender. With the multitude of positive changes that occur from taking a self defense course, the availability of self defense needs to increase across the country and self defense training may need to be address different issues to assist women in understanding the importance of becoming more sexual assertive with established partners and acquaintances as well as being prepared to handle an attack from a stranger.

Assertiveness is a built in component of self-defense. In order to engage in the activities being taught in a self-defense class, women will need to have a certain amount of assertiveness that goes along with it. In an analysis of self-defense classes, Brecklin

(2008) examined several psychological factors related to taking self-defense courses in women. Self-defense classes have the trend of immediately increasing a female's assertiveness as measured by the Rathus Assertiveness Scale (1973) at pre and post testing; however, at follow-up assessment after the post-testing the level of significance between the self-defense participants and non-participants was not significantly different (Brecklin, 2008).

Weitlauf, Cervone, Smith and Wright (2001) assessed the efficacy of self-defense training on a woman's perceived self efficacy, including assertiveness, compared to a waitlist control group. Ninety-six female participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental groups or the waitlist control group, where pre and post training data was collected through measures that assessed self-defense efficacy, global self efficacy, and assertiveness, which was measured using the Rathus Assertiveness Scale (1973). Participants in the experimental conditions were enrolled in one of two self-defense courses. The self-defense training course was a 16 hour intensive self-defense course specifically designed to teach physical and verbal resistance to rape (Weitlauf, Cervone, Smith & Wright, 2001). The other training program involved an additional 30 minutes to each session that involved group discussions and writing assignments that were designed to help participants reflect on the training. The findings of the study found that the women who were trained in physical self-defense, compared to the waitlist control group, displayed higher levels of self-efficacy across all areas including general coping, interpersonal assertiveness and self regulatory skills (Weitlauf, Cervone, Smith & Wright, 2001). This finding suggests self-defense classes can be good at immediately

increasing assertiveness but the skill set taught in the class is not good enough to maintain over the long term.

One element of having the ability to engage in assertive behavior whether it is in a sexual context or not, revolves around the self-esteem of the woman. Relating back to the typical sexual assault scenario, women are being placed into situations where they are receiving threats related to the discontinuation of a relationship and potential manipulation from her current partner (Bradley & Rusinko, unpublished data). A woman with self-esteem may be better equipped to handle the threat of losing a relationship or feeling a pull to make her partner happy. Brecklin (2008) reviewed twenty quantitative studies examining the outcomes of self-defense classes. On the matter of self-esteem, the analyzed studies have mixed results but there is promise that self-esteem does increase immediately following self-defense training and some have found self-esteem is able to maintain at a couple month follow-up (Brecklin, 2008). Brecklin (2008) does state this is a matter that needs more research done to assess how self-defense classes impact the self esteem of the participants. The best results have been found for the women who took both self defense and assertiveness training courses (Brecklin, 2008).

### Assertiveness Training

In contrast to self-defense that focuses on assertive physical nonverbal behavior and includes forceful verbal assertiveness (such as yelling), assertiveness training programs focus on verbal assertiveness and body language. Assertiveness training programs, also known as assertion training, have been utilized in a variety of situations with an array of individuals. Similar to self-defense training, assertion training involves behavioral rehearsal but in assertiveness training the individual is practicing his/her

ability to verbalize what they want. Assertiveness training will also include modeling, reinforcement, relaxation techniques, videotaped feedback, cognitive restructuring, self-evaluation and training in nonverbal expression (Galassi & Galassi, 1978). Most of the techniques used in assertiveness training do assume the non-assertive behavior is due to a form of anxiety or lack of proper modeling of assertiveness throughout life. Whether anxiety is the cause of the nonassertive behavior, the methods used in assertiveness training are effective in increasing the amount of assertiveness an individual can engage in. Assertiveness is an interpersonal style, rather than a specific skill, to be used regularly by those that possess it. Assertiveness training programs are addressing long term changes in how an individual interacts with others rather than simply a skill to be used in specific situations. Sexual communication, an element of assertiveness, is a specific skill that could be taught that will increase an individual's ability to be assertive.

General assertiveness training has been utilized with adolescents, individuals with mental health issues, older adults. General assertiveness training also has a special category related to sexual assertiveness. As highlighted before, the purpose of assertiveness training is to teach individuals how to identify their desires, feelings and wants and communicate this to other people in an effective manner. For adolescents, assertiveness training has been beneficial in the area of improving social skills, modifying aggressive behavior and aiding in preventing adolescents from using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (McNeilly & Yorke, 1990; Huey, 1988; Turner et al., 1993; as cited in Kim, 2003). Kim (2003) found assertiveness training programs did not increase social skills in visually impaired adolescents but the intensity of the training program may not have been enough to have seen results. This study is important because it



suggests assertiveness training programs may need to be intense training sessions for the behaviors to actually take place in individuals. It takes more than just educating individuals about assertive behavior to get them to engage in the behavior in their own life.

Assertiveness training programs have also been shown to decrease the amount of social anxiety felt by individuals facing situations where they needed to engage in assertive behavior (Nota & Soresi, 2003). Nota and Soresi (2003) used the Scale of Interpersonal Behavior (Arrindell, De Groot & Walburg, 1984) to assess assertiveness in their participants. In indecisive students, assertiveness training has been shown to improve indecisiveness because the students were able to learn how to gather and process information more efficiently in order to make the best decision based on their own desires (Nota & Soresi, 2003). This information becomes important to teaching sexual assertiveness to women. Women may place themselves at a higher risk for sexual assault if they are indecisive about the sexual behavior they are willing and want to engage in with their partner. Through assertiveness training, women may be able to learn the skill of incorporating and gathering information related to their willingness and desires to engage in sexual activity, be able to express this to their partner and potentially stop the sexual assault from occurring because they are upfront about what they are willing to do.

Research on assertiveness training programs with elderly adults has been promising. Ryan, Anas and Friedman (2006) evaluated assertiveness training for older adults specifically related to their interactions with medical professionals. The results of the study found more overall satisfaction with the interaction in the assertive encounter compared to the passive or aggressive encounters (Ryan, Anas & Friedman, 2006). This

is one of the first studies to address boundaries between assertive and aggressive behaviors which are an important aspect to be considered when conducting assertiveness research (Ryan, Anas & Friedman, 2006). People often misconstrue assertive behavior as needing to be aggressive behavior when in actuality assertive behavior is strictly being able to communicate both positive and negative emotions to the people encountered in daily life. Elderly adults have been shown to positively increase the amount they use assertive behavior, through training, when the need arises. This suggests assertive behavior can be learned. Women especially can benefit from learning assertive behavior in a sexual context in order to empower women to take control of their sexual life.

Women who have been trained in sexual assertiveness do maintain the assertiveness up to a 4 month follow-up and engage in safer sex practices such as condom use (Weinhardt, Carey, Carey & Verdecias, 1998). Research on sexual assertion has typically been coupled with reduction of HIV risk among vulnerable populations, such as women living with severe mental illness. Weinhardt et al. (1998) taught sexual assertiveness to sexually active outpatients with severe mental illnesses (bipolar, major depression) in order to improve their sexual assertiveness, decrease their risk to HIV and increase the amount of protected sexual interactions. At both a 2 and 4 month follow-up, Weinhardt et al. (1998) found the women were engaging in safer sexual practices and maintaining the sexual assertiveness they were taught. The findings of this study are important because it shows women can engage and practice sexual assertiveness if trained in the proper way of engaging in the sexual practices. Previous research has suggested women with a higher level of sexual assertiveness engage in less risk taking with their sexual behavior (Zamboni, 2000) which suggests that women who are sexually

assertive use their assertive skills to keep themselves protected in sexual situations (Stoner et al., 2008). Morokoff et al. (1997) designed the Sexual Assertiveness Scale (SAS) using the information that more sexually assertive women are more likely to use a condom, as well as being more likely to initiate wanted sexual contact and refuse unwanted sexual activity. The SAS has since been used frequently in research assessing female sexual assertiveness and risky sexual behaviors.

Stoner, Norris, George, Morrison, Zawacki, Davis and Hessler (2008) conducted a study to see how a woman's sexual assertiveness, as well as previous sexual victimization, influences her sexual risk taking and use of a condom. One hundred sixty one college age women were recruited to participate in their study. Participants were given varying levels of alcohol, read a stimulus story and asked to respond to the stimulus story that was designed to assess sexual decision making processing (Stoner et al., 2008). Participants were given the Sexual Victimization Survey, the Intimate Partner Violence questionnaire and the Sexual Assertiveness Scale in order to assess previous victimization sexually, physically and the participant's level of sexual assertiveness. The findings of the study support the idea that sexual assertiveness training is valuable for women when it comes to insistence of using condoms, even when the woman is intoxicated (Stoner et al., 2008).

Assertiveness training in general has been shown to reduce the social anxiety a person might experience as well as teach individuals the difference between aggression and assertiveness. Studies have shown assertiveness training has been effective with adolescents to the elderly, so it is something from which everyone can benefit. Sexual assertiveness has been shown to increase the likelihood of a woman insisting on condom

use and other safe sex practices (Stoner et al., 2008). An additional bonus in assertiveness training for college age women will potentially be a reduction in sexual assaults. Women will feel more confident in their ability to express themselves and potentially feel less anxious in a social setting resulting in a better chance of the woman feeling comfortable expressing her stance on the sexual encounter.

### Present Study

Sexual assault is a serious problem affecting women of all ages and walks of life. Sexual assault prevention needs to focus on educating both men and women in order to reduce the prevalence rate in society. It is important to note that although the present study is focused on women, sexual assault should always be the responsibility of the perpetrator, not the victim. For women, sexual assault prevention revolves around self-defense and assertiveness training programs. On college campuses self-defense classes are offered but the number of classes being offered is still relatively low considering the prevalence rate of sexual assault (Cummings, 1992). Self defense classes are beneficial for women taking them, regardless of previous sexual assault history. The current literature on self-defense courses for women show positive improvements in the area of preparedness to handle an attack, immediate increases in assertive behavior and self esteem as well as decreased fear of an attack, anxiety and depression (Brecklin, 2008; Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). Assertiveness is often incorporated into the self-defense courses because many of the skills taught in self defense require the woman to engage in assertive behavior (Brecklin, 2008); however, sexual assertiveness may need to have more of a focus in self-defense classes or be a separate course by itself in order to train college women to better handle the most typical situation they will run into. Self-defense

classes focus on verbal assertiveness that is geared toward a stranger rape or in the late stages of an acquaintance sexual assault (e.g. "No"). Self defense courses lack the sexual assertiveness training for discussions on birth control, values, sexual wants and desires, etc. and they lack general verbal assertiveness training in terms of teaching people how to make their wants and desires known. These are the skills needed to prevent sexual assaults in the early "risk" stages, rather than when the assault has already started.

Previous research on the typical sexual assault scenarios for college women suggests this age range of women are experiencing sexual assaults perpetrated by individuals they know either in a dating situation or at a party where alcohol may have been involved (Koss, 1988; Bradley & Rusinko, 2008; Abbey et al., 2001). In these situations, women have reported they are not experiencing overt threats of physical harm and they do not feel threatened in the situation but rather the man is continuously pressuring the woman to engage in sexual activity resulting in her giving in to avoid the conflict that may result from not engaging in the sexual activity (Bradley & Rusinko, 2008). Unwanted sexual advances from a dating partner or acquaintance are viewed as less forceful than a stranger so more diplomatic responses are used. Women may also be more reluctant to be assertive with an acquaintance because they want to maintain the relationship or not offend the man (Livingston & Testa, 2000; Norris et al., 1996). College women who have experienced a sexual assault in the past are also at a greater risk for experiencing another sexual assault if they place a high amount of blame on themselves and engage in low sexual refusal assertiveness (Katz, et al., 2010).

A woman may benefit more from a course related to being interpersonally assertive with her partner, including expressing her sexual desires, wants and how much

sexual activity she is willing to engage in. The issue of token resistance and compliance is a further complication to sexual assault prevention. Although the number of women engaging in token resistance on a regular basis is low, it still occurs; likely due to difficulty in clearly expressing wants. Compliance (saying yes when you mean no) is something that occurs more often. Training women specifically in sexual assertiveness may curb some of the token resistance and forced compliance resulting in women taking more control of their sexual behavior. Self-defense courses offer wonderful benefits to women and they should continue to be offered to women; however to better address an acquaintance sexual assault, a course in increasing assertive communication in romantic and other interpersonal relationships should be coupled with self defense training.

The literature reviewed often placed self-defense training and assertiveness training together making it difficult to parcel out which training set is influencing the changes viewed in the women who have taken the courses. The current study will focus on the effects of verbal assertiveness and sexual communication training and how it influences an individual's immediate sexual assault risk behavior. The current study is interested in creating a training program for women to provide them with tools to assert themselves in romantic and other interpersonal relationships with the intent to assist the woman in identifying risk with acquaintance sexual assault.

## Assessments and Measures

The following measures were used to obtain basic demographic information, assess the participant's level of sexual assertiveness, dating behaviors, sexual communication, general assertiveness, intimate relationship communication and previous sexual assault history

### *Demographic Questionnaire*

The demographics questionnaire (Appendix A) was constructed by the investigator to inquire about potentially relevant factors within the following categories: age, sex, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, income and participation in sexual assault awareness prevention programming for each participant. As highlighted previously women who have taken part in self defense classes are likely to reduce their likelihood of being sexually assaulted (Brecklin & Ullman, 2005) so the women who participate in the study will be asked about previous exposure to self defense classes and/or sexual assault prevention.

### *Sexual Assertiveness Scale for Women*

The Sexual Assertiveness Scale (SAS: Morokoff et al., 1997; Appendix B) is a questionnaire designed to measure sexual assertiveness specifically in women. The SAS is an 18 item questionnaire that is broken down into three subscales of six items each focused on Initiation, Refusal and Pregnancy-STD Prevention (Morokoff et al., 1997). The items on the SAS are measured using a 5 point Likert scale. The internal consistency of the SAS is good with Cronbach's alphas of .77 (Initiation), .74 (Refusal), .82 (Pregnancy-STD Prevention) and .82 (Total Scale) (Morokoff et al., 1997). Test-retest

reliabilities for the SAS were moderately high ( $r = .60 - .78$  for six month intervals;  $r = .59 - .69$  for 1 year intervals; Morokoff et al., 1997). The SAS was used in the current study to assess how assertive the women are in sexual situations. Items were coded into the data base with a 1-5 number. The higher the score on the SAS, the more assertive a woman is.

#### *Modified Sexual Experiences Survey*

The modified Sexual Experiences Survey (SES: Testa, VanZile-Tamesen, Livingston & Koss, 2004; Appendix C) is an 11 item questionnaire that addresses sexual aggression experiences, since the age of 14, based on the participant's self-report. For the present study a response of true was given a 1 and a response of false was given a 2; the higher a score, the less likely the participant had experienced a sexual assault.

#### *Rathus Assertiveness Schedule*

The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS: Rathus, 1973; Appendix D) is a 30-item, self report measure, that is scored using a Likert scale of -3 to +3. This is a commonly used measure in assertiveness literature to assess an individual's level of general assertiveness in their everyday life. This measure includes the individual's perceived amount of assertiveness in comparison to how they view other people. The higher the score, the most assertive an individual is.

#### *Sexual Communication Survey*

The Sexual Communication Survey (SCS: Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Appendix E) is a 21-item self-report questionnaire that measures perceived ability to communicate



sexual intentions in dating situations. Higher scores on this instrument indicate poorer perceived ability to respond clearly in dating situations. The Sexual Communication Survey has an alpha internal consistency coefficient of .56 and a one-week retest reliability of .79 (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993).

#### *Dating Behavior Survey*

The Dating Behavior Survey (DBS; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Appendix F) is a 15-item self-report questionnaire designed to measure participation in risky dating behaviors associated with an increased risk for sexual victimization. Items are scored on a 7-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate increased participation in risky dating behaviors. The Dating Behavior Survey has an alpha coefficient of .63 and one week retest reliability of .77 (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993).

#### *Romantic and Interpersonal Communication Questionnaire*

Given that current measures assess sexual communication, which is specific to talking about birth control and general assertiveness, the primary investigator designed a questionnaire to assess how participants communicate about problems and sex, as well as how they express positive emotions and morals with their partner. There are no current measures that get at the general ability to express your wants, desires, thoughts and interactions in romantic and other interpersonal relationships. The Romantic and Interpersonal Communication Questionnaire (RI; Appendix G) was created to address the ability to communicate in romantic or other interpersonal relationships. Experts in the area of sexual assault, assertive communication and questionnaire construction rated the

items for content validity. The higher the score on the RI the better an individual's romantic relationship communication.

### Training Manual

The principal investigator designed an assertiveness training manual with handouts (Appendix H). The training program was designed as 4, two hour long, sessions. It is common for assertive communication to be learned through self-help books or group training. In order to understand what information is commonly presented in learning assertive communication, popular self-help books on assertive communication, as well as research, was reviewed. The self-help books suggested understanding communication styles, verbal and non-verbal assertive communication and increased self-esteem are important aspects of learning assertive communication (Paterson, R., 2000; McClure, J.S., 2003). Research has been conducted on psychiatric patients, elderly, adolescents and other special populations that involve assertiveness training programs. Information presented in assertiveness training programs focuses on verbal and non-verbal assertiveness, self-esteem and asking for feedback (Lin et al., 2006; Tavakoli, Lumley, A., Slavin-Spenny, O., & Parris, G., 2009). The first two sessions of the present assertiveness training program focused on understanding basic communication styles, learning verbal and non-verbal assertive communication and asking for feedback.

The present study is not only looking at improving general assertive communication but also in sexual relationships in hopes of reducing sexual assault risk and lower rates of sexual assault in the future. The third session of the present study tackled the issue of communication in romantic relationships related to setting boundaries and talking about sex with a romantic partner. There was minimal research in which to

base the information covered in day three; however, the principal investigator did use what is commonly accepted as healthy romantic relationship communication in creating the information taught in session. Finally, the fourth day focused on reviewing and practicing information learned in previous sessions.

Consistent with previous research, the assertiveness training program was designed to have a psycho-educational component followed by a skills training and practice component during the session (Lin et al., 2006; Tavakoli, Lumley, A., Slavin-Spenny, O., & Parris, G., 2009). Additionally, the assertiveness training program was designed to incorporate a weekly homework assignment for participants in order to ensure they were practicing the skills outside of sessions.

#### Procedure

The study used an experimental group and a waitlist control. Participants volunteered for the study and were randomly assigned to the experimental or wait list control condition after volunteering for the study. The waitlist control group was used to assess for reactivity to the measures by being given the screening measures at the same time as the experimental group. Once the experimental group and waitlist control completed the post-questionnaire measures, the individuals in the waitlist control group started the training program. Although sexual experiences were tracked throughout the follow-up, the incidence of sexual assault with penetration is still relatively low. The current study was a pilot study with a small sample so the expected sexual assault rate was low.

The principal investigator trained four graduate students on how to run the program. The facilitator trained all four graduate students at one time. The facilitator

training was modeled to reflect how each of the training sessions should be run. Each of the four facilitators co-facilitated a session with the primary investigator. The program used two facilitators for each training session so role playing was easily demonstrated and feedback could be provided at a higher rate. At the end of each group, the facilitators filled out a checklist as an adherence check in order to make sure they covered the necessary topics for the day (Appendix I).

Interested participants were given the consent form (Appendix J) and pre-testing measures one week prior to the start of the assertiveness training program. The participants attended four, two hour long sessions that addressed assertiveness and sexual communication training. Each session was run using a psycho-educational approach for the first half of the session. The second half of every session involved role playing in order to practice the new skill learned that day. All sessions involved modeling and practice of skills with home work to monitor behavior and document when new skills were used.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### Means of Questionnaires

The means for the questionnaires are recorded in Table 1. The mean scores for participants at Time 1 were moderate to high for their sexual assertiveness, sexual communication and dating behaviors. General assertiveness and romantic relationship communication were at a moderate level; however the distribution for participants' scores on measures of general assertiveness and romantic relationship communication was large. The modified sexual experiences survey had a high mean score meaning participants had a low rate of sexual assault at Time 1. All measures were normally distributed; an analysis of skewness and kurtosis found all measures were normally distributed at Time 1 and Time 2.

#### Pre-measure Analysis

Independent sample t-tests were used to compare the experimental and control group's Time 1 questionnaires. There was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control group's general assertiveness prior to the intervention (RAS:  $t=-2.29, p<.05$ ). There were no other significant differences between the experimental and control group scores on the Time 1 questionnaires (see Table 2). This suggests the control group ( $M=114.48, SD=18.65$ ) was more generally assertive than the

experimental group ( $M=101.82$ ,  $SD=21.87$ ) prior to the intervention. The participants were similar on the other measures before the intervention

Independent sample t-tests were used to compare the participants who completed Time 1 and Time 2 questionnaires and those who only completed a Time 1 questionnaire in order to assess for significant differences between those who completed the study and those who dropped out. There were no significant differences between participants who completed the experiment and those who only completed the Time 1 questionnaire (see Table 3).

#### Within-Subjects Analysis

Paired sample t-tests were used to analyze the experimental group's Time 1 and Time 2 intervention scores (see Table 4). The participants in the experimental group did not have a significant change in their sexual assault history from when they started ( $M=20.73$ ,  $SD=1.81$ ) to when they completed the training ( $M=21.04$ ,  $SD=1.55$ , SES:  $t(22)=-1.49$ ,  $p=.148$ ). The experimental group's general assertiveness significantly improved from Time 1 ( $M=101.82$ ,  $SD=21.87$ ) to Time 2 ( $M=108.86$ ,  $SD=21.75$ , RAS:  $t(22)=-2.47$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Participants increased their interpersonal relationship communication from Time 1 ( $M=213.04$ ,  $SD=27.38$ ) to Time 2 ( $M=220.78$ ,  $SD=25.41$ , RI:  $t(22)=-2.19$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Participants did not have significant differences between Time 1 and Time 2 on their sexual assertiveness (SAS:  $t(22)=-0.36$ ,  $p=.72$ ), sexual communication (SCS:  $t(22)=0.33$ ,  $p=.74$ ) or dating behaviors (DBS:  $t(22)=1.26$ ,  $p=0.21$ ). Overall, participants who completed the assertiveness training course did significantly increase their general assertiveness skills and their communication skills within romantic relationships.

Paired sample-t tests were used to analyze the control group's Time 1 and Time 2 questionnaires (see Table 5). The participants in the control group had a significant change in their sexual assault history from when they started ( $M=20.29$ ,  $SD=2.53$ ) to when they completed the training ( $M=20.64$ ,  $SD=2.41$ ,  $SES: t(30)=-2.16, p<.05$ ) suggesting that an individual reported a sexual assault at Time 1 that they did not report at Time 2. The control group's general assertiveness significantly decreased from Time 1 ( $M=114.48$ ,  $SD=18.65$ ) compared to their Time 2 questionnaire ( $M=112.25$ ,  $SD=18.90$ ,  $RAS: t(30)=2.04, p<.05$ ). Participants did not have a significant change between Time 1 and Time 2 measures in their communication in romantic relationships ( $RI: t(30)=0.86, p=.39$ ), sexual assertiveness ( $SAS: t(30)=0.16, p=.87$ ), sexual communication ( $SCS: t(30)=-0.79, p=.43$ ) or dating behaviors ( $DBS: t(30)=-0.85, p=0.39$ ). The control group experienced a reported decrease in sexual assault experiences from Time 1 to Time 2 suggesting a participant did not report all of the sexual assault experiences they had reported at Time 1. Participants also had a decrease in their general assertiveness from Time 1 to Time 2, although small.

#### Between Subjects Analysis

A MANCOVA was conducted to analyze the effect of the assertiveness training course compared to the wait-list control group using the Time 2 questionnaires (see Table 6). The Time 1 questionnaires were held as a covariate for this analysis. The overall multivariate analysis was not significant although it closely approached significance ( $f(6, 41)=2.16, p=0.06, \eta^2=0.24$ ). There was not a significant difference between the experimental and wait-list control group's sexual assault history ( $SES: f(1, 46)=0.006, p=.936, \eta^2=0.00$ ) at Time 2. The difference between the experimental and wait-list

control's general assertiveness was significantly different at Time 2 (RAS:  $f(1, 46)=10.06, p<.05, \eta^2 =0.18$ ). There was a significant difference between the groups on their communication in interpersonal relationships at Time 2 (RI:  $f(1, 46)=10.17, p<.05, \eta^2=0.18$ ). The difference between the experimental and wait-list control's sexual assertiveness was not significantly different at Time 2 (SAS:  $f(1, 46)=0.952, p=.334$ ). There was not a significant difference between the experimental and wait-list control's sexual communication at Time 2 (SCS:  $f(1, 46)=1.08, p=.302$ ). There was not a significant difference between the experimental and wait-list control's dating behaviors at Time 2 (DBS:  $f(1, 46)=1.42, p=.224$ ). Taken together, the results suggest there was a statistical difference between the participants who got the intervention and those that did not on their general assertiveness and communication in romantic relationships. Participants who received the intervention had significantly better assertive communication and better communication in their romantic relationships.



## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

#### Efficacy of Assertiveness Training Program

Sexual assault has a high prevalence rate in the female population, especially in college students. A study by Fisher et al. (2000) found that anywhere from one in four to one in five of college age females run the risk of experiencing an attempted or completed sexual assault. In a similar study Koss et al. (1987) found that a conservative lifetime prevalence rate of one in four women will experience a sexual assault at some point in their lifetime. In light of these studies it could be ascertained that college age females are subject to being one of the highest risk groups for experiencing an attempted or completed sexual assault.

The most frequent form of sexual assault is an assault experienced with an acquaintance (Koss, 1988). The word acquaintance can be misleading in this case, often resulting in images of a person casually known to the victim (i.e. a co-worker, etc.). This type of sexual assault also involves sexual assaults that occur in romantic relationships and in situations where the perpetrator of the sexual assault is a romantic interest of the victim. As previously noted, college women are at a higher risk for sexual assaults perpetrated by someone they are in a romantic relationship with.

Currently, self defense classes are offered on most college campuses and have a positive impact on participants, including increased self-esteem as well as decreased depression and anxiety (Brecklin & Ullman, 2005). Self defense courses prepare a woman physically and mentally for a stranger-based sexual assault (Cummings, 1992); however, it is possible that women do not perceive a sexual assault by an acquaintance in the same way they perceive a sexual assault from a stranger. In addition, research suggests acquaintance and stranger rapes have different characteristics. Since it has already been established in previous research that women are being sexually assaulted most often by men they know rather than strangers (Koss, 1988) the practicality of solely offering self defense training on college campuses should be examined. Most self-defense courses focus on how to fend off an attack from a stranger or be assertive with individuals one does not know. Although the techniques taught in self-defense and assertiveness training can be utilized with anyone, women may have a difficult time using those techniques toward individuals they are familiar with or with whom they are romantically involved. A lack of early assertive communication in romantic encounters may increase the likelihood of sexual assault; teaching women to use assertive communication early in a romantic relationship may reduce the likelihood of a sexual assault perpetrated by a romantic partner or romantic person of interest. It is important to note that when a woman is sexually assaulted it is not her fault and sexual assault is the responsibility of the perpetrator. Focusing on assertiveness training and self defense for women is only a tool for protection. The present study examined the efficacy of an assertiveness training program on improving communication in romantic relationships.

general assertive communication, sexual communication and identification of personal boundaries, thereby reducing sexual assault risk.

The present study found that participants of the assertiveness training program did have a significant increase in their general assertiveness and reduction in guilt and nervousness in their communication in romantic relationships immediately following the training program. There was a significant difference between the participants in the wait-list control group and the experimental group on the post measure for their general assertiveness and romantic relationship communication. The data analysis showed there was a significant difference between the levels of general assertiveness between the experimental and control groups prior to the intervention. Although accounted for in the analysis, it is important to note that the significant changes found post-intervention in the experimental group may have been due to the control group's scores decreasing or simply that the experimental group had more room to improve their assertive communication on the measures given.

In addition, it is important to note that participants in both the experimental and control condition had moderate to high scores on the measures at Time 1. The women who participated in the present study were engaging in moderately assertive communication and had few risky dating behaviors prior to the intervention. This means that results that are not statistically significant may be a result of ceiling effects; participants may have experienced changes that are beyond the scope of the questionnaires.

While not meant to take the place of physical self defense programs, the present study offers a possible supplement to current sexual assault prevention programming

offered on college campuses. Research has shown that individuals who choose to participate in sexual assault prevention are typically at a lower risk for sexual assault than the people who do not choose to participate (Bradley, Yeater & O'Donohue, 2009). It is not uncommon that the women participating in self defense or other sexual assault prevention programming are already engaging in less risky behaviors than the women who do not participate. Participants who may shy away from physical self defense training or sexual assault prevention programming may be more willing to participate in a general assertiveness training program.

The present study proposes a different way of offering a sexual assault prevention training that may appeal more to women at highest risk. Some women may hesitate to participate in self defense training programs because they may view that programming for women who are at risk for a stranger sexual assault and may view themselves as being low risk for such a sexual assault. By offering an assertiveness training program that does not advertise itself as a sexual assault prevention program, women who may be engaging in risky sexual and dating behaviors may be interested in participating in the training to improve their overall assertiveness.

#### Limitations and Future Research

There are potential confounds in the present study that may have influenced the results and may limit the generalizability of the results. First, the present study was a pilot study where a small sample was used. Although significant results were found in the small sample, further research with a larger sample of college females would provide stronger results. Participants also voluntarily signed up to participate. This act alone suggests the participants already were engaged in moderately assertive behavior. Future

research will want to reach women in a higher risk category in order to assess the impact on the women who may benefit the most from an assertiveness training program. Second, the present study did not have a culturally diverse representation due to the location of the study. The present study was primarily White females from the Upper Midwest. This may influence some of the results related to assertiveness and communication in romantic relationships due to cultural differences in these constructs. Cultural differences are important factors to be examined in future research in order to better generalize the results; changes to the program may be required to account for cultural differences. Additionally, the present study did not have a diverse representation of sexual orientations. Assertive communication may impact sexual assault risk and differently across sexual orientations. Future research should examine the efficacy of assertiveness training at reducing risk and rates of sexual assault in homosexual, bisexual and transgendered women.

The present study only considered the impact of assertiveness training on college age women; females outside of a college population were not assessed. Although we know college age women are one of the highest risk groups for sexual assault they are not necessarily the only group at risk for sexual assault. In order to better generalize the findings, future research should conduct the assertiveness training program with non-college student populations at all education levels and ages. Running this sort of training with men may be research in the future in order to look at factors associated with perpetrating a sexual assault.

In addition, future research needs to examine the impact of the assertiveness training program in the long-term. The present study examined immediate effects:

however, in order to make a stronger argument for implementing the assertiveness training program on college campuses, the long-term effects need to be further examined. The present study was looking at reducing risk for sexual assault; actual impact on sexual assault rates needs to be studied. Conducting a longitudinal study that started with high school females being offered the assertiveness training program and tracking their sexual assault rates and assertive communication throughout college would provide useful information in the area of sexual assault prevention. Future research can focus on how the assertiveness training program impacts women prior to and during their highest sexual assault risk period.

Finally, a limitation of the present study is related to the facilitators. Although the assertiveness training followed a manual, it was only facilitated by females. Future research may want to examine the impact of a male facilitating the assertiveness training program to assess if there are differences in the efficacy of the intervention based on the gender of the facilitator.

### Conclusions

The findings of the current study suggest there is an increase in positive communication in romantic relationships for women who have completed the assertiveness training program. There is also improvement in general assertive communication post training. With assertiveness being encouraged more in women it is important to teach them how to utilize the tool not only in a work environment but also in their romantic relationships in hopes of reducing risk for sexual assault. Additionally, early assertive communication may reduce sexual assault risk when the perpetrator is a friend or romantic partner of the female.

A concern related to sexual assault prevention is ensuring that the women at the highest risk are participating in sexual assault prevention programming (i.e. self defense or assertiveness training). More often, as seen in the means of the current study, the women who are participating in sexual assault prevention programs often need the training the least because their current risky behaviors are already low. Research has proven that the women who are willing to dedicate their time and are interested in the training program often need it less than the women who do not participate in sexual assault prevention (Bradley, Yeater & O'Donohue, 2009). Therefore, "disguising" prevention programs is important.

The present study focused on improving assertive communication in romantic relationships. Since romantic relationships play a large role in the lives of college age females, offering a course in improving communication may capture a wider range of females and assist in reducing risky sexual behavior and possibly sexual assault rates. Additionally, the assertiveness training program can be coupled with self defense courses to give women an additional tool to assist in reducing their sexual assault risk.

Overall, this pilot study provides research in the area of assertiveness training programs and possible sexual assault prevention on college campuses. The assertiveness training program designed for the present study did significantly increase generally assertiveness and confidence in romantic relationship communication. Women who participated in the intervention reported feeling less anxious when speaking with a romantic partner and less guilty about expressing their wants, needs and emotions to their partner. Early assertive communication in romantic relationships can decrease the likelihood of a sexual assault occurring in the relationship. Since the majority of sexual

assaults experienced by college women are perpetrated by someone they are dating or wish to be romantically involved with, using assertive communication early on may lead to a reduction in sexual assault rates. With a larger sample and longitudinal research that will track sexual assault rates over time, hopefully this assertiveness training program will be effective in reducing sexual assault rates.



Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Measures

Measure	Group	Pre- Measure		Post- Measure	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
SES	Experimental	20.73	1.81	21.04	1.55
	Control	20.29	2.53	20.64	2.41
SAS	Experimental	69.86	10.89	70.60	11.41
	Control	69.93	10.10	69.74	9.11
RAS	Experimental	101.82	21.87	108.86	21.75
	Control	114.48	18.90	112.25	18.90
RI	Experimental	213.04	27.38	220.78	25.41
	Control	217.29	23.72	215.67	25.68
SCS	Experimental	48.04	14.70	44.03	16.01
	Control	42.38	16.25	44.03	16.24
DBS	Experimental	47.13	6.41	45.47	6.32
	Control	44.64	7.16	45.32	6.71

Table 2: Independent Sample T – Test: Difference Between Experimental and Control at Time 1

Measure	Equality of Variance		Equality of Variance (T-Test)			
	f	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	r
Sexual Experience Survey (SES)	1.90	0.174	0.72	52	0.47	0.09
Sexual Assertiveness (SAS)	0.003	0.955	-0.02	52	0.98	0.00
General Assertiveness (RAS)	0.526	0.472	-2.29	52	0.02*	0.30
Romantic Communication (RI)	0.213	0.646	-0.60	52	0.54	0.08
Sexual Communication (SCS)	0.322	0.573	1.31	52	0.19	0.17
Dating Behaviors (DBS)	0.519	0.474	1.31	52	0.19	0.17

( \* ) Indicates a statistically significant result at the 0.05 alpha level

Table 3: Means and Independent Sample T-Test for Attrition Compared to Participants who Completed Time 1 and Those Who Did Not

Measure	Mean	SD	Equality of Variance		Equality of the Means (T-Test)			
			f	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	r
SES								
Completed	20.50	2.19	0.17	0.68	0.95	81	0.34	0.10
Attrition	20.00	2.19						
SAS								
Completed	69.10	10.77	0.26	0.60	0.33	77	0.72	0.03
Attrition	68.20	11.99						
RAS								
Completed	1.55	14.99	0.07	0.78	-0.91	77	0.36	0.10
Attrition	4.24	13.37						
RI								
Completed	215.30	25.21	0.73	0.39	-0.08	73	0.93	0.00
Attrition	215.85	21.39						
SCS								
Completed	43.94	14.60	2.48	0.11	-1.30	80	0.19	0.14
Attrition	49.28	21.61						
DBS								
Completed	45.84	7.09	0.04	0.83	-1.53	81	0.12	0.16
Attrition	48.78	7.33						

Table 4: Paired Sample T-Test: Experimental Time 1 and Time 2

Measure	TIME		di	t	Sig.	d
	1	2				
Sexual Experience Survey (SES)	20.73	21.04	22	-1.49	0.148	-0.41
Sexual Assertiveness (SAS)	69.86	70.69	22	-0.36	0.721	-0.15
General Assertiveness (RAS)	101.82	108.86	22	-2.47	0.022*	-0.72
Romantic Communication (RI)	213.04	220.78	22	-2.19	0.039*	-0.66
Sexual Communication (SCS)	48.04	47.13	22	0.335	0.741	0.58
Dating Behaviors (DBS)	47.13	45.47	22	1.266	0.219	0.58

( \* ) Indicates a statistically significant result at the 0.05 alpha level

( *d* ) Indicates the Cohen's *d*

Table 5: Paired Sample T-Test: Control Time 1 and Time 2

Measure	TIME		df	t	Sig.	d
	1	2				
Sexual Experience Survey (SES)	20.29	20.64	30	-2.16	0.039*	-0.32
Sexual Assertiveness (SAS)	69.73	69.74	30	0.162	0.873	0.04
General Assertiveness (RAS)	114.48	112.25	30	2.04	0.050*	0.26
Romantic Communication (RI)	217.29	215.67	30	0.868	0.392	0.15
Sexual Communication (SCS)	42.38	44.03	30	-0.704	0.433	-0.23
Dating Behaviors (DBS)	44.64	45.32	30	-0.857	0.398	-0.22

( \* ) Indicates a statistically significant result at the 0.05 alpha level

( d ) Indicates the Cohen's d

Table 6: MANCOVA: Experimental and Control Group Time 2 Questionnaires

Source	df	f	$\eta^2$	p
<u>Multivariate Test</u>				
Overall MANCOVA	41	2.16	0.24	0.06
<u>Between Subjects</u>				
Sexual Experience Survey (SES)	1	0.00	0.00	0.94
Sexual Assertiveness (SAS)	1	0.95	0.02	0.33
General Assertiveness (RAS)	1	10.06	0.18	0.00*
Romantic Communication (RI)	1	10.17	0.18	0.00*
Sexual Communication (SCS)	1	1.08	0.02	0.30
Dating Behaviors (DBS)	1	1.52	0.03	0.22

(\*) Indicates a statistically significant result at the 0.05 alpha level

## APPENDICES

Appendix A  
Demographic Questionnaire

ID:

Please Circle the correct answer:

1. Gender: Male    Female
  
2. Ethnic Background:  
    Hispanic  
    African American  
    White (Non-Hispanic)  
    Asian  
    Native American  
    Other:
  
3. Age in Years:
  
4. Religious Affiliation:
  
5. Relationship Status:  
    Single  
    In long-term relationship  
    Married  
    Divorced  
    Cohabitation
  
6. Year in School:  
    Freshman  
    Sophomore  
    Junior  
    Senior  
    Graduate Student
  
7. What is your sexual orientation  
    Heterosexual  
    Homosexual  
    Bisexual
  
8. In the past, have you taken part in a self-defense class and/or assertiveness training?  
    No  
    Yes
  
9. If yes, please indicate what training you have been given and when you took the class?

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## Appendix B

### Sexual Assertiveness Scale (Morokoff et al., 1997)

**Instructions: Circle the number that best describes your behavior**

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Sometimes	25% of the time	75% of the time	100% of the time
1.	I begin sex with my partner if I want to.			1 2 3 4 5
2.	I let my partner if I want my partner to touch my genitals.			1 2 3 4 5
3.	I wait for my partner to touch my genitals instead of letting my partner know that's what I want.			1 2 3 4 5
4.	I wait for my partner to touch my breasts instead of letting my partner know that's what I want.			1 2 3 4 5
5.	I let my partner know if I want to have my genitals kissed.			1 2 3 4 5
6.	Women should wait for men to start things like breast touching.			1 2 3 4 5
7.	I give in and kiss if my partner pressures me, even if I already said no.			1 2 3 4 5
8.	I put my mouth on my partner's genitals if my partner wants me to, even if I don't want to.			1 2 3 4 5
9.	I refuse to let my partner touch my breasts if I don't want that, even if my partner insists.			1 2 3 4 5
10.	I have sex if my partner wants me to, even if I don't want to.			1 2 3 4 5
11.	If I said no, I won't let my partner touch my genitals even if my partner pressures me.			1 2 3 4 5
12.	I refuse to have sex if I don't want to, even if my partner insists.			1 2 3 4 5
13.	I have sex without condoms or latex barriers if my partner doesn't like wearing them, even if I want to use one.			1 2 3 4 5
14.	I have sex without using a condom or latex barrier if my partner insists, even if I don't want to.			1 2 3 4 5
15.	I make sure my partner and I use a condom or latex barrier when we have sex.			1 2 3 4 5
16.	I have sex without using a condom or latex barrier if my partner wants.			1 2 3 4 5
17.	I insist on using a condom or latex barrier if I want to, even if my partner doesn't like them.			1 2 3 4 5
18.	I refuse to have sex if my partner refuses to use a condom or latex barrier.			1 2 3 4 5

## Appendix C

### Modified Sexual Experiences Survey (Testa et al., 2004)

1. Have you ever been fondled, kissed, or touched sexually when you didn't want to because you were overwhelmed by a man's continual arguments and pressure?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
2. Have you ever been fondled, kissed, or touched sexually when you didn't want to because a man used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to make you?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
3. Have you ever been fondled, kissed, or touched sexually when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
4. Have you given in to sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because you were overwhelmed by a man's continual arguments and pressure?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
5. Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to make you?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
6. Have you had a man attempt to insert his penis (but intercourse did not occur) when you didn't want him to by threatening or using some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.)?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
7. Have you ever had a man attempt to insert his penis (but intercourse did not occur) when you didn't want him to by getting you intoxicated on alcohol or drugs without your knowledge or consent?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
8. Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man made you intoxicated by giving you alcohol or drugs without your knowledge or consent?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
9. Have you been in a situation in which you were incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs (that is, passed out or unaware of what was happening) and were not able to prevent unwanted sexual intercourse from taking place?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
10. Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?  
a. Yes                      b. No
  
11. Have you had sex acts (anal or oral intercourse or penetration by objects other than the penis) when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?  
a. Yes                      b. No

## Appendix D

### Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (Rathus, 1973)

Directions: Indicate how characteristic or descriptive each of the following statements is of you by using the code given below.

- +3 very characteristic of me, extremely descriptive
- +2 rather characteristic of me, quite descriptive
- +1 somewhat characteristic of me, slightly descriptive
- 1 somewhat uncharacteristic of me, slightly non-descriptive
- 2 rather uncharacteristic of me, quite non-descriptive
- 3 very uncharacteristic of me, extremely non-descriptive

- \_\_\_ 1. Most people seem to be more aggressive and assertive than I am.
- \_\_\_ 2. I have hesitated to make or accept dates because of "shyness".
- \_\_\_ 3. When the food served at the restaurant is not done to my satisfaction, I complain about it to the waiter or waitress.
- \_\_\_ 4. I am careful to avoid hurting other people's feelings, even when I feel that I have been injured.
- \_\_\_ 5. If a salesman has gone to considerable trouble to show me merchandise which is not quite suitable, I have a difficult time saying "No".
- \_\_\_ 6. When I am asked to do something, I insist upon knowing why.
- \_\_\_ 7. There are times when I look for a good, vigorous argument.
- \_\_\_ 8. I strive to get ahead as well as most people in my position.
- \_\_\_ 9. To be honest, people often take advantage of me.
- \_\_\_ 10. I enjoy starting conversations with new acquaintances and strangers.
- \_\_\_ 11. I often don't know what to say to an attractive person of the opposite sex.
- \_\_\_ 12. I will hesitate to make phone calls to business establishments and institutions.
- \_\_\_ 13. I would rather apply for a job or for admission to college by writing letters than by going through with personal interviews.
- \_\_\_ 14. I find it embarrassing to return merchandise.
- \_\_\_ 15. If a close and respected relative was annoying me, I would smother my feelings rather than express my annoyance.
- \_\_\_ 16. I have avoided asking questions for fear of sounding stupid.
- \_\_\_ 17. During an argument I am sometimes afraid that I will get so upset that I will shake all over.
- \_\_\_ 18. If a famed and respected lecturer makes a statement which I think is incorrect, I will have the audience hear my point of view as well.
- \_\_\_ 19. I avoid arguing over prices with clerks and salesmen.
- \_\_\_ 20. When I have done something important or worthwhile, I manage to let others know about it.
- \_\_\_ 21. I am open and frank about my feelings.
- \_\_\_ 22. If someone has been spreading false and bad stories about me, I see him (her) as soon as possible to "have a talk" about it.
- \_\_\_ 23. I often have a hard time saying "No".
- \_\_\_ 24. I tend to bottle up my emotions rather than make a scene.
- \_\_\_ 25. I complain about poor service in a restaurant and elsewhere.
- \_\_\_ 26. When I am given a compliment, I sometimes just don't know what to say.
- \_\_\_ 27. If a couple near me in a theater or at a lecture were conversing rather loudly, I would ask them to be quiet or to take their conversation elsewhere.
- \_\_\_ 28. Anyone who is attempting to push ahead of me in line is in for a good battle.
- \_\_\_ 29. I am quick to express an opinion.
- \_\_\_ 30. There are times when I just can't say anything

## Appendix E

### Sexual Communication Survey (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993)

For the following questions, please think about *how you currently behave or will behave in the future on the first few dates that you have with a man*. Please use the following scale to answer the questions:

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
- Never    Almost Never    Sometimes    Half the Time    Most of the Time    Almost Always    Always
1. Do you speak openly to your date about the issue of birth control?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  2. Do you speak openly to your date about the issue of sexually transmitted diseases?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  3. Do you ever say "yes" to something sexual when you really mean "no"?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  4. Do you ever say "no" to something sexual when you really mean "yes"?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  5. Do you ever end up allowing your date to hold your hand when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  6. Do you ever end up allowing your date to put his arms around you when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  7. Do you ever end up allowing your date to kiss you when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  8. Do you ever end up allowing your date to touch your breasts when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  9. Do you ever end up allowing your date to touch your genitals when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  10. Do you ever end up allowing your date to perform oral sex with you (you as the recipient) when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
  11. Do you ever end up performing oral sex (you as the administrator) with your date when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Do you ever end up having vaginal intercourse with your date when you don't really want to, not because you feel forced or coerced, but because of some other concern (such as wanting him to like you or being too embarrassed to talk about it)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Do you ever want to hold your date's hand, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. Do you ever want to put your arms around your date, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. Do you ever want to hold kiss your date, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. Do you ever want your date to touch your breasts, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. Do you ever want your date to touch your genitals, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. Do you ever want to touch your date's genitals, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. Do you ever want your date to perform oral sex with you (you as the recipient), but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. Do you ever want to perform oral sex with your date (you as the administrator), but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. Do you ever want to have vaginal intercourse with your date, but not actually do it, because of some concern (such as fear that he will think badly of you or that your reputation might be damaged)?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Appendix F

Dating Behaviors Survey (Hanson & Gidycz, 1993)

Please circle the number which best describes *what you would do, what you are most likely to do, or what is most likely to happen* on the first few dates you have with a man.

Please use the following scale to answer the questions:

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6  
7  
Never      Almost Never      Sometimes      Half the Time      Most of the Time      Almost Always      Always

1. Men that I go out with initiate the first few dates (ask me out).  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. On the first few dates that we have, I consume alcohol or drugs.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. On the first few dates that we have, my date and I do things that allow us to spend time alone together (such as spending time alone together in my room or his room.)  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. On the first few dates that we have, my date consumes alcohol or drugs.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. On the first few dates that we have, I consume enough alcohol or drugs to become drunk or high.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. On the first few dates that we have, I allow the man to plan what we do.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. On the first few dates that we have, my date and I spend part of the time "parking" (kissing or other sexual activity in a car)  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I pay for my own expenses on the first few dates I have with a man.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. On the first few dates that we have, my date consumes enough alcohol or drugs to become drunk or high.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. On the first few dates that we have, I provide my own transportation.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. On the first few dates that we have, my date and I choose group activities (e.g., double date).  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. On the first few dates that we have, I have at times "blacked out" (lost consciousness, can't remember what happened) from drugs or alcohol.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. On the first few dates that we have, my date and I choose activities that I suggest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Before I go out with a man for the first time, I try to find out about him.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. If a man makes sexist remarks on the first few dates that we have, I stop dating him.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

## Appendix G

Romantic and Interpersonal Communication Questionnaire (Rusinko & Bradley, 2010)

**Instructions:** Please answer the questions about your current romantic partner (or your most involved current romantic relationship). If you are not currently in a romantic relationship please answer based on your most recent romantic relationship. If you have never been in a romantic relationship please answer based on how you think you would behave/think in a romantic relationship.

- |  |              |                     |                  |              |               |
|--|--------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. I expect my partner to know what will make me happy and get mad when he/she do not follow through.                            | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 2. I ask my partner to take part in joint errands that need to be done (e.g. cooking, shopping, etc.).                           | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 3. I help my partner when he/she makes a request of me.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 4. I ask my partner to do favors for me.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 5. I feel anxious when I ask my partner to do me a favor.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 6. I feel guilty about asking my partner to do me a favor/assist me.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 7. I do not say no to my partner when he/she make a request of me, even when I am busy.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 8. I tell my partner I love/care about him/her.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 9. I tell my partner when I am angry and specifically tell him/her why.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 10. I do not tell my partner when I am angry because he/she should know why.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 11. It makes me nervous to talk to my partner about my feelings.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 12. I am the first one to say "I love you" in relationships.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 13. I feel comfortable telling my partner how I feel in the moment.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 14. I express my feelings through body language rather than words in my relationships.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 15. I prefer to be in relationships where you just know what the other person is thinking rather than having to tell each other. | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 16. I encourage my partner to tell me about his/her feelings verbally.   |              |                     |                  |              |               |



- |   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
|---|--------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 17. I enlist other people (e.g. friends, his/her friends, family) to express my feelings to my partner.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 18. I express my opinions to my partner.  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 19. During an argument, I tell my partner I agree with him/her even though I have a different opinion.    | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 20. I wait for my partner to state their opinion on a topic before I say anything.                        | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 21. It makes me anxious when my partner and I disagree.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 22. I offer suggestions to fix the conflict in my relationship.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 23. I feel guilty after disagreeing with my partner and stating my opinion.                               | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 24. My partner takes care of making decisions; I go along with what he/she wants.                         | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 25. My partner and I work together to solve a problem and come up with a solution we are both happy with. | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 26. When I have a conflict in my relationship, I can think of a way to solve it.                          | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 27. I initiate kissing with my partner when I want sex.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 28. I wait for my partner to kiss/touch me when I want sex.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 29. My partner and I talk about having sex.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 30. Talking about sex with my partner makes me nervous.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 31. I worry about being rejected by my partner if I try to initiate sexual contact.                       | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 32. I start conversations about having sex with my partner.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 33. I did discuss birth control with my partner before we began having sex.                               | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 34. I am comfortable telling my partner about the sexual activities I like to have done to me.            | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 35. Thinking about communicating my sexual preferences with my partner makes me anxious.                  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |

36. My partner and I talk about preferred methods of birth control.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
37. I choose to use my partner's preferred method of birth control rather than my own.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
38. My partner and I talk about the expectations of our relationship (i.e. monogamous, open, etc.).  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
39. I am the one who initiates conversations about commitment/monogamy.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
40. I know what I want from my current (or future) relationship.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
41. I have difficulty expressing my anger/hurt feelings in a way that my partner understands.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
42. I am able to express to my partner what I want from our relationship.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
43. I am able to tell/show my partner what I like sexually.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
44. I am able to tell my partner when they are doing something I don't like sexually.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
45. I am able to tell my partner when I am not in the mood for sexual activity.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
46. When my partner is in the mood but I am not, we end up having sex.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
47. When I am in the mood and my partner is not, we end up having sex.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
48. I am uncomfortable when my partner tells me what they like sexually.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
49. I get upset when my partner tells me they are not in the mood for sexual activity and I am.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
50. I am angry/sad/upset/uncomfortable with my sexual relationship with my partner.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
51. I behave in my relationship in a manner that is consistent with my religious beliefs.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
52. I behave in my relationship in a way that is consistent with my own values.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
53. I violate my religious beliefs or personal values in order to please or compromise with my partner.  
**Never**      **Occasionally**      **Sometimes**      **Often**      **Always**
54. When there is a conflict between my partner's needs and my needs, my partner's needs get met more often than not.

- |  | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
|--|--------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 55. My partner's needs come before my own.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 56. I make efforts to meet my partner's needs before working to meet my own needs.   | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 57. When there is conflict between my needs and my partner's needs, I meet my own needs but feel guilty /ashamed for doing it. | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |
| 58. I communicate my expectations for my romantic relationship as soon as I know what I want out of the relationship.          | <b>Never</b> | <b>Occasionally</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Often</b> | <b>Always</b> |

Appendix H  
Assertiveness Training Manual and Handouts (Rusinko, 2010)  
Assertiveness Training-Day 1

Welcome to assertiveness training

1. Introductions
  - a. Therapists introduce themselves
  - b. Overview of group rules:
    - i. Respect the idea of others
    - ii. The information shared in group is confidential unless we find out someone is seriously going to hurt themselves or someone else.
  - c. Participants introduce themselves
    - i. Why are you here?
    - ii. What do you want to get out of the class?
    - iii. What issues have you had?
    - iv. Strengths and Weaknesses

\*One facilitator writes down group responses so the examples can be catered to participant needs.
2. Purpose of training
  - a. Communication is an important part of our everyday lives. We communicate with people on various levels that can include romantic partners, friends, family, co-workers, supervisors and the clerk at the store.
  - b. How we communicate with people can influence how the interaction is going to go, how we feel about ourselves and how the other people feel about us.
  - c. Assertiveness is one of a few different types of communication styles. In order to better understand assertiveness, we will first review the other communication styles.
  - d. Neuropsychological research has found that people may be prone to a certain communication style. This doesn't mean you can't learn other types of communication styles, it just means you may be born with a tendency to use one of the styles more naturally.
3. Ice Breaker-What is Your Communication Style Quiz
4. Passive Communication Style (Pass out Handouts)
  - a. The passive style is designed to avoid conflict at all costs.
  - b. Often this is done through giving in to unreasonable demands from others, going along with the crowd; not offering your opinion until others have offered theirs, never criticizing or giving negative feedback and never doing anything that might attract contact or disapproval.
  - c. End result, we are often giving control of our life over to others and can end up doing twice as much work as everyone else.
  - d. Common Beliefs:
    - i. Other people are more important than I am
    - ii. My role in life is to be a servant
    - iii. Other people can do things better than I can
  - e. Common Emotions

- i. Fear of rejection
- ii. Helplessness and frustration over the lack of control in your life
- iii. Resentment toward the demands placed on you by others

#### 5. Aggressive Communication Style

- a. The aggressive style is typically used to get people to submit to us. It is important for us to win, no matter what the cost to other people.
- b. Aggression is typically the result of feeling threatened in a situation and is ultimately a way to control what is happening around us.
- c. Aggression ultimately does not get us what we want in the long run however people use it because in the immediate situation you get what you want
  - i. By intimidating others you get what YOU want-even though people will resent you
  - ii. If others fear you, fewer demands are made of you-fewer pleasant invitations will also be sent your direction
  - iii. Can feel like a way to get even for past wrongs although it usually ends making both people feel worse
  - iv. Sometimes you feel like you need to “blow off steam” (research suggests doing this makes you more angry)
- d. Acting aggressively makes you feel powerful briefly but it is often replaced with feelings of guilt for making the other person feel worse.

#### 6. Passive-Aggressive Communication Style

- a. Passive-aggressive is a combination of the anger of the aggressive style and the fear of the passive style. Individuals who are passive-aggressive feel anger in the form of disappointment or frustration that makes you want to “get” the other person but you are too afraid to do it directly.
- b. Passive-aggressive individuals will show their anger in multiple ways including:
  - i. Bad mouthing a co-worker to a supervisor
  - ii. “Accidentally” dropping cans on the floor when putting away groceries
  - iii. Routinely showing up late for appointments with an excuse ready
  - iv. Doing a task so badly so someone will take over for you
  - v. Not finding time to do the favor you promised someone
- c. By using this approach you are managing to get your way in the situation while having to take none of the responsibility for your actions. This will ultimately make it difficult for other people to confront you on your actions.
- d. It may be nice to be able to hide your anger and never have to deal with confrontation; however, eventually people will see you as unreliable, irresponsible, disorganized or inconsiderate.

#### 7. Assertive Communication Style

- a. None of the other strategies are satisfying. An assertive communication style allows us to take control of our behavior and we are deciding what we will and will not do.

- i. This also recognizes that other people are ultimately in charge of their behavior and they will decide what they will and will not do.
    - ii. The assertive communication style is not designed to control other people because we cannot control others.
  - b. Being assertive means you are acknowledging your wants, thoughts and wishes honestly without expecting others to give in to us; we also respect the opinions and wishes of others without necessarily adopting those same thoughts.
  - c. You are considerate of what other people are wishing and wanting to do. You may choose to go along with something you do not necessarily want to do (i.e. going to a restaurant with your friends that you don't want to go to) after you express your desires. The key is that you are making the CHOICE to do something after your desires have been expressed.
  - d. Assertive communication sounds simple in concept but is difficult to learn because we have very few models for assertive behavior growing up. If you can learn and master assertive behavior, there are many benefits:
    - i. You will relate to others with less anxiety, conflict and resentment
    - ii. You will be relaxed on most situations because you know you will be able to handle most situations you are in
    - iii. You will be able to focus on the present when communicating with others instead of bringing up the past ("Remember when you did this last month...") or unrealistic thoughts about the future ("If I do this, he will think I mean this")
    - iv. You will maintain your self-respect without stomping all over others
    - v. Your self confidence will improve because you will no longer feel you need approval from others and attempt to live up to their standards
    - vi. You will have more control over your own life
    - vii. You will be able to be comfortable with others having the right to live their life, even if it does not match with your desires
    - viii. Assertive communication is really the only communication style that will allow you to BE in the relationship
- 8. Discussion about the type of communication style participants are currently using most often based on the ice breaker questionnaire.
- 9. Stress Reduction (Handout)
  - a. The most important aspect of using assertive communication, beyond being honest about your wishes, thoughts and desires, is to be CALM
  - b. Stress is a physical response of your body when you feel you are under threat. Often we experience increase in heart rate, increase breathing, rise in blood sugar level, increased blood flow, and release of endorphins to prevent us from being slowed down by injury.
  - c. When we experience this "stress response", we are actually less likely to be able to handle the situation we are facing and less likely to use assertive communication. You will either become aggressive (fight) or passive (flight)

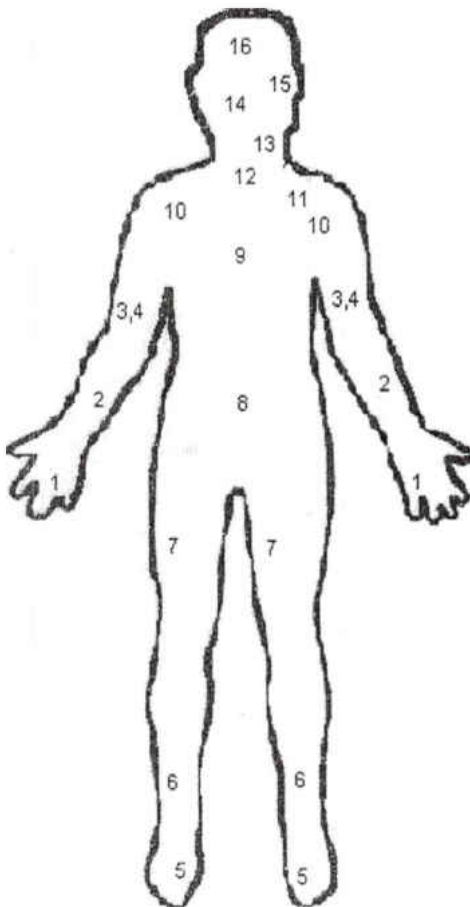
- d. It is important when you start to feel the stress response that you take the time to calm yourself first, even if that means excusing yourself from the situation until you have calmed down to handle the problem (but ALWAYS come back to discuss the problem, don't just leave it unresolved)
  - e. Stress Worksheet
  - f. Teach techniques for calming down: DEEP BREATHING and PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION
10. The Right to be Assertive (Handout)
11. Homework assignment
- a. Deep Breathing and Relaxation Exercises
  - b. Track assertive and non-assertive behavior (Handout)

## Muscle Relaxation

Muscle group number and corresponding body parts:

- 1, 2: Hand and lower arm, right, left, then both together
- 3, 4: Upper arm, right left, then both together.
- 5, 6: Lower leg and foot, right, left, then both together
- 7: Thighs
- 8: Abdomen
- 9: Chest and breathing
- 10, 11: Shoulders and lower neck
- 12: Back of neck
- 13: Lips
- 14: Eyes
- 15: Lower forehead
- 16: Upper forehead

Exercises:



- Lower arm- Make fist, palm down, and pull wrist up toward upper arm.
- Upper arm- Tense biceps. With arms by side, pull upper arm toward side without touching. (Try not to tense lower arm while doing this; let it hang loosely)
- Lower leg and foot- Extend leg so it's straight. Point toe upward toward knees.
- Thighs- Pull knees together until upper legs feel tense.
- Abdomen- Pull in stomach towards back.
- Chest and breathing- Take a deep breath and hold it about 10 seconds then release.
- Shoulders and lower neck- Shrug shoulders, then bring shoulders up until they touch ears.
- Back of neck- Put head back and press against back of chair.
- Lips- Press lips together: don't clench teeth or jaw.
- Eyes- Close eyes tightly but don't close too hard (be careful if you have contact lenses)
- Lower forehead- Pull eyebrows down (try to get them to meet)
- Upper forehead- Raise eyebrows and wrinkle your forehead.

Barlow, D.H. (1988)



**TRACKING FORM**

Date/Time	EVENT	Your Response	Assertive

# RIGHT TO BE ASSERTIVE

- You have the right to express yourself without apology
  - You have the right to have your thoughts/feelings respected
  - You have the right to be taken seriously and listened to
  - You have the right to ask for what you want, even if you might feel it is not sensible
  - You have the right to make mistakes (as long as you take responsibility for them)
    - You have the right to say NO without apology
    - You have the right to not feel guilty for putting yourself first
    - You have the right to choose not to be assertive
- McClure, J.S., (2003)

## Assertiveness Training-Day 2

### 1. Introductions

- a. Therapists introduce themselves
- b. Review: Last week we discussed the different types of communication style and which style you are most often using now. We also learned how to clam ourselves down through deep breathing and muscle relaxation. Since being calm is one of the most important elements for being assertive, let's start the training today with deep breathing.
  - i. Deep Breathing
- c. Review homework from previous week
  - i. What was easy? What was challenging?

### 2. Verbal Assertiveness

- a. Today we are going to spend time learning more about how to be assertive both verbally and non-verbally. We will start with the verbal part which is going to focus on what to say.
- b. We will start by describing what you want to do in order to say things assertively. We will then work through some scenarios together in order to practice how to phrase things.
- c. One of the keys to assertive communication is asking directly for what you want or stating your opinion/thought/feeling in a manner that allows people to understand what you are experiencing.
- d. Being assertive actually takes less words and explanation if done properly. The first step in assertive communication is to stick to the point.
  - i. Stick to the point
    1. You should be using the fewest words possible to get your point across. More is not better, it is confusing.
  - ii. Don't be distracted by additional detail or attempt to add other comments. You are not going to bring up every time this has happened, bring up the past or try to take things into the future.
  - iii. Focus on the present. You should be reporting what your thoughts/feelings/emotions are in the moment or making a request for something you want to happen based on something in the moment.
    1. EXAMPLE: Your significant other has forgotten to call you when he/she is running late. He/she has a habit of not calling when they are running late and it makes you angry.
      - a. Not Assertive: "I am so mad at you right now. How hard is it to pick up a phone and call me? You always do this, you don't care about me."
      - b. Assertive: "I am mad/upset that you did not call when you were running late because it makes me feel like you don't care. I would like it if you would call me when you are running late."
- e. Communicating assertively also means you use "I" messages.

- i. An “I” message is a straightforward comment about what you feel think and believe. There is no apology associated with it. “I messages” can be both positive and negative.
- ii. It is important to speak in terms of yourself when you are communicating assertively. You do not want to use the term YOU very often because it sounds as if you are blaming the other person.
  - 1. People become defensive when they feel blamed or attacked in a situation which will actually prevent them from listening to what you have to say. They are too busy thinking of how to defend themselves.
    - a. Has anyone ever done that to you? How do you feel when someone starts a sentence with “You did this?”
  - 2. By using statements that focus on your feelings, thoughts and impressions you are taking ownership and responsibility for what you are saying.
  - 3. Also, using I statements will make it easier for someone to listen to what you have to say because they will not be spending the whole time attempting to defend themselves.
- f. Ask for feedback, clarification and cooperation
  - i. An important part of being assertive is also asking for feedback from others. This is something many of us do not do because it is difficult to listen to criticism or negative feedback.
    - 1. At work, asking a boss for feedback on your job performance. Say “I really enjoy this job and I feel I am doing my job fairly well. I am wondering if you have any concerns or areas that you think I can improve on”
    - 2. It is important to note: only ask for feedback if you are truly receptive to hearing what the other person has to say. If you are going to react negatively or defensively toward the other person for providing you with feedback, it is probably not a good idea to ask for it.
  - ii. Asking for clarification on things that might be confusing to you is also another important part of assertiveness. Maybe there are times in class lecture where the information is confusing to you or maybe you misunderstood what the plan was for a friend’s birthday party.
    - 1. When asking for clarification, it is usually best to state what it is that you are misunderstanding, what you think the person means and then asking if that is correct.
    - 2. EXAMPLE: Your teacher as just explained a new concept in your psychology class but you are confused by the information.
      - a. Not assertive: Not asking at all
      - b. Assertive in class: Raise your hand and state. “I am not clear about the concept you just explained, would you explain it one more time?”

- c. Assertive after class: "I am unclear about the concept you talked about in class today. Could you clarify the concept for me?" If the teacher needs to leave, set up a time to meet with them to discuss.

BREAK

3. Now that we have talked about how to say things assertively, the other important part is what your body language is communicating. The non-verbal Assertiveness is just as important as the verbal assertiveness. You can say all the right words but if your non-verbal behaviors are not the same as your words, people may get the wrong message.

- a. Assertiveness is more than what you say; it also includes how you say something.

*Model a passive, aggressive and assertive approach for each  
Have participants discuss the difference between each of them and  
their reactions to the approach*

- i. Posture
  1. Sit up/stand up straight, head up, confident but not tense
- ii. Movements and Gestures
  1. Do not fidget with your hands, rock back and forth or make big gestures with your hands. Make sure that your gestures and movements are congruent with what you are talking about.
- iii. Physical Distance
  1. In the United States we tend to like about 3 feet of space between us and the person we are talking to.
  2. Too close can be taken as aggressive and too far away suggests you are afraid.
- iv. Eye Contact
  1. You want to make eye contact with someone when you are expressing yourself to them if possible (obviously over the phone, eye contact can not be made). Do not stare at someone as that is an aggressive move and avoiding eye contact is passive and apologetic for making your statement.
- v. Facial Expression
  1. Your facial expression should match what you are trying to say. If you are describing a negative emotion, doing this with a smile on your face is not appropriate.
- vi. Voice Tone
  1. Along with the expression on your face, the tone of your voice is important. When possible you should try to remove most emotion from the tone of your voice, speak in an even and calm voice when expressing yourself.
  2. Do not use sarcasm or hostility
- vii. Fluency

1. The pace in which you speak can make a difference. Ideally you want the words to flow out naturally...pausing too often suggests you are unsure of yourself.
4. Role Plays from the Scenario Sheet
5. Homework assignment
  - a. Continue Relaxation and Deep Breathing Practice
  - b. Assertiveness Tracking Handout

### Verbal and Non-Verbal Assertiveness Practice Scenarios

You have a roommate who is borrowing your stuff without asking and she rarely returns it. This is something that is upsetting to you and your roommate is the sort of person to either get very angry or lie to you if confronted.

You find out everyone at work has gotten a raise, except for you. You are confused because you think you do a good job at work.

While sitting in lecture you become confused about the material that is being taught that day and would like the professor to explain the concept again. (There are two possible ways to handle this)

Your boyfriend has cancelled plans with you again for the 5<sup>th</sup> day in a row. You are starting to think that he is not happy in the relationship but doesn't want to talk to you about it.

You and your boyfriend have been together for a long time and you have strong feelings for him. You want to tell him how you are feeling even though he has not told you anything about how he is feeling.

There are a few students in your psychology lab that talk non-stop and you are graded on participation. You have something to share with the class about the topic. How do you get involved?

You have an opportunity to have an experience in your life that you have always wanted (travel, work, etc.) and you ask your mom/dad/best friend if you should take it but they tell you that they don't know if you can handle it. You really want to take the experience and are upset by their lack of support.

A co-worker of yours is constantly taking credit for the work you do and is bad mouthing you to everyone you work with. You know who is saying things about you and this person is always nice to you when you are around.

There is a guy you are interested in going on a date with. You have flirted and tried to drop hints but he is not acting on those; however, you are still interested in dating him. How do you handle this?

## Assertiveness Training-Day 3

### 1. Introductions

- a. Last week we talked about how to verbally and non-verbally express yourself in an assertive manner. Being assertive means you stick to the point and try to use I statements, as well as use confident body language when you are being assertive with someone else.
- b. Review homework from previous week
  - i. What was easy? What was challenging?
- c. Review last week's topic

### 2. GROUP PARTICIPATION:

- a. When do you have the hardest time telling someone no?
  - i. Do you have a hard time telling people "no" at work? If yes why?
  - ii. Do you have a hard time saying no to friends or family members? If yes why?
  - iii. Do you have a hard time telling a romantic partner or person of interest (i.e. a guy you find really attractive) you don't like the same things they do? How about saying you don't want to do something for them?
- b. Discuss what current or past relationships/romantic interests have been like for communication?
  - i. Who usually brings up issues that need to be talked about? (or for those that have never had relationships, who usually approaches who (do you go talk to a person you find attractive or do you wait for them to come to you?)
  - ii. Do you feel nervous before talking to your partner/person of interest?
  - iii. What does that nervousness feel like? What does your body feel like when you are nervous? Remember it is important to know how your body feels when you experience an emotion because that is when you need to use the relaxation techniques you learned.
  - iv. Do you feel guilty after you have said something to them about an issue that is concerning? Why?
- c. Identify what an individual wants or doesn't want in a person of interest
  - i. Traits exercise (Handout)
  - ii. Why are the 3 traits you picked out the most important? Have you ever dated someone who doesn't have these qualities? Why do we stay with people who don't have the qualities we want?

### 3. How do we apply this to a romantic relationship?

- a. As we have talked about, assertive behavior is used in numerous relationships. For many women using assertive behavior in their romantic relationships can be the most difficult. Being assertive with strangers is easier because we don't have an emotion toward the stranger. When we have feelings for someone and want them to like us, we have a hard time saying what we want.



- i. Some women have a hard time being assertive early on in the romantic interactions; she may not feel confident approaching a man she is interested in and may be hesitant to state what she wants early on in the relationship.
  - ii. Other women may be assertive early on in the relationship but have a more difficult time expressing themselves further in to the relationship because the communication style has been set up to be that of a non-assertive style or both partners get comfortable with each other, forgetting to express things to each other.
    - 1. Do either of those sound like you?
    - 2. What are you typically like in a relationship? (i.e. do you go out of your way to make the other person happy? Always get your way? Avoidant of serious talks?)
    - 3. Are you demanding? Do you try to please your partner?
  - b. It can be difficult to be assertive with the people we love; however, using assertive communication in our romantic relationships will improve the quality of those relationships.
- 4. We are going to be talking about boundaries for the remainder of the training today. These boundaries are going to include our sexual boundaries as well. It may be a little uncomfortable talking about sex or sexual activity; however, it is important to be able to talk about sexual wants/needs/likes and dislikes in an assertive manner as well. Even if you have not had sex, this discussion will also include sexual activities including kissing.
- 5. Boundaries
  - a. All relationships are defined by a set of boundaries that we set up and maintain
  - b. **Visual Boundary Group Exercise:** Participants will partner up and stand across the room from each other. One person will stand still while the other person walks toward them. When the person standing still feels their partner is close enough to them they will tell them to stop.
    - i. How did you know the person was close enough? What did your body feel like when you told them to stop?
    - ii. You told them to stop when you began to feel uncomfortable. That is an important bodily feeling to remember because it is the feeling you will have if a physical or emotional boundary has been crossed.
  - c. We have physical boundaries that we maintain with people in our life. Often referred to as our "personal bubble".
    - i. In the United States we like to have about 3 feet of physical space between us and the other person when possible. With people you are more comfortable with, you may allow them to be physically closer to you because you have a different boundary with them.
    - ii. Boundaries are not only physical but also emotional. We have the right and ability to share and withhold information from people.
      - 1. Who are you comfortable telling your name to?
      - 2. Secrets?

3. Talking about sex?
4. How classes are going?
  - a. The more personal the information is to us, the more likely we are to only tell people we trust. This is a boundary. You should only communicate with people what you are comfortable telling them. In romantic relationships it can be easy to share too much information too quickly as a way of feeling close to the person. It is important to only share information you are ready to share with the person.

## 6. Sexual Boundaries

- a. A part of being human is to have a sex drive. An individual's drive for sexual intimacy can be influenced by emotional difficulties, religious beliefs or a medical condition. Understanding your own desires, wants and limitations when it comes to sexual activity is the first step in being able to express this to other people.
- b. Understanding personal sexual boundaries (Handout/Activity)
  - i. This activity is designed to get you to think about your sexual boundaries. We will be asking you to write down your responses but you do not have to share what you write down if it makes you uncomfortable. We do encourage you to share but it will not be required.
- c. Talking to your partner/person of interest about birth control?
  - i. Do you talk openly with your partner about birth control if you are going to have sex?
  - ii. Practice: You are with someone who you want to have sex with and you have started kissing this person. You are not on birth control and do not feel comfortable going any further with this individual until you know they have a condom.
    1. How would you handle this situation using your typical communication style?
    2. How would you handle this situation assertively (if the usual style is not assertive)?
- d. It is acceptable to not know what you want sexually and take each situation independently.
  - i. Do you/would you tell a person you were interested in having sex with that you want to have sex (or sexual activity such as kissing) with them? Why or why not?
  - ii. Is it ok to change your mind if you consented to sexual activity but don't want to anymore?
    1. What would you say to someone to stop?
    2. It can be uncomfortable to tell someone we care about to stop doing something because we do not want to hurt their feelings. Go back to the use of "I" statements, stick to the point and say what you are thinking with confidence.

3. Example: I know I said this was ok but now I am uncomfortable/not in the mood and would like to stop. Lets' go to sleep, I am tired.
- iii. What should you do if he or she continues to pressure you for sexual activity after you have asked them to stop?
  1. Express to them in an assertive manner how you feel they are not being respectful of what you want and that you understand they want sex.
  2. If the pressure continues, remove yourself from the situation.
  3. You always have the right to say no when you don't want sexual activity and you always have the right to request sexual activity when you do want it. It may feel uncomfortable at first. This is where keeping yourself calm in the situation using deep breathing and knowing how to express yourself in an assertive manner become important in romantic relationships. If you use the techniques you have learned in class with your romantic partner, the quality of your relationship should improve.

#### 7. Homework

- a. Identify a situation with a current partner for those in a relationship (for those not in a relationship, think about a situation with an ex-partner or person of interest) in which you and your partner had a disagreement. How did you handle the situation at the time (what communication style did you use?). If you could go back, how would you handle the situation in an assertive manner?
- b. Use your deep breathing/muscle relaxation in a stressful situation (i.e. before a test, speech or other event that makes you nervous)

## My IDEAL PARTNER

Check each trait you would like your ideal significant other to have:

<input type="checkbox"/> Dependable	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncomplicated
<input type="checkbox"/> Well-organized	<input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing
<input type="checkbox"/> Responsible	<input type="checkbox"/> Creative
<input type="checkbox"/> Good self- control	<input type="checkbox"/> A negotiator
<input type="checkbox"/> High achiever	<input type="checkbox"/> Shy and quiet
<input type="checkbox"/> Cautious	<input type="checkbox"/> Calm
<input type="checkbox"/> Objective	<input type="checkbox"/> Even-tempered
<input type="checkbox"/> Demanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Competitive
<input type="checkbox"/> Conscientious	<input type="checkbox"/> Easygoing
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-confident	<input type="checkbox"/> A peace-maker
<input type="checkbox"/> Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> A people-pleaser
<input type="checkbox"/> Serious	<input type="checkbox"/> A great listener
<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual/religious	<input type="checkbox"/> Respectful
<input type="checkbox"/> Humorous	<input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous
<input type="checkbox"/> A perfectionist	<input type="checkbox"/> Physically Strong
<input type="checkbox"/> Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Studious
<input type="checkbox"/> Dependent	<input type="checkbox"/> Extrovert
<input type="checkbox"/> Diligent	

# Sexual Boundaries

1. What sexual activity have you engaged in so far in your life (i.e. kissing, fondling, oral sex, intercourse):

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2. What were your reasons for having sex (or not having sex for those who have not):

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3. Have you ever engaged in a sexual activity that you did not want to but you were too nervous/afraid to say no?:

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4. What are you comfortable doing sexually at this point in your life? With who?

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5. When you are uncomfortable in a sexual situation, what do you do?

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Week 3 Homework

1. Identify a situation with a current partner for those in a relationship (for those not in a relationship, think about a situation with an ex-partner or person of interest) in which you and your partner had a disagreement.

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2. How did you handle the situation at the time (what communication style did you use, did you yell, storm out of the room, avoid the topic, give in to avoid conflict?)

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3. If you could go back, how would you handle the situation in an assertive manner?

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- ❖ FINAL ASSIGNMENT: If you are in a relationship or have someone you engage in sexual activity with, try to have a conversation about sex with them over the week using the skills you have learned.
- ❖ If you are not currently with someone, try to have a conversation about sex with a friend who you trust but do not normally talk about sexual activity with.
- ❖ The purpose of this exercise is to get you more comfortable talking about sex and things related to it. If you are uncomfortable with the topic you will have a hard time being assertive!

## DAY 4-Assertiveness Training Review

### 1. Introductions

- a. Review: Last week we discussed our boundaries for intimate relationships that include our sexual boundaries. Each of us is going to have different boundaries with people so being able to identify those boundaries for yourself is an important part of being assertive. Another important element for being assertive is of course staying calm in the situation, let's start the training today with deep breathing.

- i. Deep Breathing

- b. Review homework from previous week

What was easy? What was challenging?

### 2. Review and Practice

- a. Over the last three weeks you have been taught and practicing the basic skills necessary for communicating in an assertive manner. As we talked about on the first day, we all have a tendency to communicate using a certain style and assertive is just one of those styles.

- b. What are the other styles of communication?

- i. Passive: Not stating your opinion, want or need because you want to avoid conflict at all costs. Usually this leads to feeling walked all over and not very important if you use this communication style too much.

- ii. Aggressive: Yelling at people until you get what you want, forceful. People will typically do what you want but will eventually start to resent you and not want to be around you if you use this style too often.

- iii. Passive-Aggressive: Not expressing yourself to other people and trying to get back at them by not doing something asked of you or taking a long time to do it. People will eventually consider you unreliable or an untrustworthy friend if you use this approach too much:

- iv. Assertive: Expressing your wants, opinions, needs and desires in an open and honest manner without infringing on the rights of other people. The more you use this style the more confident you will feel and the better you will feel about yourself because you are expressing yourself to other people without offending them.

- c. How do we communicate assertively?

- i. Verbally:

1. Stick to the point

2. Make your statements short and based in the present, not past or future

3. Use I messages. You want to keep the focus on your feelings, opinions and needs rather than focusing on what the other person did. Remember, we can only control ourselves, not what other people are going to do.

4. Ask for feedback and clarification when you need it.

- ii. Non-verbal (Have participants model good assertive non-verbal behaviors while reviewing them)
  - 1. Eye contact, body posture, gestures, tone of voice and fluency of speech. You want to be calm, with a confident body pose and fluent speech that lets the other person you are sure of what you are saying.
- d. How do we apply this to romantic relationships?
  - i. To be assertive in romantic relationships we need to set up boundaries.
  - ii. What are boundaries?
    - 1. Boundaries are both physical and emotional. They are what we are comfortable sharing with another person.
    - 2. Each person has a different set of boundaries.
    - 3. Understanding your own boundaries and expressing those to romantic partners/person of interest will improve the quality of those interactions and make those relationships more satisfying for you.
  - iii. Sexual boundaries
    - 1. Understanding your sexual boundaries is another important aspect of assertive communication in romantic relationships.
    - 2. You do not need to know what you want sexually before you are in the situation but do pay attention to your bodily cues. Remember the boundary activity we did last week? Stopping sexual activity when you start to feel uncomfortable is always within your right.

### 3. PRACTICE:

- a. Ask participants to partner up. Give the partners a scenarios handout and ask them to take turns expressing themselves assertively in the handout. Walk around the room and provide feedback to each person for how assertively they handled the situation.
- b. Ask if they have any additional questions

### 4. Questionnaire Packets

- a. Ask participants to fill out questionnaire packets. They will need to write down the identification number they used the first time they filled it out (i.e. day you were born and first three letters of a favorite Pet's name).
- b. On a separate sheet of paper have participants write down their name, e-mail and phone number. Inform participants someone will be checking in with them via e-mail or phone in 3 months for a brief 15 minute follow-up. If they are enrolled in a psychology class at that time they can get extra credit for the follow-ups.

Thank you for taking the time to participate and we hope that you learned something you can use in your daily life.



Appendix I  
Facilitator Adherence Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review participant homework when applicable
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review last week's session when applicable
- \_\_\_\_\_ Introduce topic of session
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provide examples illustrating topic of the day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Role play and demonstrations of the skill for the day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provide participants with handouts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have participants role play and demonstrate new skill in group
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have participants provide examples of the skill for the day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provide feedback to participants in order to increase assertiveness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assign homework to participants

Appendix J  
Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA  
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Title of study: Effects of Assertiveness Training Program for Female College Students

Principle Investigator: Holly Rusinko (701) 330-2856

Dr. April Bradley (701) 777-3790

**Purpose**

You are invited to participate in a voluntary longitudinal research project that is attempting to provide women with the opportunity to learn an assertive communication style for their interpersonal relationships.

**Duration of Study**

The duration of this study is 4, 2-hour assertiveness training sessions that will be held once a week. You will also be asked to complete two 30 minute phone call follow-up interviews 3 and 6 months after you have completed the training program.

**Subjects**

You have been selected to participate in this study because you are a female student at UND over 18. You will complete a short questionnaire, participate in an assertiveness training course and participate in two follow-up phone interviews.

**Procedures**

Participation in this study is confidential. All names and identifying information will be removed from the data. You will be given a packet of 6 questionnaires to fill out. Once the questionnaires have been filled out, you will participate in a 2 hour training session for 4 weeks. Once you have completed the training, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire packet. You will also be asked to participate in two 30 minute phone follow-ups at 3 and 6 months after completion of the training.

**Risks**

There are a few potential risks of this study. We will be asking personal questions that may be uncomfortable to answer, including your past sexual experiences. If for any reason you do feel uncomfortable and wish to discontinue your participation, you are encouraged to inform the experimenter and are free to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. To discontinue the experiment because of discomfort or distress, please just walk out of the room and the primary investigator will meet you in the hallway, bring you to a private room and talk about any adverse feelings you may be having due to the study. Referral information for mental health services will be provided to all participants.

**Benefits**

The benefits of this study include the increased knowledge of the assertive communication style related to interpersonal relationships. This information may be helpful to professionals in the field and the development of future training programs for college age women.

**Confidentiality**

Information gathered from the questionnaires will be coded with an identification number and your name will not be associated with the data. Consent forms will be kept separately from the data. All materials gathered during this study will be kept securely in a locked file cabinet in the laboratory of Dr.

April Bradley at the University of North Dakota. Information will be kept for a period of 4 years, after which the information will be destroyed (shredding paper). The study experimenters (including graduate research assistants working with Holly Rusinko and Dr. April Bradley) and people who audit IRB procedures will have access to the data during this 5-year period. You will not be personally identified in any reports or publications that may result from this study.

**Cost and Compensation**

There will be no costs to you other than the time it takes to participate in this study. You will receive the opportunity to win a \$100 gift card to Target or a local gas station by being entered into a lottery drawing at the end of every training session. There will be 4 gift cards given out and the winners will be drawn at the completion of the 4<sup>th</sup> day of training.

**Right to Refuse or Withdraw**

You may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. If you decide to withdraw from the study, please tell the graduate research assistant if it is during the questionnaires. If you choose to withdraw during the training program, please just exit the room and talk with the primary investigator. If the study design or use of the data is to be changed, you will be so informed and your consent re-obtained.

**Questions**

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to ask the experimenter. If you have additional questions later, contact Holly Rusinko or Dr. April Bradley at the UND Psychology Department. The phone number for April Bradley is (701) 777-3790. The phone number for Holly Rusinko is (701) 330-2856. If you have any other questions or concerns, please call the Office of Research Development and Compliance at (701) 777-4279.

You may report (anonymously, if you so choose) any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which this study is being conducted to the University of North Dakota Social Behavioral Institutional Review Board at (701) 777-4279 or by addressing a letter to the IRB at UND, P.O. Box 7134, Grand Forks, ND 58202-7134

MY SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT I HAVE DECIDED TO VOLUNTEER AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT AND THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS CONESNT FORM.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

MY SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT I HAVE EXPLAINED THE PROCEDURES, RISKS AND BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANT.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

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