DEAR MAN

The acronym **DEAR MAN** outlines a strategy for communicating effectively. This strategy will help you express your wants and needs in a way that is respectful to yourself and others. Using DEAR MAN will increase the likelihood of positive outcomes from your interactions.

**Describe**
Clearly and concisely describe the facts of the situation, without any judgment.

“You have asked me to work late 3 days this week.”

**Express**
Use “I” statements to express your emotions.

“I feel overwhelmed by the extra work I’ve been given.”

**Assert**
Clearly state what you want or need. Be specific when giving instructions or making requests.

“I need to resume my regular 40-hour work week.”

**Reinforce**
Reward the other person if they respond well to you.

*Smiling, saying “thank you”, and other kind gestures work well as reinforcement.*

**Mindfulness**
Being mindful of your goal means not getting sidetracked or distracted by other issues.

“I would like to resolve the overtime issue before talking about the upcoming project.”

**Appear confident**
Use body language to show confidence, even if you don’t feel it.

*Stand up straight, make appropriate eye contact, speak clearly, and avoid fidgeting.*

**Negotiate**
Know the limits of what you are willing to accept, but be willing to compromise within them.

“I’ll finish the extra work this week, but I won’t be able to manage the same amount of work next week.”
DEAR MAN

Instructions: Choose a specific interpersonal challenge you are dealing with, or that you have dealt with in the past. Answer the prompt for each step to create a plan for communicating about the issue.

Describe: What are the facts of the situation? Do not include opinions or interpretations.

Express: Write an “I” statement to express your feelings: “I feel _____ when _____.

Assert: How will you tell someone what you need? Respond with the specific language you will use.

Reinforce: How will you reward the other person for responding well to you?

Mindfulness: What is the goal of your interaction? What other topics might distract from the goal?

Appear confident: Describe the posture, eye contact, and tone of voice you will use.

Negotiate: What are the limits of what you are willing to accept?