

Passive-Aggressive Behavior

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Passive-aggressive behavior is a pattern of indirectly expressing negative feelings instead of openly addressing them. There's a disconnect between what a passive-aggressive person says and what he or she does. For a passive-aggressive person, true feelings are shared through actions, not words.

For example, a passive-aggressive person might appear to agree — perhaps even enthusiastically — with another person's request. Rather than completing the task, however, he or she might express anger or resentment by missing deadlines, showing up late to meetings, making excuses or even working against the task.

Specific signs and symptoms of passive-aggressive behavior include:

- * Resentment and opposition to the demands of others
- * Complaining about feeling underappreciated or cheated
- * Procrastination
- * Stubbornness
- * Inefficiency
- * Memory lapses
- * Sullenness
- * Irritability
- * Cynical or hostile attitude

Although passive-aggressive behavior can be a feature of various mental health conditions, it isn't considered a mental illness. If passive-aggressive behavior is interfering with your relationships or daily activities, consult a therapist who can help you identify and try to change your behavior.

