

# Your Legitimate Rights

1. You have a right to need things from others.
2. You have a right to put yourself first sometimes.
3. You have a right to feel and express your emotions or your pain.
4. You have a right to be the final judge of your beliefs and accept them as legitimate.
5. You have a right to your opinions and convictions.
6. You have a right to your experience—even if it's different from that of other people.
7. You have a right to protest any treatment or criticism that feels bad to you.
8. You have a right to negotiate for change.
9. You have a right to ask for help, emotional support, or anything else you need (even though you may not always get it).
10. You have a right to say no; saying no doesn't make you bad or selfish.
11. You have a right not to justify yourself to others.
12. You have a right not to take responsibility for someone else's problem.
13. You have a right to choose not to respond to a situation.
14. You have a right, sometimes, to inconvenience or disappoint others.

Put the rights that are most important or liberating to you on a file card, and tape it someplace where you'll see it frequently, like your bathroom mirror, in order to remind yourself.

To remind you of your value and importance as a human being, we'd like you to review the following list of legitimate rights (adapted from McKay et al., 1983).