



SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR PARENTS & CARETAKERS

POSITIVE MODELING

The ways a parent talks with a child; the adult's body language; tone of voice; and the way a parent handles conflict, can create a nurturing environment where the child's self-concepts can grow and flourish. It is crucial that the caretaker model positive, life-giving behaviors, self-management skills, and problem solving skills reinforcing a positive role-model for conflict resolution.

RESOLUTION SKILLS

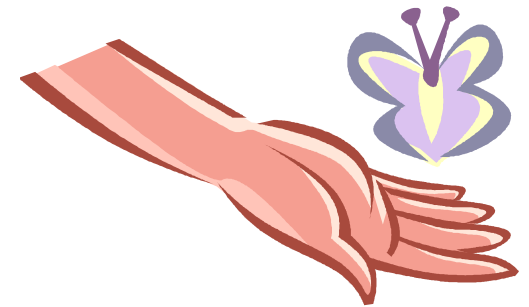
When the parent gets into a conflict with a child, there are several techniques to deal with the situation positively and successfully:

1. Acknowledge feelings of anger, frustration, and hurt — both the child's and yours.
2. Acknowledge what the child has said before responding - e.g., "So, you don't agree because...?"
3. Offer choices. "Cornering" the child makes him or her lose face in front of siblings and leaves him/her little choice but to attack, to withdraw with unresolved hostility, or to get even.
4. Look for win-win situations when you can model, and your child can learn your common goals/interests in an environment of trust and respect.
5. Use caring language. "Put downs" and threats cause conflicts to escalate and breed feelings of hostility and resentment.
6. Avoid asking: "Why did you?" Instead, have your child state what happened and how he or she feels about it.



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THE PEACEABLE HOME



RESOLVING FAMILY/HOME CONFLICTS THROUGH POSITIVE MODELING

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THE PEACEABLE HOME — A CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS



The

Causes of Home/Family Conflict (A Checklist for the Adults)

1. **Competitive Atmosphere:** Where there is a highly competitive atmosphere in a home, children learn to work against, rather than with each other.
 - Yes No** An attitude of everyone for himself or herself.
 - Yes No** Lack of skills for working together.
 - Yes No** Children feeling compelled to “win” in interactions with siblings/parents because losing results in loss of self-esteem.
 - Yes No** Competition at inappropriate times and in inappropriate ways.
2. **Intolerant Atmosphere:** An intolerant family climate is an unfriendly and mistrustful one.
 - Yes No** “Scapegoating” and blaming is a common “practice”.
 - Yes No** Intolerance of differences.
 - Yes No** Lack of support from parents/siblings leading to loneliness and isolation.
 - Yes No** Resentment of the accomplishments, possessions, or qualities of others.
3. **Poor Communication:** Poor communication contributes to family conflict when children (parents, too!):
 - Yes No** Don’t know how to express needs and wishes effectively.
 - Yes No** Have no forum for expressing emotions and needs, or are afraid to do so.
 - Yes No** Impatience at listening to others’ concerns, wants, hurts.
 - Yes No** Do not observe or pick up on the emotions of others. Lack of sensitivity to or understanding of other’s hurt feelings.
4. **Inappropriate Expressions of Emotions:** Conflicts can escalate when children/adults:
 - Yes No** Are out of touch with their own feelings.
 - Yes No** Suppress emotions.
 - Yes No** Lack self-control.
 - Yes No** Don’t have non-aggressive or alternative ways to express anger and frustration.
5. **Lack of Conflict Resolution Skills:** In conflict situations, children and adults usually respond in ways they have learned from others.
 - Yes No** Conflicts escalate when children and adults don’t know how to respond creatively to conflict.
 - Yes No** Violent or very aggressive approaches to conflict and competition are acted out by the adults.
 - Yes No** The home environment offers children opportunities to learn and practice problem-solving behaviors that they can integrate into their life within the family.
6. **Misuse of Power by Adults:** Parents have a strong influence on the factors named above. Parents/adults contribute to family conflict whenever they:
 - Yes No** Frustrate the child by placing irrational or impossible high expectations on him or her.
 - Yes No** Manage the home with a multitude of **inflexible** rules.
 - Yes No** Continually resort to the authoritarian use of power.
 - Yes No** Establish an atmosphere of fear and mistrust.