

A Proactive Approach to Challenging Behaviour

Effective Phrases

Statements and Questions to Aid Self-Expression

"How are you feeling?"

"What would make you feel better?"

"What would you like to have happen?"

"Which one would you pick?"

"People's feelings count here".

"There're lots of different ways to solve problems."

"We all have our own ideas about things."

Statements and Questions to Aid Social Competence

"How do you think he/ she is feeling?"

"That's one idea! Let's get another!"

"What would you like him/her to say if he/ she wanted to _____?" (i.e. Borrow your pencil, join the game, play with them, etc.)

"What do you do if _____". (i.e. You make a mistake, you want to ask somebody a question, you have to interrupt a conversation, etc.)

"What can you do to show somebody that you want to be his/her friend?"

"Do friends ever get angry with one another? How do you make up with a friend?"

"What can you say or do if your friend looks _____?" (sad, mad, etc.)

"Here's some things to try when you're feeling upset..."

"We care about each other in here."

"We notice things about each other in our room."

"People greet each other in here."

Phrases for Providing Correction without Threat

"In our family (or class), we (or people) _____."

Examples: "In our family, people listen to each other."

"In our family, people's feelings count."

"When people _____, it makes it hard for me to _____."

Examples: "When people are yelling, it makes it hard for me to listen to what each person is saying."

"When people are arguing in the back seat, it makes it hard for me to concentrate on my driving."

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"It matters to me that _____."

Examples: "It matters to me that everyone gets a turn."
"It matters to me that nobody gets hurt."
"It matters to me that people feel respected in this house."
"It matters to me that people learn good manners."

"_____ is one way of _____ (getting what you want). Can you think of a different way?"

Examples: "Yelling at your brother is one way of getting his attention. Can you think of a different way?"
"Slamming doors is one way of showing me that you're angry. Can you think of a different way?"

"Something quite drastic must have happened that made you _____. Do you want to tell me about it?" or "Is there a situation I can help with?"

Examples: "Something serious must have happened that made you scream at your friend. Is there a situation I can help with?"
"Something quite drastic must have happened that made you not finish your chores. Want to tell me about it?"

"I like it a lot better when people say (or do) _____ when they need something from me."

Examples: "I like it a lot better when people wait until I'm off the phone to say something to me."
"I like it a lot better when people say "Excuse me, it's important" if they have to interrupt me when I'm on the phone."

"_____ has to get done by _____. What's your plan for getting it done?"

Examples: "This room has to get straightened up before our company arrives. What's your plan for getting it done?"
"This garbage has to go out before trash time tomorrow. What's your plan for getting it done?"

"Your project has to be turned in next Tuesday. What's your plan for getting it done?"

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Using "Persuasion Power" to Solve Problems

1. If the other person is getting more and more worked up, interrupt negativity by paraphrasing the person's complaint.

"What you're bringing up is very important. I want to make sure I got it straight. You said _____, right?"

2. Attempt to discern and validate the underlying interest.

Interest = what s/he really wants

Position = the best method s/he can think of at the moment for meeting the underlying interest

"From what you've said so far, I'm getting the message that you are very concerned about _____. I can certainly appreciate that."

3. Attempt to find some point of agreement on the level of interest, even if your position is much different.

"I agree that _____ is very important." or "We're both interested in _____."

4. Explain your plan for addressing the interest. Ask for any additions he/she would make to the plan.

"I'm thinking that _____ could resolve this situation", or "I intend to _____." Do you have any other ideas about what might work?"

5. Open the door for further dialogue/evaluation.

"I hope this action will take care of the situation, but time will tell. I value your feedback. Keep me informed about what you are seeing. If Plan A doesn't work, we'll have to try something else."

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Short “Persuasion Power” Interventions

Teacher to Student

1. "Do you know what the rule is about _____? Are you willing to do it? Great!"
2. "You know that if someone was doing that to *you*, I would make *her* stop."
3. "I'm not trying to ruin your fun. You'll have plenty of time to do that later on."
4. "I don't want you to get into trouble."
5. "If you make yourself pay attention now, it'll make your homework a lot easier and quicker."
6. "My job is to make our classroom a good place for everybody. That means protecting everyone's rights. I might be protecting yours, next time."
7. "You'll make up your own mind about what you're going to do next, but I hope you decide to _____ (cooperate in some way) because I want you to have _____ (benefit)."
8. "You're going to do _____ if you really want to, but you could also decide to_____. I hope you really think about what is best for you."
9. "I'm pointing out this problem to you this time, but if I make a mistake that I don't recognize, I hope you'll point it out to me."
10. "Is that really helping you?"
11. "I have no interest in bossing you around. All I want to do is _____. (legitimate purpose.)"

12. "There's a solution to this that will help us both. Let's find it."
13. "I want this to turn out well, but I can't _____ (stop talking, get in your seat, get to work, calm down, do your homework, etc.) for you. What happens next is up to you."
14. "Here's what I'm willing to do. What are you willing to do?"

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15. "I'm not going to _____ you (scream at you, accuse you, blame you, etc.), and I'd like you to do the same for me."
16. "I'm on your side. I'm not the enemy. How can I help you get back on track?"
17. "Pretend you're me. What do you think I'm going to say next?"
18. "I'm glad you're having fun! I'd just like you to postpone it 'till later."
19. Compliment the skill used in the off-task action, then re-direct. e.g. "You can really draw! I'll get you to help some other people during art time. But now it's math time."
20. "It's OK to _____, it's not OK to _____"

Building an "Empathy Bridge"

The "**Empathy Bridge Technique**" has three parts:

- Validate the underlying feelings or motivation behind the behaviour.
- Find something OK about the person's intent.
- Pause before identifying the issue or problem the behaviour is presenting.

Example:

"So you're saying you pushed him because he cut you in line, right? I can understand that...nobody likes to be disrespected. You have the right to speak up for yourself."

"Here's the issue. Whenever anybody lays hands on somebody else, even if nobody gets hurt, the rule says I have to put a stop to it because in our school, we attack problems, not people. How could you have made your point without pushing?"

Restitution in a Nutshell

What is restitution?

Restitution is defined as the act of making good or compensating for loss, damage, or injury. It restores things to a previous state or position.

Restitution is best when it is *voluntary*. The person who made the mistake realizes that his/her actions resulted in a loss to someone else, and seeks a way to make up for the loss.

Restitution in our society is often *involuntary* and occurs when a judge or other authority decides what kind and amount of compensation is appropriate for the victim and demands that the person who made the mistake gives that payment to the victim or victims. Restitution in our society usually takes the form of financial payment, but can sometimes include community service.

How is restitution different from punishment?

Restitution is based on the concept of fairness. Under the best of circumstances, restitution benefits both the victim and the "mistake-maker" because it gives the relationship a chance to start again. It begins the process of restoring the relationship to the state that existed before the mistake was made. Restitution not only gives the mistake-maker a chance to do the responsible thing, but it also gives the victim the chance to learn the quality of forgiveness. Restitution is based on the belief that people can learn not to repeat actions that had a painful effect on *others*. The mistake-maker is seen as a person that can learn new ways to meet his/her needs. These new ways will not interfere with the rights of others, nor cause others loss. The responsibility for eliminating

future problems is given to the mistake-maker. The goal for the mistake-maker is to gain insight and increased sensitivity into the needs of others.

Punishment is designed to inflict pain or discomfort on the mistake-maker. It is based on the notion that people learn from pain, and will not repeat actions that caused *themselves* pain. Often, punishment teaches the mistake-maker to resent the punisher and the victim, and teaches the mistake-maker to be more careful about getting caught in the future. The victim is not usually involved in the punishment process within a system like school, and the punishment usually is not logically related to the offence. The relationship between the victim and the mistake-maker is usually not addressed nor restored. The responsibility for stopping future problems lies with the authorities who over-see the system. Punishment is designed to make the mistake-maker feel remorse, shame, and guilt, and is meant to prevent the person from repeating the same thing again because of fear of getting caught.

What kind of questions should we ask if we are considering a restitution-style consequence?

- Who was hurt or interfered-with?
- What was lost or damaged? (Property? Self-esteem? Respect? Trust?)
- How can what was lost be restored?
- What kind of actions could the mistake-maker take that are logically related to the loss?
- What kind of contact between the mistake-maker and the victim could best restore the relationship?

What if the victim is not a person, but rather society, the organization, etc.?

- If the victim is not a person, what was the loss to the system?
- Was a rule broken?
- Was property damaged or defaced?
- How can it be repaired or replaced?
- What kind of actions could a mistake-maker do in the future to accomplish his/her needs without interfering with others?
- How will he remember to use his new plan?
- How can the mistake-maker be led to understand the importance of the rule to the well being of the system?

What are some examples of restitution in action?

Problem: Jim was teasing Bob on the bus by taking his bag lunch and passing it around. In the process, Bob's lunch got crushed.

Restitution: Jim apologized and said he wouldn't tease Bob any more. He also gave Bob lunch money.

Problem: Susan passed a rumor that Jane's mother was arrested for dealing drugs.

Restitution: Susan apologized to Jane and made an announcement to the class that the rumor was false and should never have been passed.

Problem: Shanika kept talking during Mrs. Brown's class. She disrupted class by knocking over a desk when Mrs. Brown gave her a detention.

Restitution: Shanika apologized to Mrs. Brown for talking so much and told Mrs. Brown her plan to control her talking in the future. She offered to learn and teach a lesson to the class for Mrs. Brown.

A Restitution Plan Should Include:

1. An acknowledgment by the mistake-maker that his/her actions created a problem for the other person. The mistake-maker does not have to say that the reason behind his/her actions was wrong, but that the action, itself, was a mistake. Sometimes, it helps for victims to hear the reason.
2. *Effort and action* on the part of the mistake-maker to correct the situation.
3. A statement of future intent.

Example: "Amy, I realize that I embarrassed you when I teased you about your haircut. I was just trying to get a laugh from my friends. That was the wrong way to get a laugh. I'm sorry. I promise that it won't happen again. I'd like to sit next to you on the bus to let everybody know that we're friends, if it's OK with you. Is there anything else I can do to fix this?"