

Discipline/Training Methods

Answer Key

The interrupt rule. How to resolve a power struggle. The appeal process.

The interrupt rule.

I. Biblical Basis

A. Philippians 2:1-11

1. We are to be humble.
2. Consider others better than yourself. Look out for them.
3. Put the needs of others ahead of your needs.
4. "The preciousness of others."

B. Practical Examples

1. Holding doors open for others.
2. Allowing others to go first in line.
3. Putting your grocery cart in the cart corral.
4. Standing off to the side rather than in the middle of the aisle in crowded areas.
5. Waiting for others to finish speaking before speaking ourselves.
6. Teach these things to your children!

II. The Interrupt Rule

A. Note that the interrupt rule is not an end in itself. It is a practical application of Philippians 2.

B. The suggested procedure when you are talking with someone and your child needs your attention is shown below. This procedure assumes that there is no blood or broken bones. Obviously it is ok for your child to interrupt your conversation for an emergency.

1. You are having a conversation with your spouse or another adult. Your child needs to talk with you. What should they do?
2. Teach your young child to approach you and put his/her hand on your arm or side (your preference). Older children/teens do not need to touch you, they can stand there silently. Touching is a tool for younger children.
3. Touch them (put your hand on theirs) to let them know that you are aware of them. Do not immediately stop your conversation.
4. When there is a break in the conversation, turn to deal with them and their concern. Try to do this more quickly for younger children than for older children.
5. Practice this at home during your devotions. It can also be used by children when they are talking to each other. The younger ones will at some point be able to do it simply by standing there. The only point of them touching you is it gives them something to do and makes sure that they know that you know they are there.

How to resolve a power struggle.

- I. What is a power struggle?
 - A. A power struggle typically begins immediately after a child has been spanked or disciplined.
 - B. In their rebellion and desire for control, they return to the exact same activity that earned them the spanking in the first place. This earns them another spanking.
 - C. Left uninterrupted the cycle goes on and on and leads to frustration, anger, and even the potential for child abuse.
- II. What do you do if you find yourself in a power struggle?
 - A. Identify that you are in a power struggle. If you find yourself needing to spank or discipline a child for the same behavior a second time not long after the first incident, you are in a power struggle.
 - B. Complete the second disciplinary action. You need to make it clear that the defiance will not be tolerated and that they must obey you.
 - C. Now it is up to you to break the cycle. Don't go back to the same room or activity as a test of their obedience. You only increase the intensity of the battle. Change the subject. Go to a different room. Start a new activity with the child. Don't let them find something to do by themselves. Give them direction. Otherwise they will find themselves back there again.

The Appeal Process.

- I. Biblical Basis
 - A. The appeal of Daniel. Daniel 1:1-16.
 - B. The appeal of Paul. Acts 25:1-12.
 - C. The appeal of Nehemiah. Nehemiah 2:1-10.
- II. Characteristics of these appeals.
 - A. They appealed directly to the authority over them, not to a third party.
 - B. They appealed respectfully. Note especially Daniel in Daniel 6:21.
 - C. Look at the attitude behind their words.
- III. How does the appeal process work?
 - A. The parent gives the child an instruction.
 - B. The child respectfully asks if he/she may appeal the instruction. "May I appeal?" (Or something similar as long as it is done respectfully.) Note that the child **must** appeal to the parent who gave the instruction and **must** do it respectfully to be heard.
 - C. The parent responds. (A wise parent says "yes" unless there is an emergency or the child has been abusing the process.)
 - D. The child then explains the reason for the appeal and provides new information not known to the parent. This must not be used as a delay tactic. The child who does not supply new information will temporarily lose this privilege.
 - E. The parent reconsiders his/her instruction in light of the new information provided by the child and grants or denies the appeal.
 - F. The child obeys the final instruction. An appeal can only be made once. No whining/complaining is permitted.

(See *The Heart of Anger* pp. 163-172 for a detailed description of the appeal process.)

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Student Worksheet

The interrupt rule. How to resolve a power struggle. The appeal process.

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