

# What do you Say - (When you Can't Say 'Yes')?

The Influence and Nuance of Redirective Language

Presented by Mark Warren  
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The references that influenced this presentation include:

1. **Games People Play - The Psychology of Human Relationships** by Dr. Eric Berne, M.D., Grove Press, Inc., New York, New York, 1964.
2. **Verbal Judo: Redirecting Behavior With Words** by Dr. George J. Thompson and Dr. Michael J. Stroud, The Verbal Judo Institute, 1984
3. **Verbal Judo: The Gentle Art of Persuasion** by Dr. George J. Thompson and Jerry B. Jenkins, William Morrow and Company, New York, New York, 1993. ([www.verbaljudo.com](http://www.verbaljudo.com))
4. **The One Minute Manager** by Dr. Ken Blanchard and Dr. Spencer Johnson, Berkley Books, William Morrow, New York, New York, 1981.
5. **Whale Done!** By Dr. Ken Blanchard, The Ken Blanchard Company, 2002.
6. **The Secret: What Great Leaders Know - And Do**, by Ken Blanchard and Mark Miller, Berrett - Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, 2004
7. **"Valuing Relationship"**, a three-part video based program produced by Griggs Productions, San Francisco, 1994. [www.griggs.com](http://www.griggs.com)

## Class Objectives:

- No one likes to hear the word 'no'. Yet sometimes, that's part of our job. So, how do we maintain the "adult" in us, even under the worst of conditions *without generating more resistance*?
- The fundamentals of T.A., P-A-C skills and practice.
  - ▣ Strive to maintain professional, not personal face.
  - ▣ Treat your public like *customers*, not *violators*.
  - ▣ Work to build trust, accentuate the positive and redirect the behavior, rather than punish – **Whale Done!**
  - ▣ Create experiences with good outcomes.
  - ▣ Neutralize their fight or flight reflex.
- Professional responses, not personal reactions.

It happens time and again, because it's natural – when it's not possible for others to get their own way and we're responsible for that revelation, how do we say 'no' without making it sound personal or increasing resistance? These things might help:

- Maintaining "professional face" is so important, particularly under stress or pressure, because some days, we don't feel like coming to work! If we're slightly sick, stressed or preoccupied with something else going on in our life, we must make ourselves 'perform' our job. That's professional face. By contrast, we'll regret meeting the public with our personal face, because someone can hurt our own feelings in as little as 45 seconds.
- Treating the public like a customer simply means this: *we must care about what they think*. If you work for the government, you're spending their money! If we treat anyone like we don't care what they think, we're headed for unethical uses of power.
- The reference to the **Whale Done!** strategy is from Ken Blanchard's book of the same title, published in 2002. It's the wonderful story of a business executive at the end of his personal and professional rope who learns a powerful secret about motivating others by watching the whales at Sea World. In doing so, he learns how to facilitate change in his own world.
- Remember the difference between respond and react – this program is about the professional use of language to achieve a professional purpose and to redirect behavior, not to punish people or hurt their feelings.

## One great truth: *Conflict* is the energy that holds relationship together – which kind?

- Good or “enhancing” Conflict behaviors:
  - Trust
  - Commitment
  - Participation
  - Co-creation
  - Effective communication
  - Empathy
  - Understanding
  - Honesty and congruence
  - Being present
- Bad or “depleting” conflict behaviors:
  - Lying
  - Narcissism
  - Withholding
  - Withdrawing
  - Blaming/doubting
  - Sabotage others/self
  - Manipulation
  - Control
  - Victimstance
  - Martyrdom

From “Valuing Relationship”, Griggs Productions 1994, [www.griggs.com](http://www.griggs.com).

The outstanding significance of these lists is that the more good behaviors present in any workplace, team or relationship, the more harmony, synergy and “mutualism” (each member providing something the others need, but can’t produce on their own) are at work. People in this environment are much more likely to stay a part of that team, regardless of the stress and difficulty encountered.

The more negative behaviors present, the more likely people will look for another place to go. There is no synergy. People tend to withhold their mutual contributions and become self-centered if only to survive. In business, turnover is public enemy #1. If a leader can keep their people, they have a much better chance to grow, but if they’re constantly retraining new employees how to do the job, growth stops. If rookies end up breaking in rookies, the organization regresses.

# A Review of Parent, Adult and Child, 101

The “Transactional Analysis” Theory of Resolving Conflict from “*Games People Play*” by Dr. Eric Berne



In 1964, Dr. Eric Berne M.D. wrote “*Games People Play*”. The book put into pop culture his theory of relationship and conflict which he called “Transactional Analysis”. In part and paraphrase, here is what he said about T.A.:

From time to time, people show noticeable changes in four specific aspects of behavior. They are posture, voice, viewpoint and vocabulary. These changes along with shifts in feeling temporarily create a “new person” in us, or what Berne called an “ego state”. These “new people” are a sort of defense mechanism soldier to combat the effects of stress, pressure or attack against us. Those “new people” or ego states have names and personalities that have been recognizable for years – ***parent, adult and child.***

Although it is normal to jump into one of these new people to protect ourselves, it is not normal to stay in them. So, this is a brief overview of the ego states and an explanation of how they can either enable or diffuse conflict where words are the only (or primary) permissible means to resolve it.

“From time to time, people show noticeable changes...”

- *Posture, voice, viewpoint and vocabulary* changes caused by “Social stimuli”.
  - *Stuff* happens – traffic, news, weather, kids, deadlines.
  - Defense mechanisms to combat stress, pressure or “attack”.
- Changes create a shift in feeling.
- Shifts in feeling causes need to cope - creates a new person or “ego state”.
- “Ego states” have more common names: Parent, Adult and Child. Consider:
- How do you drive?



One of my favorite (and very accurate) examples of the “social stimuli” that can lead to a new person or “ego state” is the song “The Last Thing I Needed” by Donna S. Farar and the great Gary P. Nunn:

The postman delivered a past due bill notice,  
The milkman came two hours late;  
The garbage man dumped all the trash on the sidewalk  
The hinges fell off of the gate;  
This morning at breakfast, I spilled all the coffee  
I opened the door on my knee;  
The last thing I needed, the first thing this morning, was to have you walk out on me.  
Last night you came home late, and I knew you’d been drinking,  
By that old mellow look on your face;  
But I thought it really don’t matter, since it’s the holiday season,  
And you fill such a big empty space;  
And I laid down beside you, and I wanted your loving,  
‘Cause your love makes my life complete,  
And the last thing I needed, the first thing this morning,  
Was to have you walk out on me.  
So excuse me for looking like my world has ended,  
Excuse me for looking like I just lost my best friend;  
Excuse me for living and being forgiving,  
Just go if you want to be free;  
The last thing I needed, the first thing this morning,  
Was to have you walk out on me.  
Yeah, the last thing I needed, the first thing this morning,  
Was to have you walk out on me.

## Characteristics of P-A-C



- This is your parent means...
  - "You are now in the same state of mind..."
  - *Something* turns you into your Mom or Dad.
  - "Parents" are:
    - Self-referential
    - Personal, possessive pronouns (*I, me* and *my*)
    - Authoritarian - "I'm..."
  - What are some things your parents used to say?
- Parental postures are dangerous in potential conflict.

## Child characteristics

- This is your child means...
  - "The manner and intent of your reaction..."
    - *Natural vs. adapted* child?
  - "Children" are:
    - Selfish
    - Personal, possessive pronouns - especially "*my*"
    - Short-term thought process
- Child postures create super parents - examples?

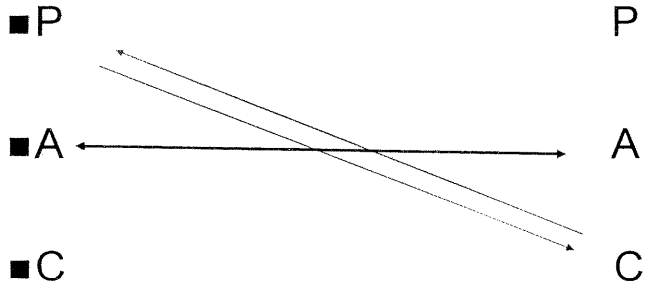


## Adult characteristics

- This is your adult means...
  - “You have just made...”
- “Adults” are:
  - Autonomous
  - Objective
  - Non-prejudicial
    - Responsive, not reactive
    - Plural, possessive pronouns (*we, us and our*)
    - Generates empathy
- Adult postures are calming and non-threatening : listen, empathize, ask.

This is your adult means “you have just made an autonomous, objective appraisal of the situation and are stating these thought-processes, or the problems you perceive, or the conclusions you have come to in a non-prejudicial manner.” The adult is necessary for survival. It processes data and computes the probabilities which are essential for dealing effectively with the outside world. It also experiences its own kinds of setbacks and gratifications. Crossing a busy highway, for example, requires the processing of a complex series of velocity data; action is suspended until the computations indicate a high degree of probability of reaching the other side safely. The gratifications offered by successful computations of this type afford some of the joys of skiing, flying, sailing and other mobile sports. Another task of the adult is to regulate activities of the Parent and the Child, and to mediate objectively between them.” (Berne, 1964)

## The Most Effective Way to Resolve Conflict is as an "Adult"



## Exercise #1

■ "You can't *make* me!"



■ "What kind of idiot are you?"



■ "Why *can't* I have it? *Why??*"

■ "I don't have to do a \_\_\_\_ thing you say!"

■ "What were you thinking?"





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In June of 2000, Mark retired from the Texas Department of Public Safety after 23 years of state service. He spent 19 of those years at the Training Academy in Austin, and was its Assistant Commander from 1993 to his retirement. Prior to the Training Academy, Mark was a Highway Patrol Trooper in Baytown and South Austin.

He attended Texas A&M University from 1973 to 1975, and Saint Edward's University from which he received a B.A. in Sociology in 1977, and the 157th session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

Mark has earned Advanced Instructor and Master Peace Officer certifications from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE). In July of 2000, he was commissioned a Special Ranger by the Public Safety Commission, signifying his honorable retirement from the Department of Public Safety.