

# Collaborative & Proactive Solutions

*A Non-Punitive, Collaborative, Proactive  
Approach for Behavioral Challenges*

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# Autism and Power

- By virtue of the core features of autism spectrum disorders, kids who are so diagnosed have difficulty meeting many expectations
- Unfortunately, the tendency on the part of many caregivers is to respond to unmet expectations with power and control methodologies (this is true in all kids, not just those on the spectrum)
- This may explain why kids diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders are often characterized as being over-corrected, over-directed, and over-punished
- And this may also explain why ADHD so often co-occurs with oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) and anxiety disorders

# Most Common Complaints

Kids: My parents won't listen to me

Parents: My kid won't talk to me

# The Top Five: Skills That Foster the Better Side of Human Nature

- Empathy
- Appreciating how one's behavior is affecting others
- Resolving disagreements in ways that do not cause conflict
- Taking another's perspective
- Honesty

# Important Questions

**Are the ways in which we're going about parenting, teaching, disciplining, and interacting with our kids teaching the skills on the better side of human nature?**

**If not, what should we be doing instead?**

## **Sound Bite**

**Shift from power and control to  
collaboration and problem solving**

# Most Important Task for Kids

Figure out who s/he is -- skills, preferences, beliefs, personality traits, goals, and direction – get comfortable with it, and pursue a life that is congruent with it.

# Most Important Task for Parents

Figure out who your child is – his or her skills, preferences, beliefs, personality traits, goals, and direction – get comfortable with it, and help him or her pursue a life that is congruent with it.

But you also want to have **influence**, and to make sure that your kid benefits from your wisdom, values, and experience.

Your influence is exerted through your **expectations**.

# The Balance is Hard to Maintain

Outcomes are determined by the degree of compatibility between the characteristics of an individual (especially his or her **skills**) and the characteristics of the environment (especially, its **expectations**)

When there's compatibility between expectations and skills, life is good.

When there's incompatibility between expectations and skills, people look bad.

# Big Shifts

- Instead of focusing on behaviors (and modifying them), focus on the **problems** that are causing those behaviors (and solving them)
- Solve them **collaboratively**, not unilaterally
- Solve them **proactively**, not reactively
- Remember, *Kids do well if they can...*
- Remember, *Doing well is preferable...*

## Options for Handling Unsolved Problems

**Plan A:** solve the problem unilaterally

**Plan B:** solve the problem  
collaboratively

**Plan C:** set the problem aside for now

# Plan B: Solve the problem collaboratively

## 1. Empathy Step

(gather information so as to identify child's concerns)

## 2. Define Adult Concerns Step

(identify adult concerns)

## 3. Invitation Step

(collaborate on a solution that is realistic and mutually satisfactory)

# Myth

**Parent-child conflict is inevitable**

**Reality: Kids and parents are going to disagree with each other and kids are going to have difficult meeting some expectations**

# Myth

**You're not an authority figure – and the kid isn't taking responsibility – if you're not using Plan A.**

**Reality: Plan B solves problems far more effectively than Plan A, without the massive down side of Plan A.**

# Do You Still Have Expectations?

Of course! You can't raise kids without expectations.

It's how you handle *unmet* expectations (unsolved problems) that matters...

# What Skills Are Trained With Plan B?

- Empathy
- Appreciating how one's behavior is affecting others
- Resolving disagreements without conflict
- Taking another person's perspective
- Honesty

How?

# Important Questions

**Why do the problems that affect kids' lives so often cause conflict between us and them?**

**Are the ways in which we're going about parenting, teaching, disciplining, and interacting with our kids teaching the skills on the better side of human nature?**

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/RESOURCES

A woman with long dark hair is carrying a young child on her back. They are standing in a grassy field with mountains in the background. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare effects. The woman is wearing a dark top, and the child is wearing a striped shirt.

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