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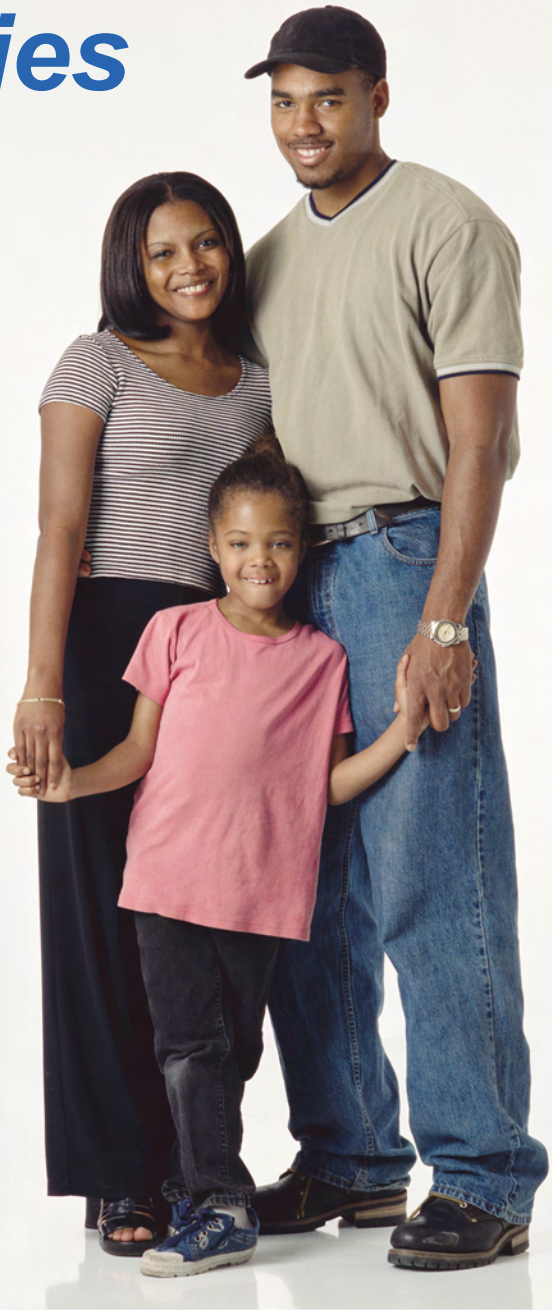

Dealing With Difficult People

Complete Transcript

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Parents Toolshop® Teleseminar Series
"Dealing With Difficult People"

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Jody Pawel:

Today's topic is dealing with difficult people. This has really become a hot topic, and people are starting to get into the holiday mode. We'll be talking about holiday shopping with kids and some of those kinds of issues next month, but what we're all starting to plan now is our family get togethers; and as I've been bringing up the topic of dealing with difficult people and holiday get togethers and some of those toxic people that we normally are able to distance ourselves from. But if they happen to be in our family, our extended family, we can't always do that over the holidays.

It can really be very stressful for families for a variety of different reasons. So I've been doing this topic for awhile, and this is the first time I've done it on the teleseminar series. It's really throughout the parenting classes that I do throughout the week, and I do a topic series at a corporation called Lexus Nexus that's local here. They're international, but they're local; they're international headquarters is here.

This has been a really hot topic, so I do have a lot of information to share on the call and even more information to share in the post call resources. So I actually have a lot of resources I'm going to send you after the call and actually quite a bit to cover in the call, but I don't want to do so much content that there's no opportunity for Q&A. So, if at any point you do want to interrupt or ask a clarifying question or give a situation maybe that you've had to deal with or that you know as fairly familiar, feel free to interrupt me for that as we go through things.

Let me just ask if everybody on the call can kind of relate to whether it's at work or an extended family kind of situation of ever having been around a difficult or toxic person that was difficult to be around them?

Jim:

Yes

Jody Pawel:

Most of us can relate to it; not all of us have to deal with it on a daily basis, which would be a work situation. Some of us, it's pretty common for most of us to have at least one of those family members somewhere in our family tree that, at least at holidays, we've got to get together with. If you don't have any toxic people in your life and you're listening to this, then bravo for you. So if you take out the handout that I sent out to you, it's like little PowerPoint slides.

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I thought we would just go through and give you a couple of real practical things that you can do in a very summarized kind of way, give you a chance to Q&A while we're on live, and then I'll send you some follow-up resources. The first thing, I guess, with difficult people is that there are a couple of pieces here that we're going to get to because we wish that difficult people would change, correct?

Female Speaker:

Yes

Jody Pawel:

And yet, I think we all realize that we really can't change other people. All we can do is change ourselves or how we allow those folks to affect us or how we choose to respond to those difficult people in our lives. So everything that I'm going to share with you, really, is from a standpoint more of what we can do on our end to change ourselves or to change how they affect us. I do want you to know that when we do these things, the very change in our demeanor, our not getting defensive, our energy just in terms of whether we're stressed or relaxed; all of those things do have an indirect influence on other people and indirectly result in someone making a change.

So our intention can't be to change them; our intention needs to be that we're just going to change ourselves, but I just want to offer some reassurances that that's not all in vain. At the very least, you will feel better; and maybe you'll get an added bonus that the situation itself will change.

So let's take a look at some prevention techniques that you can use. If you know that you're going to be around some toxic people, and I will share with you some ideas that I have and give you some extra resources. I'd also like any ideas that you all have for things that you do if you know that you're going to go to a situation where there's going to be a negative complaint or a toxic person there and then the things that I suggest and the things that I do.

The first is that I surround myself with an invisible love bubble, and that's an imaginary process I go through that, and I can do it in the situation; but obviously, if I can know going into it I need to do this, I'll do it then. I imagine that I'm surrounded by an invisible bubble that love can go both ways, I can send love, and I can receive love; but anything that is toxic that's negative that is not love bounces right off the bubble. So I just

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imagine myself being surrounded by that, and that imaginary protection seems to make a difference.

The other thing that I can do is that when someone is negative, and I actually read about this several places. I wish I could remember where I read about the shooting pink arrows. I'll have to ask the friend who told me about it, but the context of this was in a court hearing that, and I tried it actually, I went to court to support a family, a family that I work with. The person who was, I guess you call it on trial; it really wasn't a trial, but anyway, who was there, the judge started. The attorneys were all very antagonistic and argumentative and were really laying into this person. What we wanted was for this person to get treatment and help, not punishment and incarceration.

So we went there to support them; and those of us that went as this person's support group, some of us prayed and some of us, in addition to praying, shot these pink love arrows at the person. It's imaginary again, but it's like we were just sending love. What was really interesting was that, as I said, they were very antagonistic. It was very critical, and it was like oh wow, we all were starting to feel very tense.

We just continued. We just like shot the love arrows even faster, even bigger; and it was really interesting because the person on trial just stood there and didn't say anything. So they weren't really doing anything in terms of what they said or behaved. The whole demeanor of the courtroom changed. Everybody kind of backed down a bit, shifted gears a little bit, and were more willing to take an approach that was treatment-oriented than punishment-oriented.

I'd read a similar story which is why we tried it in real life; and then I had a similar experience in real life with it. So that was very interesting, but it did seem to work. So you can shoot pink love arrows at those toxic people.

Another technique, and I am giving you in the handout a link to get more information, is a technique called emotional freedom technique. This, in and of itself, I actually do a three-hour workshop just on how to use this technique and really walk people through it. The technique itself is very simple. It takes about 30-60 seconds to do;, it's actually very quick, so I don't want to make it sound like it's a big deal to learn because it's not. It's really simple, but it's so profound and so amazing; and the science behind it sometimes requires explanation if somebody really wants to know why this works because it just seems very silly and kind of woo wooish.

Emotional freedom technique is a tapping technique in which a person taps on energy meridian points. If you're not familiar with what that is but are familiar with acupuncture

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or acupressure, the points where they insert the needles are where they apply the pressure which are called meridian points. It has to do with your body's energy and balancing things out; and as you probably know just from common knowledge, for acupuncture, they would place a needle in a particular location that would correspond to something in the body or body part or an organ or whatever.

So something for the liver might not be that they're putting a needle in the liver; it might be, I don't know, behind your ear or something, but it somehow corresponds to the body. Tapping avoids all needles, which is a great thing as far as I'm concerned; and tapping is very simply tapping on some different meridian points in a particular order while you focus on whatever the issue is. What's been really amazing about the emotional freedom technique is that it probably originated more focusing on emotion-based things like fears.

Fears can be eliminated usually in an hour or less. Then it became really associated with treating post traumatic stress disorder. The VA, the Veterans Administration, now not only uses EFT, but also a technique called EMDR, which is eye movement desensitization reprogramming. Between both of those, what used to take, geeze, I mean, veterans could be in talk therapy for years and not get any relief from their symptoms from their nightmares and in a matter of minutes to hours with no more than maybe a couple of sessions. These techniques are completely rebalancing what happens in the body when trauma occurs.

When I do a full three-hour program or whatever and I teach a much broader usage of EFT, we really explore all of that. The content that I wanted to share today is that when you are around a toxic or difficult person it raises your stress level. If you've had negative experiences with this person in the past as soon as you're around them or even anticipating being around them can start to bring on physical symptoms that have almost been programmed in from having to be around this person or when you were around them before and they attacked you and you had this kind of traumatic stress reaction.

When those moments happen and we experience that the chemicals that happened at that moment of trauma or being attacked kind of get locked into the body. What the EFT technique does is that it helps release that energy and balance it out again, those chemicals it kind of releases that programming and resets it so to speak. So what we can do is in learning, if you can learn the technique, which there's a video you can get for, if it takes an hour you can also read the manual, which is free and if you click on that link that I gave you, click on free manual, you can read all the science about it. Why it works, how it works and how to do it, all free.

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When you are in a situation and someone is, you just have that sense of negative energy or it could happen after you feel like you've been attacked is if you use the emotional freedom technique it will often either undo or sometimes even protect yourself. If you do it in advance then there toxicity no longer has the same effect on you as it used to. So that's how you can use the emotional freedom technique and hopefully I've just peaked your interest enough that you'll check it out more so that we can move on to other things here.

Another technique and actually the link here takes you to Monique Gallagher's website, highestpotentialtraining.com Monique has been on our call several times, if you happen to be on the call where we were talking about I think homework and school issues or back to school and she's a homeschooling mom. She also is a personal coach and she is a trained facilitator for Stuart Lichtman Cybernetic Transposition Techniques. In plain English what those are and I'm just completing Monique's training is that it's techniques that help you do several things.

One is to achieve your goals and to remove unconscious performance limits, but the most important thing for me and that this relates to is removing some blockers and reprogramming things that in the past kind of got programmed into us on a subconscious level that we continue to play out and they're no longer serving us. What happens with these toxic people and difficult people that we have to be around on a regular basis is that we have this cumulative effect that in the past they've hurt us.

So before we even know we're going to be with them again as we go into that situation our guard is up and our defenses are up. Then we have all these lingering emotional scars from when they have hurt us in the past that still continue to affect us. There are some really helpful writing exercises and I'll just share one with you that is very helpful in relations to this problem, which is the last one, which is the last item on this particular slide on my handout; which is to create a new descriptive memory of how you want to be treated in the future.

So what you might do is you might write down memories of how this person treated you in the past and for each memory that you can recall, maybe three to five is how far you'd want to go back. Try to go back to the earliest memory you can think of as the last one that you write down and then go back for each one of those and rewrite that situation how you wish it had occurred. The science that this is based on is also similar to EFT and a lot of other visualization techniques in that quantum physics.

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Brain research has now shown and proven that the mind doesn't know the difference between a real memory if that imagined memory can be just as vivid and clear and sensory as the original memory. It can actually replace the original traumatic memory in the brain and then from that point forward you're moving forward with a non traumatic memory as opposed to a traumatic one. The main rule for rewriting this and the main place that it's difficult when we try to do this is that; and I'll take a very extreme situation, but it would make it very clear is that; imagine somebody was raped and they want to release this traumatic event.

I know this isn't related to difficult people, but it's so extreme I think you'll be able to see the example. When it comes time to rewrite that somebody would say well how could I possibly rewrite that so that the rape would be good memory? You don't have to even include the rape in it, you could include in your memory that you took a whole different route that night and it never happened. So it's you rewrite your memory as though you were the director, you are the script writer, you can write it however you want. It's almost like this is how I wish it could of gone, if I could wish anything this is how I wish it would have been.

This is how I wish my parents would have talked to me in that situation, this is how I wish my brother treated me when I was younger, this is how I wish, it's like a wish story. When you rewrite that and you really experience that you play it in your mind as though it really happened that way. And you play it as full of sensory depth and detail as you can. The body then experiences the chemicals that come from that thought and that memory and so it then starts to replace both the thought, the memory and the chemicals that are associated with that to either that person or that event or that memory.

It's more of a, it's a journaling, more time consuming technique then something like EFT, but when those thoughts and that story, you know what keeps a lot of our tension, a lot of our fears, a lot of our defensiveness going are the stories that we have connected to this person. I don't like being around this person because every time I'm around them they do X, Y, Z and that's our story that's associated with them. By actually rewriting that story our anticipations, our fears, the chemicals that those fears create in our bodies; we can actually go into the situation without walking into it all defensive.

We still can have our bubble up that's protective, which is different than defensive. Does everybody get the difference of being protected and being defensive?

Shanna:

Yes

Jim:

Yes

Jody Pawel:

Okay because you want to be protected, but you don't need to be defensive. If you're defensive that wall is going to be felt by others and they will react to that in a defensive or offensive way. Whereas protection, that's going to be more of safeness and love can still get in and out of your protection. So those are my suggestions around some things you can do on a prevention level. Are there any tips or ways that you think, or things that you tell yourself before you go into a situation to help you if you know that you're going to be around difficult people? Are there any ideas that any of you may have?

Shanna:

This kind of goes along with an imaginary sort of thinks, but telling myself this story that life is kind of like a game that I'm playing and that the people in it are actors and so that it takes a lot of fear out of situations for me to see it that way.

Jody Pawel:

That really is very true, we are all actors and we all are playing roles, those roles are kind of our identity that we've become attached to and the cool thing about it is that they are just roles, they're just acts. We can change the character that we're going to play at any time, we can't change what other people, characters that other people choose to play, but we can change the character that we're going to play. That's kind of like rewriting your story, you know the truth self of you, imagine you'd had a different life, or that you'd been raised in a different place or by different parents.

You could have turned out very differently, but there's part of you kind of that, you know some people would call it more of you know, on the physiology, you know you've got your ego, super ego, ID, there's kind of that true self or that sole that's kind of unchanging. Then there's a part of you that you can change, you know it's your psychology, it's your personality, its things like that. A lot of times people say oh I can't change that it's just the way that I am. if it's not of peace, harmony, joy and love it can be changed, you know the part of us that's always constant is kind of that, the soul part of us, everything else is personality and we do have some control over that and we can make some changes.

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So yes, just kind of becoming detached from taking it so personally, that would be one benefit I would see of looking at it like a play. It would help you to not take things so personally too.

Shanna:

And not to feel a sense of being threatened or danger or anything for me.

Jody Pawel:

So not going into it in a fearful way, yes excellent. Are there any other ideas?

Jim:

There might be another term for that, the one that I use every now and then is to go in as an observer rather than a participant or an interviewer instead of a person engaged in the dynamic. So that your arrow if you will are in the form of interests and questions and you concentrate on the other person asking them about themselves, how are things going in their lives. Doing as little contribution of your own self as you can get by with and it keeps you from getting so entangled that way. It's pretty much what Shanna was talking about just a different name for it maybe.

Jody Pawel:

It's like what you're saying is to be interested and involved but not attached. To be detached from something, you can still be involved in a situation, involved with the person, but not so hooked into it personally and attached to that person situation that whatever they do is going to affect you. You can be detached and still be caring, in fact; go ahead Jim.

Jim:

You become a little more objective rather than subjective that way and it takes the judgment out of it, which a lot of times is what, is where the conflict comes from because you're looking at arrogant Uncle Tom over there and rather than going over to Uncle Tom and saying tell me about this piece of your life, what was happening when this happened to you. You actually show interest in it, of course he may be the windbag for the next hour in a half, but at least you keep the conflict from coming up internally.

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Jody Pawel:

Yes and when something happens…

Female Speaker:

I have one more two…

Jody Pawel:

Yes

Female Speaker:

Setting an intention before going into the situation to focus on what I appreciate or what's positive, but to intentionally keep my focus there.

Jody Pawel:

Excellent idea so then … You know we call go through life with filters that filter everything that we experience, everything that we think, you know somebody could say something to us, but we hear it differently because of our filter. Setting that intention is like choosing the filter that you're going to filter everything through when you go in there. So instead of looking to judge or to be, you know defensive because of the negative that you're actually going to look and seek to find the positive; excellent suggestion.

Are there any other ideas? Then let's move on to some practical communication and response techniques. We've kind of been talking, you know area and kind of profound here the first half of the call, let's get down to; you know kind of some real basic things. Looking at the Universal Blueprint, which is in Parent's Toolshop, it's 95% of the time taught from the context of parenting. One of the things that was the big surprise for me as I developed this problem solving system and effective response system that people, it's universal that each person can customize it to their own family, their own child's needs, what's going on at that moment.

One of the things that really surprised me was how easily parents were able to take the processes and skills and use them to improve their adult relationships. Whether it was work to work, you know peer to peer at work, I had a lot of managers and bosses and company owners say that it transformed their companies when people started using these techniques. So we can use the same techniques in adult relationships, there's just

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a few little tweaks to it and I usually only present it in a tweek'y kind of way whenever we've presented it from the parenting standpoint.

So today since we're only talking about adult relationships we're just going to kind of approach it from that direction. One of the things in parenting and we have an entire teleseminar on this, which was on misbehavior and when a child misbehaves the first question that we ask is whether or not it's unintentional or on purpose. In adult relationships we ask a pretty similar question, which is, is this unintentional or it's just the way that they are and they don't know better or does this seem to be really deliberate like they're kind of going out of their way to be mean to me.

So that's the first thing that we want to ask ourselves just like we would with kids and for adults, adults misbehave too and these toxic difficult people, you know it's inappropriate behavior often times what they do. We have to decide is that just the way they are or not? So, in taking a look, if you want to look at slide three on here, if they're just kind of unaware and oblivious and you do have people that they really don't realize how they come off and how hurtful their words are.

One thing you can do is just bring it to their attention and letting them know, and you say this as an I statement, so it wouldn't be when you, you know it's whenever I'm spoken to in a way that, or whenever I hear sarcasm I have a tendency to take that seriously. It does hurt my feelings and I just want you to be aware that that's how I respond to sarcasm or something along those lines. You're speaking for yourself rather than saying, hey whey you do this you are hurting other people, you, you, you, you, which is that blameful finger being pointed at them and they're going to get defensive.

You just want to bring it to their attention, I'm not sure if you're aware that some people take sarcasm seriously and it really can hurt their feelings. You might think that they're just being overly sensitive or might think that, you know maybe they shouldn't take it that way, but the reality is that a lot of people will and I'm sure that you wouldn't want to hurt somebody's feelings. I just thought I'd bring that to your attention in case it was something you aren't aware of. So that's kind of bringing something to someone's awareness.

The other thing is to let them know that whatever it is that you're pointing out to them, it doesn't mean that somebody doesn't like them or that they think they're bad, it's just you may not be aware. So it's given, it's feedback that's given from a context of we do love you, we do want to get along with you, we do like you. I just want to be helpful and bring this to your attention. Then if you can, if it's something that they say oh well, you know, I wouldn't want to do that, then you can either offer a suggestion for what to do

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instead. You could even offer a signal or you could help them come up with what they would say instead.

I actually just did this with a family member, and there was something that they would say to me that sounded like I was being shut off. I said I felt shut off; and they said well, that's not what I meant to say. This is what I meant, and I said how about if you said it this way. It was just a much more positive way of saying what they meant, and it didn't create all of this unintentional offensiveness. They were like oh, okay, yes, you know, that's fine; you know, I can say it that way, and they saw the benefit of saying it in a more positive way.

So that would be if they are just unaware and oblivious. Are there any suggestions? I think sometimes with our older relatives, there comes a point where it's kind of like, you know, they're probably never going to change; that's just the way they are. Are there any suggestions for when it's just kind of unintentional, that's just the way that they are, any suggestions that the rest of you might have?

Jim:

What I mentioned earlier, it works for me in that particular situation pretty well. When I say ,if you say that's the way they are, then I actually get interested in the person and say when you lived in such and such a place or when you did this and you did that, old people like to talk about their stuff or their past like that. It keeps them from getting into a conflicting discussion; or if nobody is paying attention to them, is usually when they misbehave.

Jody Pawel:

That's a really good point, yes; and it might end up giving us some insight as to why they are the way that they are. Sometimes that insight can help us be more understanding and accepting and not take things so personally. You know, you can kind of understand. Oh, if that's how they see things, they really don't mean this personally. That's just the way they are. They just kind of do this to everybody; it's not just me, and it can help you detach a little bit more from it. So, okay good.

If it is on purpose, then you would want to figure out what purpose does it serve. Actually I won't go into details about that. It's really just the same whether it's for kids or for adults. It's still Dreikurs *Four Goals of Misbehavior*, which we covered in the misbehavior teleseminar. So those of you who are listening to this as a recording, you can go out and get that if you want to hear the details about that. Jim, you just

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mentioned this, which is sometimes they will misbehave when they're not being paid attention to, to get the attention; and that's a perfect example. T

The four goals of misbehavior are attention; power, which is to feel that they have some control or can control people; situations or things; and revenge, and the root of all revenge is hurt. So whenever you see someone acting out of revenge, they have been hurt at some point and are getting back for that hurt. So rather than reacting to that revenge with more revenge or discipline or whatever, backing up and helping them to resolve that hurt is usually what will take care of that. Then giving up is kind of a deep, deep discouragement displaying inadequacies, just kind of withdrawing from the situation, but in a very passive giving up kind of a way. Usually encouragement, giving some positive praise and encouragement, would be something that would be helpful there.

I didn't mention for power. Usually if rather than getting into a power struggle with somebody, seeing if you can both figure out what is your bottom line, what is it that you both want to have happen, and then see if you can negotiate a win, win so that they do have some control, and that it's not at everybody else's expense. So that's a very quick summary of what to do for the four goals in terms of what to say and what to do.

So now we're to a situation where somebody has despite all of your efforts to prevent and understand, somebody has said something very offensive or they've done something that is kind of one of those toxic moments or they're being difficult again. So like any effective response, there's what you say and what you do. The what you say part is also very similar to the effective response formula that we use in parenting, which is to acknowledge the other person's perspective first and then express any concerns that you have.

So it might be similar to that sentence I said about sarcasm of I'm sure that you're just trying to be funny or crack a joke when you use sarcasm. That's the first half, acknowledging their perspective. You might not be aware that some, that often people do take that seriously and might get offended, which is kind of expressing your concern about that. The part of this that is our part of it that we're saying, our concern or kind of bringing something to their attention, we want to be assertive, which means that we're speaking up; we're not just taking it lying down or being a door mat. We're being assertive, but we're careful about how we say it so that we're not aggressive, which would be the blaming, putting them down, getting defensive, that kind of thing.

So we're simply just kind of describing, we're using this descriptive language, more bringing something to their attention. Instead of telling them what to do, we speak for

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ourselves and say what we would, how we would like to be treated, or what we would like to hear or experience so that we're letting them be aware that this is what I would like for my experience to be and asking or non-verbally waiting to see if they say okay, I'm willing to be that way, or I'm willing to help make that experience happen, or you can say this is how I want to be spoken to. That's the first part. The second part then is what you do….

Female Speaker:

Is there a place where you ask whose problem is it as one of the questions in the children's you were working…

Jody Pawel:

Okay, that's a really good question because actually, if you kind of look at whenever there's misbehavior, it's any misbehavior where you feel like your rights are being violated where we change the child. Okay, wait a minute; back up, start this answer again …

Yes, we do ask that, but I skipped over it because it's one of those questions you can in a split second go through, and I didn't slow down enough to say that I was going through it. If you take it from the parenting perspective, the first question is, whose problem is this? Is it a child or a parent? In adult relationships one of the tweaks is that child just becomes the other person; it's whoever the other person is. In parenting we just say it's the child; but in adult relationships, it's whoever the other person is, and the parent there is just me. It's always me.

So in an adult relationship if there's mis [false start 32:55] and now in parenting all misbehavior is inappropriate, which violates one of the SHARPRV which makes it a parent problem. That gives us the P that we bring down to is it PU, parent problem with unintentional or parent problem with on purpose, right? So in an adult relationship the whole PU, PO, the little initials don't work quite as well because we're not using parent and child for everything.

So, it's my problem and it involves misbehavior that is adult misbehavior that what that person is doing is either unintentional or on purpose. I did ask that at any time there's misbehavior, any time you feel that your rights are being violated that part of the problem is your problem. Now they may have hurt feelings or they may have an opinion or they may have something that would make it a combo problem, which is they want to

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accomplish something, but they're doing it in way that violates your rights or that you have a problem with.

So that would be like a combo that you need to talk about all the stuff that's going oh, actually this relates, I'll give you an answer. I got a question and Shanna, you're still on the call, this is good, let's use your question that you submitted for this because the question was let me read it off of here. What's a helpful way to respond when another parent is speaking to me negatively about their child in front of the child? In that situation, that's a combo problem because she had the problem and she has strong emotions and that part of it is her problem that she has this issue and needs to talk about her child.

The part of that problem that you have a concern about is that she's speaking negatively about her child in front of the child and that that's inappropriate and you're concerned about the effect on the child. So it's a combo problem. In terms of what you would say, going back to what is that slide four on the handout it would be I can really hear that this is an issue for you and that you're very upset and I really want to be here for you. I want to hear all about it and really support you in this; first half her issue.

However, I'm not willing to have this conversation in front of your child I'm really concerned about the effect it could have if she overhears us. Then I would move to the next, which is what to do and okay are you with me, I can move on? Okay, then what you do and we'll go back to a generic, but I'll apply it to this. What you do depends on whether that person is willing to work with you or not. If that person is willing to work with you, on the left side of that slide is the basic brainstorm, the basic problem solving process that we teach. We had a whole session on this in the sibling one and I remember Shanna you were on that call. We really went in depth to the whole problem solving.

It would be for that situation if she says yes I really do want to talk about that and I'm willing to do that when my kid isn't around. Then it would be so when do you think we could schedule a time to do that and you would actually schedule a time and then…

Female Speaker:

What if the person is in a very emotional state where they're just almost like they want to hurt their child or they're so emotional that…

Jody Pawel:

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If you can… If you are seriously concerned about the child's safety?

Female Speaker:

Yes

Female Speaker:

[Inaudible both talking at same time 36:05]

Jody Pawel:

If you can I would offer to take their child, I would ask them, if it would be helpful for them if for right now if you could give them a break from their child, their child could come over and play for awhile and give them a chance to calm down.

Female Speaker:

Mine is unfortunately a long distance situation and I wouldn't be able to do that. [Inaudible both talking 36:23]

Jody Pawel:

Oh okay. Then I might brainstorm with her, I would express my concerns that I can hear that she really needs to talk about this, not in front of her child. I'm willing to discuss that as soon as she can make arrangements for her child and actually getting a break from her child might be just what she needs. I would actually brainstorm what could you do as soon as possible, where could you take her, who might be willing to let her come over and play and have her make those arrangements right away and then call you back. That's probably what I would do.

Shanna:

Okay

Jody Pawel:

So that's kind of an example of brainstorm, evaluate the side and then when she actually gets on the call you would actually kind of do the same thing, it would be the facts listening, it would be emphasizing and acknowledging her feelings figuring out

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what the problem is. Then helping her brainstorm solutions to that problem and possibly maybe making a suggestion about counseling or something like that that would be part of the solution. That, the B.E.D. process that's detailed there, brainstorm, evaluate the side on the left side is when the other person is willing to work with you.

When you have and this is probably just as common or more common is that the person is just that way. You may try to bring it to their attention and they don't care or they're not willing to change or they can't seem to change for whatever reason they're not in this jointly and it's up to you to figure out a solution to this situation in having to do with this toxic person. In that case you have a choice that I outline, you have three choices that we remember with CAR.

I actually got this from the book *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle. He says these, you know me and my little acronyms it's always just easier ways to remember things, so when I'm upset I can just say okay if this is just too hard to deal with I remember CAR. You can change it and remember you're not changing them you're changing your reaction to them, your perception, how you go into it, all the things that you can change. If you can't change it you can learn to accept it and acceptance has an element of letting go that you're just going to release this, that's the way it is.

You're not going to stay hooked into this, you're not going to allow this to affect you anymore, it's kind of like I was just listening to an audio tape about the Sedona Method. I'd heard of it, but never really knew what it was about and I still probably don't know details, but what the founder, Hale Dwokin I believe was his name, anyway he gave an example that if you're holding onto a pen in your fist and if we imagine that that's a problem that we have or it's this toxic person that we have to be around, this conflict that we don't like. We keep holding onto it and we keep telling this story about how painful it is to keep holding onto this pen, to hold onto this, you know how we don't like dealing with this person. We can let go and let that pen roll around in our hand or we can completely drop it and release it.

We first of all have to be aware that we have that choice, second we have to decide can we let it go and usually the answer is we could, but the second question is even more important, which is will you let it go? That's where we have to decide are we going to let this continue to bother us, can we just and will we just accept them for the way they are and not allow them to get under our skin anymore. I'm really talking more now about it's not that somebody's physically abusive to you, you could like say oh I'm not going to let that affect me anymore and they'd be beating up on you.

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I mean obviously if it's something like that you need to remove yourself from the situation, which is the last option, you can't accept it that would be unacceptable. You shouldn't stay in that situation and you need to remove yourself from it if it's unacceptable and you can't change it. It might be that if you can't physically walk out that you emotionally detach from the situation so that it doesn't bother you. So it would be removing yourself, either emotionally, mentally or physically removing yourself and those are your options. If they're not going to solve it with you those are the options that you've got and they're not necessarily quick and easy decisions to make, but it can help you go through your options to follow the CAR process.

Shanna:

I'm going to have to go, Jody thank you very much.

Jody Pawel:

Oh you are very welcome and you can catch the last ten minutes on the recording.

Shanna:

I will, okay thank you

Jody Pawel:

Okay, goodbye Shanna.

Shanna:

Thanks.

Jody Pawel:

Okay, bye. Jim do you have any questions or comments on either the BED or CAR?

Jim:

I don't think so, just good stuff, it's difficult of course when your emotions are attached and you want it to change and you know that you can't change it. It's very difficult to accept the fact that somebody has made choices to be a certain way and especially if it's a relative. It's very difficult to pull yourself away from that and…

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Jody Pawel:

Yes and when it's an adult child…

Jim:

You know it's your stuff, go deal with it, you know.

Jody Pawel:

Right, right and how we cannot let that affect us.

Jim:

Yes and that's the tough part because you get sad, you have remorse, you have guilt, you have whatever, you know.

Jody Pawel:

Yes and it really … and I don't want anyone listening to this later to think that I'm making, you know that this is just a simple, like knowledge it's not simple it can be difficult. Although if you think about it the process of release is very freeing and it's actually no effort at all. It's that we finally stopped putting so much energy and effort and holding on so tight and fighting against the current and trying to control it and trying to change them, it's that release of letting go.

What's amazing is that often times and you can't again count on this or expect this, but often times it's when we stop the fight, we stop the controlling, we stop the trying to change other people and we finally let go that not only do we get a sense of freedom, but we give them a sense of freedom. Sometimes when they're not being forced or guilted into or controlled they will on their own have more freedom and be more likely to change.

So there's kind of a duel benefit there of letting go and that we kind of let them go also. At one of my parenting class last night I was kind of getting a report via a friend of a former graduate and she has an adult child and that adult child; this is not uncommon I could probably name or think of several people along these lines. They have adult children who are making very poor decisions, decisions that could affect their health that could affect their life, could affect their livelihood, their ability to function as adults.

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There's this very helpless frustrating feeling when you are the parent, but your child is no longer a child that you have as much influences or control over, if that was the way that we operated before. It is very difficult and I think sometimes, you know we go through all of this, what can we do about it? On the one hand we do have to stand up for ourselves, say they were being abusive or they were doing something to us, in this particular situation she needed to tell the son that he needed to live somewhere else. What he was doing there was actually a risk to their safety; they really were starting to fear for their safety and lives.

So they needed to ask him to leave and they were in the right to do that and needed to do that, but there was also a sense of relief that they needed to do of, I've done as much as I can, it is his life, I wish he was making different decisions, but I need to release him. In that relief there's a step of faith that you take that there's something higher then you that might be able to intervene because clearly as human beings there's a limit to what we can do.

So it also kinds of frees for wherever someone's spiritual beliefs are with that, we won't enter into that conversation, but there's that whole other. Things can happen that are not within our control and things can still end up changing without us being the agent of change. Sometimes just letting go can help allow that to happen, so that is a hard place to be.

Let's take our last ten, five or so minutes actually because I want to save a couple of minutes at the end for some end of the year announcements. There's a couple of things, I'm going to go through them very, very quickly because I'm giving you lots of information on the post call resources around actually taking a look at what kind of difficult personalities there are. Kind of some different categories from a book called, I think it was called *Dealing with Difficult People*, I got it on there, on the next to the last slide. It is *Coping with Difficult People* by Robert Bramson. it's actually a book from the '80s or '90s, but it was one that I took notes from. I'm going to share with you my notes that I wrote to myself as I was reading the book, so it's kind of just a little summary.

The first slide though, let me backup after the, what you do, the personality priorities; these personality priorities are actually from the Next S.T.E.P., which those of us in Parent Ed. are all familiar with STEP, which is Systematic Training For Effective Parenting. There was a more advanced class from that, kind of a follow-up class called the next step and the handbook for that was called *The Effective Parent*. In that they talk about personality priorities and that's what those are on that slide. Superiority, which is thinking that someone's better than others, control, which is wanting to be in

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control, pleasing, wanting to please, comfort, wanting to avoid inconvenience and then social interest or what I call balance. The Parent's Toolshop book or have done one of my classes or audios where I talk, my spin I guess I would put on parenting styles.

Parenting people will have the three major categories, which they're called somewhat different, but there's either the, I call it over controlling. Some people call it authoritative or I'm sorry authoritarian or like, am I getting that right, Jim?

Jim:

Yes

Jody Pawel:

Then there's permissive and then in the middle instead it was democratic and I went away from a concept of democratic because parents were confused they thought it had something to do with being a republican or a democrat and that you would vote on things and all that. Most parenting programs have three categories, I have those three, but within those three the two extremes I broke down into two more categories so there were five different parenting styles.

What I actually did was I took the three major ones that everybody teaches and I overlaid those with these personality priorities from the next step and what I came up with was the perfectionistic supervisor, which you see the superiority. The power patrol, which is the controlling personality and those two are the over controlling or autocratic, that's the word I'm looking for.

Jim:

Autocratic or authoritarian

Jody Pawel:

Okay authoritarian is the, what I call over controlling and see it's because of that confusion parents would get confused on the words. That was part of why I just called it something different. I call it over controlling and I know there's other factors in there besides control and Baumrind and some of the other theorists you can learn that through them.

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On the permissive side there were actually two kinds of permissiveness, one is the pleasing, which I called it over-indulgent, the silver platter syndrome, you know doing too much for your kids trying to please them all the time. Then there's the comfort person who I call the avoider, they kind of stick their head in the sand, they want to avoid conflict, they just want everything to be easy. There are two different kinds of permissiveness so I put them in that category. Then the middle category, which most of the folks call democratic, I called it balanced because there were parts of where that overlaid, but then there's some stuff that's unique to it.

So what I have done in the handout that you're going to get in the post bonus is outline these four personality priorities, the strengths that each one has because we'll recognize where we are. We want to build on our strengths, but not get imbalanced with it. If we recognize ourselves within one of those personalities', priorities there are some suggestions for what we can do to be more balanced and how we can use each of the strengths of these to just become an overall more balanced person. Where there are times where we can strife for excellence or take a leadership position or try to do something to please someone, but we're not constantly out of balance in that respect.

So I'm just going to refer you to the handout for that and also with the seven types of difficult people, there's more details, it's I think about a three or four page handout that you'll get. You can just kind of look at the seven types that we have on here, you know for example the Sherman Tank is the in your face kind of person. In the handout that you'll get it will actually offer suggestions for if the person that you're dealing with is like this here's some very practical suggestions for what you can say and do in response. So there will actually be some real practical suggestions in the post call resources for that.

Jim:

Happy Holidays to you, Jody.

Jody Pawel:

Thanks, take care, bye

Jim:

Bye, Bye

[End of tape 51:32]

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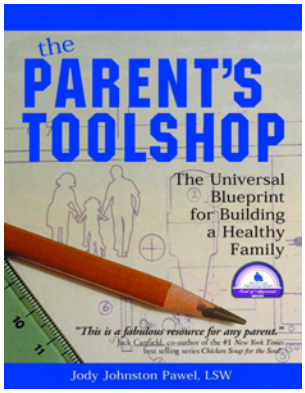

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