

PEDAGOGICAL INPUT

for the adventure of family life



33_Saying "I want" creates clarity

What affects children's development most is the quality of the relationships adults have with each other and with children. Relationships are how we treat each other. When dealing with other people language is very important.

How we talk to each other fundamentally affects our relationships.

There is the social language we use in dealing with society. It is a language that allows distance. "Would you please give me a roll?," "Do you have a coffee for me?," etc.

Social language doesn't work well in families and close relationships. Personal language has been shown to be more efficient here.

Personal language promotes closeness, contact, respect and clarity in relationships.

With personal language I show myself in all openness. I show what is important to me, what I want and don't want, what values I have and how I'm doing. It is important that I talk about ME. "I want/I don't want." "I like/I don't like." These two forms of expression are very important in personal language and, as experience shows, also very effective. These statements show the other person who I am at the moment. I show myself openly and at the same time I talk about myself and don't offend the child. At the same time, I can remain friendly.

Therefore, it's not about giving orders, but about clearly expressing my wish.

There's a big difference. Saying "I want you to leave my computer alone" is better than saying, "Can't you leave my computer alone, you snot!" Saying, "I want to rest for half an hour now. I want you to be quiet" is better than saying, "Can't you see I'm tired. Don't you have eyes in your head?"

You realise it makes a big difference whether I talk about myself or criticize the other person. Even long pedagogical explanations in the hope the child will agree often go unnoticed by children because the parents are not clear about their wish.

This personal way of expressing "I want/I don't want" gives children security.

They recognise where the boundaries of their parents are and what they want. Personal statements are a good guide. These statements can also be violent, angry, or frustrated: "I friggin want you to turn the music down now. It's getting on my nerves. I want peace now." The most important thing is, there is no criticism of the other person, no threats, no humiliation.

With the personal statement I speak about ME, and that makes an impression. At the same time, I set the example that in this family it is allowed to talk about oneself. This creates warm relationships and closeness.

Children always want to work with their parents and be valuable to them. When adults express themselves personally, children can develop respect for their personality instead of fear of consequences and punishment.

We're not used to saying "I want" in our culture.

We've been weaned off this and we think it's cheeky or it's an order. That is why many have inhibitions to say this. But clear, friendly statements work wonderfully on children. If your child doesn't want to brush its teeth, say gently and firmly: "I want you to brush your teeth now." Then leave the room and give your child time. It usually only takes a few minutes for the child to consider its unwillingness and voluntarily decide to do what you want it to do.

Personal statements create a lot of clarity for children and they can use them as a guide.

The important thing is that you say what you want, not just what you don't want. "I don't want you to play with the vase. I want you to put it back." Then go, trusting the child will cooperate with you.

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