

Habit 4- Think Win-Win

I balance courage for getting what I want (my “first things”) with consideration for what others want. When conflicts arise, I look for a win-win solution

Habit 4 is Think Win-Win- “Everyone can win.” It’s not me or you – it is both of us. Think win-win says there is plenty of good to go around. It is an abundant way of thinking. We are excited for the success of others. We have the courage to ask for what we want and compassion towards others. We use creative thinking to come up with a new solution that can make both of us happy.

Ways to apply at home:

Applaud others: Model being happy for others. “The Jones family got a new car. How great for them!” “Suzy got a new bike? I bet you were very happy for your friend.” Have Family Celebration times. Around the dinner table or in a Family Meeting allow time for children and parents to share something they did well. Cheer for them as a family. Be careful not to compare your children. Praise each for their own accomplishments.

Practice creative problem solving. Role-playing is so powerful. Have your children act out conflicts. Someone else wants the ball. They don’t like what is being served for dinner. Help them recognize what a “win” might be. Sometimes what we want is not the thing, but to be understood. Can they share their feelings in a way the other person feels respected? Help them think about what they hope to accomplish and what the other person might want. Is there a third option? Maybe we put the ball up and all play tag. Maybe the child volunteers to make dinner one night a week. We think of a solution we can all feel good about!

Clarify Expectations. It’s really hard to win if you are playing by different rules. Make sure you are clear with your children, and in all your relationships, what the expectations are. When you use terms like reasonable, enough, on-time, clean, you may think you are being clear, but the other person may have a different idea of what that means. Can you be more precise?

Words to use:

“You did a really good job on _____.”

“How can we come up with something that makes us both happy?”

“I bet you two can solve this. What is a creative win-win solution here?”

“What is a third alternative? Can we think of a better way?”

“Can you see this from their point of view? What are you each trying to accomplish?”

“What is most important here? What do you really want?”

“What is a new solution here? Can you think of more options?”