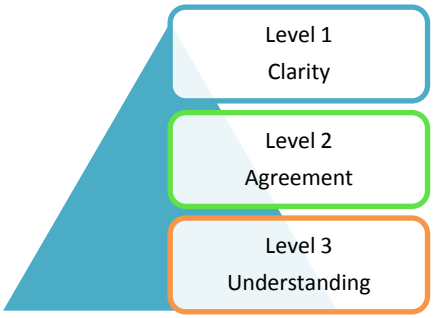
Harmonize *Fast* Formula



Level 1: Clarity: The Lightening Round

Misunderstandings cause many problems. I have witnessed this too much in ordinary conversations. Did you ever play the children's game, "Telephone?"** It clearly demonstrates the results of a series of misunderstandings. That's why clearing up possible misunderstandings is the first round of the Harmonize *Fast* Formula.

***(In Telephone, you all sit in a circle and one person, chosen to be first, whispers something to the person on their right. Then that person whispers what they heard to the person on their right. That continues until the last person in the circle. They say out loud what they heard whispered to them. It is common knowledge that it never resembles what the original person had whispered.)*

This is the fastest and easiest round, and the beginning point. Sometimes simply, clearly understanding what the people involved want and don't want untangles the situation, like the story of the two sisters and the lemon.

> (Two sisters lived together far from town. They didn't talk about it, but each was planning to use the lemon in the refrigerator the next day. In the morning, they both went for the lemon. When they realized that they both wanted to use the lemon, each thought that she would let her sister use the lemon. When each ended up explaining why she wanted the lemon, it turned out that they could both use the lemon! One sister wanted the juice for lemon water, to do a one day fast. The other sister wanted to use the zest for some cookies. …Imagine how many solutions might be discovered with simply understanding what the people involved want and don't want.)

It is important to be sure that communications are clearly sent and clearly received. It might not be good enough to assume that they understood you or that you understood them, it may be necessary to confirm the understanding. "I heard you say…" or "So you want me to…" or "Did you mean…?"

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Once there is clear understanding, if a solution is not discovered, you come out of this round with a clear understanding of the goals.

Level 2: Agreement Round

In this round, the first idea that everyone likes is the solution. This is what I learned from three-year-old children. They easily and almost instantly adopted a Positive Respect Mindset, once it was introduced to them.

1. We are each important
2. We each deserve to have what we want
3. We use Positive Respect to help this happen

So when differences came up, they would quickly and easily find harmonious solutions…on their own…after they understood how it worked.

If this does not reveal a solution, you can go deeper into understanding why.

Level 3: Understanding Round

You each get a chance to explain why you like a possible solution and/or why you don't. This gives everyone more information and can result in a winning solution.

It brings to everyone's awareness what the people involved are thinking, needing, feeling. It often only takes minor shifts that one person thinks of, but others hadn't…and a solution is revealed.

If these strategies don't help you discover a solution that you all like, you can harmonize using "Seven Steps to Harmony." (used to be End Conflict NOW!)

How It Works (Examples)

The following examples in the list are just that, examples, just one way of an infinite number of ways a situation might evolve and get resolved, depending on the people involved, the situation, their needs, wants, preferences, interests, abilities, all of their relevant variables.

The Harmonize *Fast* Formula can work simply, quickly as long as you remember to adopt a Positive Respect Mindset. This is what makes the strong foundation. This is the bridge between hearts that ensures that it works easily.

1. **We are each important**
2. **We each deserve to have what we want**
3. **We can use Positive Respect to help this happen**

Problems Adults Have With Kids:

- Tantrums
- At Bedtime
- With Food/Meals
- **Disobedience**

Here is an example of Level 1, the Clarity Round, at work:

'Why isn't she doing what I told her to do?'

YOU: "Jenny, you said you were done with this game. I asked you to put your things away when you were done."

THEM: "I changed my mind. I'm not done with my game."

YOU: "So, when you are done, you'll put your things away, right?"

THEM: "My game takes lots and lots of toys. Can you help me clean up when I'm done?"

YOU: "I can see it takes lots of toys. Tell me when you're done. I think I could help you with some of it."

THEM: "Thanks, mommy."

Mother thought that her daughter was being disobedient. Instead of getting upset about it, she thought that she had better talk with her. Maybe there was a misunderstanding. Instead, there was a lack of communication. Her daughter had reasons for her behavior that her mother didn't know. Talking together created understanding and resulted in more communication as they discussed the mother helping her daughter.

Thought Analysis:

It is better to think in terms of cooperation rather than obedience or disobedience. It's good to think that your kids want to cooperate, and if they do not cooperate, they have good reasons for not doing so…

- Find out why they are being uncooperative. Are their needs different than yours? Sometimes doing what you want them to do, in just the way you want them to do it, is going against their own needs. If this is the case, it is a good opportunity to negotiate a win-win solution.
- Maybe they have misunderstood your needs. Remember, misunderstandings are some of the most common causes of trouble among people. Make sure that your kids understand exactly what you have in mind.
- Perhaps you have misinterpreted your kid's actions, and think that they are being uncooperative because they did not do exactly what you expected them to do. Sometimes what they do really meets your needs, it was just not the way you thought about having those needs met.

- Often kids will not do what you ask the next instant after you ask it. Like many others, they need time to adjust to what you are asking of them, and to end what they are already doing, even if it is making noise.
- It might also be that they are just tired of being bossed around. Maybe they feel as if everyone has been telling them what to do all day and they are fed up. That could happen to any of us. Sometimes enough is enough and with you it's often safer to disobey than with others.
- Another thing you might look at is yourself as a behavioral model. How cooperative are you with your children when your needs are different from theirs? Are you ever uncooperative with them?
    - When they let you know what they need and if it is not what you had planned, do you work cooperatively with them to find a mutually agreeable solution? You are one of their primary role models.

Once you understand more accurately what is going on with your kids and what seems to be disobedience on their part, it is much easier to be respectful with them. When you take the time to figure things out and not just to react, you can often discover that situations which seemed intolerable to you before are understandable and, with a little effort can be transformed into peaceful, satisfying interactions.

- Interrupting
- Hurting others, aggression

➢ Ignoring you

Here is an example of Level 1, the Clarity Round, at work:

'Why are they ignoring me again? They just keep playing with their toys. I am so tired of this. Why do they ignore me? I feel like I've tried everything: time-out, taking away their toys, sending them to their rooms…I don't know what to do. I don't want to spank them, ever. I guess I may as well give that harmonize formula a try. Let's see, the first step is seeing if we just have to understand each other better. Minnie said it's working for her.'

YOU: "Crystal! Jason!" 'Oh. I have to go over to them.' She walks over and kneels down near them. They are playing on the floor, building something. "Crystal. Jason. I need you to pay attention to me."

THEM: "What Mom?" They keep on playing.

YOU: "Jason. Crystal. Please look at me."

THEM: They both look at her. "What Mom?"

YOU: "I'm going to the store. I need you two to get ready to go with me."

THEM: "But, Mom, we're having so much fun!"

YOU: "I'm glad you're having fun, but when I have to tell you something, I need you to pay attention."

THEM: “We didn’t hear you Mom,” said Crystal. “Yeah, we were too busy playing,” Jason added. “We are having so much fun!” said Crystal excitedly.

YOU: “Well, I’m glad you are having fun, but you really didn’t hear me?”

THEM: “No, Mom. We just keep coming up with better and better games!”

YOU: “Did it help you hear me when I came over to you?”

THEM: “Sure,” said Crystal.

YOU: “Well, it’s time to take a break and get ready to go to the store. You can get back to your game when we get home.”

THEM: “Okay, Mom. Come on, Jason. Let’s get ready.”

YOU: ‘That was amazing! I’m going to have to try that again. I have to remember to go over to them to get their attention. That was amazing!’

Here all it took to make things go smoothly was for the mother to go over to the kids to get their attention without struggle. They were glad to give her their attention. They were not deliberately ignoring her, as she thought. They were just intently focused on what they were doing.

Here is an example of Level 2, the Agreement Round, at work:

But, what if the kids don’t want to stop playing…

THEM: “Mom, we don’t want to go to the store,” said Crystal. “No. We don’t want to go to the store,” agreed Jason. “We’re having so much fun!”

YOU: ‘Minnie said to keep it respectful and to find a solution that we all like.’ “It might be easier for me to go shopping on my own, but I can’t leave you here without a grownup.”

THEM: “Can we take some of our toys?” “Yeah, then we can keep playing.”

YOU: “That’s a good idea, but you’ll have to leave your toys in the car when we go into the store.” ‘Minnie said that the second step, what did she call it…the second round, was that we use the first idea that we all like. Maybe this is it.’

Here is an example of Level 3, the Understanding Round, at work:

What if the kids <u>really</u> don’t want to stop their game…

THEM: Jason said, “Crystal, let’s stay in the car. Then we don’t have to stop playing. And we don’t have to leave our toys!”

YOU: ‘I guess we’re not done yet.’

YOU: “I’m sorry, but you can’t stay in the car by yourselves either. (‘Maybe I can find something interesting for them to do, so they could take a break in their game.’) I wish you would help me in the market.”

THEM: “What could we do?”

YOU: “You can help me decide what food to get. You could get food that you can reach, after we decide that we want it. It will help the shopping go faster. Then you can get back to your game.”

THEM: “Can I ride in the cart?” asked Jason.

YOU: “Sure you can, Jason. That will help the shopping go faster, too.”

THEM: “Can I get some things off the shelf when I’m in the cart?”

YOU: “Yes. If they are things we decide we want and you can easily reach them. This sounds like a shopping adventure.”

THEM: Crystal said, “Let’s just leave all our toys here, so we can get back to our game when we get home. Let’s go have a shopping adventure and help Mom.” “Yeah, let’s have a shopping adventure!”

YOU: ‘This sure is smoother than fighting about it. Thanks, Minnie. I’ll have to tell you how it went.’

- Whining
- About Chores

➢ Fighting children

Thought Analysis:

As a Montessori teacher, eventually, my first approach was to ask, “Does anyone need some help?” If they did, then we can find out if misunderstanding was the cause of their problem. If not, then we can think of an idea that everyone likes. That usually takes care of it.

Occasionally, more communication is needed to find out what specific needs they have that have not been covered in any of the ideas so far, because sometimes someone still feels that they are not being understood, or that their needs are not considered important. This is often because they are not skilled at communicating their needs. In the Understanding Round it becomes clear where the ideas are getting blocked. Then you can find out why and come up with a solution that takes the previously ‘hidden’ needs into account.

➢ 2-year-olds

Thought Analysis:

It is important to understand that human beings of this age are developing willpower, which, if properly developed, will serve them well for the rest of their lives.

Willpower has many important functions:

- It is the power behind wanting, wishing and desiring
- It is the power of determination, of commitment
- It is the power that motivates you to action
- It is the power to persevere, to carry through

➢ They then put all these abilities at the service of their intelligence
➢ It is almost impossible for them to do anything that is contrary to this

Two-year-olds are constantly practicing. They need to make as many of their own decisions as they can. Whenever possible, follow their lead.

If you want them to make a different choice, encourage them by pointing out what they might find interesting and challenging about your choice.

If you don't want a major struggle, offer the alternative before they have become determined to pursue their choice. Then the other practices come into play, 'being determined' and 'persevering'.

- Interest is the key.
- Give them opportunities to cooperate with you
- Tell them how much you appreciate their help
- Two-year-olds like to work and to be helpful, useful, needed
- Be alert
- Quickly offer them an alternative on which to practice 'willing' when what they first choose does not agree with you
- Otherwise, it's easier and more peaceful, if it's possible for you to do this, to go along with them, looking for the first opportunity to change their direction
- Remember, this period is very important in human development
- It doesn't last very long **if** they get to do it properly
- Though I know that it can seem eternal when you're right in the middle of it

- Rudeness…

Problems Kids Have With Kids:

- Not Sharing
- Hurting
- Grabbing things
- Bullying
- Teasing…

- **As you model a Positive Respect Mindset to your kids, they learn the tools, skills and strategies involved. I found that they used this approach as soon as they realized it was an option.**

Problems Kids Have With Adults:

- Bullying
- Hurting
- Punishment
- Name Calling
- Criticizing
- Blaming
- Judging
- Lecturing
- Ordering…

- **All of the problems kids have with adults vanish once you adopt a Positive Respect Mindset, because…**
  1. **We are each important**
  2. **We each deserve to have what we want**
  3. **We can use Positive Respect to help this happen**

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If You Want More Help To Do This…

Become a member of Happy Kids. Get help to find harmonious solutions to problems you have with kids…

1. **Immerse yourself** in the Happy Kids Member site… videos/audios/ebooks/articles/trainings/Q&As…
2. **Connect with like-minded people** in the Happy Kids **Secret Facebook group…**
3. **Join the live calls.** In each call we address…

a. One of the 108 Positive Respect Tools, Skills, Strategies **and**
b. Questions posted in the Secret group…
c. Calls are recorded and available in the Happy Kids Member Site