

How to Move From POWER STRUGGLES to PROBLEM SOLVING!

TYPICAL POWER STRUGGLE

Dynamics

- You and your child have opposing goals.
- You both experience strong anger from your blocked goals.
- Your conflict, though hurtful, often involves predictable, intense attention and emotion. This can become a habitual way to “bond” because it meets a child’s valid need for intense connection.



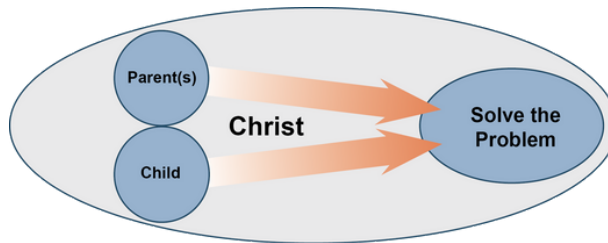
Messages Communicated

- “You get the most connection when you fight with me.”
- “What’s important to you is unimportant. Only what I want is important or valid.”
- Your child might infer, “You are unimportant.” “You are a problem.” “You are in control of my emotions.”
- “Jesus is uninvolved in our conflict, and just expects us to figure it out.”

TEAM PROBLEM SOLVING

Dynamics

- Children and parents agree on a shared goal of solving the problem in an honoring way.
- Negative emotions give way to connection and unity.
- At some point (before, during or after) parents can explain God’s role in helping us work through problems.



Messages Communicated

- “What’s important to each person is important.”
- “You are capable of and responsible to solve problems you have with people.”
- “Christ is full of compassion, and present to help and give wisdom.”

Helpful scriptures could include: [Philippians 2:3-4](#); [Hebrews 4:15,16](#)

Helpful questions could include:

1. How does everybody feel about this situation?
2. How would we each like to feel about it?
3. What’s important to each person?
4. When this issue goes better, how does that happen?
5. How could we find a solution that honors what is important to each person?

*Helpful tip: If your child gets overwhelmed by questions, just choose one or two to ask. You can also give your best shot at answering additional questions you think are important.