



the True Princess

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

There are numerous theories, books etc., on effective communication, but here I'm going to give you a simple technique to begin with. It's called "**Mirroring.**" It simply slows down the process and allows you to hear where your child is coming from without getting defensive or losing ground. What a concept!

No matter what someone says to you, good or bad, reflect back in alternate words what you heard that person say. For example, if your husband comes home and says, "What a rotten day," don't jump right in and ask "what happened?" Acknowledge first that he is upset. Say, "**Sounds like you've had better days.**" This simply validates to him that you heard him (isn't validation what we all really want anyway?) Just watch him open up. And as he's sharing continue to reflect back. You do this by saying things like "tell me more about that" or "**what I'm hearing you say is...**" People don't want you to solve their problems for them, they are perfectly capable of doing that if they have a chance to vent and sort things out. The same is true for your children. We've all heard "But Mary's parents let her do it!" Rather than assuming that is just a manipulation to get you to cave in, you can really get to the heart of the matter by reflecting..."**sounds like you feel Mary's parents are more lenient than we are.**" As your child goes off on this (and they will), encourage them by saying "tell me more about that." As your child goes on, keep reflecting back and you'll get to the core understanding by saying "**so what I'm hearing you say is...**" When you have given this validation and respect to your child they will be open



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to hearing how you feel about it. **“I hear how you feel...may I share my thoughts with you?”** Then share why you feel you need to make the decision you do and you will find this works to a compromise that works for all concerned.

A good technique to learn this communication skill and keep you from becoming defensive and/or trying to “fix” everything is to do this... raise your hand up slightly with your palm facing the other person. Your hand in effect becomes the mirror and is a reminder to reflect back.

Learn these 3 reflective phrases:

Sounds to me like (or “as if”...)

What I’m hearing you say is

Tell me more about that

As you experience using these skills they will become part of your everyday language. While at first you’ll feel awkward, pretty soon it will be a natural way to interact that values the others in your life and shows that you are truly interested in them. As you experience this shift, please share with us so others can benefit as well.