

Construct E: Oppressing
Children's Power and
Independence

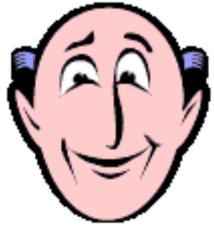


Family Development Resources, Inc.



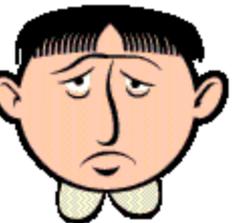
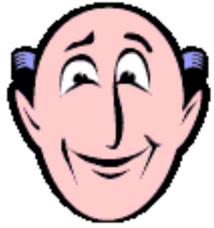
Power and Control

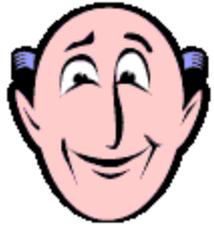
- Closely aligned with the value of physical punishment and the lack of an empathic awareness of children's needs is the belief that children's independence and power need to be oppressed.



Power and Control

- Parents fear that if children are allowed to challenge parental authority, they will become “acting-out” and disrespectful. Hence, obedience and complete compliance to parental authority is demanded.
- When children’s power and independence are oppressed, they are not allowed to challenge, to voice opinions, or to have choices, but rather are told to “do what they are told to do” without question.

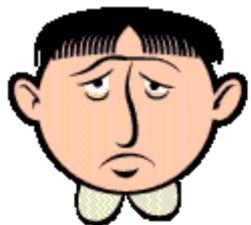




Power and Control

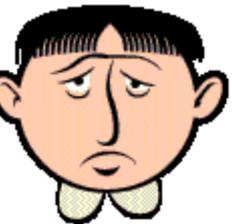
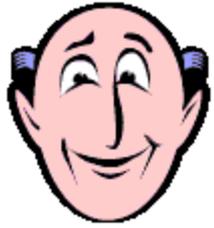
This demand for compliance to parental authority has many limitations:

1. Obedience breeds powerlessness.
2. Obedience breeds inadequacy.
3. Obedience also breeds rebelliousness.
4. Obedience breeds compliance — to all.
5. Obedience breeds followers, not leaders.



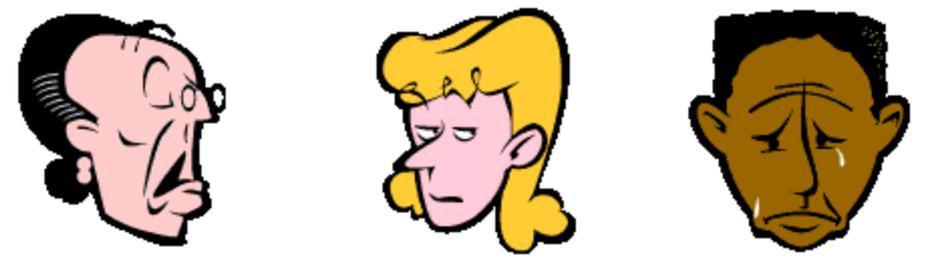
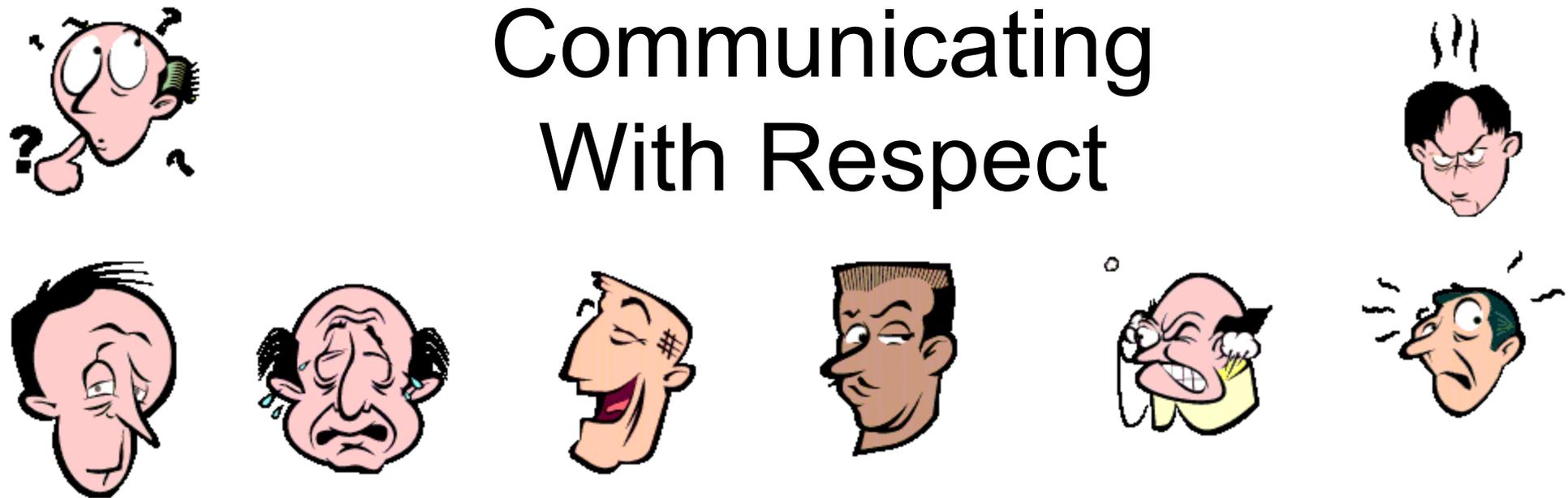
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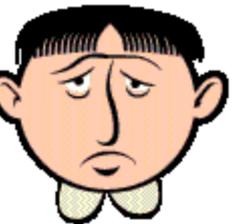
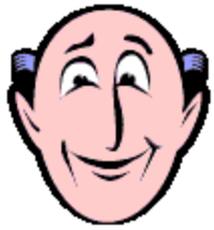
Benjamin!





Communicating With Respect





Communicating With Respect

- The key to healthy communication is to communicate your thoughts and feelings to your children in a manner that does not hurt them or cause them to think less of themselves.



Deja Vu

Parents frequently operate on the false assumption that children understand everything they are told.

Words that have **never** worked:

Don' t Worry

Calm Down

I understand

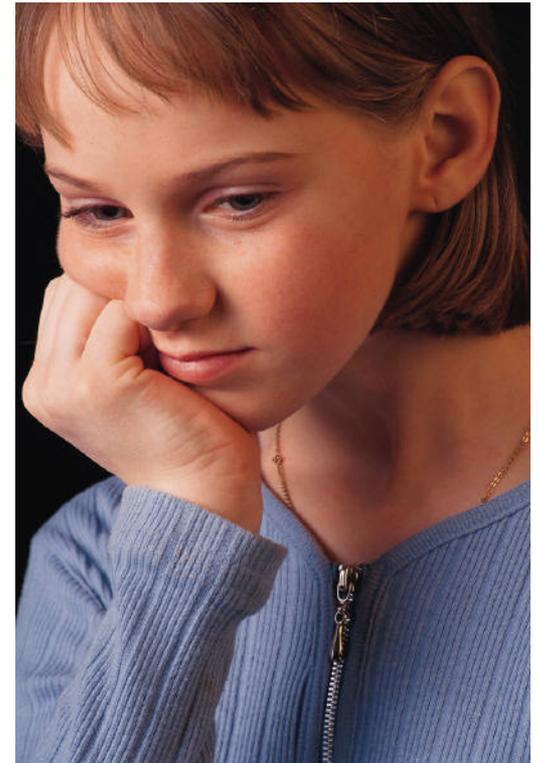
Listen

I' m Doing you a favor

I told you so

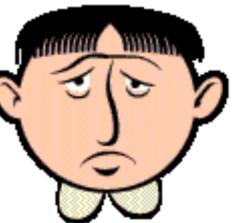
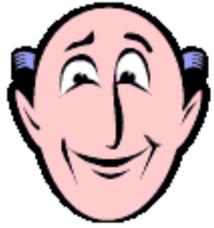
You Make Me This, You Make Me That...

- There is a problem when you begin any communication with “You make me...”
 - “You make me” is blaming.
 - “You make me” is powerlessness.



You Make Me This, You Make Me That...

- Blaming children for the way the parents feel:
 - Shows parents have **less** power and children have **more** power in determining how and what parents feel.
 - Blaming demonstrates incompetence.



You Make Me This, You Make Me That...

- Blaming sends the message you can not handle your own feelings.



You Make Me This, You Make Me That...

- We are responsible for the way we feel in the same manner we're responsible for our personal hygiene.



Enabling

- It is clean-up time. Why are you just sitting there? (Rhetorical)
- All of your friends are able to help. I wonder if you are a baby, not a big girl? (Shaming)
- Pick up the toys now, or you will sit on the chair instead of joining us for lunch. (Threatening)
- I am going to set the timer for 3 minutes and these better be picked up when it dings. (Implies “or else”)
- We go through this every day! I am tired of it. (Conveys hopelessness)
- If you don't want your toys thrown away, you'd better pick them up right now! (Threatening)

Empowering

- I have seen you pick up your toys before. I know you can do it. (Shows faith with a reminder of what the child can do.)
- You were really having fun. It is hard to stop playing to clean up. How about I pick up the squares and you pick up the rectangles? (Acknowledges feelings first/divides up the work with help)
- [Putting a gentle hand on child's shoulder] Do you want to put the big blocks away first, or the small blocks? (Uses non-verbal connection and limited choices)
- What ideas do you have to get the toys picked up? (Asks for input)
- What is supposed to be happening now? (Check for the child's knowledge/understanding)
- It is more fun if we work together. What would you like me to do to help, and what will you do? (Connects)

Constructive Communication

- Essentially we have two choices when we have to tell another person something about them that need improvement.
- The first choice is to say what we have to say to the other person ***without regard*** for the other person's feelings.



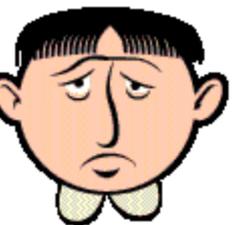
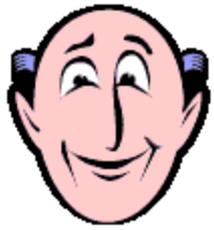
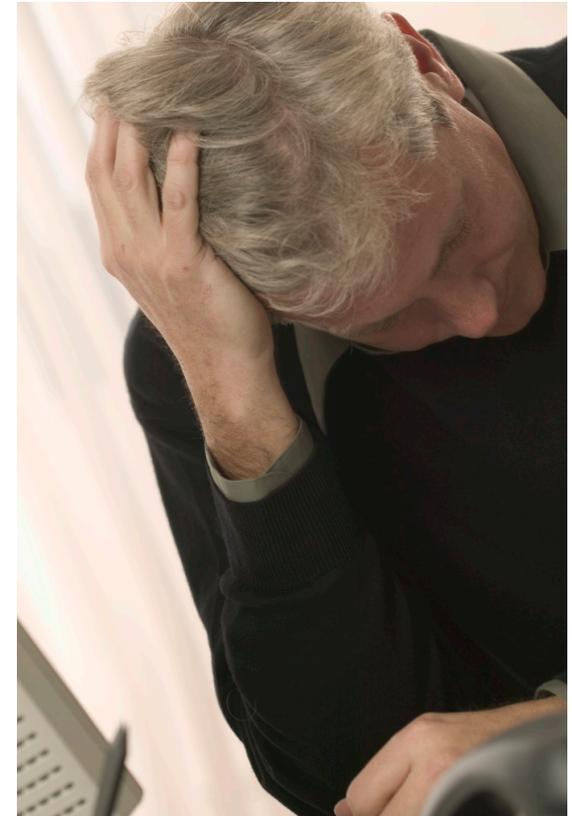
Constructive Communication

- The second choice is to say what we have to say to the other person ***with regard*** for the other person's feelings. This style is referred to as **Confrontation**.



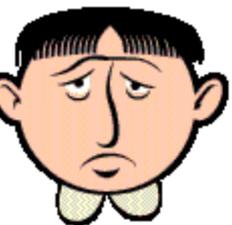
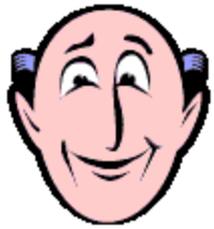
What's wrong with criticizing others?

- Criticism hurts.
- Criticism destroys.
- Criticism blames.
- Criticism closes people up.
- Criticism creates anger in others.



Confrontation: It Feels So Good!

- Confrontation is a process by which you tell your child or anyone else how you feel, or what you need, or want or observe, without tearing them down.
- To confront others is to let them know your thoughts and feelings in a way that communicates respect for them as people.



Confrontation works better than criticism

- Confrontation communicates respect for the other person.
- Confrontation helps people listen.
- Confrontation provides useful information.
- Confrontation generally promotes a friendship.
- Confrontation promotes change.
- Confrontation is based out of respect.

Negotiation and Compromise

- Not always agreeing on things is normal.
- A nurturing family will attempt to work out their differences – not fight over them.



Negotiation and Compromise

- There is no magic formula to getting everyone to agree on everything all the time.
- There is a way of trying to achieve a solution to opposing views.
- This process is called **Negotiation**.

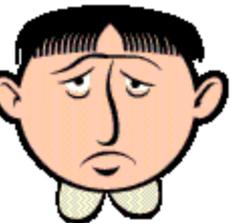
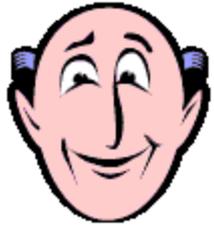


Steps for Negotiation and Compromise

- When asking for something or stating a view, first determine if there is a difference of opinion between you and your child.
- State your views and what you think the views of your children are. Remember to confront and not be critical.

Steps for Negotiation and Compromise

- Ask your child if your impression of the problem and your understanding of their views are accurate.
- Offer a compromise. Be sure to take into account their views, as well as your own.



Compromising Your Values

- Family values are not issues you want to compromise.
- If you compromise what you believe in, ultimately your anger will come through.





Self-Worth

- Self-worth is the overall way people think and feel about themselves.
- Self-worth is the combination of self-esteem and self-concept.



Praising Children and Their Behavior



What is Praise?

- Praise can be a compliment, gesture, facial expression, or form of gentle touch like hugs or high fives that promote feelings of self pride, worth and accomplishment in others.

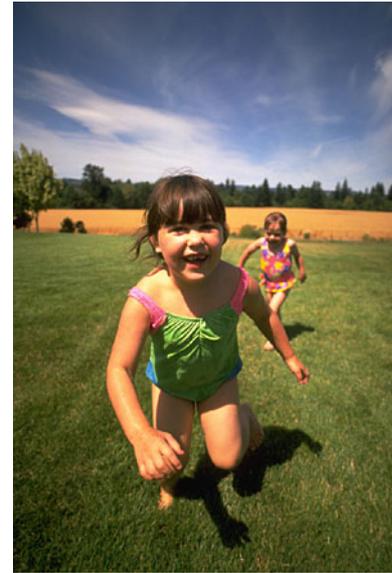


Why is Praising Children Important?

- When children receive praise, they learn that who they are and the things they do are pleasing to parents.
- Children who are praised for their behavior develop a personal sense of self-worth.

Why is Praising Children Important?

- Praise is like fuel that powers the self-esteem of children.
- Children who sincerely believe they have worth treat themselves and others in positive ways.



Why is Praising Children Important?

- Research shows that children with positive self-worth get better grades, are more popular in school, don't get discouraged easily, and generally live more productive lives.

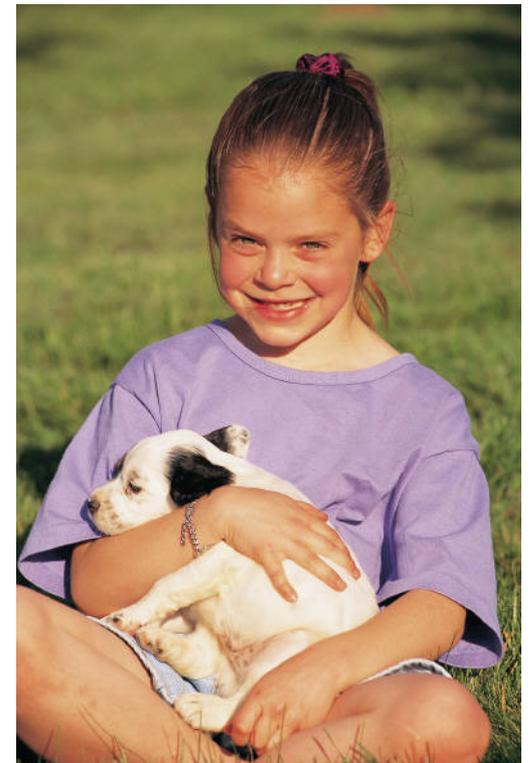


Roadblocks to Using Praise

- There is a popular myth that if children are praised they will become conceited, or believe that they are better than others.
- The fact is, children who are praised develop a strong sense of self and do not need to put themselves above others to feel good about themselves. They already do.

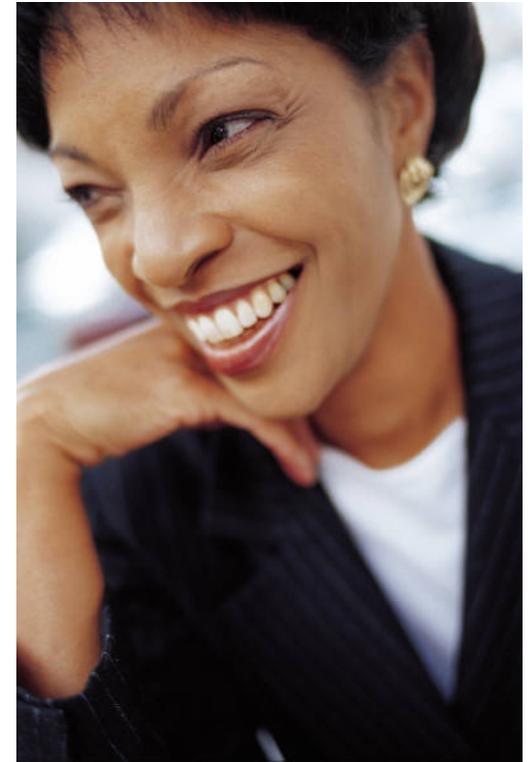
Roadblocks to Using Praise

- Some parents just expect their children to do what they're told to do without having to praise them.
- No one, adult or child, will behave in appropriate ways without some form of recognition.



Roadblocks to Using Praise

- Many adults have not had the experience of receiving praise as children, so it makes it hard for them to practice the skill as parents.
- Adults who have difficulty accepting compliments from others may feel very uncomfortable in giving praise to their children.



Praise for Being and Praise for Doing

- **Praise for Being** is the highest form of praise anyone can receive. It tells children that they have value and worth.
- **Praise for Being lets children know you value them for who they are.** It is unconditional and given freely at any time.

Praise for Being

Some Praise for Being statements are:

- “I really love you.”
- “You’re a beautiful person.”
- “What a special child you are.”
- “I am so happy you are my son.”
- “You’re a wonderful daughter.”

Praise for Being

- When you praise children for Being, they don't have to do anything to earn it. Praise for Being is a powerful parenting practice for building a positive sense of self-worth in children.



Praise for Doing

- **Praise for Doing** lets children know you appreciate and value their efforts and behaviors.
- Praising a child's behavior can be for something they tried and completed, or tried but didn't quite succeed or finish. If you acknowledge your children's efforts, they are more likely to try again.

Praise for Doing

Some Praise for Doing statements are:

- “I’m really pleased to see you try so hard.”
- “You buttoned all your buttons. Good for you.”
- “I’m so proud of the way you cooperated.”
- “You’re really doing well in school.”

Using Praise Incorrectly

- Many parents unknowingly use praise incorrectly by using Praise for Being and Praise for Doing together. Such statements are:
- “What a nice job cleaning your room. You really are a good girl.”
- “Daddy really loves you for cooperating with me.”

Using Praise Incorrectly

- Such statements tell children you only love or appreciate them when they do something that pleases you. It's known as “conditional love,” or love that must be earned.
- Children quickly begin to resent such love because they know if they don't “do the right thing,” their parents will not love them.

Promoting Self-Praise in Children

- Self-praise is a way children learn the habit of praising themselves and boosting their self-image.
- To help a child learn self-praise, parents need to describe how good the act must have made the child feel. For example:
- “Tracy, I bet you feel really proud of the nice job you did in cleaning your room.”

Promoting Self-Praise in Children

- By promoting self-praise, children learn to be their own best friend and develop self-confidence.
- To encourage children to use self-praise, parents should model the behavior for them.



Being Conceited

- Some parents worry about their children becoming conceited because they received praise for the people they are or the things they do. Conceit is different from self-worth.
- When children feel conceited, they are usually sending the message that, “I’m better than you.”
- Contrary to popular belief, it’s children who don’t have a positive self-image that wind up feeling conceited.

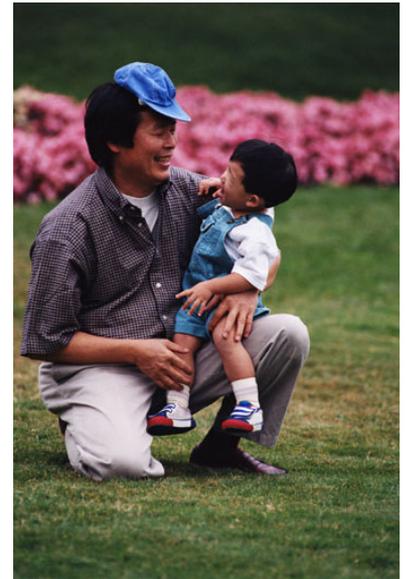
How to Use Praise

- **Focus your attention on the child and the situation-** praise deserves your undivided attention.
- **Move close to the child -** praise feels good when given by someone close to you.



How to Use Praise

- **Make eye-contact with the child on the child's level.**
For example, you must bend down to be at eye level with young children.
- **Gently touch the child-**
touch is a positive form of communication.



How to Use Praise

- **Smile or look pleasant**-everyone likes to see a happy face.
- **Praise your child**- for Being or for Doing.
- **Offer a hug**-to “seal” the nice words.



Accepting Praise As An Adult

- Praise is fuel for our positive self-worth.
- Self-worth is the value we have for our self: our ideas, accomplishments, successes, as well as our appearance, personality and character.
- When others praise any of these qualities, they are doing us a big favor-they are recognizing us in a positive way.

Why is Accepting Praise Important?

- It sends a message to others that we are worthy of their recognition and deserving of it.
- When we accept a compliment, we are building our positive self-worth. Parents with a positive sense of self-worth can help build the positive sense of self-worth in children.



Why is Accepting Praise Important?

- As models, parents show their children that accepting praise is the right thing to do.
- Everyone needs recognition. Accepting praise is a positive form of recognition.
- When we accept a compliment, we're more likely to send one.

Rejecting A Gift

- For a lot of adults, they've simply forgotten how to say thank you when they receive a gift of recognition.



Rejecting A Gift

- Here are examples of how not to receive a compliment:
 - Compliment: “You look nice today.”
 - Response: “Well, I feel miserable.”
 - Compliment: “Nice report, John.”
 - Response: “Well, if I had more time, I could’ve done better.”

Rejecting A Gift

- Clearly we would not respond in the same way if someone were trying to give us a raise.
 - Compliment: “You have been working very hard. Here is fifty dollars. Go have dinner with your family on the company.”
 - Response: “No, I don’t really deserve it. I’m not that good. In fact, you probably need to decrease my salary.”

Rejecting A Gift

- What happens to others who offer us a fifty-dollar compliment and we reject it?
- You will quit getting any compliments at all.
- When that happens, the fuel supply to your self-worth will be drastically cut short.



How to Accept A Compliment

- **Look pleasant.** Let the person sending the compliment see you enjoy being recognized.
- **Say, “thank you.”** Do not reject or send the compliment back (“Well, you look nice/work hard too.”) Be gracious and accept your gift.
- **Use gentle touch.** A touch on the arm or a handshake conveys your true appreciation.