

**Before the Behavior...**  
**Power Struggles Unplugged**  
**I Collect Zeros: Strategies for kids**  
**who do nothing**

**Presented By Brian Mendler**



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## Biography

- Grateful recovering addict
- Father to Eli and Brookie
- Husband to Renee
- Certified K-12 Teacher
- Head T-Ball Coach
- Author: Watch Your Mouth, That One Kid, Taming of the Crew and Tips for Teachers
- Co-author Discipline with Dignity 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> editions, Strategies for Successful Classroom Management, Power Struggles, and Turning Tough Parents into Strong Partners

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## **Rules From Recovery**

- The more I give the more I get
- If I change me I change everything around me
- The Windshield
- Change your nouns to change your life
- HOPE (Hearing Other People's Experiences)
- Silent – Listen (same letters)

## **Retrain Your Brain**

- Hear what instead of how
- 2<sup>nd</sup> to last word is best
- Stay personally connected without taking things personally
- Changing behaviors is a roller coaster ride
- Feel sad for instead of mad at
- Compare students to own previous work
- Tell students what is going to happen before it happens

## **Non-Negotiables for Success with Your Toughest Kids**

- Private is better than public
- Walking away = Strength
- Focus on the journey
- Some is better than none
- Late is better than not at all

## **Strategies for Kids who Love to Talk**

- Listen. Then design lessons to interests
- Set / Negotiate specific talk times
- Teach leadership skills
- Teach them to listen
- Put them in position to help others

## **Creative Teaching Strategies**

- Wild Card Question
- “I’m Good At” Board
- Songs that teach
- Carpet on the desk
- Wheel of Misfortune
- Music Stands
- Pick a Test

## **Relationship Building Reminders**

- Building anything valuable in life takes time
- Tell your story
- Listen to their stories
- Trust the process
- Be there when things are bad
- Best building time when not required to be with student



## Prevention Phrases

“Unfortunately, some of you will do and say some rude, nasty, inappropriate things. Please understand I will not always stop my lesson to deal with it. This does not mean I did not hear it and this does not mean I am not going to do anything about it. It means I think teaching those not being inappropriate is much more important than stopping for the few who are. Sometimes it might look like I am ignoring a certain behavior. I am not. It just means I think teaching is more important in that moment. Is there anything you do not understand?”

“I believe in privacy. There will be times I drop by your area to deliver a private message for your ear. Some of you might wonder what I said to that person. I will not share this message with the entire class.”

## **Classroom Management / Group Work**

- It is easier to extend than take away
- Maximum of five members in a group
- Each member has a specific role
- Post roles of each group member
- One member is “group leader”
- Only speak to the group leaders
- Red cup / Green cup

## **That's Not Fair**

- Fair - Everyone gets what they need
- Equal - Everyone gets the same thing
- Promise students: “I will be fair to each of you meaning I will not always treat you all exactly the same way.”
- Explain students might get different tests, assignments, quizzes, consequences, etc...
- “What is the problem with what I did for you?”

## Why Kids Misbehave

- **Attention** (Gets too much or very little attention at home)
- **Power** (Need to be in charge)
- **Control** (Constantly told what to do)
- **Competence** (Struggles academically)
- **Belonging** (Two types)
- **Awareness** (Literally unaware of the behavior)

## **Power Struggles**

- The student does not want to look bad in front of the class
- The teacher does not want to look bad in front of the class
- Remember to be a “Second to last word person!”
- Keep kids in class
- Stop the behavior
- Remain calm
- Allow student to save face

## **Ten Steps to Defusing Angry Students**

1. Say, "I'm sorry." It does not matter if you are really sorry. Say it anyway.
2. Focus on 2<sup>nd</sup> to last word
3. Recognize the battle is about to happen
4. Use humor
5. Use PEP (privacy, eye contact, proximity)
6. Listen (hear what the student says, not how they say it)
7. Acknowledge (let them know you hear them)
8. Agree (let student know he is or might be right)
9. Defer (tell student when you will discuss)
10. Walk away (like a boss)

## 5 W's of Defusing

- **“Whoa!”** (As loud as you can to get their attention).
- **“What”** (Let the student know what is happening). “You and I are about to argue right now.”
- **“Why”** (It is always the same reason). “You don’t want to look bad in front of your friends and neither do I.”
- **“When”** (Do not leave him hanging!). “So let’s talk about it right after class, thanks.”
- **“Walk”** (Walk away like a boss)

## **2 x 10**

- Two uninterrupted moments
- 10 consecutive days
- Goal to build a relationship with a student who does nothing
- This conversation does not need to be about school
- Be sure your other students are working on something during this time
- Check my website to watch a demonstration



## **Prevent Bullying**

- Stop forced competition
- Eliminate or do not tell kids class rankings until after high school graduation
- Allow self-contained students to switch classes and teachers
- Put bullies in positions of leadership
- Pay close attention to bullying hot spots (lunchroom, playground, cafeteria, bus)
- Teach kids how to be nice

## **Bribes**

- Happen before a behavior is complete
- If you behave we will go on the playground later (bribe)
- Change behavior quickly (better than chaos)
- Almost never get lasting change
- Do not motivate students to be “more like their peers”

## **Rewards**

- Happen after a behavior is complete
- Because you behaved we are going on the playground (reward)

## Values

- Broad and subjective
- Made by the teacher
- More important than rules
- Answer “why”

### Examples of Values:

- Respect yourself, respect each other and respect this place
- You will be responsible for yourself and this place
- Treat people BETTER than you like to be treated
- Be a good listener

## **Rules**

- Narrow, focused, and specific
- Can be measured and offer no debate
- Made by students and teacher
- Tell a student exactly “what” to do

### **Examples of Rules:**

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Bring a pen and paper to class every day
- Turn in homework the day after it is assigned
- Be in your seat when the bell rings
- Remember, good rules leave no room for argument. And kids will argue anything they can!



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