

Things have got to change! We say this a lot. Yes, there are many things that **need** to change but the only thing I can change is myself. So I'll start with where I usually **react**. I will give a thoughtful **response** instead of a quick reaction. Here's the premise: **As I change my responses toward my loved one, I will also be changing our relationship.**

A. Acknowledge the condition

This is not easy. I'm choosing to change in spite of my loved one's condition and behavior. **I need to be honest in my responses.** If I'm not able to respond in a healthy and honest way, perhaps it's a time to not respond. Walk away...not answer the text message...allow silence. Push pause. Think.

B. Be the a _ _ _ _ .

- I will not react with childish behaviors.
- I will keep my emotions in check, not adding to the drama (fear, anger, sorrow, indifference, etc.).
- I will resist engaging in arguments...I'll respond after thinking, praying, counting, breathing, seeking counsel or advice. No more rushing in with reaction.
- I will avoid manipulating or controlling.
- I will *avoid condescension* (disrespect, humiliating, patronizing, arrogance, talking down to).

C. Choose to s u p _ _ _ _ rather than attack.

Attacks consist of: (CRAM)

- ◇ Criticism
- ◇ Ridicule
- ◇ Accusations
- ◇ Mocking

All of these behaviors lead to condemnation and rejection of my words.

Support consists of: (CARE)

- Compassion
- Acceptance
- Respect
- Encouragement

As I CARE for someone, it is possible for them to receive gentle conviction.

Don't CRAM your demands. Offer CARE.

D. Differentiate between behavior and person

- I may hate the behavior. Yet I can still express love for my loved one.
- My loved one knows I disapprove of the behavior. I can avoid reacting with lecture or finger-wagging or rolling my eyes or sarcasm or
- If a behavior is healthy or positive, my response needs to be healthy or positive:
 - ◆ Recognition or acknowledgement
 - "Thank you..."
 - "I appreciate it when you..."
 - "I've noticed that..."
 - ◆ Praise
 - ◆ Encouragement
 - "I can see you are trying"
 - "You showed healthy self-control when happened and you chose to"

Lesson Notes:

As I improve the way I **r** _ _ _ _ _ , it might improve the **r** _ _ _ _ _ .

React vs Respond:

Consider the difference.

A response requires **t** _ _ _ and **th** _ _ _ _ .

Mike Says:

"As you practice your new habits, the biggest thing you need to remember is that you are now dealing with another adult, not a child.

Because you have learned to stop giving instant answers to requests from your son or daughter, you can take time to stop and think about how you would treat other adults in this situation, and act accordingly."

The Four Seasons of Recovery for Parents of Alcoholics and Addicts Page 124. by Michael Speakman, L.I.S.A.C.