

ISSUE 20

How Would You Respond?

Every problem can be solved, or at least alleviated, by thinking it through and then applying an appropriate remedy. Of course, we also need to realize what result we hope to accomplish, or we will solve one problem only to have to deal with another instead.

How would you respond if your child had no interest in studying?

- (1) Have a private tutor.
- (2) Force him or her to study more.
- (3) Support his or her other interests.
- (4) Let the child establish his or her own priorities in life.
- (5) Offer financial incentives for improved performance.



Sample Answers

(A) First, we would need to know what the *underlying* factors are. Is the schoolwork too easy, so the child is bored, or too hard, so the child needs more help? Is the lack of interest due to *peer pressure*, or is it because the child does not like the teacher or the subject matter? Perhaps some other interest, such as athletics or art or music, is taking too much time, or maybe the child is "in love." It is even possible that a difficulty at home is the *root cause* of the poor performance at school. But before we can do anything we need to know what we are dealing with.

(B) Try the old "*carrot-and stick*" approach. This *refers to* the method of urging forward a mule-drawn wagon. Hang a carrot a few inches in front of the hungry mule's nose so he will keep walking toward it. Meanwhile, hit him with a big stick when he slows down or stops. In other words, promise rewards for good behavior and punishment for bad; this works most of the time.

Speak Your Mind

How would you respond if:

1. your salary was cut?
2. your young child *went through* your wallet?
3. your son or daughter got caught *shoplifting*?
4. your parents demanded a large allowance every month for pocket money?
5. your wife wanted to *divvy up* the chores 50:50?
6. your boss insisted on unpaid overtime three times a week?
7. your sweetheart suddenly broke off your relationship?
8. your friend asked to borrow some money?
9. your grown child announced the intention to stay single forever?
10. the government decided to raise cigarette and liquor taxes *drastically*?

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M : Let's go out.

F : Great! Where to? What's the special occasion?

M : We need to go to a nightclub or a bar every night this week, if we can. And next week too!

F : Why? What are we celebrating?

M : We aren't celebrating anything. Just the opposite, actually.

F : I don't understand. What's going on here?

M : The taxes on alcohol and tobacco are going up 20% next month, so we need to take advantage of the lower prices while we can.

F : Don't be silly. You'll *go broke* partying every night just to save a little money later.

M : But there won't be any later. I can't afford to go out once the new prices *take effect*. So I need to use all my going-out now, while I can.

F : Why don't you just *stock up* on extra cigarettes and *booze* now? And then you'll have an adequate supply when the price hike goes into effect.

M : But eventually I'll *run out*, and I still won't be able to go out. So, just *indulge* me. Let's have a good time while we still can!

F : OK, I'm *game*. But if you *come to your senses*, let me know. I won't be disappointed when we stop.

M : Don't worry. We'll have to stop soon enough. Let's go!

