

# **I Can't Make You: Attitude Shifts and Derailments for Managing Resistance**



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*What has four wheels and flies?*

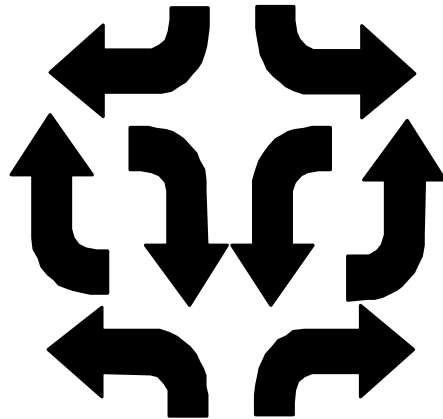
*What do Alexander the Great and Smokey the Bear have in common?*

*What is green all over and has wheels?*

You may be asking, “What in the world do these riddles have to do with managing resistance?” The answer is that riddles force us to view things from alternative perspectives. Riddles take us out of our normal paradigms, or viewpoints.

### **The Role of Paradigms**

A paradigm is a pattern or model for for interpreting information. It provides us with a set of rule and regulations for making sense out of our environment. Information that agrees with our paradigm is easily recognized and accepted. Information disagrees with our paradigm is difficult to recognize and is resisted.



### *The Dominant Paradigm is that Resistance Originates from a Child*

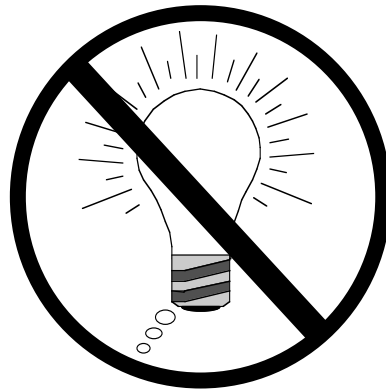
From this dominant paradigm, resistance is managed by having the student behave differently. This approach relied on punishment and rarely works for students displaying extreme challenging behaviors.

## Oppositional Defiant Disorder

- Loses temper
- Argues with adults
- Actively defies or refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules
- Deliberately annoys others
- Blames others for his or her mistakes
- Is touchy or easily annoyed by others
- Is angry or resentful
- Is spiteful or vindictive

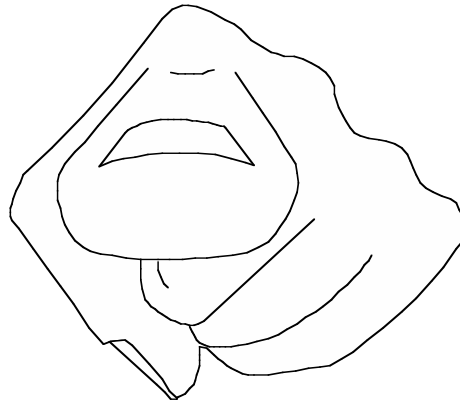
The key to understanding opposition is that it is not the behaviors that separate students with and without behavior problems. Rather other dimensions are responsible for differences: frequency, duration, and intensity.

## Paradigm Paralysis



*A Disorder of Terminal Certainty*

## Radical Stance



### *Resistance Originates from Your Behavior!*

Do you disagree with me? If so, I have just created your resistance. I can change that. I am NOT suggesting this as a technique for managing resistance. But what would happen to resistance if you never asked a student to stop behaving inappropriately or to start behaving appropriately? Would there be resistance?

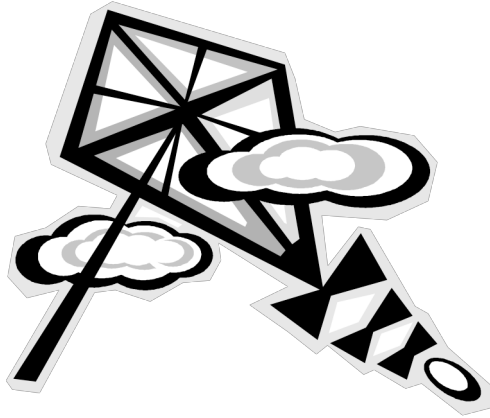
### **Join a Child in His or Her Frame of Reference**

No two people are alike and no two people understand the same sentence in exactly the same way. In dealing with children we should not try and fit them into what our concept of what they should be. Instead, we should try and discover what their concept of themselves is.



## One-Down Children

Place the child in the power position. Acknowledge defeat. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em! You can use resistance to get compliance.



Don't be afraid of opposition. Remember, a kite rises against the wind, not with it.

*George Bernard Shaw*

Accepting resistance is analogous to trying to change the course of a river: If you oppose the river by trying to block it, it will go over and around. However, if you accept the force of the river and divert it in a new direction, the force of the river will cut a new channel.



## Adopt New Patterns of Behavior

We have much more knowledge than we let ourselves know. Psychologists believe that in any 20 life span, we all have been involved in over two billion behavioral interactions with others. With a great deal of difficulty we can recall only 40% of those experiences. With even greater difficulty, we can call forth only 1% to guide our present and future behavioral interactions with others. This problem has nothing to do with brain capacity. It is all about paradigm paralysis!



The key to accessing more options is understanding the difference between *knowledge* and *knowing*—the latter of which is much more important than the former! Accessing a wider range of behaviors in our repertoire permits us to begin responding in novel ways that break up students' resistant patterns. There is a simple axiom:

*If What You're Doing Isn't Working,  
Try Something Else!*