

You Can't Make Me! (But I Can Be Persuaded)



Turning Conflict Into Cooperation

by

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Points to Remember

**We don't have trouble with authority—
we have trouble with how you *communicate* your authority.**

It is a great gift to have a child with firm convictions, a high spirit, and a sense of adventure. Think about some of the great leaders and innovators in our past—Thomas Jefferson, Marie Curie, Albert Einstein, Joan of Arc, Thomas Edison and others. Each of these people held up under adversity, stood up for his or her convictions, and persisted against all odds. They refused to believe their dreams were impossible. (You Can't Make Me, p. 11)

**We don't need to control you—
we just can't let you take all control away from us.**

You do not let your child off the hook if you modify your requests. The strength of your convictions as the parent helps your child feel secure. Your enforcement of the rules prevents your children from becoming spoiled brats. But how you communicate your message makes all the difference in the world. (You Can't Make Me, p. 93)

**The quality of the relationship
determines the effectiveness of your strategies.**

Your strong-willed child will keep you forever challenged. You won't have to worry about becoming bored or getting into a rut. There's a lot to be said for that! Life is too short to constantly battle those you love. If you can begin to understand the inner workings of an SWC's mind, you may hold the key to his or her heart. It sure beats knocking down door! (You Can't Make Me, p. 168)

Five To Survive

Key Strategies for Dealing with the Strong-Willed Child

1. Choose your battles—don't make everything non-negotiable.
2. Lighten up—but don't let up.
3. Ask more questions—and issue fewer orders.
4. Hand out more tickets—and give fewer warnings.
(more action; less anger)
5. Make sure your SWC always knows your love is unconditional.

Questions That Help Build Relationships

- ◆ Do you want help with that?
- ◆ Are you doing that to annoy me?
- ◆ Do you know why I want you to do that?
- ◆ Does this frustrate you?
- ◆ Is that what you meant to do?
- ◆ What can I do to help?
- ◆ Is that what you wanted?

Questions That Can Destroy Relationships

- ◆ Why did you do that?
- ◆ Why do you feel that way?
- ◆ When are you going to learn?
- ◆ Why can't you just do what you're told?
- ◆ What were you thinking?
- ◆ What's the matter with you?

What's The Point?

- What do you need to accomplish?
- Is there another way to reach the goal?
- What's the bottom line?

Is It Worth It?

- Is this a battle worth fighting?
- Will this improve the relationship?
- Is this a negotiable issue?

What Will It Take?

- What would motivate you?
- What will you need in order to succeed?
- Where do you start?

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