

Parenting experts have identified 10 methods that parents commonly use to try to get their children to cooperate. Read through the examples which illustrate each method, go back in time and imagine you are a child listening to your parent speak. Let the words sink in for a moment. How do they make you feel. When you have your answer, write it down in the space provided. (Alternatively you can do this exercise by having a friend read each example aloud to you as you listen with closed eyes.)

1. Blaming and Accusing.

Your room is in a mess again! Why can't you just keep it tidy? What is wrong with you? I've told you a million times to hang your clothes up. You never listen to a word I say..... What's the matter with you?..... How many times am I going to have to tell you to put your things away after you.....

As a child I'd feel

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2. Name Calling

"You just walked straight into that puddle! Now you've got wet socks! What kind of idiot are you?"

"You are biting your nails again! You're disgusting."

"Here let me do the buttons for you. You are such a slowcoach."

"Look at that messy handwriting. You need to make more effort, you are just lazy."

"Stop that moaning, you are such a whinge."

As a child I'd feel

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3. Threats

"If you touch that computer one more time you'll get a smack".

"If you're not ready for school by the time I count to three, I'm going without you".

"If you don't do as I say this minute, I'm going to come over there and make you do it".

"If you don't turn that television off this instant, there'll be no dessert for a week!"

As a child I'd feel

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4. Commands

“Get that mess up off the floor right away.”

“Come and help me carry in this shopping. Now!”

“The dog still hasn’t been fed? Put his food out straight away for goodness sake”.

“We need to go. What are you waiting for? Get a move on!”

As a child I’d feel

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5. Lecturing and Moralising

“Grabbing that toy from your friend wasn’t a very nice thing to do was it? That’s not good manners. It’s very important to share. And grabbing isn’t good manners. You have to understand that if we expect people to share with us then we have to share with them in return. How do you feel when someone grabs from you? It’s not nice is it? So you shouldn’t grab from other people. You have to share.”

As a child I’d feel

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6. Warnings

“Careful, you’ll get burnt”.

“Watch out, you’ll get hit by a car”.

“Get down from there. You’ll fall”.

“You can’t go out dressed like that, you’ll catch a cold!”

As a child I’d feel

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7. Martyrdom Statements

“Stop that squabbling! You’re giving me a headache....you’re going to drive me into an early grave you know....”

“Just wait until you have children of your own. Then you’ll know what tired is!”

“There wasn’t a single grey hair on this head the day you were born”.

As a child I’d feel

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8. Comparisons

“Why can’t you be more like your sister? I never have to remind her to do her homework.”

“Look at the way your cousins behave! They have such beautiful table manners. I never see them eating with their mouths open.”

“Why don’t you just wear what I suggest? You always look so scruffy and Peter is always so neat. Why can’t you dress like he does?”

As a child I’d feel

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9. Sarcasm

“You’re going out dressed like that? Well if you like looking a tramp....”

“You did what? You left your jacket in the cinema. Oh, very smart”.

“This is the homework you took two hours to do? I hope your teacher can read gobbledegook because I can’t.”

As a child I’d feel

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10. Prophecy

“Oh that’s it. You go right on being selfish. Wait ‘till you see. No-one is going to want to play with you. You’re not going to make friends”

“You’re such a whinge. Why don’t you at least try to do it yourself? If you keep this up you’ll still be moaning when you’re in college and not able to solve any of your own problems”.

“You told me a direct lie about what happened today! You know what you’re going to be when you grow up? You’ll be someone that can’t be trusted, that’s what.”

As a child I’d feel

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Now that you know how the “child” in you might react to these ten approaches, you might be interested in finding out the reactions of other people who have completed this exercise. You’ll find a link to a worksheet containing common responses that “children” give beneath the link to this worksheet in the “free stuff” section of the www.beyondsupernanny.com website.