

When the Rules Change On Me

Sometimes in life when someone has power over you, they will “change the rules” which reduces your power (choices from which to choose). For example:

Ex. You're a good student. And your parents have given you much freedom to choose when you do your homework. However, your big brother has begun to blow off homework, and it shows in his grades. Your parents react with concern. Your mom says, “This is partly our fault. We'd better keep a closer eye on the kids". Therefore, all your parents' children are now only allowed one hour of free time after school. You also now have to show your parents your completed homework before you spend your hour of free time.

Directions: Part One

It's uncomfortable to lose power. That's why we often automatically respond with comments like, “That's unfair!” Listed below are general reactions a person may have when they feel their power is threatened. List them numerically in order from the most desperate response to the most minimal response.

- _____ Talk one-on-one
- _____ Make an impassioned speech to a very large crowd
- _____ Physical violence
- _____ Commit literal or emotional blackmail
- _____ Sabotage &/or espionage to topple the rule changer
- _____ Carry out a “coup d'état”
- _____ Submit alternate proposals in writing
- _____ Appeal to a higher authority
- _____ Civil disobedience
- _____ File a petition
- _____ File a lawsuit
- _____ Circulate propaganda
- _____ Defy the change by breaking away and forming your own group

Directions: Part Two

Now pretend you are the Principal in our school. Make one major rule change that, although beneficial, would probably make the students feel like they were losing power. List several arguments you would make to persuade them that the new rule is a good idea. Write in the "First Person", like you are the Principal.

Example: "Students wearing clothing with inappropriate messages will be sent home for the day".

- *"First, you have a right to express yourself. But none one has a right to force other people to be an audience. When you're in class together, you can't leave if the student next to you has a T-shirt with offensive writing".*
- *"My job is to protect the rights of all students. Even if that means denying some rights to protect others".*
- *"Please understand that part of what we learn together at school is how to get along with other people. So It's everyone's responsibility to learn how to do that here in our school.*

Your Rule: _____

Your "First Person" Reasoning: _____

SAMPLE- DO NOT COPY

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