

Personal Power – Patricia Mares, M.Ed., LPCC-S

Parents have two jobs as parents 1. To love you and keep you safe 2. To make sure you know how to follow rules because you won't be happy and successful in school, home or life if you can't follow rules and you might not be safe. Parents and adults they select help you practice following rules because you don't get good at anything unless you practice (I generally use an example that corresponds like if they play baseball or play an instrument).

But, I know kids get tired of being told what to do (again examples like eat, brush your teeth, get out your math book, etc) so I talk about your Personal Power—which means that every minute of every day you get to decide What to Think, How to Feel, What to Say, What to Not Say and How to Act. For every choice you make there's an outcome. Life isn't fair or equal but in general good choices lead to good outcomes and not so good choices lead to not so good outcomes.

When you get upset, angry, anxious or afraid, it's like handing your power over to someone or something else and then they are in control of you instead of you managing yourself. They are determining who you are instead of you defining yourself and who is the only person who should be defining you. Remember that parents are in charge of rules and making sure you follow them, but you are the only one in charge of your choices. Managing yourself is a full time job and that means you don't need to be managing others or letting others manage you.

What is it you like about yourself? Then talk about boundaries and their bubble and how they need to get up every day and only concentrate on being the best "name" or the best daughter/son, friend, student, sister/brother, self. What others say or do don't have to have any meaning or power unless you let them.