

# COMMUNICATION AND POWER IN ENDURING CONFLICT

CADRE Annual Symposium

October 26, 2011



# Presented By

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# Enduring Communication Requires

- ▣ Perseverance
- ▣ Maintaining communication in some form, even when direct communication was ineffective.
- ▣ Using multiple channels of communication
- ▣ Speaking one's truth
- ▣ Attending to the communication loop

- ▣ Using third parties, coaches, advocates
- ▣ Taking time out
- ▣ Responding to conciliatory gestures
- ▣ Affirming each other
- ▣ Choosing one's battles

# Overall Power Goal

Encouraging a

- Constructive
- Reciprocal
- Sustainable

Pattern of Power

# Using Power Over Time

- ▣ Power will be Used
- ▣ Disputants Need to Learn Their Power Effectively
  - Asserting Power
  - Responding to Other's Power
  - Constructive Escalation
  - Effective De-escalation
  - Changing the Power Pattern



# Characteristics of Effective Use of Power

- ▣ intentional,
- ▣ realistic,
- ▣ focused,
- ▣ incremental,
- ▣ proportional,

# Further Constructive Power Characteristics

- ▣ congruent,
- ▣ non-violent,
- ▣ flexible,
- ▣ sustainable, and
- ▣ transparent

# Constructive Escalation

- ▣ Four Principles from Prisoner's Dilemma
  - "Niceness"
  - "Provocability"
  - Forgiveness
  - Simplicity
- ▣ A Key Fifth Principle: Proportionality
- ▣ And One More: Uncertainty
- ▣ The Negotiator's Dilemma

# WHEN ESCALATION IS NECESSARY













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# False Choices

- ▣ Confront or Compromise
- ▣ Stand Firm or Seek Accommodation
- ▣ Deliver a Clear Message or Deliver a Conciliatory Message
- ▣ Be Tough or Be Nice

# Exercise: An Educational Dispute

- ▣ Lynn --27 year old special education teacher in a primary school (idealistic, energetic, inexperienced)
- ▣ Eve-- a regular classroom teacher for over 20 years (no nonsense, disciplinarian, skeptical about special ed)
- ▣ Lynn was warned about Eve before starting at this school a year ago

# The Issue

- ▣ Three 10 year olds in Eve's class are supposed to be in Lynn's resource room for an hour per day
- ▣ Eve resists this and engages them in activities that are very hard to leave in the middle of (games, movies, trips, drama, etc.)
- ▣ Eve complains about the resource room to the families
- ▣ Lynn is unable to have any consistent time with them



# Lynn's efforts to resolve

- ❑ Lynn has tried to talk to Eve but Lynn refuses to engage – talking only about the importance of routine
- ❑ The principal, while trying to be encouraging of Lynn has refused to intervene
- ❑ Lynn feels like parents, teachers, and even students are beginning to view her as ineffectual

# Exercise

- ▣ You are to coaches/ advisors to Lynn
- ▣ Discuss how to frame the problem
- ▣ Consider durable systems of communication
- ▣ What kind of power should Lynn resort to?
- ▣ Should this conflict be escalated and if so how?
- ▣ What is your major advice to Lynn?