



Are you still talking?

The #1 secret to reduce parental conflict

www.AndreaLaRoche.com

Have you ever gotten stuck talking to someone who never shuts up? Do you tune them out 3 minutes into the "conversation"? While silently brainstorming your exit strategy?

Have you ever been out with a group of friends and someone says something that angers you to the core? Do you keep listening to their rationale? Or do you mentally start strategizing your rebuttal?

Have you ever been sitting in a board meeting that has gone on 10 minutes longer than expected, pretending to listen intently while secretly daydreaming of what you'll eat for dinner?

People talk too much! And when people talk too much, the people they are talking to stop listening!

People talk too much because they have a lot to say, they aren't sure what they are trying to say, they are trying to convince you of something (or themselves of something), or most importantly, because they think that when they are talking - you must listening.

Nothing could be further from the truth. If you're talking a lot, it's not likely that the person you are talking to is actually listening to anything you are saying.

"But Andrea, important topics need to be discussed. Our children's mental and physical well being depend on it."

Absolutely, IMPORTANT topics need to be discussed and resolved between parents.

How often do the important discussions about your children's mental and physical well being with your parenting partner go sideways? How often do those same discussions put you and the *other parent* in even greater conflict?

Stop talking. Yes, it's that simple. Stop talking.

Talking sounds like it's important. Surely two parents have a lot to communicate with each other about regarding their children.

But talking is just space filler. And if you are in conflict, space filler has the potential to turn sour. When words are used to fill space, the likelihood that those words are taken out of context or misunderstood becomes greater. Because the more you talk, the less the other person is listening.

When you are in conflict with your parenting partner, everything you say must have a purpose.

In order for your words to have a purpose, you must first give your words thought. In order to give your words thought, you must first plan what it is you want the other parent to hear.

You need to understand the message you are trying to get across to the other parent. Once you understand the message you are trying to have heard, then you can think about the words you are going to choose to fit that purpose.

When you use your words for purpose, you are speaking, not talking.

When you are speaking, you are more likely to get heard.

I cannot guarantee that the message you create will be heard the way you intend it to be heard.

But I can guarantee this:

When you choose words to speak with purpose and the conversation goes sour (and it may), you will be better prepared to redirect the conversation back to the purpose you started speaking about in the first place.

Let's recap:

Stop talking and invite the other parent to listen to you.

What message do you want the other parent to hear? (Purpose for speaking)

What words will best get that message across? (Purpose for speaking)

Start speaking. With purpose.

When you speak with purpose, your ability to redirect the conversation back to your purpose when it goes sideways is greater.

If you can successfully navigate a sideways conversation back to your purpose for speaking, your message has a greater chance of being heard.

