

# Engage—The Sixth Step of PLEDGEtalk

## (Transcript)

Hi I am Mark Oelze. Welcome back to the PLEDGEtalk online course where you are learning a “how to” for when communication *really* matters!

So far we have talked about the first five steps in the PLEDGEtalk process.

Pause  
Listen  
Echo  
Disarm  
Give

This is the last video - where we will cover the sixth step of PLEDGEtalk. It corresponds with the final letter “E” and stands for Engage.

There are two main ideas with this last step.

The first is a continuation of the last video, where we talked about the old principle we learned in Kindergarten, that of “taking turns.”

When using the steps of PLEDGEtalk to resolve conflict, we see it is necessary that we *take turns* speaking and listening. Often, when we both have a turn in each position, we see the need to go back for round two or even three. So we go back through the process again switching roles to give each person another chance to share. In this sense we ENGAGE the PLEDGEtalk process over and over until the conflict is resolved or we come back to a place of love and appreciation.

The second idea we mean to communicate with the idea of ENGAGE is this: though we train people to use all the principles in the order in which we teach when in conflict, we don’t need to wait until we have conflict to use the principles. In fact, I teach people to use each and every principle every day when talking with others. ENGAGE in their use every time you converse! Here is what I mean:

Get in the habit of **Pausing** before you speak to check how well you are valuing those around you. Consider your choice of words and their intention before they come out of your mouth.



Develop your **Listening** skills by working hard to understand the heart of what others are saying.

Regularly **Echo** back what you hear others saying, particularly when in serious conversation, when what is being talked about *really* matters.

**Disarm or Validate** what others have to say - and you will be someone that everyone likes having around!

**Give** your perspective on matters. Don't hold it back. Your ideas need to be heard too. BUT - practice hearing other's ideas first!

**ENGAGE** in PLEDGEtalk everyday at work, with your friends and neighbors, in your marriage and with your children.

When you practice each of these steps on a daily basis - here is what will happen:

- You will make better and stronger connections with people.
- You will grow in confidence knowing what to say the next time you are in a moment of conversation when what you say next *really* matters.
- You will know how to genuinely understand others and be understood
- You will show others respect and gain theirs
- When conflict occurs, using the principles will be like second nature
- Your family will become a place of peace
- Though we can't promise you will never again experience conflict, we can promise you will know what to do when it happens. And if you use PLEDGEtalk not only when you process conflict, but in everyday conversation, your conflict will be greatly reduced.
- Your children will learn PLEDGEtalk as you model and teach them. Knowing it will help them the rest of their lives.

Several years ago, my son Micah called me up from his graduate school in Miami. He said, "Dad, I've been thinking about something."

I said, "What have you been thinking about Micah?"

He said, "You know, Dad, how you and mom haven't been able to help us out a whole lot financially with college and graduate school and stuff?"

And I jumped in and I said "Oh, I know, Micah, I'm sorry, I sure wish we could have done more!"

He said, "Dad, dad! No, no, no! That's not what I'm saying! That's not why I want to tell you this! I've just been thinking, you've not been able to help us out a lot financially, but on the other



hand, you really have. In fact, dad, you have saved both Brittany, Taya and me hundreds of thousands of dollars because you taught us Social Capital.”

And I went "What?" And then I also had to think through--I think I even asked him, "Uhh, Micah, what do you mean by Social Capital?"

He said this: "Dad, because we grew up in a home where you and mom taught us how to love well, how to relate well to different people, how to look people in the eyes and communicate in such a way that shows value to people and, Dad, because you and mom showed us how to work through conflict, we've gained a sense of confidence when we relate to others. Each of us have walked into our perspective schools and me also into graduate school and have gotten the top scholarships. In fact, Dad, I knew that when I walked into Florida International University, that I had the greatest chance, perhaps of all, to get their top scholarship because I knew that I could relate to the interviewers well. Dad, I have developed Social Capital, just as Brittany and Taya did, and it helped all of us in getting scholarships and funding our way through school!"

Whooo! I sat back. I actually had tears coming down my eyes, to think that he thought that through, and that he saw that, and appreciated that and wanted to tell me that!

I say that story, I tell you that story because I want you to know how significant this could be if you teach PLEDGEtalk to your kids. It will change their life, and their relationships from this day forward, and have who knows how many and what kinds of positive ramifications. So teach your kids PLEDGEtalk!

One more note: don't try PLEDGEtalk!

Don't *try* PLEDGEtalk. Do it! Don't *try* it because here's what happens when we try something: we get all excited about it. Someone says: *This will really work! It will make your life better and change everything!* We believe them and get excited so we go home and *try* it. And you know what happens? We all know what happens when we try something. It doesn't go the way it was supposed to go, or not as easily, or not as quickly. So we get frustrated. We say, "well that's stupid," and "forget that!" We toss it aside and give up. That's why I say don't *try* PLEDGEtalk. It works! It really does work if you work it.

Finally:

In these brief videos, I have shared the basics of each step of PLEDGE. Watch for my blog coming in to your inbox for more helps with PLEDGEtalk and answers to questions you might have!



Email me to let me know if this has been helpful - or if not let me know that too, so I can learn how to improve it. Give me your questions so that I can respond to them in my blogs. And tell me a story of what happened when you applied what you learned!

Finally, if you enjoyed learning about PLEDGEtalk and found it helpful, will you help us help others?

Would you team up with us to get the word out and together make a difference in marriages and families and neighborhoods and workplaces across this nation!

Thank you!