

# Give—The Fifth 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 four steps in the PLEDGEtalk process.

Pause  
Listen  
Echo  
Disarm

Now, the next time you experience a moment when communication matters, you will know the exact steps to take to stay connected and move the conversation in a good direction: Pause, Listen, Echo and Disarm--in that exact order.

In this video I talk about the fifth step: It is the G in the word PLEDGE and stands for the word: Give.

Here’s what most people say at this point when I train them in PLEDGEtalk:

“So I get it - I am with you so far. In order to have peace in my relationships, and make a good connection when I communicate, I have to **Pause** and remind myself of my PLEDGE to value others above myself. I have to be willing to set my agenda aside in order to **Listen** well and genuinely understand the person I am talking to. And when I do, I need to **Echo** back to clarify and make sure I heard correctly. If I did hear correctly, then it’s important that I validate what was said which ultimately **Disarms** the tension between us if we are in a conflict.

That all makes sense. I’m with you. I know what to do the next I find myself in conflict. And I know how to connect better with my spouse and my kids.

BUT - what do I do with *my* thoughts and *my* views that are different than what I just heard from the other person? When do I get to share my side of things?”

Great question. That’s where step number five comes into play, which is GIVE.

As I begin to explain this step, we have to go back and remind ourselves of the fundamental underlying premise for any good conversation, and especially when resolving conflict. Here is the premise:

**“We have to value others above ourselves.”**

There is a universal problem that gets in the way of good communication. We are all afflicted with this problem: *We naturally think first of ourselves before we think of others.*

Take two people who have this problem, put them together in the midst of a conflict, and guess what? More conflict! Why? Because both are thinking more of themselves rather than each other! As long as this is the case, they will NEVER connect. They will never find peace between them.

Think of how this happens.

A wife is upset about something and tells her husband like it is - the moment she sees him at the close of their day. No time to Pause and let her emotions dial down. Rather she says to herself: *I don't care what he thinks; I am going to tell him exactly how I feel! After all, he wants me to be honest.*

And later that day when she does tell him, he reacts back -- accusing her of always being on the attack!

And things just escalate from there.

Neither one of them even got past first base.

Before long, both will accuse the other of never listening. If things don't change, they will live disconnected lives or head for the divorce court, claiming they have fallen out of love.

And I shake my head thinking, NOPE. They didn't fall out of love, they simply failed to love.

They failed to understand the fundamental premise for good communication: **we must value others above ourselves.**

So how does this relate to PLEDGETalk?

Once we choose to value others above ourselves, we must understand there is order to a good conversation, and order to follow when talking through a conflict. We know this to be true in the

back of our minds, but we need to bring it to the front of our minds and follow it. That order is: Pause, Listen, Echo, Disarm, and **THEN** Give.

When my daughter shared her frustration about feeling I had treated her like a child, I knew I had to Pause to dial down my emotions and remind myself to value her above me; next, I knew I had to Listen to understand, then Echo back to clarify, and validate her concerns which had the effect of Disarming the conflict. **ONLY AFTER I DID THE FIRST FOUR STEPS** would I be able to GIVE my thoughts and my perspective. Only after my daughter felt heard, respected, and loved would she feel **ready** to value me in the same way.

It's another one of those principles we learned in Kindergarten. Taking turns.

We have to take turns valuing each other. One shares their concern while the other listens, echoes, and disarms. Then roles are switched and the one originally sharing, now listens, echoes, and disarms.

When my daughter took her turn to listen, and I shared my perspective - she grew in her understanding of *my* heart and intentions. Together we had a whole new way of understanding what had taken place between us. We appreciated each other in a deeper way not only because of this understanding, but also because of **HOW** we went about gaining it. **We followed the PLEDGETalk process of valuing each other above ourselves.**

## Here's your challenge this week:

In conversations, don't be so quick to get your words in. Instead, focus on listening, echoing and validating. And if you are in a conflict of any kind or to any degree, let the other person **Give** their perspective first. Wait your turn to Give your thoughts after you have first valued their's!

One final word of caution: this may all sound easier than it really is.

Don't give up.

Keep working at it.

When processing conflict, you may find that you need to hit the Pause button several times throughout the process, to keep your emotions down, your brain on, and heart in the right place of valuing the other. That's OK. It is much better than the old way of doing things!

See you tomorrow for the final PLEDGETalk video!