

An Excerpt From CEO Mr. Brenden King's Book

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One of our trainers, Matt Thompson, once worked in a facility with adolescent youth – specifically, incarcerated males. During most days, the schedule allowed for the young men to go to the gym for recreation time. During those years, it was the fashion to leave shoes untied. So, in keeping with the latest trends, the boys would leave their shoes untied. This, of course, meant their shoes made an odd, clicking noise as they walked down the halls. Chakunk. Chakunk. Chakunk.

On certain occasions, some of the kids would stop and lace up their shoes. The boys would get to the gym, they'd start playing, a little elbowing begins, and presto—they're in a fight. As the new staff member you're left wondering, "What happened?" "They were fine just a few minutes ago?" "I didn't even see this coming!" Somehow though the veteran staff were all over the situation, reacted immediately and shut the crisis down in a heartbeat. Later some of them tell you they knew something was about to happen, they just didn't know when.

How did they know? Let's look at it. When your shoes are untied, it becomes very easy to slip out of them. When you tie the laces, your shoes stay put. It's only logical that, if you see a kid tying their shoelaces before getting to the gym, you'd think, "Oh, they want to play basketball. They don't want to slip out of their shoes." That's sensible, right? Nope. That's wasn't the case at all. The kids who weren't ready to fight, and who weren't planning to fight in the first place, would continue to play basketball, even with their shoes loose and flopping on their feet. That was the style and that's what they did. The seasoned staff members saw kids starting to lace up, they took it as a sign. To them it was a key. "Hey, we'd better be on guard because something's about to go down." These are the little tricks you don't get during regular job orientation.



They usually don't teach you these things during those first few days of "official" training; the days before you hit the actual units. It's not because they want you to fail. It's only because there are many little details that can only be learned once you're on the non violent crisis intervention training job.

When officers are first assigned to their Field Training Officer, they are always told, "Forget everything you learned in the Academy. You're going to have to be re-taught." While that may not be entirely true, there are a lot of details you simply can't get from the formal classroom education. Experience is the only way to learn some things.

Lesson? If you have some experience, have acquired certain skills, know little tricks of the trade, or learned a few secrets of how to keep things calm, pass it on. Pass the information on to your co-workers. Pass it on to the newbie. Remember, at one point **you** were the newbie, and needed all the help you could get.

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Give Respect, Get Respect

A number of years ago, we were conducting training sessions with a particular client in the upper Northeast. We were discussing power, control, and crisis situations. We were, specifically, going over the type of situation where people felt they had to draw a line or “make a stand” so to speak.

One gentleman made an interesting comment. “You know Brendan,” he said, “When it comes to the kids here, I don’t give them respect until they earn it.”

At the time my first thought was, *Wow! Sounds like a real joy to work with.* His attitude surprised me quite a bit, as you might imagine, as one of the first things we learn in dealing with people in

a hospital or treatment setting is to treat them with dignity and respect. I knew in that moment that my work was cut out for me. This gentleman was a supervisor, and had been at the facility for a long, long time. It was apparent that he was very set in his ways. Regardless of the fact that my company had been brought to this organization by the State to help fix their crisis response, his attitude was clear that he didn't think he had much to learn, and already had all the answers. As I quickly gauged the other faces in the room (about 25 or so), it was clear that most of the rest of them didn't agree with his comment, though they were not going to speak up out of fear of retaliation from this supervisor. It made for an interesting next 30 minutes as I opened the conversation up and gently let him know I thought his attitude towards dignity and respect was not helpful, and likely led to the issues they currently had, and that we were called there to fix. Let's just say, I wish I had that conversation recorded. Anyhow, this attitude within him had developed to this point for whatever reason. He had been in the industry a long time and maybe he was just burned out. I don't know the reason, but he'd come to a point where he felt he didn't have to show respect to anyone until that person had earned it. I wonder how many others feel that same way. Do you know nonviolent physical crisis intervention?

Maybe you work in corrections. Maybe mental health. Maybe you're in law enforcement, or security, and you think, "You know what? I've got the authority, the badge. I've got the gun. Therefore, you do what I say." Maybe that's the way you approach these scenarios. But let's think about it for a moment. Doesn't that sound more detrimental than beneficial? Can't you see that walking into a conversation with someone in that "top dog" position will likely only garner resistance?

I don't know about you, but my experience -- especially when I was working with adolescents -- has been that they're not going to give you respect right from the start. Instead, it's been quite the opposite scenario. Typically, I've had to establish myself with *them*. I've had to earn *their* respect prior to them returning respect to me.

When I demonstrate respect to another person, I do expect to receive respect in return, but I'm going to be the first to show it. I'm not going to make the other person be the one to make that first move. I will start from a position of Cautious Submission™. Cautious Submission™ is a concept CCG came up with to represent ones attempt to be situationally aware, open-minded, and respectful, while willing to submit ego and pride in order to gain compliance and peaceful cooperation. I understand this concept may not be widely accepted at first, though the reality is, it's what's worked for me time and time again. If I enter a situation with the attitude of *you have to earn my respect before I give that back to you*, I'm already behind the 8-ball. I'm already in a shaky position. Instead, I come from a position of, *Hey, we are in this together. I want to help you. I'm here to try to get us both through this situation as efficiently and as safely as possible.*

When I arrive, I make it a point to carry myself with a certain level of dignity, professionalism, and tact. Those with whom I'm dealing will recognize this presence as soon as I enter the room. So it should be with you. Those who you are trying to help should immediately recognize that you deserve respect simply by the way you carry yourself, by the words you use, and the manner in which you walk. This is not control or fear based respect. Instead, they know you mean what you say, and care about the outcome being positive. You're going to do what you

say you will do, and you will follow through on promises. When you do, they will begin to trust you. Soon you'll develop a rapport, then a relationship, and little by little, respect grows.

Start from a position of Cautious Submission™, showing the other person respect in the hopes of receiving it in return.

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