



JIM WALSH

**Taking a Cue From
SCOTUS:
Being Appropriately
Ambitious**

Let's Learn from the Supreme Court

- o SCOTUS tells us that every IEP should have goals that are APPROPRIATELY AMBITIOUS enabling the student to achieve CHALLENGING OBJECTIVES.
- o All of this only after taking into account the particular circumstances of the student.
- o Take that language into every IEP Team meeting.
- o Review the student's unique circumstances. Then develop present levels of performance. Then propose measurable annual goals.
- o And poll the members of the Team: are these APPROPRIATELY AMBITIOUS?

And Then????

- o Let's consider these same standards as applied to you.
- o What are your particular circumstances?
- o What is your present level?
- o What would be a measurable goal that is APPROPRIATELY AMBITIOUS for you?
- o Apply this to multiple areas of your life. Physical. Financial. Intellectual. Spiritual.
- o Let me use myself as an example....

What a Year I've Had!!



But Then There is This....



- o “Listening session” at Region 13....I get yelled at, called a liar, and booed out of the room.
- o Interview by Texas Monthly....
- o Texas Tribune panel....
- o Informal conversations with parents....

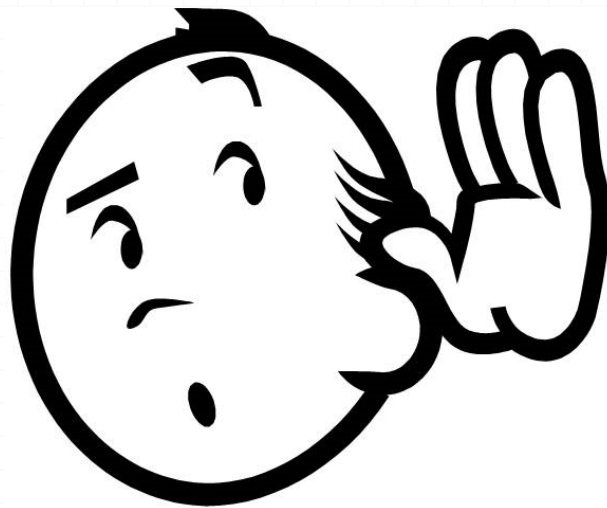
What I Noticed....



- All of the parents who spoke at the Region 13 meeting were angry.
- State agency indicator (8.5%) was the spark that ignited all this, but very few parents spoke about that.
- The complaints covered everything: IEPs, lack of services, rude treatment, lawyers, TEA, etc.

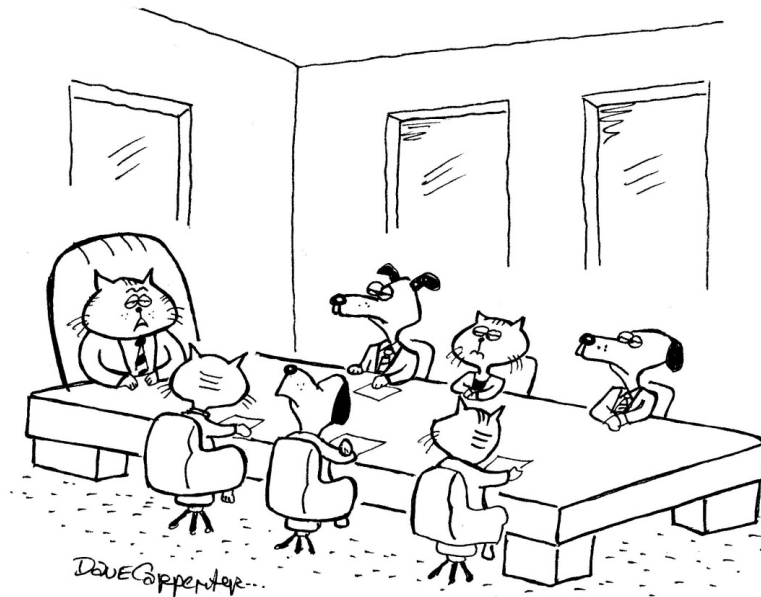
The Main Thing

- o The main thing I noticed was....



It Was December 15th

- Christmas was ten days away.
- The meeting was in the evening, after people had probably worked a full day.
- And there were hundreds of angry parents.
- You cannot discount that. You can't ignore that. You have to honor the reality of that.
- So where do we go from here?



"Face it, we're never going to reach a consensus."

Two Instinctive Responses:

- o Instinctive response #1: Fight.
- o Instinctive response #2: Flight.

One Non-Instinctive Response

- o The Prayer of St. Francis....
- o Let me seek to UNDERSTAND, rather than to be UNDERSTOOD....

Can We Become LISTENING PEOPLE?



- Our culture does not celebrate listening.
- Our culture encourages us to SPEAK UP.
- There is a time and place for this— particularly on behalf of public education.
- But we can speak out on behalf of public education and also listen to our critics. We can become LISTENING PEOPLE.
- This does not happen unless we are INTENTIONAL about it.

Notice Your Resistance....

- o When I'm not listening well, it's usually because I am full of RESISTANCE.
- o RESISTANCE starts with "I don't like what you are saying."
- o It moves on to "You shouldn't be saying these things."
- o And then "You are a bad person for saying these things."
- o Discomfort becomes judgment. First, judgment about what was said; then, judgment about the person who said it.

Let me Introduce You to Mark Nepo

“To stay among the living, we are often asked to SUMMON THE COURAGE NOT TO RESIST. This is different from turning the other cheek or submitting to dominant forces in our lives. Rather this is MEETING THE WORLD in ALL ITS PAINFUL VARIETY with FEET SPREAD AND ARMS OPEN, neither accepting everything nor rejecting everything but LEANING INTO WHAT IS NOURISHING AND LETTING THE REST MOVE ON THROUGH.”



And Then....

- o Quiet your monkey mind by CREATING A SACRED SPACE in your home and COMMITTING to spending time there every day.
- o Every day.
- o Blaise Pascal: “All the troubles of life come upon us because we refuse to sit quietly for a while each day in our rooms.”

Practice: I

- o Let me tell you the story of Richard from Landmark Forum.
- o Consider asking a parent “What is it like for you to attend our IEP Team meetings?” “What is it like for you having your child in our school?”
- o Consider asking your co-workers: what is it like for you to have me as your boss? Co-worker?



Practice II

- o Let me tell you about the Imago Dialogue...reserved exclusively for your closest relationships.

Practice III

- o Expecting a fight?
- o George Saunders tells us “the best thing we can bring to any fight is a calm and compassionate mind.”
- o Can you bring that mindset to a contentious IEP Team meeting?

Full Catastrophe Living

- o When you are enmeshed in the FULL CATASTROPHE of life, committing to quiet time in your sacred space is hard to do.
- o But it is more urgent.
- o Here's a quote from an unknown source: "With a QUIET MIND I can notice the moment's opportunity. I can tap into the DEEP WISDOM that is always available to me and USE MY TALENTS to meet that moment. My purpose is far from complicated. I will know it easily when I turn to THE STILLNESS WITHIN."

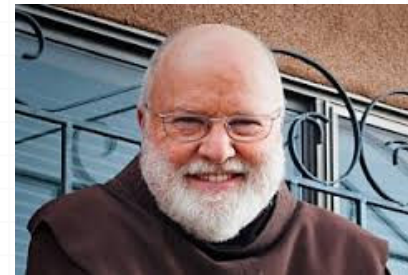
An Appropriately Ambitious Goal

- o To bring about a transformation in my workplace.
- o To bring about a transformation of some of the difficult parent relationships I have.
- o To bring about a transformation in how I think about and perform my work.
- o Let me tell you about the Taj Mahal....



Benefits for You and Others...

- o Let me introduce you to Richard Rohr, my favorite priest:



“Transformed people transform people, and usually only as far as they themselves have been transformed. So the best thing you can do for your family and the world is to keep growing up yourself.”

Let's all strive to “grow up” into LISTENING PEOPLE.

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The information in this handout was prepared by Walsh Gallegos Treviño Russo & Kyle P.C. It is intended to be used for general information only and is not to be considered specific legal advice. If specific legal advice is sought, consult an attorney.

