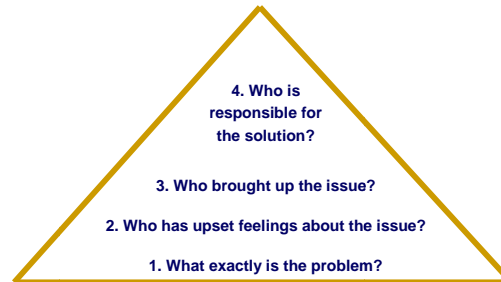


PROBLEM PYRAMID

FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS



For every problem there is a solution.

To find that solution solicit the input of the person with the problem.



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The problem pyramid will help you sort out who really needs to be taking responsibility for solving a particular problem. Once you know who is responsible (you or your child) you can decide the most effective way to promote a solution.

The pyramid is read from bottom to top.

1. What exactly is the problem? By looking at your feelings and identifying your thoughts you can break a big problem down into its individual components and look at the separately.
2. Who has upset feelings? List all parties whose feelings are upset. (Not all parties who have feelings about the issue.) This level is specifically for negative feelings. Because more than one name can go on this level, it's important to look at the next level. If you stop here, you may take on a problem that doesn't really belong to you.
3. Who brought up the issue? Sometimes it's difficult to decide who brought up the issue because it can seem as though two or more people have issues simultaneously. Also, because you are the one who is working through the pyramid and who is focused on a solution to the problem. Only one person can bring up an issue at a time, and it's usually (not always) the person who verbalized it first.
4. Who is responsible for the solution? It is the combination of levels 2 and 3 that determines who is responsible for implementing a solution to the problem. If you have upset feelings and you are also bringing the issue up as a problem, then your name will appear on level 4. It is unlikely that the names on level 2 and 3 will be different, because people who are content with a situation rarely bring it up as an issue. If by some chance the names on level 2 and 3 are different, level 3 alone determines who tops the problem pyramid.

Concept taken from "Joint Custody with a Jerk." Julie A. Ross, M.A. and Judy Corcoran