



# Time-In: When Time-Out Doesn't Work

a newsletter for people who care about self-esteem

Volume 17, Number 5 - Issue 98 - Sept/October, 1998

*Dear Readers,*

The book *Time-In: When Time-Out Doesn't Work* was spawned by a *WE*. Betsy Crary, author of *Without Spanking or Spoiling* and *Pick Up Your Socks*, and many other helpful books, and publisher of Parenting Press, Inc., read the Vol. 15, 1996 issue of *WE* about Time-In and liked the idea. She asked me to write a small book about Time-In for Discipline. Betsy, editor Carolyn Threadgill, and I consulted, and a new little book is the result.

It reflects the ideas that *WE* readers sent and I thank you deeply for your helpful feedback. You will notice that the notion of a correct sequence in which to use, Ask, Act, Attend, and Amend, has been replaced with the more helpful invitation to use the pieces in any order.

This issue of *WE* includes:

- ◆ Questions about *Time-In: When Time-Out Doesn't Work*.
- ◆ A small sample of the writing style and illustrations of the book.
- ◆ A group activity, "Introducing the Ask, Act, Attend, and Amend puzzle pieces."
- ◆ Time-In reminder cards.
- ◆ Tips for trainers about choosing content.
- ◆ A set of Ask, Act, Attend, and Amend puzzle pieces to use with the group activity or in any other way you wish to play with or teach about the Time-In ideas.

Have fun exploring these ideas.

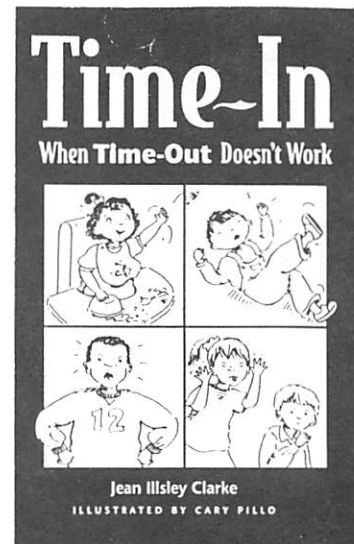
*Sincerely,  
Jean Illsley Clarke*

## Questions about *Time-In: When Time-Out Doesn't Work*

There is a chapter about each of the following questions in the book.

### 1. What Is Time-In?

Time-In is a way of connecting with children. When children need discipline or when children misbehave, it is always an indication that there is some lesson the child needs to learn. The word discipline comes from a root word meaning to *learn*. The thrust of Time-In is to figure out how to respond to misbehavior in a way that not only stops it at the moment, but encourages the child to internalize responsibility for better behavior in the future. The four ways of doing Time-In are: *Ask, Act, Attend, and Amend*. That means that the parent or teacher has more than one option for approaching a behavior problem.



2. Why Is Time-In, *Ask*, *Act*, *Attend*, *Amend*, like a Puzzle with Four Pieces?

It's like a puzzle because managing discipline is often puzzling. What works with one child doesn't with another. What has worked with one child at one point, doesn't work at another point. *Ask*, *Act*, *Attend*, and *Amend* are like four puzzle pieces because they all fit together, but they can be used separately, in any combination, or in any order. The book contains many examples of ways they can be used for discipline problems with children ages three to twelve.

3. How Does Time-In Differ from Time-Out and Other Common Methods of Discipline?

It differs from spanking because it doesn't involve hurting physically. It differs from criticism because it doesn't involve hurting emotionally. It differs from Time-Out because it is a way of connecting with children. Often Time-Out can be used as part of *Asking*, *Acting*, *Attending*, or *Amending*. Time-Out by itself is not a discipline; it is a strategy for giving a child time and space to calm down, so that the child will be able to think. Time-Out doesn't work as well with children who are extroverted and need to talk with someone else

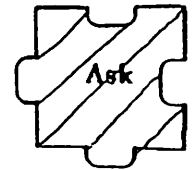


while they think. It is not apt to be effective if the child needs at that moment to be connected with a parent or teacher, to be reassured, to be helped.

Time-In not only addresses the discipline, the misbehavior, but it also strengthens the connection that the child has with the parent or teacher. What is known about behavior is that the stronger the bonding, the attachment, the connection the child has with the parent and the family, the better the behavior will be.

4. Why *Ask*?

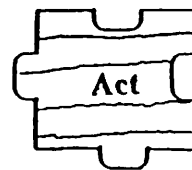
Why is *Ask* one of the puzzle pieces? Because asking encourages children to think and to be responsible. If I say, *What can you do about this?*, I'm



asking the child to think. If I say, *You are bad and you must do this*, I have already done the thinking and the child can either accommodate to me or resist me. Questions need to be focused on the lesson you want the child to learn. It is very important not to make the questions a criticism.

5. How Do You *Act*?

You act decisively to interrupt or redirect a behavior. You act when you have a child who



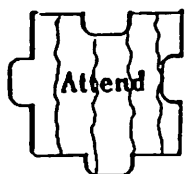
is a wiggler. Wiggly children are often kinesthetic learners. Sometimes they don't easily recall what we have told them to do. Taking this

child by the hand, leading her where you want her to go, standing right in front of her, or interrupting a very young child's activity to guide her to something else are all ways that actions can be used in the purpose of discipline. Since discipline is about learning, each action that the parent does is directed toward helping the child learn responsibility for self and toward others

6. What Does *Attend* Mean?

Attend has a very big meaning. First of all it means that parents and teachers are attending to what is going on. They are attending to what they see and maybe even to what they can't see.

If we don't understand why a child is misbehaving, the very first thing to do is to attend. What is going on? What is happening in the child's life? Are we expecting too much? Are we expecting too little? Does this child need more guidance? Attending is very important for grownups because it helps them

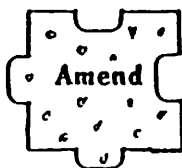


decide whether to act, ask or have the child make amends.

Second, it is important to teach the child how to attend. When the child spills milk, rather than yelling at the child, we teach the child how to wipe up the spilled milk. If a child has hurt another child, we teach the perpetrator child to attend to the child who was hurt.

#### 7. When Is It Important to Make *Amends*?

It is important to make amends if there is a big wrong that needs to be righted. It is important to make amends on little things when you are teaching a child how to make amends. Do it when you have the time and the patience to carry through.



Also, you make amends when you have wronged the child. You teach the child about amends by making amends. "I'm sorry I was late to pick you up. I didn't intend to leave you standing outside of the school building. What can I do to make it up to you?"

#### 8. Is There a Best Way to Put the Puzzle Pieces Together?

The best way is the way that is most effective for the misbehavior at hand. Puzzle pieces can be put together in any order. Use as few as possible so you are spending a small amount of time on discipline. That leaves more time to have fun with children.

#### 9. What if Time-In Doesn't Work?

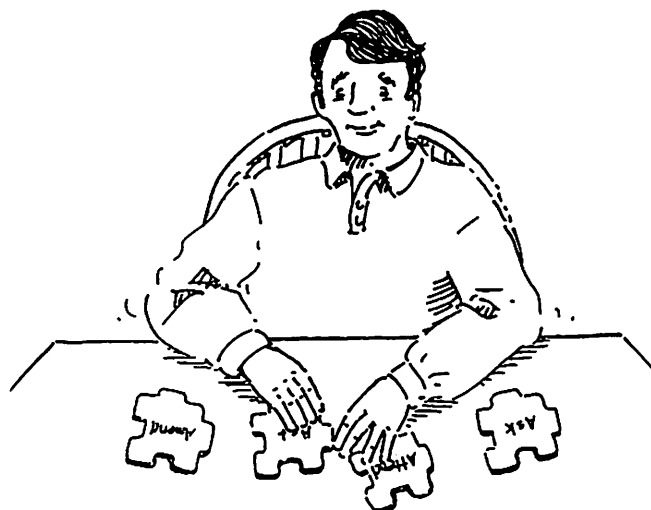
Time-In, used effectively, stops a misbehavior, but it may not remove the cause for it. If Time-In isn't working, parents and teachers need to look for the cause. What is going on in the child's life? Are there exterior stresses? Are there family stresses? Is there a move, a divorce, a new baby, a big change? Are there interior stresses? Hitting the hormones of puberty is a tremendous interior stressor.

#### 10. What if My Anger Gets in the Way?

Oh wow. All of Time-In depends on interacting with the child in a noncritical way, so if I'm truly angry with the child I need to say, "I'm angry with you right now, I'm going to deal with you after I get through my anger so I will be thinking clearly and very fairly." If it is hard for me to do that, then I need to think about my anger. Anger is always an indication that there is something that I want or something that I need. Sometimes it is hard for us to get what we need. There are suggestions in the book of ways for parents to deal with their anger on a deeper level than counting to ten or taking a brisk walk.

#### Conclusion: What Else Can a Parent Do?

Parents and teachers can serve the children in their lives best by taking care of themselves, by attending to their own growth, by caring for their health, and by being assertive about getting the care that they and their family members need.



Excerpt from: *Time-In: When Time-Out Doesn't Work*

## How and when to use the attending puzzle piece

### *Attend to a broken object or a hurt child*

One way to avoid giving lots of attention to a misbehaving child is to focus on the results of the misbehavior. This may cut down on the child's desire to misbehave and also teach some empathy.

In the preschool room, Rebecca, four, had thrown a toy and hurt Amy. Teacher moved in immediately and got Rebecca's attention. *Rebecca, Amy has been hurt. You stay beside us while I help Amy.* Teacher applied first aid, not looking at Rebecca, but making sure Rebecca stayed put.



Then Teacher empowered Amy.

*Amy, do you remember the rule about throwing toys?*

*Yes,*

*Amy, can you tell Rebecca that rule by yourself or shall I tell her for you?*

*Don't throw toys!*

*Amy, do you want to tell Rebecca how you feel?*

*I'm mad at you.*

Teacher might ask Rebecca to make Amends or she might Act by sending Rebecca to the Time-Out thinking chair to think about what to do next time. Discipline lesson: Breaking a rule is a poor way to get attention.

## Group activity

For introducing the Ask, Act, Attend, and Amend puzzle pieces

### Objectives

People will have the opportunity to:

1. Identify the 4 A's of Time-In: Ask, Act, Attend, Amend.
2. Compare Time-In with Time-Out.
3. Practice using the 4 A puzzle pieces as choices for turning misbehavior into lessons to be learned.

### Background Mini Lecture (2 minutes)

Parents or caregivers who wish to replace authoritarian or overpermissive ways of handling discipline problems with firm but loving authoritative ways need tools.

Time-Out is a tool that helps calm the child, and perhaps the parents, but it doesn't always work. An extroverted child, an anxious child, a child who needs information, may not respond to Time-Out even if it is not overused.

Time-In is a way for the parent to connect with the child while helping the child internalize the lessons she needs to learn in order to behave appropriately.

### **Group Interview** (10 minutes)

- Ask the group to tell you when Time-Out works and when it doesn't.
- List the times it doesn't work on newspaper.
- Ask group members to look at the "doesn't work" items and guess if each might not work because the child feels disconnected or abandoned.

### **Group Exercise** (5 minutes)

- Ask people to choose a partner for a quick role play about helping a child.
- Remind people of their right to pass and just observe if they so choose.
- Ask the person playing the child to pretend he or she has just broken a rule. Ask the person

playing the parent to touch the other's arm gently and say in a loving voice, "I will help you with your problem."

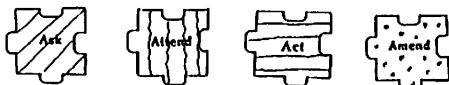
- Ask two or three of the persons playing the role of children to tell what happened when they were offered this support.
- Ask both partners to shake off their roles and see each other as the caring adults they are.

### Mini Lecture (2 minutes)

Babies bond with the mother and get to know the voice of the father during the months in the womb. After birth, the baby bonds with both parents. This lays the important ground work for relationships throughout life. Following infant bonding, the child needs to develop attachments to the others in his immediate world. This happens over time as the child experiences many, many instances of loving response and care. After the initial attachments, children need to feel connected and to learn how to connect with others. This is a lifelong task. Time-In can be used to help children attach, to feel connected, and to learn ways to connect with others.

### Group Demonstration (15 minutes)

- Place large Ask, Attend, Act, and Amend signs in a row at the front of the room.



- Ask people to think about which they prefer to use when a child has misbehaved. Would they rather ask a question, attend to what is going on, take immediate action, or ask the child to make amends.
- Ask for one volunteer for each of the A's to stand by his or her sign and tell the group why he or she prefers this position. (If no one volunteers, you role play each one.)
- Point out that no A is better than another, but people may find one easier to do than others.
- Thank the demonstrators and derole them.
- Ask people to think about which of the four A's their child might prefer.

### Mini Lecture (2 minutes)

In order to connect with children and to help them learn to think about themselves and others, each of the A's must be delivered in a supportive, non critical way. No one A is better than the other. Making amends often takes lots more time than the other three so parents should ask for amends only when there is enough time to carry through. Also, it is not appropriate to ask children to make amends until their thinking patterns are sophisticated enough to grasp the concept. Parents can start modeling making amends from the time the child is an infant. Parents can learn more about amends by reading *Restitution: Restructuring School Discipline* by Diane Chelsom Gossen.

### Group Interview (5 minutes)

- Ask the group to give examples of how you could make amends to an infant, a toddler, a two year old, a three year old.

### Group Exercise (12 minutes)

- Practice using the 4 A's by reading the examples on the handout.
- Working in pairs, one person reads the four examples using centered posture and a respectful, loving, firm voice using the name Andy and thinking of a four-year-old.
- Then the other person reads the examples using the name Andrea instead of Andy.
- After everyone has read, call the group back together.
- Ask if anyone found one A easier than another.
- Ask if anyone thinks it is easier to discipline boys or girls.
- (If there is time, ask people to read again thinking of Andy and Andrea as eight-year-olds.)

### Closing (2 minutes)

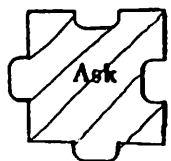
Ask people if they are willing to choose one A to practice using non critically during the coming week, to monitor their body posture and voice, and to send a "I am here to support you" message.

# The Four Puzzle Pieces of Time-In Practice Sheet

**Example:** Child has broken a rule the child knows. *Do not throw toys in the house. Throw balls and Frisbees outside.*

1. Stand in a centered way and think, "I want this child to learn to be responsible for himself and to others."
2. Practice reading the examples in a reassuring voice:

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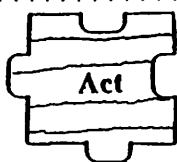


*Ask a question that will teach the lesson you want the child to learn.*

**In a reassuring voice:**

"Andy, do you remember the rule about throwing toys?"  
"What is it?"

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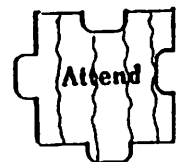
*Act to interrupt or redirect a misbehavior.*

Pick up the toy and hold it out at arms length.

**In a reassuring voice:**

"Andy, let's think of three ways toys could hurt if you throw them."

\*\*\*\*\*



*If person is hurt:*

- \**Stop the activity.*
- \**Apply first aid if needed.*
- \**Attend to the victim as you teach the child how to attend.*
- \**Empower the victim.*

**In a reassuring voice:**

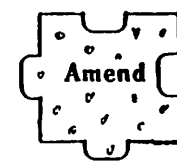
"Andy, Katlin has been hurt. You get the cold pack from the freezer and then stay beside us while we help Katlin."  
"Katlin, do you remember the rule about throwing toys?"  
"Katlin, can you tell Andy that rule yourself or do you want to listen while I tell him?"  
"Katlin, do you want to tell Andy how you feel?"

**If an object is damaged:**

- \**Attend to the object in a way that encourages the child to be responsible.*

"This toy is broken. You can't play with it unless we can fix it. Do you think we can do that? How?"

\*\*\*\*\*



*Help the child decide how to make a restitution in a way that satisfies the victim or helps someone similar and helps the offending child to*

*learn positive ways to interact with others. May be a repayment of time, objects, or services, or a restoration of reputation.*

**In a reassuring voice:**

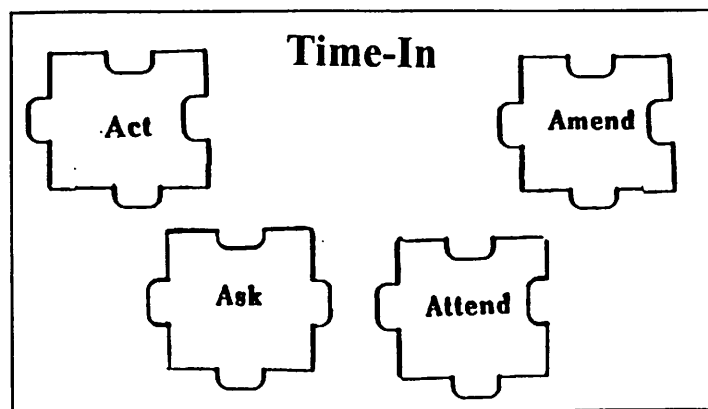
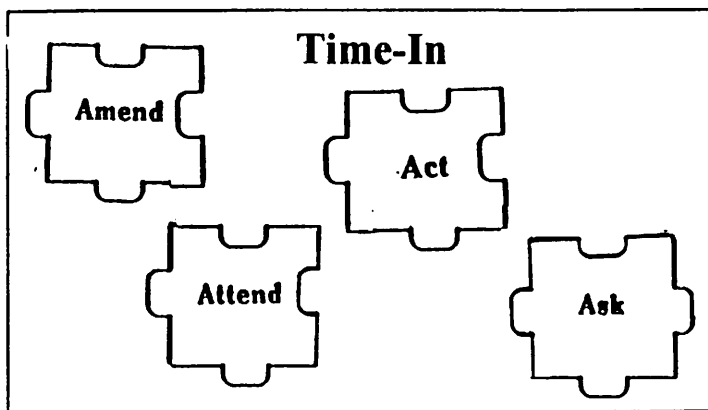
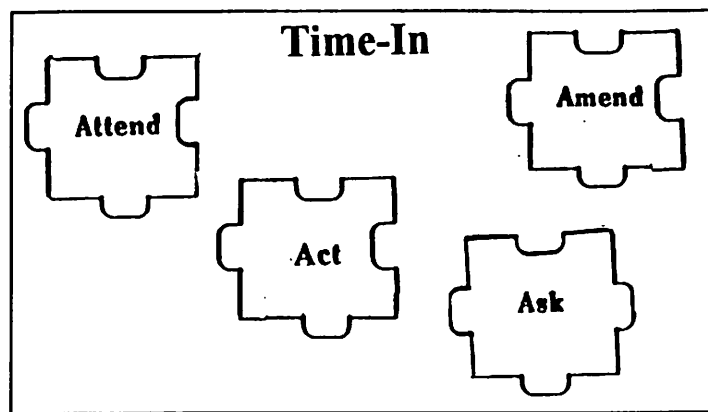
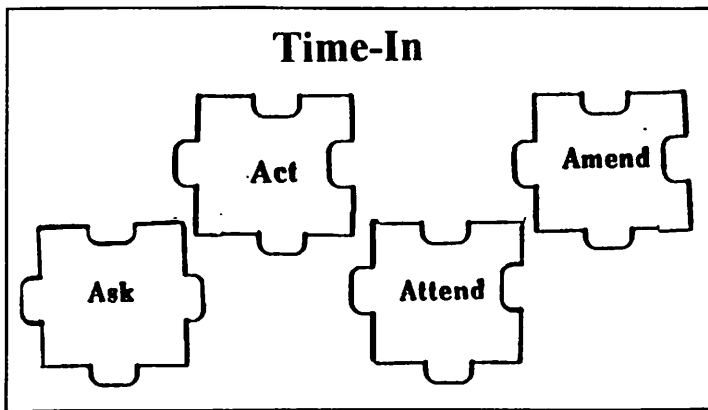
"Andy, when you threw Tommy's clay dinosaur you ruined his artwork. Now you need to make amends. Do you want me to help you think of ways to make it right? Your 'amends' will have to be okayed by Tommy and by me."

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3. Read the examples again using the name Andrea instead of Andy to see if you are as loving and as firm with girls as with boys.
4. Identify the puzzle piece you use most often.
5. Practice the others to improve your ability to use all four puzzle pieces.
6. Use one or more as needed in any order.



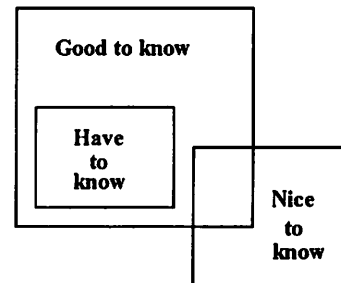
## Reminder cards to copy and post



## Tips for trainers - Content



On the way home from a workshop the trainer often ponders the three crucial questions: Did I offer too much content, too little content, the correct content? Try slotting your offerings into the *have to know*, *good to know*, *nice to know* diagram that Deane Gradous uses.



**Have to know:** The essentials that fulfill the needs assessment, the necessary stepping stones to understanding, the content that leads to the core competencies, pass the test, qualify for the certificate. If you are not sure about what is needed, get more information.

**Good to know:** All of the material that enhances the *have to know*, the concepts and methods that the experienced presenter knows will fit for this particular group or that illuminate the response to a question. This is the material you collect from experience and from expanding your knowledge base. Not to be offered instead of *have to know*.

**Nice to know:** All of the things that illustrate, illuminate, and expand upon the *have to know* and *good to know* content. *Nice to know* can add richness, stimulation, and satisfaction to a presentation. However, if you are offering *nice to know* at the expense of *have to know*, revise your goals and your program design so *have to know* is thoroughly covered.

--Deane Gradous is an educator and a consultant in the field of management development. Her Ph.D. is in Training and Development.

## Opening activity

To encourage people to think about effective uses of Time-Out

Hand out name tags and ask people to:

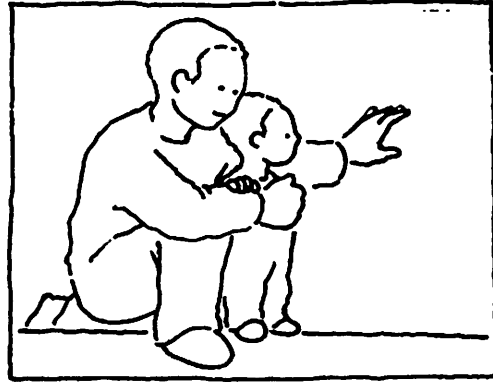
- Choose a partner. Make a name tag for her and ask her to tell you about one time she or someone else used Time-Out successfully.
- Introduce your partner and tell the group briefly what behavior she used Time-Out for if she is willing for you to share that information.

## Closing activity

To encourage people to try using Time-In for discipline

At the end of the meeting, briefly review the activities of the meeting.

- Ask several people to tell about one Time-In puzzle piece they will use in the future.
- Ask for Resentments. Listen to resentments, do not defend or explain.
- Ask for Appreciations.



## Workshops

Drew Betz will teach a Growing Up Again Facilitators Workshop based on the *Growing Up Again Leader Guide* on February, 9, 16, and 23 in Elma, WA.

Contact Drew at: 360 740-1220 through Washington State University.

### *WE*

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Edited by Jean Illsley Clarke

\* Ideas and activities or materials to use individually or in support groups.

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