

No Problem!

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**No Problem!**

**By Nisandeh Neta**

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"Thanks to Walt Disney's ""The Lion King"", children the world over know the Swahili expression ""Hakuna Matata"". It means ""No Problem"" and we grown-ups should use it more often.

I used to come home and my wife would say, ""We have a crisis!"" I would immediately think that our daughter was in a hospital, the car broke down, or her mother was coming to stay with us. But it was usually just that the washing machine was broken, or she couldn't get a babysitter for our movie date.

It is easy to turn a minor disruption into a major disaster. Don't do it! It lowers the energy of everyone involved and makes you want to run away. Instead, take the energy you are wasting on worrying and complaining about the ""ifs"", ""buts"" and ""shoulds"" – and direct it toward finding the solution.

Problem-solving requires awareness and becoming aware of the problem is often enough to solve it. To sharpen your awareness, take a look at the problem from three different perspectives:

1. Accept that the problem is really just a FACT, or set of facts.

Situation: You parked in a no-parking zone and your car was just towed.

You may be furious about it, but the fact remains that the car was towed. If you detach yourself momentarily from your feelings, and look strictly at the facts, it will be easier to put things into perspective. Just imagine that someone else's car was towed. Would you feel the same about it? Probably not! You would probably think, ""Well that's what happens when you park in a tow-away zone.""

So, act as if the problem belonged to your neighbor and not yourself...

Now, there are no more problems – only facts!

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### 2. Be willing to see your problem as a CHALLENGE.

What's more fun: dealing with a problem, or facing a new challenge?

Situation: You've just had another fight with someone close. Arguing is not going to achieve anything.

You can treat the situation (or the person) as a problem, or you can choose to see it as a challenge: "How can I create a harmonious, understanding relationship with that person?" Instead of looking backward into the past ("How many times I've tried, and still it doesn't work"), you look forward to the future ("Let's see how I can make a difference").

The heaviness of the situation is gone, and excitement takes over...

Now, there are no more problems – only challenges!

### 3. Recognize the problem as an OPPORTUNITY.

In reality, every obstacle is a chance to learn something new and grow: "The obstacle is the path."

Situation: Your boss just gave you two weeks notice. You're shocked, angry, worried, feeling insecure.

You can see it as a problem ("What am I going to do now?" "Where will I earn money?" "I'm too old to change"), or you can see the possibilities open to you that were not there before: "Now I finally can take the around-the-world tour I always dreamed about", "Now it's time to open my own business", "Here's my chance to find a better job".

Contemplate many of the opportunities you've had in your life; probably many opened up when you were in trouble...

Now, there are no more problems – only opportunities!

The key element in this problem-solving process is the conscious act of taking personal responsibility.

Reshaping problems into facts, challenges and opportunities will allow you to accept that you are in charge of your "problem".

You can no longer play the "blame game" because the problem is no longer something that was forced upon you from an outside source (other people, circumstances, etc...)

You are no longer a powerless victim!

If it's affecting your life, you must have something to do with it; therefore you can do something about it.

Often, you don't even have to take action in the physical sense. Simply changing your point of view

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may be sufficient for the problem to disappear on its own.

The closer you are to an issue, the harder it can be to be creative about it. So try taking a step back from your situation and invite others who are not close to it to brainstorm solutions with you.

Ask yourself these questions: What are the facts? What are the challenges? What opportunities are presented? How will a solution make my life better than it was before? What is it that I have to learn in order to deal with the situation differently?

Remember that NOTHING is IMPOSSIBLE.

When people tell me that something is impossible, I ask them, ""How can you do it anyway?""

That simple question has the power to transform lives.

Imagine what would have happened if people like the Wright Brothers, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, J.F.K. and Gandhi used the word ""impossible""? Where would humanity be today?

We all tend to look at some problems as impossible to solve or beyond our power. ""It's impossible to talk to my mother, she just won't listen!""

But if you ask yourself instead, ""How can I talk to her?"" then, suddenly, ideas emerge (i.e. take her for a quiet lunch, include a third person in the conversation, write her a letter).

Changing your language changes your outlook.

Really, most ""impossible"" things are just ""difficult"" and can be achieved with some effort and a new ""no problem"" attitude."

Nisandeh Neta, author of the best-seller book Jump-Start Your Life:

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### **WIN THE "YEAH BUT" GAME in 5 Easy Steps**

**By Laurie Weiss**

You know the game, don't you? Someone invites you to help them solve a big problem and every great suggestion you make is met with, "Yeah, but that won't work because...." Frustrated and defeated, you finally give up.

Next time someone tells you about a problem, use these steps.

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1. Listen politely, without offering any suggestions. Remember, it is not your problem.
2. Affirm that the problem is really important. Just say, "That sounds like a really big problem."
3. Ask, "What have you already tried (thought of) doing about the problem?" You learn all the suggestions to scratch off your list. And you subtly reinforce the capabilities of the person with the problem.
4. After you hear the answer, ask, "How did that work out?" You invite the problem holder to rethink his or her own challenge. Often that leads to a solution on the spot, with thanks to you for your brilliant suggestions. (Of course, you have not made any suggestions, but that doesn't really matter.)
5. Ask, "Is there anything you would like from me?" Often the answer will be, "No thanks, I have figured out what to do next." If you are invited to do something more, you can choose to accept or decline with a much broader understanding of the problem.

These steps will help you resist your own tendency to try to be a hero by solving someone else's problem, usually before they even ask for your help. This game usually starts by someone lamenting about a problem instead of asking for help to solve it.

The invitation you are learning to decline is really about proving that the problem is unsolvable, that nobody can help, and that the problem holder is justified in giving up and doing nothing further about the problem.

Instead, you affirm the problem holder's skill and resourcefulness, without getting involved in the game. And you may become the hero after all.

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Laurie Weiss, Ph.D., author of *Dare To Say It!*, is an internationally known executive coach, psychotherapist, and author. For more simple secrets for turning difficult conversations into amazing

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