



Today, a new day to wipe the slate clean...

Holding onto past grievances damages relationships when mounting frustration leads to angry outbursts. Kitchen sinking, the habit of bringing out all the ‘emotional dirty dishes’ when something goes awry, is unpleasant for everyone. Keeping things in perspective, communicating early and wiping the slate clean often fosters healthy relationships. Children who learn these skills early in life are set up to succeed at the relationship game and as adults with influence, it’s healthy for us to ask, “What am I modelling?”

Don’t get stuck in the past...

If you catch yourself saying things like, “*You always do this...*”, “*Here you go again...*” or “*Oh, and another thing...*” it’s likely a sign that a problem hasn’t been effectively addressed as yet. If you’re dealing with someone who has a habit of forgetting to do a task (eg. taking out the bin), **state the truth** and **keep it in perspective**. Their lack of cooperation is likely not a personal attack on you...in fact it’s very likely that the offending party doesn’t understand how much their cooperation means to you. Try saying, “*I notice that you have difficulty remembering to take out the bin (state the fact) and I wonder what we can do (collaborative action) to help you remember next time (desired outcome)?*” It might mean setting a weekly alarm on a phone or tying a yellow ribbon on their door handle. Whatever you decide, if it’s respectful, doesn’t shame them for past mistakes and addresses the real issue, it will be much more effective than a torrent of angry, blaming words.

Wipe the slate clean and focus on the future...

Building a cooperative team at home or in the workplace requires careful, calculated effort and a vision of how you want your team (family) to operate in the future. Try focusing on what you’d like in five years time. True cooperation requires emotional intelligence (EI), a quality that is evident when you recognise a situation that could result in angry words, take early action to build trust and respect and resist giving in to feelings of frustration. It’s also great to remember that when you wipe the slate clean for others it helps them do the same for you. It’s not always easy, but it’s so worthwhile!

- ✓ **Communicate early to prevent frustration building**
- ✓ **Collaborative action puts you on the same team**
- ✓ **Wipe the slate clean and allow others to do the same**

“Regardless of your past, tomorrow is a clean slate.”

Zig Ziglar

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