

WORD TRAPS

JEDI MIND TRICKS WORKSHEET

Conflict is an inherent part of our daily lives in healthcare, making it imperative for all of us to acquire the skills needed to navigate it successfully. Either by yourself, or as a team, use this worksheet to practice re-phrasing a series of statements that are full of word traps.

Quick Guide:

JEDI MIND TRICKS:

1. Really Listen.

- (Help me understand...)

2. Frame the Discussion.

- State your common interests ("I'm hearing that you are concerned about _____. I want to make sure that we address your concerns")
- Acknowledge your contribution (Drop the rope")
- Explicitly separate people from problems, actions from intentions ("I wanted to share the impact that ___ event/action had on me...I know it wasn't your intention)

3. Use "I" statements:

- (When happened I felt __[emotion] because __. Moving forward, __.)
- I wish...I worry...I wonder

WORD TRAPS:

- "Always/never"
- "But"
- "You"
- "Why"
- "Calm down"

**Circle the "Word traps" in the following five scenarios.
Then, re-write a response using "Jedi Mind Tricks."**

1. Confronting a late coworker

While working in the clinic, your co-worker arrives 25 minutes late, causing a disruption to the schedule and resulting in you getting home to your family later than expected. You express your anger with the following:

"Why do you always do this? You are so unprofessional. I can't believe how inconsiderate you are. Now I'm going to be late because you can't get it together to show up on time. There is traffic every day—don't make lame excuses."

Rewrite:

"Help me understand why punctuality seems to be challenging for you. I'm noticing that your tardiness is causing disruptions to our schedule, and it's impacting my ability to spend time with my family. I want to address this issue in a constructive manner. When you arrive late, I feel frustrated because it affects our work flow and my personal time. Moving forward, I wish we could find a solution that ensures we both arrive on time without disruptions."

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2. Coping with an impatient patient

You are a front desk specialist working late in a busy Urgent Care when a patient yells at you for the long wait time. The clinic staff and physicians have been working their tails off, and you are feeling emotionally fried. You respond:

“I’m sorry, but you just have to relax. Other patients have been waiting for a lot longer without being seen. You can’t yell at me—I’m working as hard as I can and so is everyone else.”

Rewrite:

“I understand that you're frustrated with the wait time, and I apologize for any inconvenience. Our team has been working diligently to accommodate everyone's needs. I want to address your concerns in a respectful manner. Let me check with a healthcare staff to get you an accurate wait time. “

3. Catching a training mishap

You are working in a community clinic and overhear a conversation among colleagues nearby. A senior staff member who is orienting a new hire tells them, “You don't need to use an interpreter when rooming a patient.” You respond:

“I can’t believe you would teach someone that. You’re just being prejudiced. You could get our clinic in trouble if we were to get caught doing this. I know that we’re busy, but it’s just lazy and unacceptable.”

Rewrite:

“Could we discuss the approach to language interpretation in patient care? When I heard that not using an interpreter was being suggested, I felt concerned because it's important to provide accurate and inclusive care to all patients, regardless of language barriers. Moving forward, I believe it's essential that we follow proper protocols to avoid any potential issues.”

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4. Video watching team member

You are working in slammed ED. The triage team member who is supposed to be rooming patients appears to be watching videos. Your patients are mad because of the wait times. You snap:

“What are you doing? Look, I know you work long hours, but shouldn’t you be doing that on your break? The waiting room is exploding, and this is unprofessional!”

Rewrite:

"Could we talk about the current situation? When I see you watching videos instead of rooming patients, I feel concerned because it impacts our ability to provide timely care. Moving forward, can we discuss strategies to manage workload and prioritize patient needs effectively?"

5. Calming an emotional patient

You are seeing a pediatric patient in clinic with a resident. The resident tells you about a well-appearing child who is here for fussiness. The child reportedly looks great and can go home. You go into the room and the parent is tearful and tells you that nobody here cares and that they just want to go home. You reply:

“Why are you so upset? I’m sorry that you didn’t get along with the resident but they’re right—your child looks really well—there’s nothing wrong and this is great news! You don’t need to worry!”

Rewrite:

"I can see that you're feeling upset, and I want to assure you that we are here to help and support you. While your child does look well, I understand that your emotions are important, and I'm here to listen to your concerns. Let's discuss any questions or worries you may have."