



PLAY -awhile!

CORE VALUES FOR PLAY-BASED THERAPY (AND LIFE!)

*MICHIGAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE
HEARING ASSOCIATION
CONFERENCE, 2024*

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Our 5 Core Values

01

Yes, And

Acknowledge a playful bid and make it even more fun.



02

Plan Less, Play More

Let go of perfection to make room for authentic play.



03

Process or Product

Keep the goal in mind, but be flexible about how you achieve it.



04

Play to Your Needs

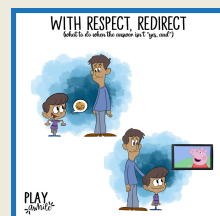
Accommodate first, then play to learn new skills.



01

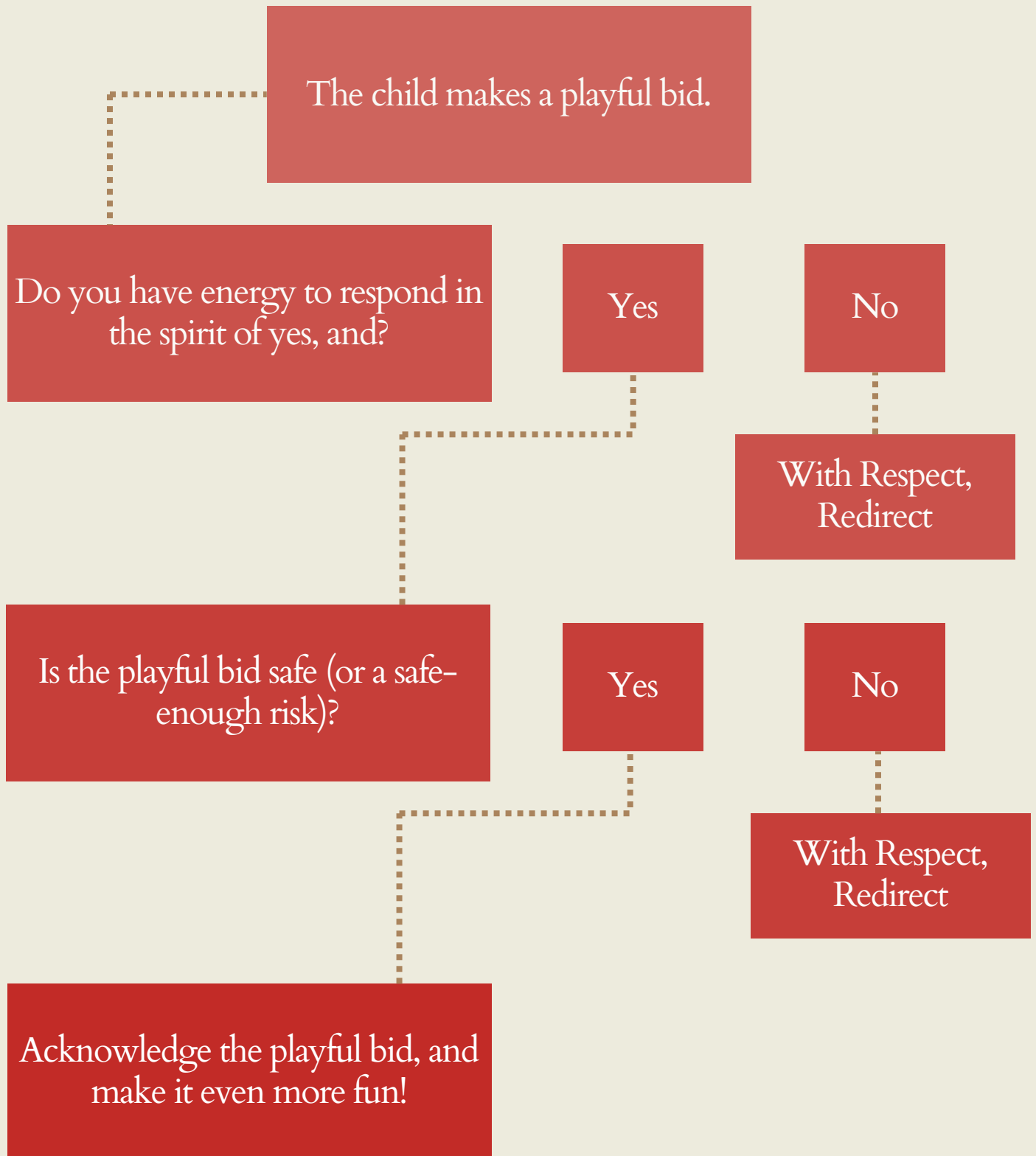
With Respect, Redirect

When the answer isn't "Yes, And", choose the least restrictive redirection.



Core Value #1

Yes, And



LET'S PRACTICE!



The Playful Bid: _____

The Yes, And: _____

The Playful Bid: _____

The Yes, And: _____

The Playful Bid: _____

The Yes, And: _____



Core Value #2

Plan Less, Play More

Minimize Materials

Small Parts

Multi-
Contextual
Toys

Basic Craft
Supplies

Recycling

1:5 Plan:Play Ratio

Craft: 20
minutes
Plan time: 5
minutes

Therapy
Hours: 5
Plan time: 1

Consider
Future Fun

Keep it Authentic

Kids' play ideas
are almost always
better than
grown ups'.

Note changes in
body language/
engagement.

Celebrate
neurodivergent
play.

If it's "picture
perfect", it's
probably not
authentic play.



LET'S PRACTICE!



What materials do I have that invite kids to play their way? How will I display them?

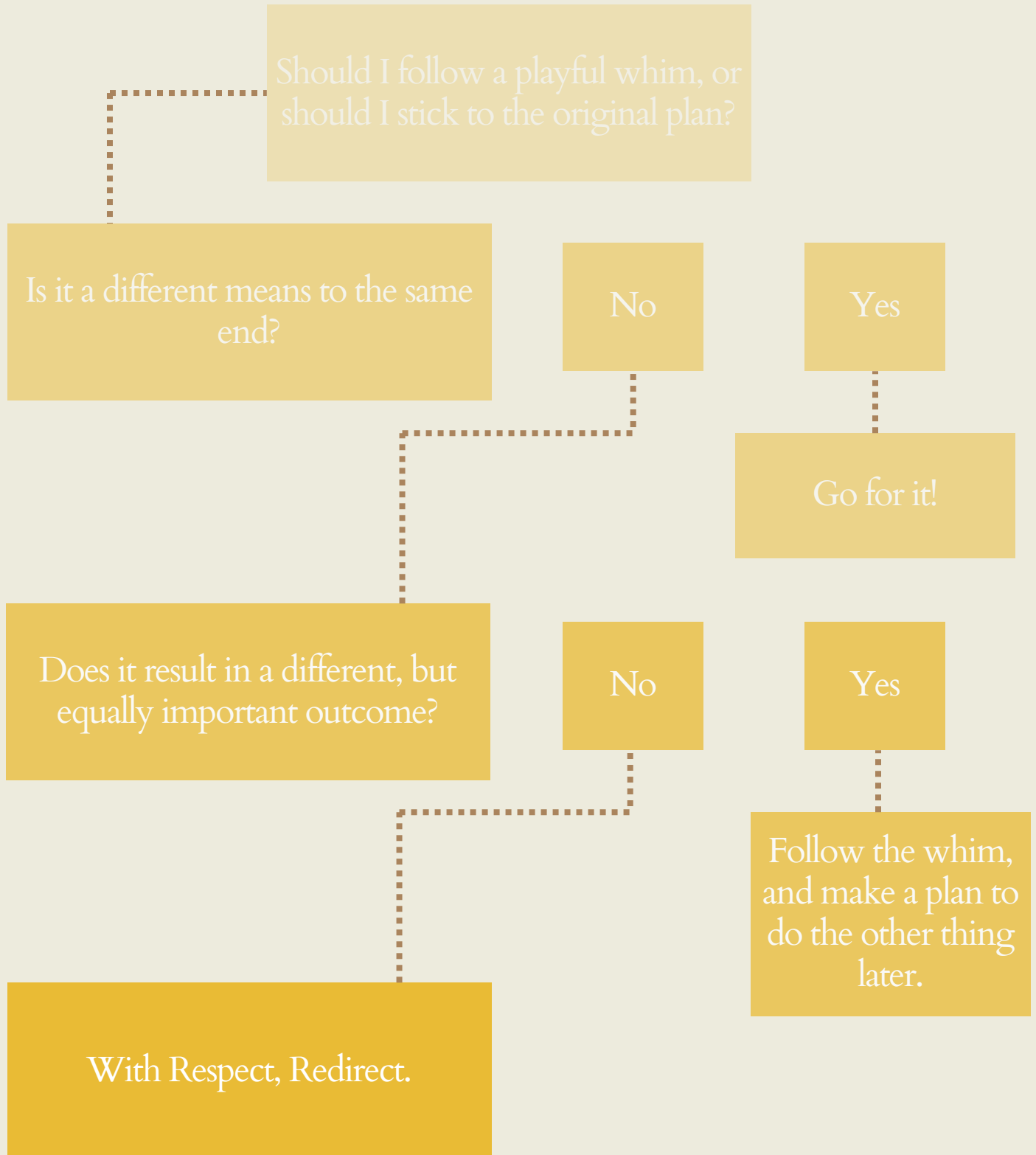
Special crafts/activities that take 5 minutes to plan for 20 minutes of play:

Think of a kid. What does their joy look like? What does connection look like for them? How can I provide more authentic play opportunities that lead to that joy and connection?



Core Value #3

Process or Product



LET'S PRACTICE!



The Desired Outcome: _____

The Playful Whim: _____

What Should I Do: _____

The Desired Outcome: _____

The Playful Whim: _____

What Should I Do: _____

The Desired Outcome: _____

The Playful Whim: _____

What Should I Do: _____



Core Value #4

Play To Your Needs

Meet a Need to Play

Sensory
Accommodations

Physical
Accommodations

Cultural-
Linguistic
Considerations

Social/Play
Preferences

AAC is for
everyone

Disability is
dynamic

Accommodations
do not have to be
phased out

Play to Meet a Need

If they're
laughing,
they're
learning

Embed
evidence
based
strategies

Allow
calculated
risk

Creative
data tracking

Invite family
participation

Progress, not
milestones



LET'S PRACTICE!



Think about yourself... what accommodations to you need to do your work?

What happens when those accommodations are not available?

Think about a need you have or a skill you'd like to learn... how can you "laugh to learn" this skill given your optimal learning environment?

What are some accommodations that your students need to do their best?

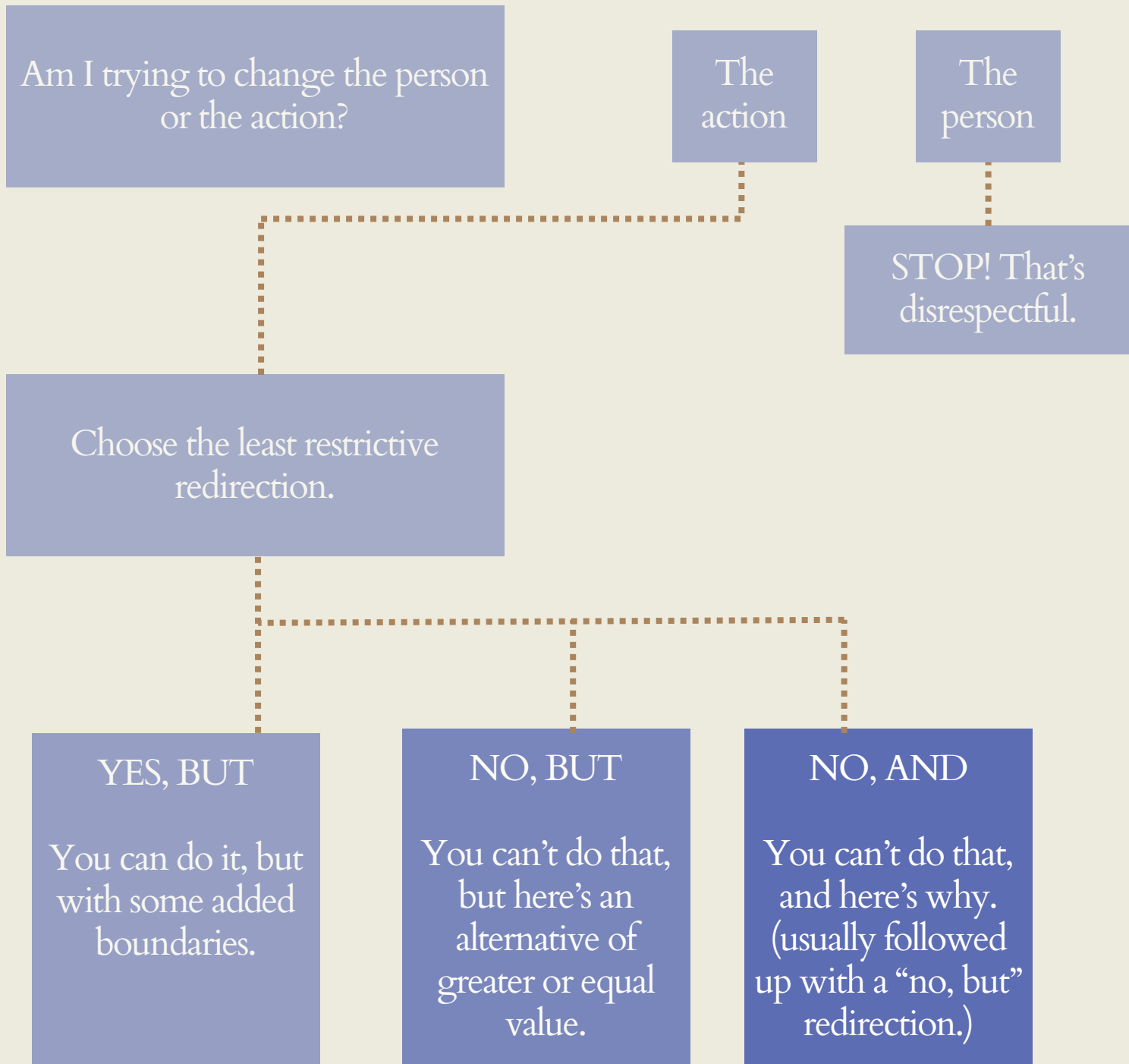
What happens when those accommodations are not available?

Think about their therapy goals... how can they "laugh to learn" those skills given their optimal learning environment?



Core Value #5

With Respect, Redirect



LET'S PRACTICE!



When in the past have I “redirected the person?”

When have I used a “yes, but” redirection?

When have I used a “no, but” redirection?

When have I used a “no, and” redirection?

What is the least restrictive redirection of the 3?





Signature Program Coming Soon “The Play Awhile Approach”

I’m currently working on an in-depth signature program featuring everything you learned today and so much more. I want it to be *great,* which will take some time. I expect to launch the course early 2025. If you’d like to stay informed, send me your contact info below!

