

# Traffic Light: Modes of Influence

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There are dozens of ways to influence those around us. We all gravitate towards certain tactics and modes of influence to the exclusion of others. Green-light forms of influence are ideal. Red-light modes often transmit and amplify pain more than transform it; and should only be used as a last resort. What are the most stressful relationships in your life? And have you truly exhausted the inspirational modes of influence?

**Using Violence & Fear** – Physically forcing change upon people.

**Using Law suits & political intimidation** – Using courts, lawyers, police, vigilantism to obligate change.

**Using Economic leverage:** Not supporting someone financially, cutting loans; boycotts; Getting people fired.

**Using Victimization:** We allow them to hurt us so we can evoke pity & arouse action from others.

**Using Negative Words *Publically*** to critique and accuse them (Eg., political coercion; whistleblowing)

**Using Passive Aggression:** Gossip; backstabbing; covert obstruction, veiled social media critiques.

## **↑ RED LIGHT ↑: Collateral Modes of Influence** – (aka, Non-Influence)

**Using Basic Boundaries** – Non-interaction / clear separation to avoid escalation & collateral damage

*"Keep to a path far from [the foolish person]...<sup>9</sup> lest you lose your honor to others..." Prov. 5:8-9*

**Using Third party mediators** – (Eg., Negotiators, Counsellors, Judges, Social workers, pastors)

*"But [a person who sins against you] will not listen, take one or two others along" Mt. 18:16*

**Using Negative words *Privately*** to Critique and Accuse them (Eg., Guilt trips; finger pointing)

*"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you." Mt. 18:15*

## **↑ YELLOW LIGHT ↑: Crisis Modes of Influence** – (when Low Modes have been exhausted)

**Using Resourcefulness & Initiative:** Finding books, conferences, programs to help simplify the change.

*"the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied." Proverbs 13:4*

*"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all..." Jam. 1:5*

**Using Professional Consultants** – People who are especially trained to troubleshoot the problem

*(Eg., Weight loss counsellors; Financial planners; Addiction Recovery experts; Therapists)*

*"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." Prov. 15:22*

**Using Empathy/Listening** – Seeking to understand their hang-ups, fears, inabilities that prevent change.

*"A person who feels understood often loses their will to fight."*

*"Be quick to listen; slow to speak, slow to become angry." James 1:19*

**Using Healthy Authenticity** – Sharing how other people's actions make us feel without accusation.

*Instead of saying: "You always/never" (accusations), say: "When you do these things, I feel..."*

**Using Incentives** – Giving rewards and opportunities in response to behavior

*"[God] is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Heb. 11:6*

**Using Encouragement / Positive Persuasion** – People become what we say about them – Vision casting

*"But encourage one another daily...so that none of you may be hardened." Heb. 3:13*

**Using Prayer** – Divine Influence to change circumstances or change our attitudes in response to circumstances.

*"...In everything, through prayer & petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."*

**Using Servanthood** - Using actions only – no words, to model the change we want to see

*"Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all." Mark 9:35*

## **↑ GREEN LIGHT ↑: Inspirational Modes of Influence**

