

WHAT IF YOUR GRANDCHILD REPEATS LIES ABOUT YOU?

How one responds often depends on the age of the grandchild. In general, you want to make the response more about how they feel than how you feel.

For example, I worked with a mother whose young granddaughter said, "Mommy said you were really mean to her when she was little." In this case, the mother didn't agree with her daughter's assessment that she had been mean to her.

I coached the grandmother to respond in the following way so that future interactions might go something like the following:

Grandmother (GM) "Really? What did you think or feel when mommy said that?"

Grandchild (GC) "I didn't like it."

GM: "How come?"

GC: "I didn't like that you were mean to my mommy."

GM: "I bet you didn't. I wouldn't like it if someone was mean to my mommy too!"

GC: "Then why were you?"

GM: "Honey I don't remember that in exactly the same way as your mommy. But you know that often happens that we sometimes remember things differently that happened a long time ago."

The main principles here are that you're:

- Not being defensive
- Not putting your grandchild in a loyalty bind by criticizing her parent
- Modeling that you can take the criticism and still keep your poise
- Educate the grandchild on the confusing, contradictory,

separate realities nature of family life