



Parenting Made Simple

Mount Kangchenjunga, India

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Introduction

Parenting is the most important and profound responsibility any of us will ever have. And yet parenting skills are not part of a high school or college curriculum. We are handed our babies with little instruction and then have to wing it as they grow and change. Never are we taught about the psychological processes that we need for positive parenting. Whether we are a birth parent, a step parent or a God parent, we truly are responsible for the well-being of another person. And yet, for most of us, we are just learning to take care of ourselves. Though being a parent is not easy, it is simple. The more straightforward and sincere we are, the more sacred our relationship with our child can become. Of course there are explicit themes for our child's different stages, but in all, everything remains constant. Our hearts remain the same; it is just our words and teachings that change.

Parenthood is a potpourri of feelings. It comes with joy, grief, anger, frustration, pride and any other emotion we can name. For even the best of us, there are the worst of times. We doubt, deny, disappoint, damage and then dream. Those dreams are what keep us going through our weakest periods. It is often said that adults do not produce children – children produce adults. The more we teach, the more we learn.

One therapist was quoted as saying, “We will only know how well we did as parents when our children are about 35 years old.” Another therapist was quoted as replying, “If through the worry of being a parent we live long enough to see them become 35 years old!” The more we doubt, the more we worry – the more we worry, the more distant we become from the wonder. It takes great contemplation and concentration to balance the two.

The purpose of this guide is to help simplify the process of parenting. It is not how well we do, but in how hard we try. As Cahill Gibran says; “Our children do not belong to us, they do not come from us, they come through us.” As parents, we can have the best intentions and still our children have their own destiny. In the end, it is up to them to decide what they want, how they will behave and what they will become. If we dedicate ourselves to furnishing them with enough of the right options, we are indeed guiltless to the path they choose to take when they come of age.

Parental love is the acceptance that there will be days that we will be misunderstood and hated. But the solace for such love is the knowing that as parents, we do not need to be popular, we need to be pure and perseverant.

Exercise 1

I Am Truthful

As a parent - we must be trans-parent.

Without truth, there can be no love. Truth is water, for without it nothing can grow or blossom. Therefore it is safe to say, that truth is the main ingredient to becoming a successful parent. Truth is something we must seek and honest is something we must be. So many times parents think they are protecting their children by not telling them the truth. However this is the farthest thing from the 'truth'. Children always sense the truth, so it is vitally important for us to find the right words to express what is true-ly going on. When they are young, there are topics that are inappropriate but there are ways and means of filling them in or answering their questions, while still keeping appropriate boundaries.

When a child asks us a question and we twist it or lie about it, the child intuitively picks it up and no longer trusts us. Essentially, we become untrustworthy. When we become untrustworthy, the child either becomes untrustworthy themselves, or they are attracted to relationships where trust is absent.

Trust and truth are the foundation of all that is good and right. The main reason our world is suffering is because deception and corruption have become the mainstream. More than ever, we, as parents need to be an example of truth and integrity. These are the protectors of our children's authenticity. Our children remaining authentic is our grandest badge of honor as parents.

*With honesty be very bold
Yet do not make it cold
Keep your judgment on hold
Do not shame when you scold
So your child's self-worth won't fold.*

*Don't let your integrity be sold
Instead let your words be like gold
Making authenticity the family mold
So that when your child gets old
They know that the simple truth must be told.*

1. Do you believe that the truth is the most significant ingredient to love?
If not, why?

2. Are you afraid to tell the truth? If so, why?

3. What are you the most afraid to speak truthfully about? Why?

4. Are you afraid to hear the truth? If so, why?

Exercise 2

I Am Tender

Tenderness is the warm breath of the heart.

Tenderness births from our ability to feel comfortable with our vulnerability and sensitivity. Children feed on our softness and kindness. Their souls become hungry when we are detached or cold. When their souls experience this hunger, they act out, misbehave or search for ways to fill themselves.

A study was done whereby children who were abandoned managed well as long as they had loving touch from the nurses and staff. Touch awakens the senses. Because today we live in a world that has become so desensitized, tenderness, like truth is more important than ever. We need to focus on helping our children develop all their senses because it leads them to sensibility and sensitivity.

Tenderness teaches our children compassion and empathy. Bullying comes from a void of these two attributes. The more we help our children embrace their softheartedness, the better chance they have in developing their character into a nobleness. There never was a person truly great that did not have compassion. Children learn to feel for others when they feel felt for themselves. The more we understand their shortcomings, the more they will understand another's. The less we judge, the less they judge.

A lack of tenderness usually stems from a lack of patience. Being patient facilitates a continual cultivation of listening and learning. Patience invites knowledge and knowing, which becomes a solace, not only for ourselves, but for our children.

To be tender is to be reachable. The finest gift we can give to our children is the feeling of safety that they can tell us anything. They are not afraid that they will be judged or criticized. That does not mean that all their behavior will be justified. We must guide them towards positive choices and teach them about cause and effect.

Though it may be difficult to avoid the feelings of guilt and shame, whether that be in ourselves or our children, a tender heart leads to a pathway of no remorse.

1. Do you feel you are a tender person? If so, how do you show it? If not, why?

2. Do you more often than not, express tenderness to your children? If not, why?

3. Do you feel your children view you as reachable? If not, why?

4. What are the ways you feel you could be more tender?

Exercise 3

I Am Teaching

Teaching well is the art of infusing and inspiring.

Being a good parent involves being a good teacher. However, in school, a teacher guides the students with knowledge and information. Being a good teacher as a parent involves us being and living what we teach. We cannot tell our children to do something if we are not prepared to do it ourselves. Therefore, it is safe to say that we must be great students ourselves. Many times because children are so innocent, great wisdom comes out of their mouths.

To love appropriately, we need to listen and be open to learn. Some of our greatest teaching will come from sharing our mistakes with our children. This accomplishes two goals. *One*: our children can hopefully learn from our mistakes and *Two*: they no longer put us on a pedestal that they cannot possibly achieve. Our frailties become knowledge and give our children something to think about. Thinking things out, weighing consequences, observing and studying options all come from mistakes well learned. Dignity is designed for those who think. When a troubling thing occurs, the best thing we can do is study it, think about why it happened and then find the proper solution. A great author once wrote that some people study all their life yet never learn to think. Thinking is the first step to becoming a good self-developer. The more we teach ourselves how to be better people, the more we earn the right to teach our children.

Great leadership is to lead by example. Great parenting is to be an example of learning. The best parent is the one who suggests and inspires their children with the desire to teach themselves. We awaken their interest and kindle their enthusiasm. By infusing them with inspiration, we infuse ourselves. For those who govern well lead the blind; but for those who teach well gives eyes to see.

Grade yourself 1-5 on what you feel you teach well as a parent. 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

- _____Caring
- _____Honesty
- _____Integrity
- _____Friendliness
- _____Empathy
- _____Communication
- _____Sense of responsibility
- _____Creativity
- _____Awareness of Feelings
- _____Directness
- _____Courage
- _____Perseverance
- _____Kindness
- _____Service
- _____Sharing
- _____Goodness
- _____Power
- _____Leadership
- _____Consciousness
- _____Consideration
- _____Involvement
- _____Discipline
- _____Honor
- _____Happiness
- _____Other_____

Choose the 5 that you have the most trouble with and state how you will work on them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Choose the 3 that you teach the best and state how you do it.

1.

2.

3.

Exercise 4

I Am Thankful

Gratitude is an attitude of high altitude.

There is no greater attitude than gratitude. When we see the glass as half empty instead of half full, we deprive ourselves of our successes and triumphs. Thankfulness and gratitude birth determination, tenaciousness and perseverance. Therefore, the most significant gift we can give to ourselves and our children is the art of thankfulness.

When we feel thankful, we create an energy around ourselves of positivity, prosperity and power. In truth, living in a free country is enough to be grateful about, let alone all the other luxuries we have, such as running water. As parents, we need to instill in our children the mathematics of counting their blessings. We live in an “I-Me” society, where narcissism is at its peak. Therefore, to fight for our children’s wholeness, we need to fight for their holiness. For this to happen, it behooves us to instill in them the awareness of those less fortunate, including other species. This consciousness is a necessity for their healthy and proper growth.

A thankful heart leads to a happy outlook. A happy outlook leads to empathy and compassion. In truth, gratitude inevitably births the power of goodness. When our children develop this sense of goodness, our hearts can be filled with joy for the deed we have accomplished. Whether we know it or not, we truly have affected infinity for the influence we have had. Then we can thank our lucky stars!

1. Make a list of 12 things you are grateful about.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

2. Make a list of 4 things your children or child can be grateful about.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

3. Do you encourage gratitude in your house, if not why? If so, how?

Exercise 5

I Am Triumphant

Just based on the fact that you are involved in doing this program merits you a triumphant parent. Never be attached to what happens with your children. Just focus on doing the best you can and leave the rest to their higher power.

Read the 40 Parenting Guidelines and
write the 10 that mean the most to you and why.

1. Parents who wish to guide their children in the way they should go, must go in the way in which they would have their children go.
2. A suspicious parent makes for a deceptive child.
3. Sins of parents not cleansed fall upon their children.
4. We are only as sick as our secrets.
5. Good acts of parents are the guiding corridors for their children.
6. Bad behavior must be weeded out for the garden to grow.
7. Never let material things replace love, for it materializes in emptiness.
8. As fear begets fear, so love begets love, so when in doubt, don't shout.
9. If a parent divorces or must part, make certain to leave behind your heart.
10. Display your will – do not push it.
11. Living moral is securing a guiltless life.
12. Maintaining our children's innocence is our planet's only hope.
13. Children who do not feel safe become unsafe.
14. Never purchase patience.
15. Teach children to do for others – one day they may be the other.

16. Children need to look upon parents as their friend, teacher, defense, sanctuary and guide.
17. Parents need responsibility - responding to their child's ability.
18. Promises that are spoken cannot be broken yet when circumstances demand it, can be changed.
19. The seven C's to parent conduct – Commitment, Conscientiousness, Calmness, Creativity, Continuity, Confidence, Compassion.
20. Life has no blessing like a good parent – it is the key to the human evolution.
21. A solid foundation for parenting needs to be cemented in moral codes.
22. Parenthood must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity.
23. Good nature is one of the richest fruits we can give our children.
24. Parents must do what they must, state what they trust and stay away from lust.
25. A parent's job is to protect their child's sense of wonder for it leads to their genius.
26. The shortest way to guiltless parenthood is to be guided by conscience.
27. To do good is to feel good – to feel good is to be good – to be good is to live good.
28. We cannot tell our children to be happy if we do not embrace it ourselves.
29. To be a great parent – be of great character.
30. Do not fall asleep if you want to awaken your children.
31. Children always know the truth – do not fool yourself to think otherwise.
32. Never believe that our children are not our teachers for a better way of life.
33. Love without tears is not love because our tears are the river of life.
34. Parents are to be held in the highest honor – however, they must be honorable.
35. The secret of successful parenting is no shame, no blame, just name then tame.
36. Parenting another is simple if you learn to parent yourself.
37. Good temper is the most comfortable state of the soul.
38. A parent's love is the whispering of heaven and the arms of angels.
39. What one voices shows our choices.
40. To be a parent - Promising Another Real Earnest Nurturing Time.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Exercise 6

Closing Exercise

1. Where do you feel you are a great parent? List them.

2. Where do you feel you need help as parent? List them. How do you plan to receive this help?

3. Which “I am” attribute of truthful, tender, teaching and thankful do you feel you possess the most and how do you show it?

4. Which “I am” attribute of truthful, tender, teaching and thankful do you feel you need help with the most? How do you plan to improve on this?

51 Positive Things to Say to Your Child

1. I love you.
2. You figured it out!
3. You are really improving at...
4. I trust you.
5. You are an excellent helper.
6. You made a good decision.
7. I am so grateful for you!
8. I believe in you.
9. This family would not be the same without you!
10. Let's try it your way.
11. You are making a difference.
12. What you did was awesome!
13. I admire you.
14. Your opinion matters.
15. You are helpful.
16. I know you did your best.
17. You are a good person.
18. I understand.
19. Your feelings matter to me.
20. I am listening.
21. You make my heart full!
22. I noticed how much you worked on that.
23. I appreciate your cooperation.
24. Trust yourself.
25. You make me smile!
26. I love your sense of humor.
27. Follow your dreams.
28. You have such a kind heart!
29. You are caring.
30. You are kind.
31. That was really brave.
32. You are compassionate.
33. It's okay. We all make mistakes.
34. Respect yourself.
35. You can try again tomorrow.
36. You are learning so much!
37. You are important.
38. You make me smile.
39. I am always here for you.
40. How does that make you feel?
41. Your words are meaningful.
42. You have great ideas.
43. I cannot wait to hear about your day!
44. Being your parent is my favorite job.
45. I learn new things from you every day!
46. I am so glad we are doing this together!
47. You are wonderful - inside and out!
48. You are a good soul.
49. You are so strong.
50. That's a great question!
51. I am so lucky to have you as my son/daughter.