

Parenting in the Zone

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Sponsored by:
The Kid's Place

This parenting course combines information and techniques from five sources:

My experience and training as a Christian.

My experience from the past 15 years of working with parents and children.

“The Nurtured Heart Approach” by Howard Glasser – Website: www.difficultchild.com

“Love and Logic” by Jim Fay and Foster Cline, MD - Website: www.loveandlogic.com

“Making Real Love Happen” by Joyce Buckner, PhD – Website: www.joycebuckner.com

Segment #1:

1. What is the “Zone”? *Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.” (NIV)*

See handout “Breaking Through to the Blessed Zone and the Abundant Life”

The Zone is living your life in accordance with the expectations of God. When you live in the Zone you can anticipate a life of blessing and abundance in all areas. When you live outside of the Zone you don't have the right to expect God's blessings and abundance.

Proverbs 3: 9-10 “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.” (NIV)

Proverbs 16: 3 “Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.” (NIV)

Two major opportunities in life for refinement and developing the character of Christ are Marriage and Childrearing. *Romans 5:3 “...we rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.*

Segment #2:

1. The MOST effective parenting technique. *Exodus 20:5(b) “...for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.”*

Ephesians 6: 4 “Fathers do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

What is the most successful and powerful parenting technique? Look in the mirror. Your child will do what you do – not what you say. You can preach and lecture all day long to your child BUT if you cheat, lie, steal, do drugs, scream to resolve your problems, hit others, gossip, backstab, fake sick to miss work, rage on the road, drink to avoid your problems, pout, manipulate, fail to report 100% of your earnings so you get out of taxes, look and use pornography, fail to grow up and resolve your problems, etc... GUESS WHAT?

2. How is your marriage? *Ephesians 5:23 ,25, 28 &33 “For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is also the head of the church... Husbands love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies...and the wife must respect her husband.”*

You can urge your child to marry someone they truly love and find their “soulmate” but if your marriage is filled with yelling, screaming, avoiding each other, power struggles, abuse, negativity, game playing etc... GUESS WHAT?

3. What you are as a person and a parent very often predicts what your children will grow up to be.

No – you are not perfect and you never will be. But, if you show your children that you are trying your best to grow in your weak areas they will respect you for it tremendously. It will give them hope that they too can grow up and change for the better.

Avoid being a hypocrite. Kids see right through it in a millisecond.

Segment #3:

1. The two mistakes every parent will make (to some degree):

Intruding – overbearing, smothering or controlling your child and not allowing them their individual identity. Examples: Rigidly controlling and punishing your child, dominating conversation, telling a child what they like/dislike, inducing constant fear into your child so that they do not feel safe to ever leave, not allowing a child to explore their world, invalidating your child’s feelings and thoughts “Quit crying” “You better stop that tantrum or your going to get it”, constantly telling your child “No” or failing to listen to your child.

Excluding – ignoring, neglecting or abandoning (physically or emotionally) your child.

Examples: Failing to spend enough time connecting to your child, shutting them out, devaluing them, ignoring their needs, withdrawing physically or emotionally when they do things you disapprove of or giving them the silent treatment.

Segment #4:

1. How to say “no” and mean it.

This requires the realization that you ABSOLUTELY must follow through with realistic and enforceable consequences. If you threaten to punish your children and rarely follow through, you are simply teaching them that they do not have to believe what you say (Examples: If you don't stop you are going to be grounded for a month! The next time you do that you are going to get it big time!)

If you give your child unrealistic or unenforceable consequences you are teaching them that you are a liar (Example: I'm going to call the police and they are going to take you to jail).

If you give warnings to your children you are failing to prepare them for the real world (how many warnings do you get when you break the law?)

Saying “no” means putting limits and boundaries on your child's behavior.

A “Type 1” child will respond quickly to you but a “Type 2” child immediately tries to break the rule you just set to see if it is real. **They want to know that the rule IS real because it helps them to feel safe and secure.** Type 2 children get more energy from you by misbehaving. Type 1 children get more energy from you by behaving.

You cannot be a FRIEND to your child and expect them to listen to you when you enforce the rules. Can a friend fire you for poor performance at work? Can a friend punish you for poor behavior? Can a friend place you in jail? Parents need to be parents – not friends.

2. How to avoid power struggles and arguing and how to give consequences that work:

This requires removing the energy from the disagreement. When your child is misbehaving you must put on your “poker face” speak softly and directly and state your directive. If they argue you can respond with one of two options:

a. Love and Logic: Respond with “I just love you too much to argue.” Or “I know, I know”. This type of response avoids a power struggle by simply repeating the phrases above no matter what the child throws at you. This lets them know that when they attempt to manipulate you out of the consequence or decision you made they will only get the same controlled response every time.

b. Nurtured Heart: Begins with Taking stands that will produce change.

Stand #1: “I refuse to be drawn into energizing negativity.”

Stand #2: “I refuse not to purposefully pull the child into successes.”

Stand #3: “Here are the rules and here’s what happens when you break a rule.” “I refuse to look the other way”.

Unfortunately, starting with the stand on rules and consequences can actually make things worse. Negative attention is like junk food...no nutritional value. New ways of being positive are necessary...that get around the radar, provide excellent emotional and psychological nutrition and that get felt as successes.

State the rule broken and give the consequence. Example: “You are arguing. You need to take a Time Out (called a “Break” for older children). Your Time out starts as soon as your hands, feet and mouth are quiet and ends as soon as I say it does.”

Time outs should be no longer than 30 seconds and the child should be praised for successfully completing it and encouraged to get back to life (Time in).

If a child continues to argue you can say: “You continue to argue with me. That’s five minutes of community service”. Each continued MINOR rule violation earns another five minutes. Once the child cooperates they owe a time out AND the amount of community service time they were given BEFORE they get ANY privileges.

In the Nurtured Heart Approach the child loses ALL privileges once they enter consequence mode (either time out or community service).

Both a time out and automatic community service are earned for MAJOR rule violations such as assault or physical violence; running away; destruction of property; using drugs or alcohol; pornography; or anything else you consider MAJOR. For example: “You snuck out last night. You owe me a break and 10 hours of community service. You have lost all of your privileges until you complete your consequences.”

What is community service? Any work you want done around the house, neighborhood or community for free. Examples: car wash, window wash, vacuuming, dusting, sweeping, mowing, raking, picking up trash, etc...

Successful community service fulfills both QUANTITY and QUALITY. They must complete the amount of time you gave them and do the jobs you assigned them well.

Using this approach you avoid power struggles by always responding the same predictable way, removing the energy from the conflict and taking away all privileges until the child cooperates with the consequence. In this system the children punish themselves if they continue to “dig in their heels” and refuse to cooperate with the consequence. After all, they get ALL of their privileges back as soon as they serve their time out and their community service (if they earned any).

Regardless of which approach you use you MUST remember that giving your child negative energy is like PAYING THEM TO DO IT AGAIN! If lecturing, arguing, yelling, bargaining, manipulating, scaring, screaming, pleading, power struggling, etc have not worked with your child before **THEY ARE NOT GOING TO WORK EVER.** Stop using the same old techniques and getting the same old results.

Try something new and become skilled at it and you will get new results. These approaches are proven to work if implemented correctly.

Segment #5:

1. How to build inner strength into your child and help them succeed.

You need to start by recognizing that your child’s current success strongly predicts their future success. If they feel like they are a “bad person” because they are constantly in trouble at home and in school guess what they will grow up to be?

Watch your energy. How much do you give your child when they are misbehaving? How much time and energy do you give them when they are behaving?

Helping your child succeed is accomplished by removing the energy from misbehavior and only giving it when they are behaving (neutral or positive behavior). This is like **PAYING YOUR CHILD TO SUCCEED.**

Do you know how they train “Shamu”? Start by “lowering the rope” and praising them for slightly positive or neutral behavior. The Nurtured Heart Approach provides excellent ways to learn to do this.

2. New ways to encourage and praise your child. How to help your child develop emotional intelligence and enhance their self-esteem.

You need to become an expert at using the praising and encouraging skills in the Nurtured Heart Approach if you want children to learn to see themselves as successful.

Refer to the Nurtured Heart Handout.

Finally - Order the book or video or DVD for it or for the Nurtured Heart Approach and/or for Love and Logic and become an expert. If your marriage is in disrepair order the book "Making Real Love Happen" and/or seek counseling.

Notes and Questions: