

A General Perspective on Parenting

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General premises

- Parenting as sharing in the act of God's creation, it is an act of love.
- Children are born with an innate capacity to love; they always want to love/idealize you.
- Successful parenting has to be built on a trusting/loving basis from early on.
- Raising a child means you are forming person, (the concept of formation).

General premises (cont.)

- Help balance their aptitudes with your priorities for them.
- Let their personality develop and remember they are born with basic leanings (temperament).
- Think of it as a long term relationship that you are nurturing; it will come back to you.
- Be patient and tolerate their limited abilities; this is the essence of love.

General Issues

- Parenting is NOT an innate behavior.
- When is one ready to be a parent?
 1. Societal pressures/family expectations.
 2. Is there an ideal age for being a parent?
 3. Conflict between your own personal needs and the child's.
 4. Consequences of the nuclear family.
 5. Consequences of being in an emigrant society

Age-specific Issues

- Stages of development
- Every stage has its own characteristics
- The *epigenesis* principle; growth occurs in successive stages built on one another; time is of essence.
- Characteristic aspects to every phase; biological, emotional/instinctual, social and cognitive.

From Infancy to Childhood

(birth to age 6)

- Regularity, consistency and bonding
- Attachment and consequences of separation.
- Meeting basic needs engenders trust, security and optimism.
- Control issues, power struggle, autonomy and magical thinking.
- Identification with the parent, initiative industry and concrete operation.

Late childhood and preadolescence

- Instincts are dormant, friends and achievement are important, but they still are concrete.
- A rather chaotic phase; physically capable but emotionally dependent.
- The beginning of group association and sense of identity.
- School and other families
- Encourage work, hobbies and socializing.

Adolescence

- Beware of your proclivities and how they affect the way you see into your child's behavior.
- Beware of your own limitations, they will ultimately affect what you give to your child.
- Learn to see their interests as persons through their leanings and the things they like.

- Develop common hobbies that you/them share, it will give you time to get to know each other.
- The idea of benign neglect; watch from afar, don't jump in to help, let them take responsibilities.
- Watch against the tendency to protect them from themselves (better to do that early on so that they learn to be responsible).

Parenting Adolescents

- Generation Gap; differences in growing up experiences color one's outlook and opinions.
- Factors contributing to the generation gap:
 1. Technological advances.
 2. Changes in social norms.
 3. Changes in moral standards.

Parenting Adolescents (cont.)

- Issues threatening to the parent; growing adolescence of the child stirs fear of loss.
- Fear of the adolescent's developing sexuality.
- Complicating factors of raising children in an emigrant society; reaction can go to both extremes.
- Be a role model for them. If you do something wrong they will do it and when you correct them they will remind you (the accuser's role).
- Their Tendency to reject you as a means to define themselves.
- Parenting dilemmas in our emigrant society.

- The notion of age-specific developments achievements but if you missed, you can always make up for your mistakes.
- Good intentions do not help.
- Law of unintended consequences; what you say does not mean that this is how they hear you.
- You have an immense effect on them. Be mild; overbearing backfires.
- Read and seek out help on parenting and be open to outside input.