

Effective Parent's Toolkit

Course Name:

Putting the Basics into Action

Core Material – Reading (Putting Basics into Action)

So what does this look like when we put it all together? Creating a safe place for your child, can mean a lot of things. It can mean that when they need to tell you something important, they can completely count on your full attention, your understanding, and non-judgmental reaction. You will be able to become more involved in your child's world, their decisions and help them solve issues that they may otherwise attempt to solve on their own, or with the help of questionable friends. By putting your efforts into consistently being a safe communicator, your children will be more likely to share with you their big issue, which is, after all, the whole point of these exercises.



But by creating this type of relationship with your child, you may also find that being the SAFE place, may manifest in other ways too. For example, children, and adults too, will often take out anger, frustration, or emotion on the person they feel the closest and safest with. So you may see a shift in behavior, where they are yelling more at you, or displaying a temper more with you than they did before. This may not be a sign of disrespect, or a sign that you have done something wrong. It may be a sign that you have done something completely RIGHT! Where was your child displaying that behavior before? Toward other children, other adults? If it is now directed at you, it may be that you have become the SAFE alternative, that they know that if they have to release that emotion, that you are the one that will always love them, and that you will not be judgmental, or react negatively. This one is a difficult one, as it may appear that they are being abusive, so as before, it is important to separate the initial conversation from any judgment or punishment.

Sharing my Story

Let me share with you an experience I recently had with my own children. My daughter is a very energetic, charismatic, enthusiastic child. She has always been able to walk into a room or enter a conversation and command the attention. My son, on the other hand, is laid back, relaxed, quiet, a thinker and a watcher. He always looks at a situation and evaluates it before he makes his move. Recently, we had an event, which required me to “create the safe space” for my son to confide in me, monitor my “verbal and non-verbal communications,” and then try to be “consistent” in my solution.

One morning on our way out the door to school, my children, as siblings do, began to push each other’s buttons. I tried to intervene, but it quickly escalated to them screaming and each one “one-upping” the other in insults. I tried to intervene, get them to stop. However this turned my son’s anger on me, and the morning degraded into a flurry of I-hate-yous and leave-me-alones. Everyone in the car was angry. The important thing that I did right then, was that I DID NOT react; I told them both that I loved them, and I knew that they loved me. During the silence on the ride to the high school, I reflected on what had just happened. I realized that my son and daughter were pushing each other’s buttons, and the reason why could be one of thousands – unresolved issue, hormones, being tired, a fight with a significant other, fear of an upcoming test, it didn’t really matter “why.” But why did I become the target? Because if my son would have continued to lash out at his sister, it would have continued to escalate and it could have become much worse, with her trying to top him, and he trying to out-insult her. So, human nature kicked in – we, as adults and as children, always lash out at the person we trust most, the person we feel the safest with, the one we know will love us no matter what – So in the midst of the onslaught of “I HATE You” my son was actually saying “I love you and I trust that you love me and will understand!” So by not reacting to the obvious, I was able to hold that safe place for my son at that moment. My daughter took the opportunity to apologize before she got out of the car, and I had an opportunity to ask questions and give her 100% of my attention at that time. Later, when I picked my son up, I explained to him that I understood why he said what he said, and that I knew he loved me and that I loved him. I told him that as we get older we need to own up to our actions, and that if we cross a line or say something we shouldn’t have, we need to take responsibility for it. I asked, “Would you like to say anything now about this morning?” He said, “I’m sorry for the things I said to you, and for being disrespectful” I told him that I was proud of him and took the opportunity to gently ask him more questions, and pay 100% attention to him, and what he was saying. Because I showed him respect, didn’t react to the surface actions, but took the time to discover what the REAL issues were, we were able to uncover several other issues that had been bubbling under the surface and to make a plan to address those as well. So, how would this have played out if I would have grounded them both for fighting and for saying “I Hate YOU?” Would the issue have been resolved or suppressed? Would the other issues have been uncovered? How would all of us feel now? Do you think my son will come to me with more issues?

The moral of this story, if you will, is that I, as the informed, involved, consistent participant in my children's lives, understood and reacted with consistent, gently persuasive, actions that not only elicited remorse for his behavior, respect for my position, but more insight into the situation and more opportunities for growth.



Learning from my experience

By not reacting, by not escalating the emotion, and by waiting to discuss it when all parties were calm, the real issue was able to come out and we were able to address the "fire" not the screaming of the teapot. Being the SAFE place is important, but can sometimes be difficult.

This is another example of being consistent. Because your child can COUNT on you and your reaction, your child will come to rely on you, confide in you, and even trust you – imagine that, a child TRUSTING their parents!

For some of you, you may think these skills are common sense, for others, you may never have heard of these concepts or ideas. Parenting is so much different today than it was when we were young. Parents have to be PROACTIVE, setting the framework and structures to help kids react, overcome and survive things we never even considered when we were their age. So if these ideas sound new or strange to you, it is no wonder. We as parents must learn new skills, learn new ways of connecting and staying connected with our kids and their lives, because if all this seems scary to you, imagine how it feels to be a child and living it every day!

So how do we put all this into action?

How do you leave this seminar and actually put these tools to work in your life? Well, that is going to depend on you. Do you learn best from doing? Do you learn best from instruction? Are you a visual learner?



Some of you may leave here, and immediately know how to implement these tools, and put them in place today. Others may need to review the information provided, and see how they best can integrate these new ideas. Still, others of you, may learn best with a little further direction, a coach to help develop and initiate a plan that is specific to your own family needs. All these methods are great ways to get started. The important thing is that now that you know how important these tools are, that you actually incorporate them into your parenting arsenal, and call on them when you need them.

The important thing to do right now, is ACT. Do something that makes a difference. Children, no matter what age, want to know that they have been heard, want to feel like you are their ally, and that what they feel is important. If your child feels like you don't have time to listen, are not interested in what they have to say, or that their ideas or needs are unimportant to you, they WILL turn to someone else. And who is that? Who is it that you would rather raise your child, direct, mold, console, comfort, advise, or guide your child other than you? It will be the person to listens, and takes the time to really hear them. It may be another child, it may be an ill-intentioned adult, the issue again, as I said before, it should ALWAYS BE YOU!

As I mentioned in the beginning, these tools are invaluable. You must create a safe place for your children to feel comfortable confiding, to talking with you. You must be consistent in applying any rules, or structures, and above all, you must be sure your face or body language does not speak louder than your other actions.

So what was the last situation in your life that you wish you could have used these tools? Can you imagine what the outcome would have been?

Do you think you will be perfect at this the first time?

No. You will need to take baby steps. Be honest with you children. For example, in my story above, if I had reacted in the heat of the moment and "GROUNDED EVERYONE" then realized I should have waited till I had all the facts, I could still have gone back to the children in my second wave of discussion and told them I felt I overreacted and should not have applied a punishment in the heat of the moment. They will appreciate that, sometimes, you make mistakes too, and that you are big enough to admit when you didn't react in the best way. That makes them feel better when THEY have to do the same – Role Modeling is the best teacher!

So I challenge each one of you. Take the baby steps to put these powerful tools into place. If you run into problems or have questions, go the Parenting Mindset website and go to the TOOLBOX tab. Ask your questions, make comments or tell me your wins and successes!

When you feel confident in using these tools, there are more tools in this Parenting Toolbox. Try our other Teleseminars when they are offered. Keep an eye open for the next announcement!

Thank you for participating and I hope you find the information you learned here changes your life and encourages you to take even more steps to become the best parent you can be!

Thank you again!

See you Next time!

For more information, event announcements, or to contact me, please visit www.parentingmindset.com.

Summary and Review Questions

Sss

Sss

Action Steps - Putting it All into Action
