

## Between Parent & Child: Part 3

---

Based on book by Dr. Haim G. Ginott  
"Between Parents & Child"

Fountainhead Preschool  
August 19, 2007

## Agenda

---

- Recap
    - Conversing with children
    - New ways of praise and criticism
    - Avoiding self-defeating patterns
  - Responsibility and independence**
  - Conclusions
- 

## Recap of Part I & II

---

### **Conclusions: Conversing with children**

---

1. Communicating with children is an art. You must learn it.
  2. Listen without resorting to advice or criticism.
  3. Focus not on the events but the relationship or the feelings. Not on general comments but on specifics.
  4. Voicing of Mixed up feelings must be allowed.
  5. Provide a mirror that reflects not rejects.
-

### Conclusions: New ways of praise & criticism

---

1. Praise accomplishments not personality.
  2. Our words must let the child think good about himself.
  3. Be clear b/w helpful & unhelpful praise.
  4. Constructive criticism is to tell how it should be done, without any remark on the child's personality.
  5. Avoid tags.
  6. Accept your anger, and use it judiciously.
- 

### Conclusions: Avoiding self-defeating patterns

---

- AVOID:
    - Threats
    - Bribes for good behavior
    - Promises
    - Sarcasm
  - DEAL CONSISTENTLY & CALMLY WITH:
    - Lying
    - Dishonesty
    - Stealing
  - Teach Politeness politely (not rudely)
- 

### Responsibility and independence

---

### Responsibility: Chores and Values

---

- We want to teach responsibility to our children.
    - Daily chores- supposed solution (e.g. going to the market); imp but may not have no positive effect on creating a sense of responsibility
  - Obedience & cleaner room X responsibility
  - Responsibility cannot be imposed; has to grow from within & absorbed from home values
-

## Well spring of responsibility

---

- Respect for life, liberty & the pursuit of happiness
  - Don't see the lack of responsibility in the child's messy room, tardy school attendance, sloppy homework, reluctant dance practice, bad manners or sulky disobedience
  - A child may be polite, keep himself & his room clean, do his assignments on time, and yet make irresponsible decisions: especially true for those who are always told what to do (no judgment of their own)
  - Values cannot be taught directly; they can only be absorbed!
- 

## Desirable goals and daily practices

---

- Responsibility starts with parents' attitudes & skills
    - To allow children to feel ALL their feelings
    - An ability to demonstrate acceptable ways of coping with feelings
  - Our education weak on this front
    - Denial: Not really
    - Disowning: Not you, the devil in you
    - Suppression: Mention it and get it!
    - Prettifying: Not really hate, just dislike
  - Feelings like rising rivers cannot be stopped, only diverted
- 

## Long-term and Short-term programs

---

- Short-term: recognition that character education depends on our relationship with our children, & traits must only be demonstrated!
  - Long-term: Become interested in their thoughts & inward feelings (not just external)
  - **Inner Motto:** "Let me understand. Let me show that I understand. Let me show in words that do not automatically criticize or condemn."
- 

## Exercises

---

- Child comes home from school silent, slow & dragging!

**Criticism WILL NEVER LEAD to responsibility!**

## **From War to Peace**

---

- Let us not war – children have more time & energy to fight!
  - Only one way to win: by winning the children over -
    1. Listening with sensitivity
    2. Preventing “grapes of wrath” (insults, name-calling, prophesying, threats, accusations, bossing)
    3. Stating feelings & thoughts without attacking
  - But what specific responsibilities?
- 

## **Responsibility: VOICE AND CHOICE**

---

## **VOICE AND CHOICE**

---

- Children not born with built-in sense of responsibility; nor acquired with a certain age
    - Can only be attained with years of practice in exercising judgment & in making choices that matter age-wise
    - Training can start early!
  - Responsibility is fostered by allowing children a voice, & wherever indicated, a choice in matters that affect them
- 

## **Voice and Choice?**

---

- Matters that fall entirely within the child’s realm of responsibility: his choice!
  - Matters affecting the child’s welfare exclusively within our realm of responsibility: he may have a voice, but not a choice. We make the choice for him, while helping him to accept the inevitable!
  - Differentiating these two realms?
-

## Food

---

- Deliberately present situations in which they have to make a choice:
  - 2-year-old: half a glass or a full glass of milk?
  - 4-year-old: half an apple or a whole apple
  - 6-year-old: eggs boiled hard or soft?
- You select the situations; the children make the choices!
  - Not: "What do you want for breakfast?" but "Do you want your bread toasted or not?" "Do you want your cereal hot or cold?"
- We provide breakfast & sympathy as well as milk & toast: choosing is your responsibility!
- Eating problems: mother who take too much interest in their child's taste buds or appetite
  - Best for mother not to have strong feelings about food: offer food of quality & taste and trust the children to eat as much or as little a they want.
- Eating: Child's realm of responsibility!

## Clothes

---

- Our responsibility to decide what attire they need & what to budget:
  - Select price & style acceptable samples: let the child choose the one she prefers to wear!
  - 4-year olds can decide between approved shirts/shorts/dresses!
  - At home, let them wear what they like as many times as they like (after-all you chose the dresses)
- Choose according to trends (not bata when everyone's wearing adidas)
- We do the selecting; they do the choosing!

## Homework

---

- Once responsibility of homework is taken, never free of the bondage!
  - Else blackmail & a weapon of exploitation
- Strictly the responsibility of the child & his teacher (despite what schools might have to say)
  - No supervision or checking of homework unless at invitation
  - No NAGGING!
- Much misery can be avoided, if parents took less interest in the minute details of child's assignments & convey that:
  - As adults work, this is your work

## Homework

---

- Value of homework in early grades should not be overestimated
  - Students of schools not assigning homework do just as well later on
- Main value: to teach independence
  - Must be graded to child's age - not as an extra learning tool for schools
- Give indirect help, not direct help:
  - Privacy, suitable desk, reference books, someone nearby
  - But don't nag on how they sit, or their chewing of pencils, or untidiness; don't interrupt unless important
  - Remain in the background giving comfort & support rather than instruction & assistance

## Homework

---

- Threats & nagging are common but worse than useless:
    - charged atmosphere, irritated parent & angry child
  - Capable children lag in their homework & underachieve in school as an unconscious rebellion against their parents' ambitions
  - If homework & high grades become diamonds in his parents' crown, the child may prefer to bring home a crown of weeds that is at least his own.
  - By not attaining his parent's goals, the young rebel achieves a sense independence: "they can take away the TV & my pocket-money, but they cannot take my failing grades.
  - Neither increased pressure nor laissez-faire!
  - Some kids may need external tutoring (not all)!
- 

## Activity Classes!

---

- Music, Dance, Karate, Skating, Tennis
  - Between the coach & the student
  - To play or not to play is not your question, it is your child's!
  - The price is too high if the results include prolonged disturbed relations
  - Main purpose of hobbies: not skill development but an effective outlet for feelings
- 

## Similarly....

---

- **Allowance:** budget & give but don't control - defeats the purpose of teaching responsibility
  - **Friends and playmates:** other than exceptional cases, let the child choose; preferably opposites
  - **Care of pets:** children may help & they will learn - but ultimately your responsibility
- 

## Freedom Phrases

---

- A good parent like a good teacher is one who makes himself *dispensable* (and not indispensable)
  - Thus, when our inner response to a child's request is "Yes", they say:
    - "If you want to..."
    - "If that is really what you want."
    - "You decide about that".
    - "It is really up to you."
    - "Whatever you decide is fine with me."
  - "Yes" may gratify, but this give him satisfaction of making his own decisions & enjoying our faith in him!
-

## Conclusions – Part III!

## Responsibility & Independence

- Responsibility: Chores and Values
- Desirable goals and daily practices
- Long-term and Short-term programs
- From War to Peace
  1. Listening with sensitivity
  2. Preventing “grapes of wrath”
  3. Stating feelings & thoughts without attacking
- **VOICE AND CHOICE:** Food, Clothes, Homework, Music Lessons, Allowance, Friends & Playmates, The Care of Pets, Freedom Phrases

Thank You!