

WHAT'S WRONG RIGHT WITH MY CHILD?



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➤ UNDERSTAND

➤ WHY DO WE FEEL SO VULNERABLE?

- **Parenting is a leap of faith!**
 - We enter into a permanent relationship with a perfect stranger.
- **Hopes and Dreams Yield to Realities**
 - The continuation of the human race depends on this!
- **Our own histories are interwoven with our parenting (partner's history, too!)**
 - We try to replicate or avoid experiences of our own on our children.
- **The community exerts a LOT of pressure on us**
 - “Friends” will try to validate their choices by imposing them on us.
 - “Well-meaning” family will offer unsolicited advise
 - Cultural “norms” exist in the walls everywhere and rattle our confidence.
- **Our children reflect us and we FEEL that they reflect ON us.**

➤ **UNDERSTAND AND EMBRACE**

➤ **THE PERSON YOUR CHILD WILL BECOME**

- **Our children will likely lead lives that are very different from ours.**
 - Our job is to help them understand themselves so they can thrive.
 - It is not our job to make them happy nor make it all easy for them.
- **Each child has:**
 - Personality - evident at birth for many,
 - Character traits - descriptors of personality (easy-going, anxious..)
 - Learning Style(s) - most evident in school and over homework but also activities

▶ **Most character traits have opposites and are also on a wide spectrum**

▶ i.e. stubborn/tenacious insecure-confident-cocky

▶ character traits can be magnified or diminished

▶ kids DO grow up!

▶ **Behaviors are usually trying to tell us something.**

▶ Our job is to figure out the message and listen carefully to it!

▶ Children need pre-teaching in most situations.....This is how you go to a birthday party.....When we get to the restaurant....

▶ **Working to challenge or change innate characteristics, personality, likes, dislikes or physical appearance can send a VERY loud and often negative message...**

▶ What we mean is, “We love you so much and want all the best for you.”

▶ What a child can hear is, “We expected a different child and but YOU showed up.”

▶ Or a child might hear, “They will only love/accept me if I’m perfect.”

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 - ▶ What **we** mean is, “We love you so much and want all the best for you.”
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 - ▶ Or a child might hear, “They will only love/accept me if I’m perfect.”
 - ▶ **It’s perfectly okay to tell a child that their BEHAVIOR has embarrassed or disappointed you, but you must be specific in your description and offer some better choices for the next time.**

▶ **HELP!**

▶ **MY CHILD IS SO DIFFERENT FROM ME!**

- ▶ **Introvert vs. introvert**
- ▶ **Internally driven vs. externally driven**
- ▶ **One friend vs. group of friends vs. everyone is my friend**
- ▶ **party animal vs. quiet engagement (It's okay to hate birthday parties!)**
- ▶ **Athlete vs. scientist vs. musician**
- ▶ **team sports vs. individual athlete**
- ▶ **Anxious vs. easy-going**
- ▶ **Planner vs. Procrastinator**
- ▶ **High energy vs. measured**
- ▶ **Night Owl vs. Early Bird**
- ▶ **** Your child doesn't know that he/she is like this. It's just how they arrived here,**
- ▶ **and they are doing the best they can.**

➤ **NURTURE**

➤ **THE CHILD YOU HAVE**

- **Step back to disconnect (as much as you can) from your own emotional entanglements and expectations.**
- **Don't allow others to drive decisions for your family.**
- **Resist the athletic trap.** Help your child find their passions inside!
- **Resist the college trap!** Chances are your child won't go to your alma mater anyway!
- **Notice and support what your child enjoys.**
- **Praise the effort a child puts into something.**

➤ APPRECIATE

➤ WHAT YOUR CHILD BRINGS INTO YOUR WORLD

- Allow each of your children to challenge your thinking
- Ask questions before you impose your needs on your child.
- Allow your child to expose you to different activities.
- Enable your child to direct some family activities. Engage enthusiastically!
- Read behaviors as reflections of a child's feelings.
- Spend time with each child doing what that child likes to do.
- Help siblings understand each other better using the reflections you are doing yourself.

➤ **CELEBRATE**

➤ **Use your differences to**

➤ **ENRICH**

➤ **Your life!**

▶ PARENTING MATTERS

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