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Approaches to Positive Discipline

Friday March 13th 2020





Discipline

- The word discipline.
- Discipline comes from the root word to disciple.
- Disciple means to train and to instruct.
- To be a disciple means to be a student.





Step 1



For Positive Discipline to exist there must be a relationship between parent and child

- It must be based on love
- Not any kind of love but unconditional love
- A love that at times is a choice not an emotion or a warm fuzzy feeling

In Victorian England the saying was “Children should be seen and not heard.” We are shocked and laugh about this today but sometimes what we see today is a new kind of culture that is equally shocking “Children are to be provided for but given no time, no love, no value, no respect” That we provide for our children materially but leave them starving emotionally and then wonder why they do the crazy things they do.

We all have a predominant love language, find out what your child’s love language is and be intentional. We can never love our children too much.

The relationship must also be based on trust, respect and care.



Step 1



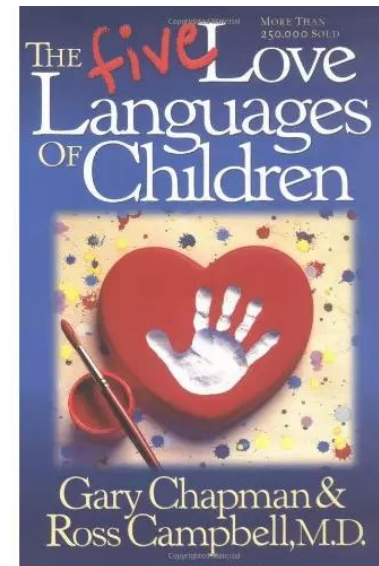
Love Languages

We all have a predominant love language, find out what your child's love language is and be intentional. We can never love our children too much.

What are the five love languages?

- Quality time
- Acts of service
- Physical Touch
- Gifts
- Words of affirmation

<https://www.5lovelanguages.com/>





Step 2

For Positive Discipline to exist we as parent need to be a **Good Role Model.**

As the adult and parent in the relationship we are our child's first and predominant role model. We are their primary teacher. If we hate their temper and anger issues how do we model when we are angry? If we hate their incessant lying, do we model truth telling or are we incessant liars too? If we hide our emotions away, then why are we shocked when they hide their emotions? If we laugh when our sons cry, then why are we shocked when they are reprimanded at school for laughing at a friend and bullying them for crying. If we don't apologise and seek forgiveness for our wrong, how can we expect them to say sorry? **So think about what kind of role model you are? Begin to make changes to the way you conduct yourself in order to be a better role model.**



Relationship

Role Model



Step 3



Family Rules/ Expectations/ Consequences

It is important that you and your spouse are on the same page and so you need to sit down together and if your child/children are at an appropriate age then they can also be involved in the setting of expectations and rules for your family. What is important to you, what are your values? What are the values of your spouse? Just as a class at the beginning of a year will make a list of expectations and rules you also need to set down the ground rules and also the consequences of what will happen when these expectations are met or broken.

Chat with someone sitting next to you.

- What are your family rules?
- Are they clear to your child?
- What will happen if these expectations are met and achieved?
- What are the consequences if these expectations are not met?

Relationship

Role Model

Framework



Step 4

Consistency

Playing by the same rule book

- You and your spouse and if you have other people who are helping to raise your children be it a family member like a grandparent or a Nanny, Maid or Driver all need to be playing by the same rule book. It's no good if you do one thing and your spouse does another... your child is at best **confused** and at worst becomes a **master manipulator**. So continuity and consistency between all caregivers is critical and so too is another form of continuity.

Consistency with consequences

- We should never threaten something that we have no intention of carrying out. We do not threaten to take away our child's toys unless we will carry out on the action, we do not say that they are grounded unless we are prepared to ground them. If we are not prepared to go through with the consequences then we shouldn't say them. If we keep threatening and never following through we give our children the message **that they can get away with anything** and we also give them the message that **we are not to be trusted and we make liars of ourselves.**

Relationship

Role Model

Framework

Consistency

WHAT YOU DO
EVERY DAY
MATTERS
MORE THAN
WHAT YOU DO
ONCE IN A WHILE.

“Small disciplines repeated with consistency every day lead to great achievements gained slowly over time.”

John C. Maxwell

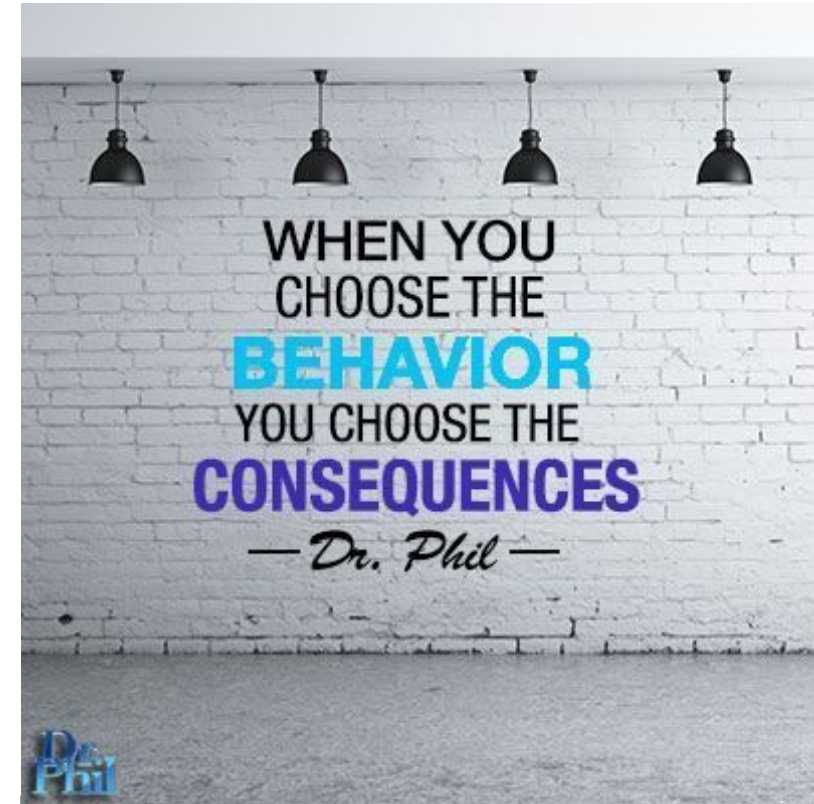


Step 5

Consequences

The **consequences** need to be **fair**, they need to be **honouring** to your child even when they've done wrong and be **respectful** too, they need to not give your child trauma and psychological damage. If **physical punishment** is going to be used (remembering that in some countries it is forbidden by law) then it needs to be **appropriate** and **used incredibly sparingly** or it will quickly have the potential to become abusive.

There are some forms of discipline that may seem appropriate in one culture and inappropriate in another culture but can I stress that **hitting a child on their head** is never ok. Whether this is a slap across the face, a punch or a pinch. Hitting someone across the face is one of the most **degrading** and **dehumanising** things we can ever do to someone regardless of culture. Our child will come out **scarred for life** long after the bruising or marking has subsided. If you love your child and care for your child then don't ever resort to hitting them around the face. If you are **feeling angry as you go to discipline your child** you need to **step out of the situation, cool down and then decide on a cause of action.**



Relationship

Role Model

Framework

Consistency

Consequences



Step 5

Consequences

To some of you this is obvious what I am saying but for others I know that it is not. In the same way you don't hit your child on the head or face you should never **pinch** your child, this is not positive discipline in fact it could be called **abusive**. To **pinch** is **harsh, mean, brutal and degrading** and is **never a loving act**. Maybe you were pinched as a child but I truly believe it's time to stop this cycle. So no pinching and while we're at it **no kicking and obviously no biting**. Growing up we were always told that horses kick and bite not children, not people and I would have to agree. **So can we please leave these animalistic behaviours to the real animals!**



Relationship

Role Model

Framework

Consistency

Consequences



Step 5

Consequences

And then we get to the grey area of is it ok to smack your child? Whether you agree with a quick sharp smack or not this should only happen as a last resort, when you are calm and in control and never as a form of shame in front of others. The child would need to understand why they are being smacked and that your love for them remains the same. They would need to understand that the act is to help them to self correct and to learn a new way.

The truth is that children who are physically disciplined, particularly if this is inappropriate, are all the more likely to be physically violent themselves. A child who is physically abused is more likely to suffer psychological issues into adulthood and this can present as depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, anger issues, post traumatic stress and so the list goes on...



Relationship

Role Model

Framework

Consistency

Consequences



Step 5

Consequences

In the same way that **physical discipline is rarely if ever acceptable** then using **emotional abuse as a form of discipline is never ok**. We should never frighten a child into doing the right thing. **Fear has no place** in positive discipline.

To tell a child that we will lock them in their bedroom in the dark as a form of punishment is only going to traumatise our child and frighten them into doing what we want them to do. Punishment should never involve frightening our children by placing them in a situation that they are naturally fearful of. Locking a child anywhere whether they are fearful or not is never going to be the right or best form of punishment. Let us not manipulate our children into doing what we want through frightening them.

Positive discipline never involves the manipulation of withdrawing love from our children. Our children are to know that they are loved and accepted even if their action is not and let us never confuse the action with the child. The action was bad the child is not bad. The action was a stupid thing to do the child is not stupid. The action was naughty but the child is not naughty. **We name the action not the child**. As well as the fact that discipline should never be based on fear it also should never be based upon degrading our child by making them look foolish or demeaning them. **Shame** should not play a part in our chosen form of discipline.

Relationship

Role Model

Framework

Consistency

Consequences



Can you think of some positive consequences of good behaviour?





Step 6

Evaluation

If anything is to remain meaningful and effective over a sustained amount of time then evaluation needs to happen. You and your spouse, caregivers need to review first and then if the child is age appropriate with them too. What is working well? What is not working? What needs to be changed or adapted? What is now no longer current? What are the current issues, that you are now facing in your household?



Relationship

Role Model

Framework

Consistency

Consequences

Evaluation



Practical Suggestions and Imagined Scenarios

- 1. Your two year old child keeps snatching toys from a sibling or friend what can you do?**
- 2. Your three, four year old refuses to eat their packed lunch, what will you do?**
- 3. Your five year old will not read at home, what can you do?**
- 4. Your six, seven year old was jealous of a friend's toy, so decided to take it home and you discover it in their bag, what approach will you take?**
- 5. Your eight, nine year old has anger issues and keeps lashing out at you and their siblings, how can you manage this?**
- 6. Your ten, eleven year old has been pulled out at school for bullying behaviour what would be the best way to manage this?**



Let us not forget that we have to evolve with our children and that what worked for our two year old will not work for our six year old and what worked for our six year old will need to be adapted for our ten year old...

So, to conclude, with positive approaches to discipline we must start with a relationship built on love, trust and mutual respect and that then we as the parent are our child's greatest role model and we need to decide what role model we want to be. From there we make a family framework and a set of instructions and consequences both positive and negative that are important to us. There needs to be consistency and continuity from all caregivers and in the way the discipline is carried out. Great consideration is to be given to acceptable and unacceptable forms of punishment, and lastly that it is always important for us to evaluate what is working well and what needs to be changed. From this foundation and approach there are many varied and creative practical ideas we can adopt to ensure positive discipline.

Thanks