

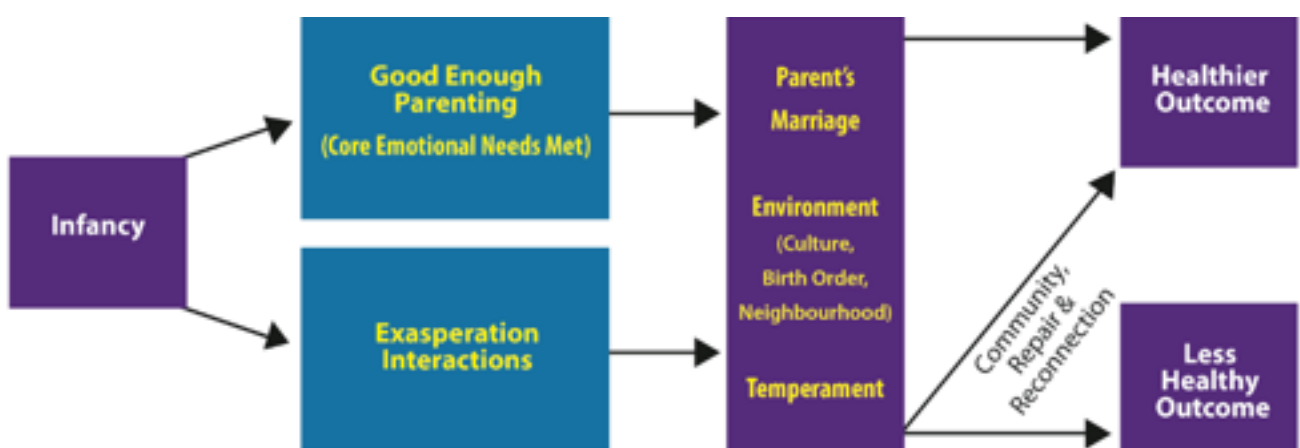
Monday : First Principles in Parenting

Proverbs 23:15-26..Solomon in these verses,was so vividly expressing how much the parents get overjoyed to see the children turn out as righteous and wise persons in their adulthood. This is the dream of every parents. This Parenting program strives to achieve that. Practising the principles of parenting takes courage passion and perseverance or as some have said, blood, sweat and tears. Because of implementing the biblical principles of parenting, you would experience joy and satisfaction when you are emotionally connected to your child, when you see them hold on to the values you shared and face their world with ease and confidence through deep and thriving relationships resulting in greater level of success.

Parenting is a very important responsibility that each and everyone of us after the marriage take it up or get involved in by default even without any training. For any responsibility like driving, to be a doctor, to build a building etc., we expect people to be well trained and how much more we should seek training for raising up our children. Even though we expect parenting to be intuitive, in practice we land up reacting to our kids based on our own past childhood emotional dysfunctions. Parents are good at meeting the physical (food, clothing & shelter), educational, medical and social needs of our children very intuitively. However, parents are unaware of children's CORE EMOTIONAL NEEDS and it is counter intuitive for them to meet those needs. Kids themselves do not know when they are emotionally needy. As water, sun light, air and nutrients are the core needs for plant life, children must also have their core emotional needs met in order for them to be mentally and emotionally healthy. The core emotional needs are so important and when they are not met, children go through a feeling of exasperation (that is frustration of core emotional needs and trauma) and develop dysfunctional behaviours. The FOUR plus ONE core emotional needs of children are ;

- 1.Connection and Acceptance
 - 2.Healthy Autonomy
 - 3.Reasonable limits
 - 4.Realistic Expectations
- Plus one SPIRITUAL VALUES and COMMUNITY

See the flow chart below that shows the two pathways the kids go through in general and how they interplay to bring out Healthier and Less Healthy outcome in the kids.

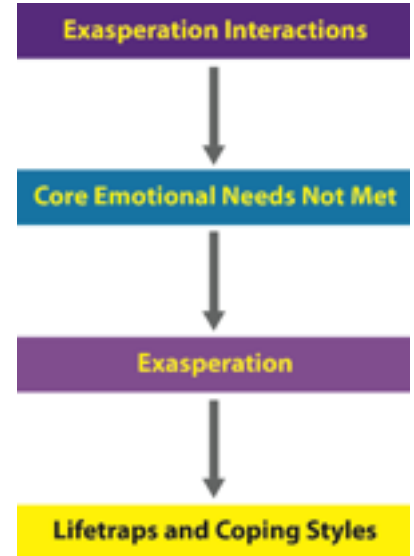


Today's practicals : Father and Mother discuss together about their past years of parenting and both jointly take responsibility for the healthy or unhealthy outcome on each child. Pray together and Commit to get trained in this area of Parenting by reading the Good Enough Parenting book together every day and attending for parenting classes.

Tuesday : Avoiding the EXASPERATION INTERACTIONS



Ephesians 6:4 Here Paul talks about as parents we should not exasperate our children. Do not exasperate means we should not discourage, embitter, frustrate or provoke them to anger. Exasperation means frustration of the child's core emotional needs and an experience of trauma. Though experiencing frustration is part of life, the distinction we need to make is between occasional events and moments of frustration VERSUS a life style of repeated frustration and trauma that the child has to experience as a result of the exasperation interaction from the parents. When this happens the child will be growing up without the core emotional need being met. This continued state of exasperation eventually



shapes a child's worldview and affects his way of thinking. The child's thoughts about himself and others become distorted. Parents who love their children make this mistakes in a subtle and unintentional way. Through research Parenting counselors have come up with a list of 8 exasperation interactions parents have with their children as shown below.

Today's practicals : Put a no. between 1 to 10 capturing the severity of the exasperation interaction that you feel is experienced by your kid. (high score means more severe)

Sl.No	Exasperation Interactions	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3
1	Belittling			
2	Perfectionistic and Conditional			
3	Controlling			
4	Punitive			
5	Emotionally Depriving and Inhibiting			
6	Overprotective			
7	Pessimistic			
8	Overly Permissive			

Wednesday : The Core Emotional Need of Connection & Acceptance

1Peter 4:8 - Peter talks about deep love...that is the love that connects and accepts and that love covers over thousands of others (including your children's) sin. Our children need this Connection of deep love towards Parents without any condemnation.

Romans 15:7 - We all have this need to be accepted as Christ accepted us. Our Children also have the same need deep in their heart to be accepted by parents for who they are with their strengths and weaknesses, flaws and all.

The core emotional need of connection and acceptance can be defined as the state children live in when they feel completely attached to their parents in a healthy affectionate bond with empathic understanding. When this need is met and your connection with your children is strong then not only will your children love and respect you but they will enjoy being with you. When this need is met children will naturally imitate their parents values and this in turn will help them eventually have the conviction to resist being drawn to unhealthy delinquent behaviour, beliefs and ideologies. When parents meet this need of connection and acceptance the child will develop the traits and beliefs of TRUST, Self-Acceptance and Openness, Emotional fulfilment and intimacy, Belonging and Affinity, Emotional Spontaneity and Expressiveness and Mastery and Success. The foundation of parenting is that parents must connect with their children empathically and not cause exasperation.

Today's Practicals : Both parents together write a card or note to each child expressing how much you not only love them but LIKE them and they are such a joy and blessing to both of you. Write 3 things you like in each kid and share with them and all pray thanking God.

Thursday: Do not show Favouritism among children.

Gen 25:19-34 Favouritism blocks effective communication at the heart level. It prevents people from being vulnerable with each other about their feelings when they feel they are disliked, or that they have fallen out of favour. For this patriarch's family, much was lost in the early years. They lost out on what might have been fantastic times together. They could have had so many great memories together as a family. Each of the son could have turned out much more well-rounded if they had tapped into the strengths of both of their parents. In the end, favouritism blocked each parent, Isaac and Rebekah, from meeting the core emotional need for connection and acceptance in Jacob and Esau, respectively. At most, they got it from one parent only. Favouritism breeds jealousy and results in tiffs with our siblings, which in turn, creates scars and gets carried into our adulthood.

Today's Practicals : Talk between the couples to bring out any perception of favouritism from any of you to any of the kids. If such perception exists today clarify it to each kid separately and put it to rest.

Friday : Quality Time with Kids Takes Time

Mark 6: 30-32 Here we see Jesus taking his disciples out for a special Quality time. He knew that his disciples needed that time to get refreshed. He invested on that time to show them how much they are special and important. Even otherwise we see Jesus spending lots of time with his disciples taking them to wedding at cana not only for prayer times and preaching sessions. That is the way Jesus raised up his disciples who finally were ready to die for Him. As parents who are trying to raise our own kids to be future disciples should take some time out and invest on Quality time with our kids. For many of us this is not natural. But you need to develop a sense of discipline and do this. Quality time meets the core emotional need of the child that is

Connection and Acceptance. For busy parents, if you do not set aside time for your kids you are communicating that they are not valued by you and they are not worthy for your time. Again it is not the quantity but the Quality of time that creates positive unforgettable memories in the minds of the children. Structured and planned time with your kids creates Quality time.

Today's Practicals :- Commit to regular one to one Time with each child every week for 1 to 2 hours. Commit to dinner time of 30 minutes together with all kids without any agenda.

Saturday : Build Connection in LOVE

1Corinthians 13:13 , Colossians 3:14, 1 John 4 :18 Understanding that the greatest of virtues is love, should motivate us to realize its power in binding the parents with kids in unity. The key test that shows if the relationship between the parents and children is built on love or not is by the display of fear among the children. (Some may argue to have some level of healthy fear is good but we need to aim for connection through LOVE as the bible says perfect love drives out fear). When the relationship is connected in Love there will be no place for fear, insecurity, hiding and cheating. To grow in Love connection towards children parents need to learn to accept children with out judgement as Jesus accepted them with out punishment and fear.

Today's Practicals : Celebrate and enjoy together with your kids by having funtime for 2 hours. May be outing to park, beach or restaurant without mobile. Focus is on fun not teaching or lecture so as to drive the fear.

Sunday : Accepting Child's Feeling not necessarily their Behaviour

COLOSSIANS 3:12-17 - Feel for others (mainly your kids) as these verses characterise.

MATHEW 7: 12 - This verse teaches the golden rule of do to others what you would have them do to you in everything. The least or sometimes the most we want from others is that we should be understood properly. For this to happen we want others to give us a patient hearing and empathise with our feelings, we though others may not agree or accept with the choices of our behaviour. So let us the do the same for others ... the empathy and validation of feelings. This principle applies to handling the feelings of our children as well.

For many parents this is confusing. They think that the two are one and the same thing, but they are actually different. We connect with our kids when we empathise with their ups and down. However this does not mean that we will always agree with the behaviour that may have accompanied their feelings. For example a child may feel sad when left out of a game between his siblings and respond by throwing temper tantrum. We need to separate the feelings from the behaviour. as parents we need to process the feelings of rejection and empathise with our child but after that is done, we need to then voice our disapproval of his behaviour (not him or his feelings...they both are accepted) and if necessary apply an appropriate consequence for his unacceptable behaviour. We need to communicate that there are some behaviours that are acceptable and then there are some that are not. Learn this key question: " How to talk so kids will listen and How to listen so Kids will talk"

Today's Practicals : Memorise this statement to Say to your child daily, ' I care about how you feel and I want to treat your feelings with respect". Write 1 thing YOU (not your children) can change that would make your kids to connect with you on feeling, emotional level.

1. _____