

THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES OF CHILDREN PART 2

How to discover your child's primary love language:

When your child feels loved, when their emotional tank is full, they will be more responsive to parental guidance in all areas of their life.

How do we learn their language? IT TAKES TIME. Discovering your child's love language is a process. Love languages are not set in stone and are subject to change. Please remember that you cannot ignore the other four. Your child needs to learn to give and to receive love in all the languages. The more effectively they can speak love in all the languages, the more effective they will be as a communicator of love and appreciation to their future spouse and children, work associates, and friends.

Discovering the primary language.

As you begin to look for a child's primary love language, it is better not to discuss your search with them (especially with teenagers). Remember: children by nature are self-centered and they may well use the love language search to manipulate you to satisfy their own momentary desires.

POSTIVE PARENTING DOES NOT MEAN GIVING YOUR CHILD EVERYTHING THEY WANT. Hints to find your Child's primary love language:

- 1. Observe how your child expresses love to you.**
- 2. Observe how your child expresses love to others.**
- 3. Listen to what your child request most often.** If their request seem to fit a pattern, they are asking for what they need most emotionally (quality time).
- 4. Notice what your child most frequently complains about.** Every child complains now and then, and many of these complaints are related to immediate desires and are not necessarily an indication of a love language. But, if the complaints fall into a pattern so that more than half the complaints focus on one love language, then they are highly indicative. Their frequency is the key.
- 5. Give your child a choice between two options.** Lead your child to make choices between two love languages and for several weeks keep a record of their choices. You will find a pattern emerge. The choices you offer your child depend on age and interest. Giving choices will be helpful only if you do it often enough to see a pattern showing a clear preference in love languages.

Remember to speak all five languages no matter what your child's primary love language is.

In addition, learning to speak all five love language will help us to nurture people throughout our lives, not only our children but spouses, friends, and relatives.

DICIPLINE AND THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES:

Which of the following words is negative: LOVE, WARMTH, LAUGHTER, OR DISCIPLINE? *The answer is none.*

Discipline involves the long and vigilant task of guiding a child from infancy to adulthood. The goal is that the child would reach a level of maturity that will allow them one day to function as a responsible adult in society. Now that's a positive goal! To be effective in discipline, parents must keep the child's emotional love tank filled. Parent's play the major role in the discipline of their children because it is they who interpret to their offspring their culture's generally accepted standards.

To train your child you will employ guidance by example, modeling, verbal instruction, written request, teaching and preaching right behavior, correcting wrong behavior, providing learning experiences, and much more.

Punishment in most homes is greatly overused. In fact, many parents assume that discipline and punishment are synonymous and that discipline actually means punishment. The popular definition of discipline is the establishing of parental authority, the developing of guidelines for behavior, and then helping children live by these guidelines.

The road to maturity is one that every child must walk and for which every parent needs to accept responsibility. It is an awesome task, requiring wisdom, imagination, patience, and great amounts of love. Though discipline varies from home to home, it all depends on the culture. There are different kinds of approaches for guiding a child to maturity: A "hands-off" approach to parenting which allows children to do whatever they want, does not produce happy or responsible children. A supposedly scientific approach has developed to child development. With it, many parents have lost confidence in the common sense approach to parenting; they are ready to receive guidance from the latest guru. (Yet the guru or supposed experts offer clashing theories and often contradictory advice.)

So, discipline is certainly an act of love. The more a child feels loved, the easier it is to discipline that child. This means that we must keep the child's love tank full *before* we discipline. Practice unconditional love; then discipline.

HOW A CHILD LOVES

Before we are able to effectively discipline a child in love, we need to ask two questions:

- 1. How does a child love?**
- 2. What does my child need when they misbehaves?**

Answers: 1. A child will love in an immature fashion, adults will seek to love in an unconditional manner. Most times we settle for something in the middle called reciprocating love or rational approach to love. (I'll do this for now, but not always!) A child loves in a self-oriented fashion. Some parents think a child should try to earn their love and affection with good behavior, but this just isn't possible. A child by nature continually tests our love by their behavior. Nothing makes a child more desperate than a lack of love.

In most cases the parent would answer "Punishment" and that is the one reason that punishment is so over-used, rather than parents' selecting more appropriate ways of training a child. A child who misbehaves has a need. So, when a child obviously misbehaves, what they have done should not be condoned. However, if we deal with it wrongly (either too harshly or too permissively) we will have further problems with that child, and those problems will worsen as they grow older. Yes, we need to discipline (train) a child towards good behavior, but the first step in that process is not punishment. Another cause could be physical problems: ill, hungry, thirsty, or tired. Misbehavior cannot be condoned, even if it is caused by a physical problem, but the problem behavior can usually be quickly relieved if its source is physical.

A CHILD'S REMORSE

When a child feels genuinely sorry for what they have done, there is no need to proceed further. He had learned and repented; punishment now could be destructive. Again, a certain amount of guilt is necessary for the development of a healthy conscience. When your child is genuinely sorry for their misbehavior, instead of punishing, FORGIVE THEM. By experiencing forgiveness from the parent, they are learning to forgive themselves and later to forgive someone else. WHAT A BEAUTIFUL GIFT THAT IS! The only other way to teach your child how to forgive is to ask forgiveness when you have wronged them. (Suck in your own pride).

EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR:

As parents we are responsible for so much that happens with our children, often more than we want to admit. Take a moment and think about it. Here are the suggested five methods to effectively control your child's behavior. Two are positive, two are negative, and one is neutral.

1. Making requests. Is very important, positive means of controlling behavior; it greatly benefits both parent and child. When you make requests, you are sending three nonverbal messages to your child. A) is that you respect their feelings. B) the fact that you realize your child has a brain and is able to form opinions. C) tell your child that you expect them to take responsibility for their own behavior. By the use of requests, you are guiding and encouraging them to take responsibility.
2. Issuing commands. Is necessary and appropriate at times. Commands are necessary when requests fail. They use harsher tones and almost always elicits irritation, anger, and resentment in the child, especially if used frequently. Being pleasant but firm, enhances your authority because you are gaining your children's respect and love as well as their gratitude.
3. Gentle physical manipulation. Can gently move a child in the appropriate direction. Negativism in two-year-olds is a normal step of development, one way the child begins to separate psychologically from his mother or father. Please be careful not to confuse negativism with defiance.
4. Punishment. It is the most negative and also the most difficult method of control. A) the punishment must fit the crime because children are so aware of fairness. B) the punishment may not be appropriate for the particular child. C) Punishment brings with it variation, since parents often rely on their feelings when they are dishing out a punishment. (Kids in Danger by Ross Campbell is a recommended reading)
5. Behavior modification. It utilizes positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, and punishment. Behavior modification can be helpful at times, particularly for specific, recurring behavioral problems for which a child shows remorse. Behavior modification is conditional, does not deal with child's feelings, leads to manipulation, and children will use it on the parents.

Remember to speak the child's love language before and after a time of discipline.