

# Effective Parent-Child Interactions

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# Agenda

- **Introduction**
- **Housekeeping Rules**
- **Roles and Goals**
- **Types of Parenting**
- **The four components for effective communication**

# Introduction



- **Name**
- **Ages of children**
- **What do you expect from this session?**

# Housekeeping Rules

- **No judging others for their parenting skills.**
- **All are here to help each other to do things better**
- **What is spoken in the room stays in the room, only the concepts is taken home.**
- **The goal is to reflect on the current practices and implement the tools appropriately provided in this session**

# Quiz Time

<http://www.beliefnet.com/section/quiz/index.asp?sectionID&surveyID=400>

**Resources can be found here:**

<https://todaysmeet.com/VCC>

# Types of Parenting

According to Diana Baumrind there are four types of parenting

- 1. The Authoritarian Approach**
- 2. The Permissive Approach**
- 3. The Authoritative Approach**
- 4. Uninvolved Parenting**

# **Roles of Parenting**

- **What is your role in parenting?**
- **What is your goal for your child?**

# **Roles and Goals**

- **Facilitator**
- **Family culture**
- **Family Values**
- **Spiritual Practices**



# **Understanding our today's focus**

**Let's shine the light of consciousness on places  
where we can hope to find what we are seeking.**

# Scenario

**Mother finds a pair of dirty socks under the table in the living room.**

# Effective communication

- **Max, when I see the pair of socks under the table in the living room, I feel irritated because I am needing more order in the rooms that we share in common.**
- **Would you be willing to put your socks in your room or in the washing machine?**

# Communication that blocks compassion



# Statements for judging

**“Do not judge, and you will not be judged.**

**For as you judge others, so you will yourselves be judged...”**

Bible, Matthew 7:1

**Scenarios which blocks compassion for others.**

- **The problem with you is that you are too lazy**
- **It's inappropriate to talk like that...**

**Avoid:** *Blame, insults, put-downs, labels, criticism, comparisons, denial of responsibility*

# The Four Components

(for Expressing honestly and Receiving empathically)

**1. Observation** 

**2. Feelings**

**3. Needs**

**4. Request**

# Observation and Evaluation

The first component is separation of observation from evaluation. If we separate we are clearly and honestly expressing how we are to another person. When we combine them we decrease the likelihood that others will hear the intended message. Instead they are hearing our criticism and thus resist whatever we are saying.

A Philosopher once remarked: Observing without evaluating is the highest form of human intelligence.

# Observing without Evaluating

Examples of observation and evaluation mixed in

- ◆ You are too generous
- ✓ *When I see you give all your lunch money to others, I think you are being too generous*
- ◆ She won't get her work in
- ✓ I don't think she will get her work in or She said "I won't get my work in."
- ◆ If you don't eat balanced meals, your health will be impaired.
- ✓ If you don't eat balanced meals, I fear your health may be impaired



## **... more examples.**

- ◆ **Hank Smith is a poor soccer player**
- ✓ **Hank Smith has not scored a goal in twenty games.**
- ◆ **Jim looks ugly**
- ✓ **Jim looks don't appeal to me**
- ◆ **He frequently comes over.**
- ✓ **He comes over at least 3 times a week.**

# **Exercise**

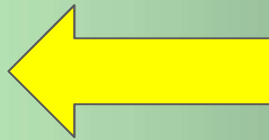
- 1. John was angry with me yesterday for no reason**
- 2. Yesterday evening Nancy bit her fingernails while watching television**
- 3. My father is a good man**
- 4. Janice works too much**
- 5. Henry is aggressive**
- 6. Pam was first in line every day this week.**
- 7. Luke told me I did not look good in yellow.**

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# Identifying and Expressing Feelings

- ◆ I feel that isn't right to play music loud at night.
- ✓ When feel is followed by that the statement was his opinion not his feelings.

# Distinguish feelings from thoughts

In general, feelings are not being clearly expressed when the word feel is followed by:

- Words such as **that, like, as if**:
  - ❖ I feel **that** you should know better
  - ❖ I feel **like** a failure
  - ❖ I feel ***as if*** I am living with a wall

# ...distinguish feelings from thoughts

- The pronouns *I, you, he, she, they, it:*
  - ❖ I feel *I* am constantly on call
  - ❖ I feel *it* is useless
- *Names or nouns* referring to people:
  - ❖ I feel *Amy* has been pretty responsible
  - ❖ I feel *my boss* is being manipulative.

## Distinguish feelings from thoughts

# An Example

I feel *inadequate* as a guitar player

In the statement above, I am assessing my ability as a guitar player, rather than clearly expressing my feelings.

**Rather we can use the following:**

- I feel *disappointed* in myself as a guitar player
- I feel *impatient* with myself as a guitar player
- I feel *frustrated* with myself as a guitar player

# More Examples

Distinguish between what we feel and how we think others react or behave toward us

I feel *unimportant* to the people with whom I work

The word unimportant describes how I think others are evaluating me, rather than the actual feeling, which in this situation might be

**“I feel sad” or “I feel discouraged”**

## Exercise

I feel *misunderstood*

I feel *ignored*



# Sample words

Below are some words about how we interpret others rather than how we feel.

**abandoned**

**rejected**

**unheard**

**unsupported**

**used**

**abused**

**overworked**

**pressured**

**provoked**

**Intimidated**

**attacked**

**betrayed**

**bullied**

**distrusted**

**cornered**

# Building vocabulary for feelings

[http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/pdf\\_files/feelings\\_needs.pdf](http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/pdf_files/feelings_needs.pdf)

# Expressing feelings

- I feel you don't love me.
- I am sad that you are leaving.
- I feel scared when you say that.
- When you don't greet me, I feel neglected.
- I'm happy that you can come.
- You are disgusting.

## **...Expressing feelings**

- **I feel like hitting you.**
- **I feel misunderstood**
- **I feel good about what you did for me**
- **I am worthless**

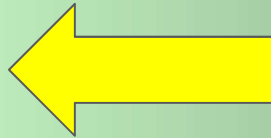
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# **The Needs at the Roots of feelings**

**(and Taking Responsibility of our own feelings)**

**Speaker A:** You disappointed me by not coming over last evening

**Speaker B:** I was disappointed when you did not come over, because I wanted to talk over some things that were bothering me.

**Speaker A attributes responsibility for his disappointment solely to another person's action**

**Speaker B traces his feeling of disappointment to his own unfulfilled desire.**

# **Expressing your needs (an Example)**

- ❖ **Mommy is disappointed when you don't finish your food.**
- ✓ **Mommy feels disappointed when you don't finish your food, because I want you to grow up strong and healthy.**

# **An Important point**

**Distinguish between giving from the heart and being motivated by guilt.**

- It hurts mommy and daddy when you get poor grades at school.
- This implies that their child's action are the cause of the parents happiness or unhappiness.



# Acknowledging needs

- ❖ You irritate me when you leave the room with clothes on the floor
- ✓ I am irritated when you leave the clothes on the floor because I want the clothes to be neatly arranged in the closet.
- ❖ I feel angry when you speak insulting words
- ✓ I feel angry when you say that, because I am wanting respect and I hear your words as an insult.

# Acknowledging needs

## Exercise

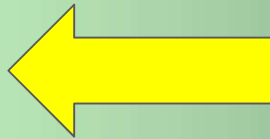
- I feel frustrated when you come late.
- I am grateful that you offered me a help in cleaning the kitchen because I was needing to get the cooking done before the guests arrive.

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# **Use positive language when making requests**

- **Making requests in clear, positive, concrete action language reveals what we really want.**
- **Vague language contributes to internal confusion**

# Making requests consciously

When we simply express our feelings, it may not be clear to the listener what we want them to do.

**Example:**

I am annoyed that you forgot the homework packet at school.

**These words make the child feel guilty. Are we asking them to go back to the school and pick up the homework packet?**

# Another Example

**We are often not conscious of what we are requesting**

**Parent:** I never seen anyone going slow in doing homework everyday.

**The child may say:** It takes time, I cannot rush through.

**Parent:** But still you could focus better.

**The child may lose interest as he lost his thoughts already**

# Asking for Reflection

## **Example:**

**Parent:** I want to make sure that you are aware of the chess class which is at 5:30 pm. Will you be ready in 5 minutes?

**Child may be involved in something and mumble.**

**Parents could request for reflection:**

Could you tell me what you just heard me say?

**You can also request the eye contact from the child.**

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## **... Asking for Reflection**

**If the child did not hear well and respond**

**We have to leave at 5:30 pm from here.**

**If you assert like you didn't hear me or you are misunderstanding me it will make the child understand that you are going to chastise him/her**

**I am grateful to you for telling me what you heard. I can see that I didn't make myself as clear as I'd have liked, so let me try again.**

# Requests vs Demands

When the other person hears a demand from us, they see two options:

To submit or rebel

To the child a parent may ask:

Would you be willing to set the table? instead of

I would like you to set the table.

# Expressing Requests

- I want you to understand me.
- I would like you to tell me one thing that I did that you appreciate.
- I would like you to feel more confidence in yourself.
- I would like you to let me be me.
- I would like you to be honest with me about yesterday's meeting.
- I would like you to drive at or below the speed limit.
- I would like you to show respect for my time.

# Srila Prabhupada on Parenting

**These children are given to us by Krishna, they are Vaisnavas and we must be very careful to protect them.**

My dear Arundhati, Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your letter dated July 19, 1972, and I am simply surprised that you want to give up your child to some other persons, even they are also devotees. For you, child-worship is more important than deity-worship. If you cannot spend time with him, then stop the duties of pujari. At least you must take good care of your son until he is four years old, and if after that time you are unable any more to take care of him then I shall take care. These children are given to us by Krishna, they are Vaisnavas and we must be very careful to protect them. These are not ordinary children, they are Vaikuntha children, and we are very fortunate we can give them chance to advance further in Krishna Consciousness. That is very great responsibility, do not neglect it or be confused. Your duty is very clear. Hoping this will meet you in good health. Your ever well-wisher, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

***[Srila Prabhupada Letter to: Arundhati Amsterdam 30 July, 1972]***

# Srila Prabhupada on Kids Chanting

**If we want them to become great devotees, then we must educate the children with love, not in a negative way.**

Regarding your question should force be used on children, no, there shall be no forcing the children to do anything. Child should not be forced. This is all nonsense. Who has devised these things? If we want them to become great devotees, then we must educate the children with love, not in a negative way. Of course, if they become naughty we may show the stick but we should never use it. But never apply force, especially to his chanting and other matters of spiritual training. That will spoil him and in the future he will not like to do it if he forced.

***[S.rila Prabhupada Letter to: Brahmanya Tirtha Ahmedabad 10 December 1972]***

# Srila Prabhupada on child living with parents

**The children of our devotees may live with their parents perpetually because you are all living in the temple and already engaged in devotional service.**

So far your son leaving you, his parents, at 5 years, that is not necessary. Especially our Krishna Conscious children; they are already living in a asrama. The children of our devotees may live with their parents perpetually because you are all living in the temple and already engaged in devotional service. Other instructions are for those not engaged in Krishna Consciousness. Any family engaged in Krishna's service is living not in this material world. Such a home is considered as Vaikuntha. [the spiritual world] That is the verdict of Bhaktivinode Thakura.

***[Srila Prabhupada Letter to: Indira London 15 August, 1971]***

# What if you have a strong willed child

- When we need him to do something for us and we expect resistance, we try to make it feel they have a say in the matter.
- Don't compare them to other kids.
- Remember that most strong-willed kids end up being powerful, confident adults.
- Give lots of unsolicited love and praise.
- Keep your own frustration in check.

# Resources

<http://www.businessinsider.com/life-is-good-founders-say-this-question-inspired-their-business-2015-12>

Quiz in today's meet

<http://www.beliefnet.com/section/quiz/index.asp?sectionID&surveyID=400>