



PARENTING DISCUSSION

Sarah M. Coyne

Principle 1: Allow for mistakes

- *“To avoid all possibility for error is to avoid all possibility for growth.”*

Dallin H. Oaks

Principle 2: Parenting is hard...but
you aren't doing it alone

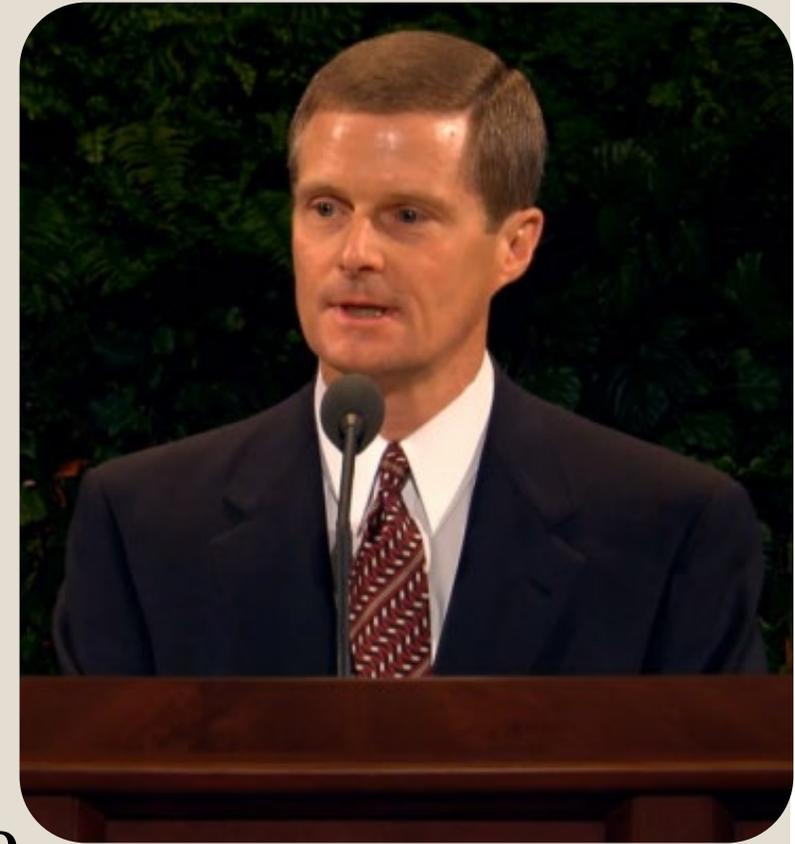
- I remember once a seven- or eight-year-old son of ours jumping on his bed hard enough that I thought it might break. I felt a flash of frustration, and I moved quickly to set my house in order. I grabbed my son by his little shoulders and lifted him up to where our eyes met.
- The Spirit put words into my mind. It seemed a quiet voice, but it pierced to my heart: “You are holding a great person.” I gently set him back on the bed and apologized.
- Now he has become the great man the Holy Ghost let me see 40 years ago. I am eternally grateful that the Lord rescued me from my unkind feelings by sending the Holy Ghost to let me see a child of God as He saw him. (Henry B. Eyring, My Peace I Leave With You)

- Early in our married life my young family and I were laboring through graduate school at a university in New England. Pat was the Relief Society president in our ward, and I was serving in our stake presidency. I was going to school full-time and teaching half-time. We had two small children then, with little money and lots of pressures. In fact, our life was about like yours.
- One evening I came home from long hours at school, feeling the proverbial weight of the world on my shoulders. Everything seemed to be especially demanding and discouraging and dark. I wondered if the dawn would ever come. Then, as I walked into our small student apartment, there was an unusual silence in the room.
- “What’s the trouble?” I asked.
- “Matthew has something he wants to tell you,” Pat said.
- “Matt, what do you have to tell me?” He was quietly playing with his toys in the corner of the room, trying very hard not to hear me. “Matt,” I said a little louder, “do you have something to tell me?”
- He stopped playing, but for a moment didn’t look up. Then these two enormous, tear-filled brown eyes turned toward me, and with the pain only a five-year-old can know, he said, “I didn’t mind Mommy tonight, and I spoke back to her.” With that he burst into tears, and his entire little body shook with grief. A childish indiscretion had been noted, a painful confession had been offered, the growth of a five-year-old was continuing, and loving reconciliation could have been wonderfully underway.
- Everything might have been just terrific—except for me. If you can imagine such an idiotic thing, I lost my temper. It wasn’t that I lost it with Matt—it was with a hundred and one other things on my mind; but he didn’t know that, and I wasn’t disciplined enough to admit it. He got the whole load of bricks.
- I told him how disappointed I was and how much more I thought I could have expected from him. I sounded like the parental pygmy I was. Then I did what I had never done before in his life—I told him that he was to go straight to bed and that I would not be in to say his prayers with him or to tell him a bedtime story. Muffling his sobs, he obediently went to his bedside, where he knelt—alone—to say his prayers. Then he stained his little pillow with tears his father should have been wiping away.

- ...My pillow was now stained, whether with perspiration or tears I do not know. I threw off the covers and ran to the little metal camp cot that was my son's bed. There on my knees and through my tears I cradled him in my arms and spoke to him while he slept. I told him that every dad makes mistakes but that they don't mean to. I told him it wasn't his fault I had had a bad day. I told him that when boys are five or fifteen, dads sometimes forget and think they are fifty. I told him that I wanted him to be a small boy for a long, long time, because all too soon he would grow up and be a man and wouldn't be playing on the floor with his toys when I came home. I told him that I loved him and his mother and his sister more than anything in the world and that whatever challenges we had in life we would face them together. I told him that never again would I withhold my affection or my forgiveness from him, and never, I prayed, would he withhold them from me. I told him I was honored to be his father and that I would try with all my heart to be worthy of such a great responsibility.---Jeffry R. Holland (Within the Clasp of Your Arms)

We need Christ to enable us in families

- “Thus, the enabling and strengthening aspect of the Atonement helps us to see and to do and to become good in ways that we could never **recognize** or **accomplish** with our limited mortal capacity. I testify and witness that the enabling power of the Savior’s Atonement is real. Without that strengthening power of the Atonement, I could not stand before you this morning.”



Elder Bednar’s first
General Conference address

Principle 3: Just save the relationship

- Speaking of her mother-in-law, Kathleen H. Hinckley writes: “When I called her for advice, she verbalized something I would say over and over to myself for many years to come, ‘Just save the relationship.’ I believe those words are the most simple and powerful parenting principle I have ever learned.” Marjorie Pay Hinckley

Principle 4: Parenting helps us become



- “Rather than wonder what you might have done wrong in the premortal life to be so deserving [of a child who tests your patience], you might consider the more challenging child a blessing and opportunity to become Godlike yourself”
Elder Robbins

- “A successful parent is one who has loved, one who has sacrificed, and one who has cared for, taught, and ministered to the needs of a child. If you have done all of these and your child is still wayward or troublesome or worldly, it could well be that you are, nevertheless, a successful parent. Perhaps there are children who have come into the world that would challenge any set of parents under any set of circumstances. Likewise, perhaps there are others who would bless the lives of, and be a joy to, almost any father or mother.” Howard W. Hunter

- “Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of—throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace” C. S. Lewis

Principle 5: Figure out a good balance between limits and autonomy

◦ “Setting limits to what a child can do means to that child that you love and respect him.” – Spencer W. Kimball

- “My mother taught me some basic philosophies of rearing children. One is that you have to trust children. I tried hard never to say “no” if I could possibly say “yes.” I think that worked well because it gave my children the feeling that I trusted them and they were responsible to do the best they could.” Marjorie Pay Hinckley

Principle 6: Be present

◦ In family relationships
love is really spelled ***t-i-
m-e, time.***

◦ Dieter F. Uchtdorf