

**Antelope Springs
Basic Parenting Class
Session 10
Introduction to Discipline**

*“The most serious challenge facing our culture is building back into our personal relationships and lifestyles affirmation for the value of human beings. Our children sit in crowded classrooms where the teacher does most of the talking and they feel no affirmation for their value as a unique individual. They go home at night to parents who are frustrated, burned out and tired from a day on the job. **The result is a race of children who have not been listened to, taken seriously, or affirmed as needed individuals. As long as children believe that they are insignificant,** there will continue to be chemically dependent, anorexic, suicidal children. We need people who are capable of validating and affirming people as valuable human beings. . . we are literally dying because of this little factor.”*

Stephen Glenn

Agenda

1. Review Listening basics, listening dyad exercise
2. Assertiveness, “I-Message” components
 - a. I feel _____ (insert an emotion)
 - b. When you _____ (describe behavior)
 - c. Because _____ (logic/rationale)
3. Cooperation enhancing techniques for families
4. Conflict resolution, problem solving techniques
 - a. Identify the problem
 - b. Brainstorm possible options/solutions
 - c. Explore a few options
 - d. Decide on a framework/plan of action
 - e. Set a time for review/update on the situation
5. Introduction to discipline
 - a. Discipline versus punishment
 - b. Obstacles to effective discipline
 - c. Basic techniques
 - d. Application

Steps to More Effective Discipline #1

1. Ask the question “**Whose problem is it?**” Determine the answer by two indicators,
 - a) Who has the highest emotional level?
 - b) Who is moving toward whom?

If you are angry and following your child/youth around the problem is yours. . . time to express and possibly discipline. If your child/youth is approaching you and is upset, chances are the problem is theirs. . . time to reflectively listen, explore alternatives and support. (Don't jump in and solve the problem for them, learn to support without stealing their experience)

2. **Ask if the child/youth's behavior is really misbehavior or just inappropriate behavior.** Misbehavior has 3 components that differentiate it from inappropriate or “trying on” behavior.

- a) Occurs in a pattern, repeats
- b) Breaks an agreement, rule, norm, law, etc
- c) Bothers you

3. **If you determine the behavior is just inappropriate behavior you may want to IGNORE, teach or talk with the child/youth about it.** Ignoring is usually the best choice because the chances of reinforcing the behavior are minimized.

4. If you determine that the behavior is actually misbehavior then you may want to consciously choose either natural or logical consequences. The following steps may be helpful.

FOR LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES:

A) **Be assertive with an I - statement** or other message that doesn't USE anger, shame, guilt etc. You can be very direct without emotionally leveraging the child/youth.

B) **WAIT** (this will vary depending on the behavior)

C) If the behavior persists then you may want to use **logical consequences**.

Give a choice, such as,

“Do you want to. . . (Insert desired behavior). . . or . . . (insert the consequence).” An example might be, “Do you want to be home by the agreed upon curfew time or would you like to lose the use of the car for a few days?”

D) To be effective the consequence **MUST** have 3 components

- 1) Must be logically linked to the behavior
- 2) Must be enforceable
- 3) Must have impact

If all three components are present your chances of being effective skyrocket. . . if you are experiencing a lack of effectiveness you are probably missing one or more of the components.

FOR NATURAL CONSEQUENCES:

You allow others/nature to teach your child. This works well when it really isn't your business or you don't want to stir in elements of a power struggle between you and your child.

Steps to More Effective Discipline #2 (Flowchart)

1. Ask the Question, "Who has the problem?" (You determine the answer by 2 indicators, 1) who has the highest emotional level and 2) who is moving toward whom?

Your Problem

2. Misbehavior or Inappropriate?

Misbehavior must have 3 components

- a) is in a pattern
- b) breaks an agreement, rule, law, etc
- c) bothers you

For Inappropriate behavior;

- a) ignore
- b) teach
- c) talk it over

Their Problem

- 2. Reflective Listening
- 3. Explore Alternatives
- 4. Commit to Action
- 5. Review
- 6. Divide areas of support

3. If it is misbehavior then you can either let Natural Consequences take care of it, or you may want to use Logical Consequences.

Natural Consequences

- a. You **do nothing**
- b. Allow others/agencies/nature to teach
- c. Help process when approached
- d. Do not buffer children from consequences
- e. DO NOT USE if physical danger level is high

Logical Consequences

- a. Be assertive with an I statement or such
- b. Wait (time depends on situation)
- c. Give a choice
Do you want to, (desired behavior)
Or . . . (consequence)
- d. **Consequence must have 3 components**

- 1. Must have **Impact**
- 2. Must be **Enforceable**
- 3. Must be **Logical**

e. Follow through with the process
WITHOUT USING ANGER

Additional Keys

- 1. Be both firm and kind
- 2. Try to be a responsible parent, not a "good parent" (enabling)
- 3. Become more consistent
- 4. Separate deed from doer
- 5. Encourage independence
- 6. Avoid pity
- 7. Refuse to be concerned about what others think
- 8. Recognize who owns the problem
- 9. Talk less, act more
- 10. Refuse to either fight or give in
- 11. Let all children share responsibility (treat them as a group when possible and don't listen to tattling)

Punishment and Discipline

One of the keys to being more effective in working with children is to understand clearly the differences between punishment and discipline. One way to help understand these concepts is to at least consider the idea that punishment and rewards are opposite sides of the same coin, whereas discipline and encouragement are sides of an entirely different coin.

Contrasting Characteristics

Punishment/Rewards

1. Externally reinforced (anger, guilt, shame or with rewards “control thru seduction”)
2. Produces dependency and thus hostility
3. Promotes ego esteem – task related
4. Emotionally leveraged (see 1)
5. Produces distance in relationships
6. Short term results – long term?
7. Doesn’t address real problems
8. Focus is on who is in charge
9. Heavy emphasis on compliance
10. Promotes competition/vertical interaction
11. Only works as long as the rewarder/punisher has the power to dispense
12. Produces externalized people
13. A sense of incompleteness – insatiable
14. The world is dangerous/unpredictable
I must be careful and on guard
15. A sense of “out of control”
16. Diminished interest in tasks
17. “Adversarial world” dog eat dog

Discipline/Encouragement

1. Internally reinforced
is this good for me/others?
2. Produces self sufficiency
3. Promotes self esteem
4. Structure supported
5. Produces intimacy
6. Long term results
7. Focus is on the core issue
8. Focus is on being effective
9. Emphasis is on relations
10. Promotes cooperation/level
11. Concepts are integrated so works w/o external props
12. “Internal compass”
13. Peaceful, a sense of safety
14. Situations may be unsafe,
but I can react effectively
15. A sense of order
16. Interest in tasks (intrinsic)
17. Life is good/challenging

“If people are good only because they fear punishment, and hope for reward, then we are a sorry lot indeed.”

Albert Einstein

*“While you may understand the emotions underlying your child’s misbehavior; **this IS NOT THE TIME for empathy.** Emotion Coaching to address the child’s feelings that may have led to the misbehavior can be postponed. **Right now it’s time to state unequivocally that you think that your child’s actions were wrong and why you feel that way. Expressing your feelings of anger and disappointment (in a nonderogatory manner) is appropriate. It is also appropriate to talk about your values.**”*

John Gottman

Raising An Emotionally Intelligent Child