

# PARENTING OVERVIEW

## **Concepts of STEP\* Parenting Approaches**

(\*Systematic Training for Effective Parenting)

The following are basic tenets, or beliefs, of **Adlerian Psychology**, (from Alfred Adler) which form the backbone of this particular parenting approach. STEP is still the most widely used parenting program and arguably the most effective approach to contemporary parenting. The concepts are based on a foundation of respect and love. STEP is also unique in that it is very universal to different cultures, races, religions, socio-economic groups and ages. This program has been translated into many other languages and enjoys success worldwide.

1. **Respect** for each other, manifested in both physical behaviors and verbal interaction.
2. Keeping the “**business**” of discipline separate from the love/friendship of the relationship.
3. All **behavior is purposeful** or goal oriented. An example of this are the goals of misbehavior: (attention, power, revenge and appearing disabled)
4. Each one of us has **three main goals** that we are involved in throughout our lives;
  - a) to **belong**, b) to be **unique and different**, c) to have **purpose and/or meaning**The ways in which we work on accomplishing these goals are called our **lifestyle priorities**. These will generally fall within the following categories; a) comfort seeking, b) pleasing, c) controlling others, d) control of self, e) superiority, f) victim, g) martyr
5. Our **lifestyle priorities** are fashioned out of our **internal beliefs**, which in turn are produced by influences such as; a) birth order, b) genetics/physiological factors, c) parenting styles, d) environmental factors, e) family values, f) implied family rules
6. **Misbehavior** occurs when children (adults) **feel discouraged** (without options or hope) or when they have been **pampered**. (Provided service to the point that they are dependent and crippled emotionally)
7. Our job as parents is to work ourselves out of a job by encouraging responsible, independent behavior in our children. (**DEPENDENCY ALWAYS PRODUCES HOSTILITY**)
8. Our belief system influences how we see and experience the world. (**The only reality is our perception**)
9. Our **belief system is produced by inner sentences or scripts** that we receive from other family members and significant others. We then customize and elaborate on those scripts to produce our view of the world.
10. **All persons are equally important and deserve respect and dignity** in any interaction we

may have with them. Their deservedness is not the issue. . . we choose to behave that way because of who we are.

11. **The way in which we remember incidents is designed to gather evidence** for our view of the world. No one has the ability to experience “reality” without a bias. That bias occurs due to the filters of our perceptions. The meaning that we attach determines our experience, not the experience.
12. **Punishment and Discipline** are two very different processes, **they are not different names for the same thing.**
13. **We treat others in some of the same ways that we treat ourselves.**
14. **Anger is usually a mask for fear and/or hurt.**
15. **Personal fulfillment can only come from personal responsibility.** “Owning our own stuff” is the fastest way to relief, inner peace and clarity.
16. The most effective way to have impact on another person’s behavior is to look in the mirror, to alter our own behaviors and responses. **WE CAN NOT CHANGE OR CONTROL ANYONE ELSE. We may have influence, but we can not change or fix anyone else.**
17. **Love and kindness are always more encouraging to others than aggression and demanding behaviors.**
18. **Punishment and anger DO NOT MOTIVATE** effectively or encourage others to change. When those techniques are used, incredibly high emotional prices are paid.
19. **Close versus Right.** Would I rather be close or right to my children? (Spouse, friends, etc.)
20. **Structure, supervision and encouragement** are the most important tools for effective parenting techniques.
21. **Rewards and Punishments** are different aspects of the same dynamic. When used they will typically bring about the same result.