

## Parenting with Love & Logic

Love and Logic is basically a process by which children grow through their mistakes and learn from the consequences of their choices.

There are 2 basic rules in Love & Logic:

**Adults set firm limits in loving ways without anger, lecture, threats or repeated warnings.**

Set limits using enforceable statements, regard mistakes as learning opportunities, and resist the temptation to nag.

**When children misbehave and cause problems, adults hand these problems back in loving ways.**

Provide empathy before describing consequences, use few words and more loving actions, delay consequences when necessary, and give kids the gift of owning and solving their problems.

### The Foundation

#### **The Love & Logic Process**

- **Shared Control** – Gain control by giving away the control you don't need (and often the control you didn't have to begin with).
- **Shared Thinking/Decision-Making** – Provide opportunities for the child to do the greatest amount of thinking/decision making.
- **Equal Shares of Consequences with Empathy** – An absence of anger causes a child to think and learn from his/her mistakes.
- **Maintain the Child's Self-Concept** – Increased self-concept leads to improved behavior and improved achievement.

#### **The 3 Styles of Parenting**

- **The Helicopter Parent** – This kind of parent hovers, rescues, and protects their child.  
They send messages like:
  - “You're fragile and can't make it without me.”
  - “You need me to run interference.”
  - “You need me to protect you.”
  - “You can't make it in life without me.”
- **The Drill Sergeant Parent** – This kind of parent demands that their children do it now, their way, OR ELSE!!  
They send messages like:
  - “You can't think.”
  - “I have to do your thinking for you, boss you around, and tell you what to do.”
  - “You aren't capable of making it in life.”

- **The Consultant Parent** - This kind of parent is always around to give advice and let the child make the decision, with the idea that they will let the child make as many mistakes as possible when the price tag is affordable.

They send messages like:

- “You’d better do your own thinking because the quality of your life has a lot to do with your decisions”.

#### **The 4 Steps to Responsibility**

- Give the child a task they can handle.
- Hope they blow it.
- Let equal parts of empathy and consequences do the teaching.
- Give the same task again.

#### **The 5 Steps to Guiding Children to Own and Solve Their Problems**

- **Empathy** - “How sad.” “I bet that hurts.”
- **Send the Power Message** - “What do you think you’re going to do?”
- **Offer Choices** - “Would you like to hear what other kids have tried?”
  - At this point, offer a variety of choices that range from bad to good. It’s usually best to start out with the poor choices. Each time a choice is offered, go on to step four, forcing the child to state the consequences in his/her own words. This means you will be going back and forth between steps 3 and 4.
- **Have the child state the consequence** - “And how will that work?”
- **Give permission for the child to either solve the problem or not solve the problem** - “Good luck. I hope it works out.”
  - Don’t worry. If the child is fortunate enough to make a poor choice, he/she may have a double learning opportunity.

#### **Consequences Vs. Punishment**

- Consequences expressed with empathy will place a child in the thinking/decision-making mode and the problem will become the bad guy, not the parent.
- Punishment usually elicits an emotional response, a desire on the part of the child to become sneaky rather than more responsible, and the parent becomes the bad guy, not the problem.

### **Tips and Tricks of the Trade**

#### **Enforceable Statements**

- Always say what you are going to do, not what you think the child should do.
- Only speak from your perspective because you are the only one you can control.
- Make sure you can actually enforce the statement you are making.

### **Delay the Consequences**

- Delaying the consequences gives you time to think of a good one and allows you the chance to get ideas from other people and get the support you will need to carry out your plan.
- When a problem arises and you need to delay the consequences, simply say: “Oh no. This is sad. I’m going to have to do something about this. But not now, later. Try not to worry about it.”
- Let the child think they’ve gotten away with it, and then make a plan with help from others and carry out the plan if the child refuses to solve the problem on their own.

### **Give Choices**

- Give as many choices as you can while the price tag is small so you can gain control when the stakes are higher.
- When giving choices, begin with phrases like:
  - “What would be best for you...”
  - “Would you rather...”
  - “Feel free to...”
  - “You can either...”
- Only give choices you can be incredibly happy about. Kids need to believe (whether it’s true or not) that your life will go on and you’ll be happy no matter which choice they make.
- Never give a choice only after they have argued with your original decision. This shows the child that they can manipulate you.

### **Love & Logic One-Liners**

- Use one-liners when an explanation is either not necessary or it will only cause an argument.
- Don’t be afraid to be a broken record.
- Try these one-liners. Pick one or two that work for you and try them out.
  - “Nice try.”
  - “Probably so.”
  - “I love you too much to argue.”
  - “Could be.”
  - “It probably seems that way to you.”
  - “Aren’t you glad I don’t believe that?”
  - “Hope you get over that feeling. Love you lots.”

### **Misc. Tips**

- The question we want our children to ask themselves is “How is the next decision I make going to affect me?”
- “Kids who have parents who make all decisions for them don’t learn how to make their own decisions. Then, when they need to make a decision, they make it not based on what is right but

on who is going to find out, how that person will react, and how they can hide it from that person.” (Randy’s Story – The Lifesaver Kit (cd’s))

- Parents have a choice in how to deal with any situation. They can rant and rave, give in and take away the child’s problem, or they can allow the consequences to sink in, which will in turn create a life-long lesson.
- Kids need to feel they have an investment in something in order to take it seriously.
- Kids need to understand that trust is about making and keeping agreements. The more agreements that are kept, the more trust is built. The more agreements that are not kept, the more trust is broken down and the child realizes just how many times a day a parent can either trust or not trust them.
- Remember to pick your battles wisely. Not many things are worth fighting over. If you choose to fight, you better win.
- Never argue with your kids. You won’t win.
- Don’t nag or remind. Tell them once. They are smart enough to remember if it’s important to them.
- Talk about things your child likes to do and explain exactly what you need to see from him/her in order to gain access to those things (this happens when a misbehavior has occurred).
- Allow a child to have the power to gain access to the things that are important to him/her. They will choose the most important things to them. Don’t choose for them.
- **Preserve the relationship at all cost.** Make the problem the behavior not the child.
- When you need to talk to a child about their behavior, do it in calm waters when everything is going fine. You can ask them to come up with solutions of what should happen when misbehavior occurs. Have a back-up plan in case they don’t follow through with their end of the bargain when a problem arises.
- When using the 5steps, enforceable statements, delayed consequences, and one-liners, do your part and walk away. Don’t hang around for what could turn into an argument. Go back to what you were doing to show that your life goes on and you’re not worried about it.
- **Smile!!** You choose whether you are happy or sad. Consequences said with a smile are much easier to swallow.