

Parenting Tip - The Value of Routines

Submitted by Jan Burt

This month's parenting tip has to do with routines, why they work well in families, and what can happen when we don't have good routines! If you enjoy this parenting tip, the book "Good and Angry" by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller has lots more wonderful parenting information. You can purchase the book online at www.biblicparenting.org.

We Fall Into Patterns

A busy father comes home from work hoping to relax with his wife and enjoy his children. Instead, he walks into a land mine of relational issues. Children are bickering and Mom is frazzled. Even the dog has retreated to a quieter room in the house. Likewise, a mom comes home from work wanting to share a couple of interesting stories with her family only to find that, instead, everyone wants a piece of her. When you hit those challenging moments in family life, how do you respond? You probably have certain routines you use in conflict situations or when you're stressed or upset. One mom tells us, "I call it my 'take charge mode.' I just start taking control of everything, giving orders, solving problems, and managing people. Unfortunately, I don't always do it in a gracious way. I become more interested in reestablishing my authority than in building relationships." A dad admitted, "When things get tense in my home, I retreat. I know that's not the best but it's the way I've always responded to conflict."



When things get tense in your home, step back for a moment and evaluate the patterns that have developed. One of the ways to change those patterns is to see the routines that you use when you're under pressure. It's amazing what happens when just one person begins to change. A whole family can change a pattern, but it all starts when one person decides to relate a little differently.

We all know that children function best with routines in their schedule. They also benefit from learning good relational routines. If you will take the time to teach children how to respond well to instruction or correction and then practice those healthy routines, you will not only make family life easier but you will teach your children something they will use in relationships for the rest of their lives.

This parenting tip comes from the book, "[Good and Angry: Exchanging Frustration for Character in You and Your Kids](#)" by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN.

You Are Invited To Attend:

The children of Live Oaks will present The Living Nativity Christmas Program on Sunday, Dec. 16th at 10am.

Please come and be blessed by this special play and support our children and the hard work they have put into this production for our church. Invite your friends and family to attend with you as well!



Comfortably Calloused?

By Ashley Callstrom

I've been thinking a lot about what it means to be comfortable lately. I think that the value of comfort is too high in our culture; comfort is, after all, some part of pleasure. But what happens when we mistake comfort for numbness? When simply not feeling pain is thought to be a good thing? All too often, I think we tend to make comfort a goal and we rarely stop to think of the consequences.



Today I picked up my custom-made shoe inserts; because it turns out I have these really crummy feet. "Crummy" meaning that I have high arches and it often feels like my weight is supported by about 3 square inches of foot. As a result, I have incredibly thick calluses. Big deal, right? Having a callus on your foot probably isn't going to hurt you too much, given its function. But, let's flip to emotional and spiritual callousness. We become hardened as a means of protection, which may even be beneficial at the time. But once the thing (person or situation) that caused the callus is gone--then how do we respond? That callousness is not going to vanish on its own. Our hardened spirit has become part of who we are, and all too often we do not recognize its unnaturalness. Quite often, valuable time is lost before we even realize that our thick extra layers are unnecessary. We become too busy in trying to grow and progress, that we do not realize we cannot go forward without removing our hardened shells. Removing the physical callus is probably less difficult than removing other forms. And, unlike band-aids, calluses aren't formed overnight and they cannot simply be ripped off, nor is it likely that the original surface conditions ever be fully recovered.

Comfort. It's strange to think that we become comfortable with our calluses. It might be more accurately called "protected," but what is the healthy amount of risk, or protection? But do we realize our callousness keeps us from a wealth of opportunities? Sure, we may not be able to feel as much pain or pressures of the world, but we also miss out on the all-encompassing love and compassion of our God. We cannot truly feel His love nor do we have the ability to love others the way God intends. The more hardened I am, the more likely it is that I do not even feel my callousness. I pray that the Holy Spirit will make us each acutely aware of the harmful ways we've let life thicken our skin. He alone knows how to effectively soften and renew us. It may not be comfortable, but it's good, right and worthwhile.

December's Events!

Please mark your calendar with these very important and special events as we prepare for the Christmas Holiday:

1st Sunday of Advent: Dec. 2
 All Church Christmas Dinner: Dec. 2, 5-7:30 PM
 Haag Open House: Dec. 15 6-8:30 PM
 Nativity Worship Service: Dec. 16, 10 AM
 All-Church Caroling: Dec. 19 6:30 PM
 Church Services at Hotel: Dec. 23, 10 AM &
 Dec. 24, 6 PM

A New Look for The Outer Leaf

By Chris & Janette Dillon

After highlighting families in the newsletter each month for the past 3 years and 7 months, this month marks our final family.

Beginning with the January edition, we will be changing formats to a one page, double-sided newsletter. Should you have some suggestions and/or ideas for things we could occasionally highlight on the back side of Kelley's article, please see Chris or Janette Dillon.

