



Welcome to The Parent Program Week 2 (15 weeks)




Hello dear parents.

Welcome to Week Two. I hope you enjoyed Week One and feel great about all the things you like and love in your child, however big or small.

This week we will continue talking about and practicing with new perspectives on all situations you can encounter. As mentioned last week, this is the core of the first part of the program. If we can look at a situation from many different, constructive and positive angles, we will not react as quickly in a defensive way. We have more opportunity to think/feel about how we would like to act instead of react.


The Big Picture Parent

The Big Picture Parent

-  ***Will this still be important to me/you in 1, 5, 25 years?***
-  ***How will what I do now affect our life long relationship?***
-  ***How will this affect your learning, self confidence & self esteem in the long run?***

When looking at situations through the eyes of the Big Picture Parent, the perspective becomes anywhere from this year to a life time.

Is this still important in 1, 5, 25 years? This question alone can change how you react in many situations. Because most of it isn't that important. And what is important should get the attention it deserves.

-  *If I get upset about how my child's room is messy it is valuable to think about how important this issue really is. Is it important enough to get upset about? Or is it something they could learn but is my reaction wasted energy because it not THAT big of a deal? Maybe it is important, because your child needs to learn to get organized and you had made a clear agreement. Maybe your child lied about doing their task.*

Remember that not confronting your child when it is necessary can also have effects in the long run you want to avoid. As much as going into a confrontation unnecessarily can do damage in others. Don't sweat the small stuff. And know when to act, because you are now clear about what IS important.



How will what I do now affect our life long relationship? What I do now can affect your relationship with your child for a long time. Kids remember, and try out behaviors to see whether their parents are there for them. If I want my child to talk to me as a teenager does it help that I don't listen to them now? Our behavior today impacts the future. So if we get tired, maybe we can look at the big picture and do things differently than when we think it is just about today and that it won't have a lasting effect.

"My child is running around all day asking questions and I get tired of answering them. I just ignore my child at some point. The next day it happens again and I tune out even sooner. The next day she asks me questions and then tells me that her friend's parents are getting divorced. Will we get divorced too? But I had tuned her out already. She goes to bed with her fear inside her. The next day she doesn't ask me any questions. When she is 14 her friend offers her a joint. She doesn't know what to do. She doesn't ask me. Because she has learned from me, that I am tired of her questions and have tuned her out."

Listening and responding to questions or what you see will not always be easy. By being straightforward, fair and open you may not get a happy reaction from your teenager. But when they are older, they may realize that you will always give them a straightforward, fair and open opinion. And they might need that then. As much as they needed it earlier, but lacked the appreciation you would have loved to get.

"Most of us talk about our parents, the issues we have or haven't resolved for many, many years after we have left home. Often until after they die. When our parents get older and need us, old resentments come out of nowhere to stop us from loving them freely. We can't communicate with open minds, with love and acceptance, maybe because we didn't feel that from them? Is that what you want to create with your kids?"

How will this affect my child's learning, self confidence and self esteem in the long run? How I react to you now can affect how you learn or feel about yourself for a long time. Most of us know of a reaction people had to something we did, how we dressed. This can be negative or positive.





- "A good friend of mine loved volleyball in school. He played the sport with passion and dedication. He had a coach who he looked up to. One day his coach said that he would never be good enough for the school rep team. He stopped playing volleyball and had a hard time doing anything with a passion again. He had accepted the remark the coach made for one as true and furthermore he let it impact him way beyond the sport. He had heard "you will never be good enough" and let that sink in, because he respected the coach. And he still remembers the comment as if it was yesterday."*
- "You can do anything you want, you can be anything you want, if you really set your mind to it" Many "stars", whether in entertainment, sport or career, remember being told that. By their mother, their father, or the passerby who saw them sitting in a slump. The message came through so clearly, that it washed away all the negative self images and limitations they had put up for themselves."*

By being conscious of what we say, how we say it, we can prevent the negative impact we can have on our children's learning. By giving them realistic, positive (!) feedback and encouragement to go for it and give it their all, we can stimulate the positive, the drive to come alive in our child. We have to repeat the positive a lot more, because sometimes one negative remark can have a lasting impact even when we don't know who or what the remark was from or about.




Parents are the strongest influence in a child's life. We just have to work hard at keeping that positive image alive. They may pick up great reinforcement from someone else, but the ground work, the preparation comes from you, their parent. .

The Positive Parent

-  ***I see the glass half full, the nice side of people and the good in situations***
-  ***I see my child's testing the boundaries as learning, not as undermining my authority***
-  ***I always look at the potential and at what can be achieved.***
-  ***I reach for the stars because that IS the potential***

The Positive Parent sees the glass half full, the nice side of people and the good in situations. If you see a storm coming, you can fear its power or you can rejoice in the water and the wonderful wind that is to come. The Positive Parent will always look to find the positive AND prepare to deal with its power.

Look ahead with a positive view, **not being naïve or blind**, but wanting to see the positive side of people, events and what comes at them from all sides.

 *Do you see that boy with the nose ring and the black clothes, the hair in a multi-colored set of spikes? Who do you see? The uncertain boy who is trying to see what fits with him? The cute boy who spends an hour fixing his hair? The young man who is not satisfied with how the rest is going through life and tries to find his own way for himself, while trying to make a statement in how he is dressed? If so, then you see through the eyes of the Positive Parent.*

I see my child's testing the boundaries as learning, not as undermining my authority. When we are tired we can easily see what our child does as aimed against us, challenging our authority or just pushing the boundaries to get their way . What our children do is aimed at learning. They learn all the time, from the moment they wake up to the moment they fall asleep. This learning is creating patterns of experiences. Is there food, will you say you love me, can I make you laugh by being naughty? What do you do when I get you angry, do you still love me? What will you do when I do things that are way beyond your comfort zone as a parent?

Not all children learn from experience. Children with FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), for example, can be affected in a way that they don't retain lessons. But they will test whether they belong, are loved. They too are not out to get you, they don't even see the consequences, because they too haven't learned from experience.

But other than that, your child is looking for a lesson, so the Positive Parent will try to find out what it is about and help them with that lesson. And you child learns most at the edge of the boundary you set, so be careful to leave some wiggle room before they really push the limits and either get you really angry or might be unsafe.



“The boy is a real thrill seeker and loves to skate. It is winter and the lake is half frozen. He is a lightweight and thinks nothing of skating on thin ice. You have told him to quit doing that or he'll be grounded. His friends push him to go further on the ice and he does, not too far, but further than you said he could. A friend's parent sees him and yells him off the ice (as the friends scatter quickly) and gives you a call about it.

If you see this behavior as not listening to you and challenging your authority, you may miss the point and a learning opportunity for your son. But you see his challenge and how his friends have influence over him. And yes, you ground him (because that is the natural consequence of his behavior) but also talk about how his friends were safe on the land, how he was the one going into danger, not them, for what? Because they said so?

He now can learn at least two things: When I cross the boundary, consequences do follow. And being safe involves following your own SANE judgment, not going of the deep end because someone says so. He would have been the one to drown, as people often do, when the ice breaks. And as a bonus: you mean well, see his safety first and know about how kids challenge each other into unsafe behavior. And being grounded like that, without anger, is way more effective than an angry parent, worried about their kid not listening to them.

I always look at the potential and at what can be achieved. I reach for the stars because that IS the potential. The Positive Parent doesn't look too much at what went wrong, other than to see what we can gain out of that. The Positive Parent does not look to find blame, or to create guilt. The Positive Parent will see a **mistake as a step in learning** and as experience and skill development.

“A child falling from a bike is no big deal in this light, but a natural step in learning. Towards riding the bike. A science project that doesn't work, becomes a project that doesn't work YET.

Don't stop at what is done so far. Because the Positive Parent always looks at the potential, at what can be achieved. They don't see failure, or the inability to learn. They don't judge against a low standard; instead they reach for the stars, because that IS the potential.

Positive Parenting is to me building your child's self-esteem on true achievements, which is NOT giving empty compliments for nothing.

It is focusing on building on those achievements, rather than working from fear, or failure. Avoid just pointing at the words in the spelling test they missed when scoring 23 out 25.

It is setting high expectations based on what you know your child is capable of, not on your own dreams and desires.

“If 10 teams play a tournament, only one can win. Does that mean the rest can't have a good time? If this is so, then 90% of kids will always feel rotten. Why would they play? The Positive Parent will look for what can be seen as good or fun and a learning experience or something that can be improved on next time. On learning the skills step by step. They will focus on ALL having a great time playing.



www.TheParentProgram.com

1 888 379 4222 Info@TheParentProgram.com

When a child encounters a Positive Parent, they meet a person who will look at what is achieved and encourage learning more, rather than see what is not achieved and see failure. They look for the positive angle in whatever happens, so the learning is positive. "You did a great job, let's celebrate and now let's make it even better!" Or: "Sure, that didn't work out so well, what can we do to make it better next time?"

Following are the exercises for this week and two pages with "The Big Picture Parent" and "The Positive Parent". I encourage you to print them out and hang them up on your fridge or another central place.



The Parent Program Week 2 Exercises

Attitude: Start the day and end the day with thinking about something you like about your child. Before you do the exercises think about how you like something today or in general about your child. Something they did, said, how they looked, a feeling you had. Anything positive will help you get into a mood that will help you embrace learning for and with your child

Learning:

Your learning investment: Input = output.

The more you practice, the more you experience: the deeper your learning will be. When you speak/write about what you are learning and share experiences with others, you will retain more and increase your understanding. When you complete it with celebrating your successes on a daily basis, you will feed your brain the positive recognition it needs to truly change behavior.

1. The minimum: Once a week reading the email and listening to the audio file (together about 30 minutes), do the minimum daily exercises of 10-15 minutes.
2. The little extras: Take the time to reflect during the day on your thoughts and actions as related to the content and exercise you did today. Hang up the print out sheets and look at them. Answer your kids' questions about them.
3. The sauce on top: Sharing: Find a buddy, create a learning community, by sharing with others, either your partners in parenting or others who are or want to learn. A supportive learning community increases your learning. We all need that little boost from time to time. Parents at the courses enjoyed sharing with others as much as the course itself.
4. The full meal deal: Creating positive memories by writing 3-5 successes every day. Get a little notebook to enjoy and, look back at when you feel less confident and as a memory of your learning, write down stories.

Exercises:

✂ **Every day:** Think of something you like about your child at the start of the day and at the end of the day so you embrace the whole day in positive thoughts about your child. Before you start the exercise, reflect on how you like something in you child.

✂ **Day 1.** 10-15 minutes: **The Big Picture Parent.** Think of a situation in which what seemed so important to you at the time didn't look the same later. How do you think about that now? Would you still act the same way? Now if you think about what looks really important to you right now, could it be that this changes with time, too? Is there anything your child sees as really important now, and may think of very differently about that later? If something comes up today, try to use an example of how you see things different now than years ago. (Like friends who seemed important in high school but are out of sight now)

(Extras) As you go through today, just take a few moments to consider: is what I am doing now important in the big picture? Is my energy best spent in this way? If there are moments of friction: think/feel whether this would still be important looking back in 1, 5, 25 years from now and review your actions from that point.

✂ **Day 2.** 10-15 minutes. **The Big Picture Parent "How will what I do now affect our life long relationship?":** What is really important to you in your relationship with your child? How do you want your relationship to look in 1, 5, 25 years? If you think about your relationship in 25 years, what do you need to do today to help that relationship grow? Can you remember actions or conversations with your parents that affected



your relationship for a long time, both negatively and positively? Today talk with your child about how you both hope something will look in the future. If possible talk about your future relationship. (Like how you hope that they will ask for help, call when they need to, and always when they need to be picked up and NOT to get in a car with a drunk driver even if they have done something you wouldn't like).

(Extras) When you speak to your child or act directly or indirectly, keep in mind how you would want your relationship to be in 1, 5, 25 years from now. Remember that this is not meant to hold you back from being strict when strict is needed! Strict with love, without anger can be very necessary. Kind strictness can be a great tool in life, for yourself and others. Children need boundaries. Stepping back and not getting upset over the small stuff can help today, tomorrow and for a life time.

Day 3. 10-15 minutes. **The Big Picture Parent, How will this affect your learning, self confidence and self esteem in the long run?** Can you remember moments of great impact in your own learning/self confidence/self esteem? How do you remember them? Fondly, with pain, having learned from them? I know you want to affect your child's learning/self confidence/self esteem positively. Can you see the effects from what you did/said a year ago? How can you act today that will affect your child's learning/self confidence/self esteem in a positive way? Try to talk about a moment that was defining for you in a positive way, from what you've learned.

(Extras) Today look at how your child learns, is it visual or auditory (taking in what it sees or hears), does it learn by doing or by gathering the facts? Knowing that, how can you best stimulate your child? Can you focus on what works for your child instead of what works for you, how your learning works? Try to use different ways to stimulate your child to find out how they learn best.

Day 4. 10-15 minutes **Today is for you.** Think about something you can do for yourself only. It doesn't matter whether it is 5 minutes or an hour. Whether it is sitting in the sun, reading a book or taking a bath. Whether it is free or costs money. As long as it is for you only. Because you need to take time for you, so you can be the best parent you can be the rest of the day, without resentment, without feeling life is for others. You deserve it. Take it. And tell your children about what you're doing: I am taking time for me, it's important!

(Extras) Today, whenever the urge comes up, stop, take a deep breath and look around you. See what is there for you. Do you have food? Clothing? A roof over your head? Loved ones around? Can you see the light in others' eyes? Do you have a special talent, skill, gift? And appreciate what is already. Not what isn't. What is. And take a few minutes to count those blessings before you move on again.

Day 5. 10-15 minutes. **The Positive Parent sees the glass half full, the nice side of people and the good in situations.** How do you look at things, events, your child's marks? Do you see the part not done before you recognize what was done? Do you



see the kindness in the old bag-lady's eyes? Do you see the streets filled with wonderful people seeking happiness? Do you see the rewards in learning to get up after you fall?

Talk with your child about one situation in which you did see the glass half full, one in which you saw the nice side of someone and the good in a difficult situation.

(Extras) Today try to look at the positive side of everything, everyone and every situation. When you drift off into less positive thoughts, just let them be and refocus on the positive. Give yourself a pat on the back every time you can turn around and move towards positive thinking again.

Day 6. 10-15 minutes. **I see my child's testing the boundaries as learning, not as undermining my authority.** This can be a very challenging shift at times. I.E. when my child steals money, when he/she does things I clearly said they could not. When their room is a mess the next day, again. Think of situations in which your child challenged a boundary you set for them. Can you see how they could learn from your action when they do? Are there natural consequences, do you follow through? Think of how you set boundaries: do they leave wiggle room before you get truly upset? Can your child experiment without fear of an adult who reacts heavily (out of their own issues, anger, feelings of rejection, lack of respect)? Today think of one boundary you could make clearer and less on the edge of your own comfort zone and see how you can implement that boundary, what they can learn if they cross the boundary, with a clear action. And if possible talk about it with your child, so they know.

(Extras) Throughout today look at everything your child does as learning. Your boundaries are their building blocks in learning and so are the consequences. Plan consequences, so you won't react by building the level of consequences up (from half an hour to "the rest of your life in your room") because they challenge you)

Day 7. 10-15 minutes. **I always look at the potential and at what can be achieved. I reach for the stars because that IS the potential.** Think about yourself. What talents do you have, skills, special interests? Think of small steps you can take to reach a bit further with your skills. How can you apply them, how can you reap rewards from them?

Talk about this with your child today: what is their dream, their potential? What do they think, feel? Can you help them see their own greatness inside? It doesn't matter what it is, whether it is a rare talent or an everyday skill: enjoy the richness of it in seeing it, how useful it is to your child and to the world.

(Extras) Look at everything today from the perspective of a step towards reaching for the stars, the best, the most wonderful. See how you can turn learning from a fall into a step toward glory as an ice skater, how sowing a sock, hammering a nail, jumping on a skate board is a part of the path to fulfillment of the dream, whatever that is. And encourage your child to take the next step. With love, enthusiasm and encouragement.



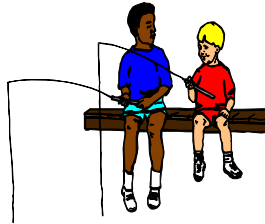
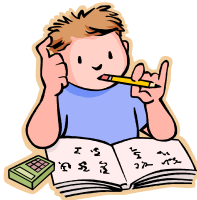
www.TheParentProgram.com

1 888 379 4222 Info@TheParentProgram.com

End of week 2: *Take a few minutes to think about how you have learned this week. Did it work, do you need to change the timing, or how you do things to increase the impact of your potential learning?*



The Big Picture Parent



Will this still be important to me/you in 1, 5, 25 years?



How will what I do now affect our life long relationship?



How will this affect your learning, self confidence & self esteem in the long run?



The Positive Parent



***I see the glass half full,
the nice side of people
and the good in situations***



***I see my child's testing the
boundaries as learning, not as
undermining my authority***



***I always look at the potential
and at what can be achieved.
I reach for the stars because
that IS the potential***