

CONSCIOUS PARENTING IN THE NEW MILLENIUM

By Janet Anakhita StraightArrow © 2005



Children today are born wise and knowing who they are. They need unconditional love and support from their parents. Children need to know that they are listened to and cherished. They need safe reasonable rules to learn to live by. They need our time and attention. There is no place for anything less than honesty and integrity because they are very attuned to both.

Isn't this what we needed as children? Have things changed so much? Why do we still not meet the needs of our children? Because we first need to learn how to parent ourselves, and meet our own needs, so that we can see what others needs are. The pendulum has swung from over controlled parenting filled with rules and harsh punishment to overindulging boundary-less freestyle parenting. Both were extremely harmful, yet one of these styles may be all today's parent knows. Without a model, how do you bring up your child to be a healthy happy human being with a strong sense of self and community?

The bigger question is how can you bring up a healthy balanced child when you are still wounded from your own childhood and life? As I work with families, I find that most parents want to help their children have, what they know as a good life. Yet, parents easily get caught up in the patterns that they themselves have not healed from in their lives, and bring their wounds unknowingly into the family system. Wherever we are lacking or wounded is exactly what you will find illuminated at home. Our families push our buttons. Are you listening to the deeper message and not just the hurt?

There is amazing strength in opening up and clearing ourselves to assist our families and us as we release patterns. Knowing ourselves on the psychological level is not enough. This can be a trap and a merry-go-round until we go deeper to forgive and release the anger and pain underneath the comfort of having mentally accepted our past and our childhood agenda and truly heal. There are much deeper patterns and beliefs that we hold from our childhood that trap us as parents and partners and people.

It is time for us to move into a heart-centered life. Unconditional love is the goal. How can we do this when most of us were brought up to avoid loving and knowing ourselves? We see ourselves through the filter of expectations of parents, friends and spouses as well as school, church and society. Who are we? What makes us feel happy and fulfilled? Are we the roles that we play? Or are we much more?

Take time for yourself and your children. Learn to really listen to them. Who are they? What are their unique gifts? Let go of thinking that they need to fit into a certain model for yourself or society. Each one of us has talents and abilities we are born with to share in the world. Do you encourage your child to accept who they are? Do you encourage your child to explore what makes them happy and fulfilled? Do you model that yourself?

In this fast-paced society we are very busy doing and performing, add kids into that equation and where is our time to attend to our own needs as well as theirs? We live in doing what we think we are supposed to do and be to the point of overriding our ability to really connect to our own basic physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs.

The need to become conscious and take responsibility is important. Chronic depression, pain, illness, divorce, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse and violence are all symptoms of unhappiness and needs not being met. We also have a population of children and parents who have stopped feeling and self-awareness because of the use of prescription drugs to mask it. Being involves feeling, creativity, contentment and excitement for life.

Kids today are so much wiser than we were and need conscious and aware parents. "Indigo Children, The New Kids Have Arrived", is an insightful book by Lee Carroll and Jan Tober. Their studies show how directly related our home situations and outmoded parenting, are to today's major and seeming minor problems. The number of children who are labeled ADD and ADHD, taking drugs, and exhibiting other behavior and learning-oriented problems are the result of the need for healthier foods without preservatives and sugars and fats filled with hormones as well as being honored in their differences and attending to their individual needs as children. Children who recovered from these behaviors and diagnosis found that healing changes within the family system as well as diet helped tremendously.

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Many children do not fit into the outmoded teaching styles that our schools still work with. Most children cannot sit for hours listening to things in ways that do not compute in their brains. They get restless and in trouble or very quiet and do not do the work. Their inner selves rebel to things and people who are not authentic or make sense. As a parent you do have a responsibility to go to the school and see what you can do to help your child. As parents we have to be honest and open to know when our children have learning and behavior problems and be willing to work with them with understanding and compassion as well as working with teachers and the school.

One of the most important times to be available is during the teen-age years, teens need parents to be home for them almost as much as infants do, maybe more. It is during this time that their safety is an issue. They are making adult decisions daily and for their future and they need to know that you can listen without telling them what to do. They may not even want to talk to us, but they do want to know you are there and available and care. If you are, they will call on you when they need you instead of making poor choices built on need for attention, rebellion or fear.

Children are gifts given to us for just a few years to cherish and enjoy. The bonus is that you have lifelong friends and support in your life, if you were there for them while they were growing up. You will also have less heartache as they make better choices because you spent the time valuing them and modeling values. It is time to treat our children as valuable people in our lives. Quality time can be a fallacy used as an excuse to be absent doing what we perceive to be more important. Raising children is the most important job that we have and well worth the time.

What can we do?

Finding the balance is the challenge and the gift. Learning to love yourself, life and the precious people in your life is the first step to healing your family and yourself. Creating a life that works for you and makes you happy that includes room for the children to learn and grow with you is important. Finding ways to spend less money so that you can work less is another key. We find more than enough time when we take the time to re-establish priorities and waste less time doing what is unimportant in the larger scheme of things.

Relax, enjoy, and love. Focus on making life simple and easy and fun! Children are our best teachers; let them help as you learn to live life more fully. Talk to them about things and really listen to them. Kids say the darnedest things, and are usually filled with wisdom and truth.