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Free Your Children: A Guide for Liberty-Loving Parents

by Justin Arman



GUIDE 1.0

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INTRODUCTION

When I was approached by Jeffrey Tucker to write a parenting guide, I was honored to contribute, to offer support for those courageous enough to withdraw their consent to be governed by immorality, and to extend whatever guidance my own experience as a family man and lover of liberty permits. To live free now without asking authority's permission is the only way without paradox. The philosophy of liberty gives us an immutable system of ethics to guide us through our everyday actions. We can use this system to take personal inventory as an important first step toward living free. Do I have the character¹ that a free world requires? If not, then I need to reflect and identify con-

¹ Lawrence Reed's "[Are We Good Enough For Liberty?](#)" Throughout this booklet, every time I mention being good enough for freedom, or having the character that freedom requires, I'm alluding to Dr. Reed's work.



traditions and queue them up for removal as quickly as possible. This is the process of growth through discovery. For parents, this process is vital, because rationality and moral consistency are the only way we can stop the status quo from legitimizing itself in the minds of our children.

This little booklet is not meant to point fingers or to expose government schooling; the goal here is to offer practical tools for creating a powerhouse family. Strong families that choose freedom now will be examples for the rest. When

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enough families decide to stop being answerable to authority, and to start acting on their own authority, freedom will be

Strong family is the antithesis of the state.

realized. Strong family is the antithesis of the state. Though contemplating freedom is wonderful, parenting is not activism.

Parenting is love, and love and happiness are ends in them-



selves. When we become parents, life gets very real, and right and wrong become more than just mental exercises. Our example creates the future, because our actions shape so much of who our children will become.

Out of respect for your time, I only chose to cover what I felt was most significant. We don't need to agree on everything; keep an open mind, and just put what resonates to use. There is no greater wealth than a healthy, happy family.

BREAKING THE MOLD

There is no parenting prescription other than this: know your children as unique individuals. Be on the same team as your spouse. Know yourself. Be principled. Be original.

Writing your own script will liberate you from the everyday bore, and honoring and respecting the uniqueness of the members of your family makes life interesting. We have a tendency to assume our roles, make ends meet, lump our little ones together as “the kids,” and be on with it, without considering the most potent questions that help us find our purpose: Who am I? What do I want to create? How am I going to get there? Every individual in the family, everyone that can speak, should be able to answer these questions or at least reflect on them. Though each family member's path is unique, they meet here: living with clear purpose, creating horizons² of short- to long-term goals, and working backwards from these goals into weekly and daily objectives. Being clear is what helps us prioritize our lives and make necessary arrangements, and clarity gives us the ability to craft individualized curriculums that reflect our child's unique ambitions. This is an ever-changing process with no end; however, as a self-owner, you'll always know what works for your family, regardless of what the experts twaddle.

There is constant pressure for parents to fall in line and assimilate the mainstream way. I believe that much of this stems from our formative years of being indoctrinated by the scriptures of general education. Children ought to know (blank) by this age. Children ought to think (blank). Children ought to solve problems this one way. Children ought to be praised for being this one

²David Allen's systematic efficiency: “[Getting Things Done](#)” — Youtube: “David Allen Tragedy and Hope.”



type of person and humiliated for being another. The word “education” has been equivocated by experts, and now has nothing to do with discovery. To be educated by today’s standards is to be molded into an ideal.

Knowing your children, accepting their uniqueness, and creating an authentic relationship with them requires waking up from the myths of general education. Otherwise, you’ll be constantly feeling the pressures to mold them into something they ought to be, squashing their individuality, and hurting your relationship. I have to work on this daily with my children by reaffirming my commitment; it’s not easy. It’s okay for them not to know things until they’re genuinely interested, because they’ll forget just about everything otherwise. Your goal is not to school your children or meet anyone else’s standard; your goal is to create a culture where the love for learning, reading, discovering, experimenting, adventuring, and innovating excites them and becomes the top priority. It’s your responsibility as a parent to create as many opportunities for your children as possible, but it’s ultimately up to them to determine their own path.

Your goal is to create a culture where the love for learning, reading, discovering, experimenting, adventuring, and innovating excites them.

Education is a process of self-discovery, and it doesn’t have to be confined within the walls of a classroom or under the thumb of a pedagogue. We attain genuine knowledge once our mind processes³ information through a series of questions. Learning is identifying. Processing is validation through systematic problem solving; finding contradictions and removing them; relating and contextualizing; connecting the dots; experimenting; and even using argumentation, or dialectic, to create deeper understanding⁴.

General education, from age five until twenty, fills the mind with information and then grades output according to input. What is missing? Thinking, which is the key ingredient. Breaking the mold is having the courage to trust your children, accepting them for where they are presently, and loving them for nothing short of who they actually are. Trusting means treating children as individuals rather than raw materials, knowing full well that when you consistently create the right environment and model the habits you desire for your children, the learning process naturally flows unimpeded.

If academic excellence is important for your family, then work on sharpening the mind by focusing on your child’s genuine interests—whatever they are and however unorthodox—and using these interests as opportunities to encourage the process of discovery. Teaching how to

³The Trivium method of critical thinking: (grammar) knowledge, (logic) understanding, (rhetoric) wisdom, as presented to me by Gene Odene. Peace Revolution Podcast, TriviumBinder, TriviumEducation, SchoolSucksProject, and UnpluggedMom are the best source for a Trivium introduction. <http://peacerevolution.podcastomatic.com/>, <http://triviumbinder.com/>, <http://triviumeducation.com/>, <http://schoolsucksproject.com/>, <http://unpluggedmom.com/>

⁴The classical model of education traditionally waits until a child is pubescent before teaching the rules of logic and clear thinking; when children start to argue, they are taught how, rather than being punished for it. Everything before adolescence is the sponge stage — Parroting stage — of information gathering. Check out the book *The Well Trained Mind*.



learn⁵ anything efficiently, with a definite system for creative problem solving, liberates a child's mind from intellectual dependence and gives them the most important skills for life success: thinking clearly and knowing how and what it's going to take to get there. Conversely, teaching children what they "ought to know" by bombarding them with factoids dulls the mind and destroys the lifelong love for learning.

As a father, trusting myself has been very slow going. "Normal" is a bad word in my home; being original takes a lot of courage. We all have unconventional talents, and my children get into things that I'm not always supportive of. Cosmetology—all things beauty—is my daughter's fascination. On many occasions, I asked my daughter what she was working on—reading and writing being the only acceptable answer of course! I treated her love for makeup as a hobby that I disapproved of. "This is a destructive symptom of mainstream consumerism, provisional self-esteem." I might as well have called makeup the devil! So, I would criticize my daughter for making bad choices with her time, for not reading, for not learning what she ought to know. So many times she would come running toward me hysterical about a new technique she learned, and I would amuse her with a smile and a "nice job," but this was disingenuous. I was consistently disappointed and my daughter knew it. Thankfully, her character and passion carried this hobby onward. After months of criticism and zero support, she became quite literally the best makeup artist I know. At eleven, she's working on a brilliant portfolio and is completely clear on who she is, what she wants to become, and now we're working on how she's gonna get there.

I had a realization while coming to terms with my daughter's passion. I had a similar ambition as a child, though mine was rock stardom. Not to be a musician, just simply a rock star. Drumming was all I cared about. My mom and stepdad not only encouraged this; they were my number one fans, and actually talked me out of going to a university that had accepted me. "You've been talking about being a rock star since you were twelve! Now's the time; be true to your heart. You can do school later."

Be true to your heart was the motto of my raising. A year later, I was on a national tour, endorsed by my favorite drum companies, and in all the metal magazines; music videos, autographs, makeup—I certainly played the part of rock star, and I got to see some of the world doing so. Who the hell was I calling my baby's dream a bad habit, not important, not healthy? If she can pursue mastery, travel, be entrepreneurial, make people look and feel beautiful, and use the human face as her canvas, if she learns everything there is to know and moves on to a completely new passion—this is genuine knowledge, a real education. Since I've embraced my daughter's uniqueness and accepted her path, we've gotten a lot closer, though I'm not perfect and still have a lot of growing up to do. I am personally happier because I've freed myself from unnecessary baggage. Seeing her talent take form and create beauty is truly inspiring. My daughter is creating her life, her way.

⁵ Dorothy Sayers' powerful essay "The Lost Tools of Learning."



BEING PRINCIPLED BECAUSE IT MATTERS

Being principled is being morally consistent, and for someone to be judged as a moral actor, they have chosen goodness over other options. A person's freedom to choose is the common factor that must always exist if his character is to be judged. If a person were forced to give, we would never call him giving. If he were forced to hurt another, we would never call him violent. Only when someone acts of his own free will can we place descriptions on his character (e.g., giving, honorable, good, evil, selfish). If a man pulls a jacket out of his car to give it to a person in need, he's giving. If a man is ordered to give up his jacket at gunpoint, no description of his character can be generated. Goodness can't be forced.

What a person does with his own free will is the only test of his character. If a child simply obeys the rules, does this make him good?

Beings that simply follow their biological program, without awareness of universals, could never be judged on a standard of morality. The wolf devours its victim alive, and the tiger kills a baby deer. These predators are bound by their programming, and judgment here would be anthropomorphic. I have seen dogs sacrifice themselves for their owners and predators spare their prey's young. Though beautiful, these acts are not moral, because no potential for evil could have been committed. If the lion kills the gazelle and its baby, so be it.

As volitional creatures, we make decisions at every moment, and principled people make decisions in accordance with right and wrong. This readership is principled. So, where do your principles extend?

1. **If I'm faced with losing everything, is filing my income taxes immoral when I know it's paying for murder?**
2. **Taxes are theft. Is it immoral for me to drive on public roads and use sidewalks?**
3. **If I believe hurting others is always wrong, unless in self-defense, is it okay for me to inflict pain to correct my child's behavior?**

Answer: Only where there's choice can principles extend. The difficulty here is that "choice" can be rather subjective. A young man may choose prison over paying taxes and write a book with his time off; a family man would not consider prison a choice.

The third question above usually upsets people. Libertarians debating whether or not spank-



ing is against the nonaggression principle (NAP) is as unproductive as debating whether or not sending their children to public school is against the NAP, because people will simply do things against their principles when they feel that they don't have real options. Any pro-spanking argument presupposes that there isn't another way to raise well-rounded, disciplined children. Libertarians who spank their children and send them to public school feel that there isn't another way, though I presume that all would prefer not to. A productive discussion would demonstrate practical alternatives that do exist, that work, and that are far superior.

Moral consistency takes a lot of honest reflection.

PARENTING WITH PRINCIPLE

The fact is that any rational person wants the best for their children. Parenting is the most persistent responsibility there is, and it is extremely difficult at times. Sometimes we lash out and punish our children for stresses that have nothing to do with them, and sometimes we just get fed up with them. I'm here to tell you that it's okay to be human. It's okay to get loud and to be authentic. It's okay to make mistakes. The basic requirement for being a good parent through all of the difficulty is communication. It's always better to not flip out, but those that say they're always Zen are either full of shit or their children are still young. Communication is key, and allowing your children to know that you're fallible is extremely important. Forgiveness, understanding, and dispute resolution are necessary life skills and virtues that parents need to model.

I believe many parents have trouble extending the philosophy of liberty to parenting because they feel that there aren't a lot of options. Many feel like the threat of pain and punishment is the only way to guide "irrational children who don't have the ability to govern themselves." If a parent confidently knew there was a way to instill personal responsibility, self-restraint, and self-discipline in their child at a very young age without the use of pain and punishment, it would be inconceivable for principled parents to hurt their children anyway. Likewise, if a parent believes that pain and punishment is the only way to raise well-disciplined children, then of course they'll believe that peaceful parenting means an out-of-control child. If pain and punishments worked, we'd have a lot of well-behaved children out there, because most households are hitting and threatening every day.

Being a principled parent means that you have an unwritten family code that



governs your actions and your home life. Just as the state promotes relativism by creating arbitrary laws with no basis in rationality, so do unprincipled parents make up arbitrary rules for their children. Just as state actors are not subject to the laws they enforce, so do these parents believe they're immune to living by the values they preach. So what is this code? A family code should clearly define your values, duties, and even emergency procedures. Universal values mean that they apply to everyone, equally. A family code can look something like this:

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My only allegiance is to Truth. I will always live in accordance with the principles of liberty, by never taking what is not rightfully mine, and never initiating violence against another. I will never restrict others from living the way they choose. I will take action when I see wrongdoing. I will always make good on my promises. If I say I am going to do something, I'll do it, and if something prohibits this, I will find another way to stay in integrity. I will encourage the members of my family to be original and to be true to their hearts. I will always create value in my relationships, and I will do my best to leave a place better than it was before I arrived. I will always make time for my loved ones even in the hardest times. Daddy will always work his hardest to financially support this family. Mommy will work her hardest to be the keeper of the household. Mikey will always watch over his sister and brother. Allie will trust and listen to Mikey in an emergency and always look after her little brother. Azlan will always be given a voice and I will always get down on his horizon so that he doesn't feel dominated. No member of this family will live at the emotional expense of another member. If there is a dispute, members of this family will sit down together, when they are ready, and talk through everything until a resolution is made. Mom and Dad will always be answerable to the children when they ask, "Why?" But the children will respect not getting an immediate answer and will listen obediently if there is an emergency. If any member of this family violates this code, then he or she is obligated to make whomever is harmed whole again, and apologize to the members of this household. Hurting each other emotionally, violently, or with threats in order to make them pay for their wrongdoing is never an option.

Principled parenting will be a theme carried throughout the rest of this booklet.



LIBERATION FROM MEDIOCRITY

“Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their future.”—Maria Montessori

The home is the microcosm of the global community. Your power to change the world exists in the relationships that you create at home. That “be the change” quote is so true, though for most this is just a pleasant meme that inspires zero action. The greatest societal changes have nothing to do with political heroes; rather, change emerges when enough people decide they want something different. Public school textbooks always credit specific people—usually those who give glory to the state—as the movers of the world; this only teaches that society is the impotent follower, lost without its Hero King.⁶ The historiographical perspective of Great Conquerors and Liberators makes normal people powerless spectators. Adults now defer to authority to meet human needs, and call on experts to do their thinking for them. What if we were taught the truth — that everyday people are extremely powerful? What if we never subjected our children to the lies? What if our children were never taught that ends justify means? If we raised up intelligent, literate, rational, morally consistent adults, who would commit the atrocities? If we taught our children to act against evildoers and speak up when they see injustices, who would get away with breaking moral law, even under the auspices of the state?

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If there is something you truly want to become, creating a clear vision, a burning desire,⁷ and an action plan is key; however, one thing that will sometimes get you there even faster is connecting with what success feels like. How will you hold yourself? Will you look different? Dress different? Will you stand taller and make company with other successes? If you can clearly answer these questions, then you’ll find that you can actually begin bringing some of these characteristics of success into your life and persona immediately. The world will catch up with the vision you have for yourself. This applies to freedom. What does liberty feel like for you? Do you have what it takes? Are you healthy enough? Are you self-reliant enough and have you created a network of trading partners that is sustainable? Are you instilling the kind of virtues your children will need to be good enough for liberty? You have a positive obligation to create peace wherever possible with your unique abilities; your children didn’t have a choice, you brought them here. It’s your job to give them every opportunity to pursue their passions. Avoiding Leviathan⁸ whenever possible—innovating and participating in cutting edge technologies that bring us together—is beautiful, and building agoras that act in direct defiance of the state

⁶ Thomas Carlyle’s hero worship.

⁷ Napoleon Hill’s work.

⁸ Jeffrey Tucker and Max Borders: “Fifty Ways to Leave Leviathan.” http://www.fee.org/the_freeman/detail/fifty-ways-to-leave-leviathan#axzz2o9k9hUqd



is inspirational. But the antecedent to all of this is how we transmit love to our spouses and children. We must embody traits of a sovereign wife, husband, and parent. We must be our best right now; the convenience of procrastination is over, no more excusing the status quo because we “turned out okay.”

Jessica and I were liberty-hobbyists for the first few years of our marriage. I call us hobbyists because libertarianism was simply an intellectual pursuit: fun for the mind, and good for the conversation. We loved to cheer on Ron Paul, talk about the globalists and how cool it would be if the state collapsed on itself and everyone realized that they were just fine. We’ve always been punk rock, cool parents, but totally not good enough.

Our personal lives looked like dropping the kids off to public school every day. Feeling guilt, shame, and hypocrisy, we knew full well what we were doing. Helping Mikey and Allie with their homework usually turned into a fight until they simply stopped asking. Hearing the lies they were bringing home usually ended in a lecture about propaganda. Watching the children tremble with fear when we showed them another way to solve a problem was also difficult.

Earlier on, I used to hit my two-year-old on the hand for hitting. (“Azlan! No hitting!” While simultaneously smacking his hand.)

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Jessica used to be nonstop drama with her friends, trying to squeeze friendship out of a turnip, so much of it was petty and pointless. She didn’t like who she was, that the majority of her inner thoughts were playing out arguments and strategizing relationships. Strangely, so was our daughter. Drama. Drama. Drama.

And years before that, Allie’s butt would be glowing red for consistently creating messes. “Allie, clean your room.” After the twentieth iteration, “If you don’t clean your room, I’m going to spank you!” And, of course, she didn’t. *Pop. Pop. Pop.* Crying. Jessica would come out of the room beside herself upset that she hit her daughter; she knew it was wrong, and I would convince her she deserved it.

“She doesn’t listen, honey. That’s how she’ll learn. Just spank her consistently enough and hard enough.” I remember taking note of the irony of us having a messy bedroom and being generally messy people, but apples and oranges, right?



Moving forward a few years, Jessica and I read *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead* together, and this gave us a tremendous amount of strength to cut out the mediocrity; this gave impetus to our real transition. It helped harden us to irrationality and protected our hearts when certain dear friendships needed to end, giving us the courage to reinvent our lives and create new company. Henry Reardon and Dagny Taggart gave us an example of unrelenting persistence through impossible circumstances. The characters in these two books became the character sketches of the people in our lives. We identified the Tooheys, the Keatings, the D'Anconias, the Galts, and we began choosing which characters we'd ideally align with, and the company we needed to make for us to rise to the occasion. Profound revelations happened when these characters became the archetypes of our behaviors, positive and negative. How many times had I self-abdicated personal responsibility, becoming feeble and whiny, like James Taggart? How many times did I play out a self-sacrificial satire in my life by acting in accordance with everything I hated, just like Dominique Francon. This period for taking personal inventory and backing it up with action was very difficult yet massively liberating for both Jessica and me. I'll never forget pulling up to the library to drop off *Atlas Shrugged*, witnessing from afar my wife kissing the book and holding it close to her heart before letting it go. I completely understand why Rothbard called *Atlas* the greatest novel ever written.⁹

TRANSITIONING STRATEGIES AND FINDING WHAT WORKS

What governed this transition was philosophical, but what created it was action. We decided to finally pull our children out of school. Because of circumstances, we had to wait till the end of the semester, so this was still several months away. Our home began to shift quickly, and our children found themselves confused, watching things shift without understanding. They knew why we were taking them out of school—it was obvious—but they didn't really understand the shift of the household dynamic. We forgot the most important thing on our personal growth crusade: letting the children in on what was happening.

What governed this transition was philosophical, but what created it was action.

We had several family meetings and the children quite literally couldn't believe what they were hearing. At first the liberty-and-virtue rhetoric was boring; it seemed all that they heard was all-night Netflix and no more math.

⁹Mises And Rothbard Letters to Ayn Rand, 1957. http://mises.org/journals/jls/21_4/21_4_3.pdf



And the world became Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory; every child's dream had just been realized.

Mind you, this was part of our transition and things have changed since then, but we're getting there. Let's just say the pendulum swung during this process while we were discovering ourselves. We had never played by our rules before.

When the children came home, I freaked out. Even with months of planning, everything went out the window. Jessica kept assuring me that the children needed time adjusting and that we should leave them be, but I fought her on this and threw my principles out the window.

I started taking them to the library and reading them history. I forced both Mikey and Allie to engage in a roundtable dialog. I was putting the Socratic method to practice and wasn't getting anywhere. My children hated it.

So, in what I felt was a frantic hurry to save my kids, I read *The Well Trained Mind* in three days. I spent about \$400 on Classical Trivium curriculums, and created their schedules according to how everything was laid out in the book. The materials came; I wrote everything out and created a lesson plan, put the children on a schedule, and was sure I had solved everything. My children were going to be classically educated. It didn't work, not even for a moment. My children hated it.

I became a tyrant, probably worse than their public school staff combined. Every day that I came home from my office, the inquisition began. Disappointment, anger, disappointment. To this day, Mikey laughs and says that my mood read like an EKG, a steady line of disappointment with spikes of anger. I became that dad. Shit!

I conceded to my wife and to my children. They never got a break. They went from public school to homeschool. What happened to freedom? What happened to self-determination? I forgot my purpose. Jessica was patient with me. She knew that I was wrong, but supported me in the process of being wrong, so that I could see myself.

I admitted to the children that I felt like I was failing them by not knowing how to reach them. I told them that I was scared and didn't know what I was doing. I told them that I couldn't figure out what was wrong with them. I remember Allie looking at me, "Dad, there's nothing wrong with me. I'm okay. Why do you keep saying that?" And I realized just how screwed up I was.

DESCHOOLING

After I realized my own ignorance, Jessica and I decided to go back to the plan we'd come up with months prior: deschooling. The children had never been given an inch; it was time to allow them to take ownership over their day, to feel what freedom is, to live in whatever extremes they decide to explore, to give them absolute authority absolutely, to allow them to homestead themselves as self-owners,¹⁰ to become people rather than subjects.

Deschooling is no different than the process of drug withdrawal. Deschooling, other than what I've described above, is the process of the child being liberated from intellectual and emotional dependence and other post-traumatic stresses. It's also the process of redefining what education is, redefining the role of the teacher, rebuilding confidence, rebuilding trust, creating a new bond, and essentially undoing the behavioral conditioning that they were subjected to. Just like the drug addict, children going through this process literally lose themselves because much of what they identified with fades away.

Being constantly told what to do becomes a sort of comfort blanket; freedom is the removal of this blanket, and it can feel unbearably cold, leading a person to do strange things to feel that warmth again. This was beautifully captured in *Shawshank Redemption*. Once an inmate serves decades and is finally released, he begins to yearn for captivity and confined spaces. This impels him to commit a crime so that he can return home.

This is deschooling. My children were institutionalized, and they had no idea how to handle their newfound freedom. For those parents that have their children currently in public school, this is what the process looked like for us:

- Attachment to electronics. About twelve hours per day.
- Staying up all-night and going to sleep at around 10 a.m.
- Absolutely destroying their rooms to utter filth.
- Eating awful food.
- Becoming one with the couch.

¹⁰ Playful allusion to Stephan Kinsella's "How We Come To Own Ourselves." <http://mises.org/daily/2291>

- Very bad hygiene.
- Extreme boredom and feeling lost. Not knowing what to do. Wanting to be told what to do.

This is essentially what happens to children every summer vacation. Only de-schooling is productive because this is a time for children to reconnect with themselves. Summer break ends with being recommitted.

Through this process, these were some of the breakthroughs that the children had that gave Jessica and me the courage to allow this to continue:

- The kids started telling us that they loved us regularly.
- They started becoming more confident and connected with their feelings.
- We began having deep conversations about life and their realizations were jaw dropping.
- Mikey and Allie became very close. They spent so many nights together just talking, and developed a genuine friendship.
- We began opening up to each other in profound ways.
- Their individual identities started taking form.
- They began saying things like, “When I was in school, I never thought about the future; I never even contemplated it. Now I think about this all the time.”
- They both started developing talents, doing little projects on their own, being creative, and even feeling bad about some of the poor decisions they were making.
- “Dad, I want to start learning something. I can’t go on like this.” I asked if it was guilt driving their new attitude, if they really wanted to learn or if they just felt like they ought to. But there was a growing desire to learn.



- The family bond strengthened and there was a lot less yelling. The overall stress level decreased tremendously. We began laughing a lot and enjoying our time together. There was no longer the sense of perpetual urgency.

Though painful at points, this was the best thing that our family could have experienced. After several months (about the length of summer break), it was clear that our family was ready for the next step.

“You’ve had enough time. School is now a distant memory. It’s time to start doing more of the things that make you feel accomplished. Creating, rather than observing, makes you feel better about yourself.”

Creating, rather than observing, makes you feel better about yourself.

We started talking to them about personal responsibility, self-restraint, and dealing with logical consequences, and becoming their own person. Speaking to children is the greatest test of your own understanding. Einstein said that if you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.

- **Personal responsibility means that if you want something, you are the solution; it’s up to you to get it. As an adult, you are entitled only to your right to peacefully pursue your dreams, nothing else. If you fail, blame no one else; you keep trying and if you give up, well, that’s your decision. If you succeed, it’s because you made it happen, and nobody else is entitled to what you’ve gained. Being happy is the result of creating a meaningful life and having a clear purpose. You decide your purpose; it doesn’t come to you in some dramatic and glorious way like it does in the movies. Bad things happen and how you decide to react is your Response Ability,¹¹ your ability to respond. This defines your character.**

Self-restraint means knowing what’s best for you and creating a balanced life. With freedom comes great responsibility.

Taking responsibility is empowering and feels so much better than having a victim mentality. Being the victim of wrongdoing happens and is a part of life, but you never have to be a victim.

- **Self-restraint means knowing what’s best for you and creating a balanced life. With freedom comes great responsibility.**

¹¹ I got this from Darrell Becker in an interview with Laurette Lynn. Search “Darrell Becker nonviolent communication” and for an incredible home education resource, Laurette Lynn has personally taught me so much about what being a good parent means. <http://laurettelynn.blogspot.com/>



- **Logical consequences are the loss of freedom in some area of your life when you've made bad choices, hurt yourself or others. If Mom and Dad decide to spend all of our money on entertainment and fun, we won't be able to pay our rent. If we can't pay our rent, we'll be forced to leave our home, and with bad spending habits, we wouldn't be able to afford even a small apartment. Somebody would then need to take care of you. All would be lost. Another example: say I couldn't afford my car any longer; I lose all of the freedom that leisure travel gives me.**

Personal responsibility, self-restraint, and logical consequences are essentially the same thing. A mature person's actions reflect their needs, and maturity is the ability to differentiate needs from wants. Having freedom requires maturity. If you are immature, you lose your freedom. As parents, our number one job is to keep you safe. If we can't do our job with you having freedom, then we'll take this away just like being irresponsible will take Mom and Dad's freedom away.

REBUILDING CONFIDENCE

Months after we brought our children home, Jessica and I saw how deep their public school wounds actually were. I was at a YMCA swimming pool with my daughter, and because of her age the lifeguard asked her to take a swim test in order to continue on in the deeper section we were playing in. My daughter is the most coordinated child that I know; she's elegant, graceful, and just generally good at anything athletic. Though she's a very skilled swimmer, probably just about as good as I am, she opted out of the test and went to the shallow section. I was extremely troubled and frustrated with her choice. She opened up to me and stated that she was scared of failing.

"Dad, I used to get yelled at all the time for messing up in school. I hate how that felt."

Just after she told me this, my three-year-old, Azlan, was calling for his daddy to check out his new skill. "Daddy, look! Look what I do!" And the revelation hit me hard and tears filled my eyes. I remember when Allie was that age and filled with excitement and confidence to perform any feat—messing up wasn't something that even entered her mind. Now, my daughter was scared to swim because it was called a test. Those bastards beat the confidence out of my daughter. And how



many times did I yell at her for bad grades? I even showed my disappointment when she brought home Bs. What had I done? How did she go from that bright eyed little princess to this? What had we done?

“Allie, never again will you get yelled at for being wrong. You must make mistakes in order to learn. Mistakes, failing, being wrong are gifts.”

“I’m so sorry for what I put you through. I’m so sorry for what I did to you. For what those piece of shit teachers did to you.” (Yes, I said that. Teachers, when you yell at children for being wrong, you are emotionally abusing them and ought to feel ashamed. You can’t learn without the gift of being wrong.)

Rebuilding confidence in your children means apologizing for all the times you hurt them, even when you thought you were helping. The path to hell is paved with good intentions. You must apologize, and you must not expect forgiveness. Forgiveness does not come packaged in words, it happens over time as you commit to a new way of guiding your child, teaching free from shame and humiliation. Children are incredibly resilient and don’t need to be treated as broken through this rebuilding period; just correct course and you’ll see them begin to recover. If you say you’re sorry and they respond that it’s okay, do not expect an immediate fix. I made this mistake several times after the swimming pool event.

“Why are you acting this way? I told you that you don’t need to be scared of being wrong!” Oh, foolish me.

MODELING GOOD HABITS

One of the most significant ingredients for being a successful entrepreneur is emulating the best entrepreneurs.

Miles Davis said, “First you imitate, then you innovate.”

To stay profitable, you need to consistently innovate—essentially building on the work that came before you.

Imitating is great for the consumer because it drives market prices down, and for the producer it’s a quick way to break into an unsaturated market. But in the end, this business model has an expiration date. However, this is where it starts, and to stay profitable, you need to consistently innovate—essentially building on the work that came before you.



The single best way to teach your children is by modeling everything. In fact, children shouldn't be forced to learn or do anything that you either don't know yourself or aren't willing to model. If you want your children to be intellectuals, then become one yourself. If you want your children to be healthy, then start working out. This extends to everything you wish for your children.

It's absolutely incredible how children adopt our little idiosyncrasies, especially the more latent ones. The biggest recurring fight in my home with all of my children, even the littlest, happens over electronics. I absolutely abhor my children's use of electronics, unless it's for an occasional movie. It seemed like every moment of the day, they needed to be glued to something digital. We don't have television in our home, but we have something worse, U-Verse. There is immediate access to the best media, ever. No commercials, no waiting. I thought this compulsion was their problem. "Kids these days. Look what they've become," I would say to myself, until yet another realization. My profession requires me to stare at a computer screen all day, and I used to work at home, right in my living room. They saw Dad sitting idle in one position for at least eight hours every day. Light bulb. I moved my computer out of the house and got an office. This created a significant culture change.

The love for reading is one of the most important gifts you can pass down. Creating reading assignments is one of the worst things you can do if your child has any negative association with being forced. Forcing them to read will kill this love. Though this may not be universally true. Looking into the early childhood of John Stuart Mill, he had the most intellectually rigorous home education¹² —baffling really. His father, James, created a project out of him, and to this (aside from not feeling loved) he responded well and was genuinely grateful. His father was a scholar, writer, author, and the greatest living British historian of India. John was essentially unschooled (as were many of the great minds¹³), and though he was assigned volumes of reading, James did not give his son any busy work or waste his time. He followed John's natural development, and he created an individualized curriculum for his son rather than following one. John used to sit at his father's desk and read his drafts. James included his son in scholarly conversations, even in the most formal of company. John emulated his father's habits and assimilated his scholarly ways. Parents ought to think twice about shooing their children off when there's company.

The love for reading is one of the most important gifts you can pass down.

¹² Mill's Autobiographical Sketch: "Childhood and Early Education."

¹³ I don't subscribe to utilitarianism.



I'm not bookish (I wasn't even literate until I was about twenty-one) though my oldest son has really shared in my love for reading. I've been devouring books the last couple of years, and he's been reading voraciously with me. The boy knows more about Greek mythology than I know about any one subject; he's completely self-taught. He wants to be a historian, researcher, author, and speaker. He's thirteen and wants to advance human knowledge. I feel like we've created a bond from our common interests in the world of ideas. He's become one of my dearest friends and is my liberal arts study partner. I do feel like we're cocreating a rather intellectual culture at home.

When you don't think your children are watching, they are.

One last thing to note here: when you don't think your children are watching, they are. Remember, consistency with modeling is key. Your children will not learn from you if you're not consistent; or, the little buggers will go right ahead and emulate your inconsistency.

FAMILY BOND

MARRIAGE AND PARTNERSHIP

The key factor in the family bond is the marriage. Choosing your mate is the most important decision you'll ever make. Don't rush it, and never settle for anything less than creating a life with your best friend. The reader is most likely already creating a life with a partner they've chosen, so we'll proceed as if this were the case, while keeping these essentials relevant to all. Jessica has plans for creating an entire guide that is focused on relationships, though right now we're squeezing this in with the topic of parenting, so we'll keep this short and to the point. The below are the most important things I've learned from the ups and downs of married life. What never works, what always works.

COMMON VALUES

The single most important element of any relationship is having common values. If you don't align with your partner on the principles that govern your lives, your relationship will never be authentic; you'll al-



ways stay on the surface and use a busy life, entertainment, drama, and other mediums of distraction to avoid these matters; this will always lead to distance in the relationship and the creation of separateness. When common values do not align, one partner always feels unsupported, alone, or misunderstood. This is especially true for those that have unconventional beliefs, such as a deep love for liberty. Your partner doesn't need to be a voluntaryist, but he or she does need to sympathize with core libertarian values. What liberty looks like is up for debate, which is fun, but believing in the use of violence as a justifiable means to an end is enough cause for ending a relationship or just never allowing it to get serious. Don't mate with a statist!

Note: Common values are much deeper than one's faith. A marriage of two different faiths can work because faith is simply the reflection of values.

Common interests come second to core values.

COMMON INTERESTS

Building a relationship on common interests is not as important as common values but really does come second. Common interests create lasting and meaningful friendships. When you create a friendship with your partner, this joyfulness usually leads to intimacy. If you are having difficulty connecting with your partner, even though your core values are the same, this is usually a symptom of lack of shared enjoyment. Reading together (this leads to better conversation), going on walks, working on a project together, working out, challenges, dates, adventure, etc., can all be effective remedies. The more you do together that brings you joy, the healthier your friendship will be and the more intimate you'll become. Sweating together and risk taking is a total turn on.

COMMON GOALS

What usually burns a couple out is losing purpose through the hustle and bustle. When you're busy surviving, it becomes extremely easy to



lose sight of what makes the struggle worth it. Maybe your goals aren't clearly laid out, maybe your purpose is not potent enough, or maybe you don't have a purpose. Purpose is what keeps you in integrity while you're tackling each objective. Your relationship has collective goals as well. Reflecting on common goals brings harmony to your individual paths, and this helps determine what you two are setting out to create together. A relationship built on creativity and clear purpose will always be a healthy one. Purposeful living creates happiness, and when this is shared, there's a kind of synergy that makes you even happier. Common goals can be starting a family business that will create more freedom in your life, becoming more sustainable by planting a garden together, creating an event that brings the community together, buying a home in south Austin, or running a 5K.

ART OF COMMUNICATION, THE THIRD WAY OF LISTENING¹⁴

The three paragraphs above can't happen without honest communication. This is such an obvious relationship virtue; I'll just touch on a communication technique that is extremely powerful. It's called *being with*, which Jessica and I learned in a workshop together. This tool is probably the reason we have a marriage today. As information is being received, most of us are agreeing and disagreeing with it in real time, and the problem with this is that these hasty judgments prevent full discernment. There's an expression that goes something like this: judgment without observation is ignorance; observation without judgment is wisdom.¹⁵ So, if we hear something that offends us, such as "You don't appreciate all I do for you," or "I feel like I'm your servant. You just throw clothes on the ground and expect me to pick them up behind you," the first reaction is to lash out in one way or another, or defend yourself by denying the accusation altogether. A lot of times, when there's a conflict, it's because there's a miscommunication, lack of mindfulness, or your partner feels like she needs something she's not getting. As a couple, the most important thing you can do is give each other a safe space to fully express your feelings; this means that, regardless of what comes out, you will not judge or react to what

¹⁴ I gleaned "the third way of listening" and "being with" from a workshop that I don't care to identify here. If you want to know about this source, contact me.

¹⁵ I heard this while studying Richard Grove's material at <http://TragedyandHope.com/>



you're hearing. A lot of times, the smarty likes to use logic to reason issues away; however the irony is that in his attempt to outsmart his partner, he's committing a fallacy arguing against feelings. Feelings are not truth statements!

If you feel an issue arise, try something like, "I have a feeling that I've been wrestling with that may not be accurate to reality, but I just need to share this with you. Please don't judge or attack me. I could be wrong, but I really do need to share this. I promise to give you a chance to respond and not to interrupt, judge, or attack as well." When your partner is listening to you, they should not be bobbing their head up and down, making faces, or trying to save you. If your partner is really practicing the art of being with, then you'll feel that they are at least doing their best to be truly present. It's okay to argue in real time; however, this needs to happen once the situation is completely understood for what it is. Another practice in being with that can make you proactive with building a relationship is to tell each other what love means to you.

Tell each other what you would appreciate from them. "Just be with me right now. I need you to start telling me you love me more. I need you to tell me that I'm amazing. I need you to kiss me more. I feel like you're uninterested and it's probably just because you're working on this new, exciting project. I think that if you just take a couple of minutes to hold me, I'll be good to go."

As a couple, the most important thing you can do is give each other a safe space to fully express your feelings.

SEX

Sex is the defining characteristic of your relationship. Without it, you wouldn't be life partners; you'd be friends. You need to have a lot of sex; I mean a lot. And you'll need to change this up and do whatever you can to turn each other on. Some couples are dealing with emotional trauma around sex; if this is the case, then you must do everything you can to heal from this together with therapy and communication. The bottom line is that sex is the fuel and without it, your relationship will fail or be far from ideal.



The art of communication can be applied here. “I want to show you something. I love you and I’m turned on by you. However, this is how I like it.” If your partner is offended, then it’s because he feels inadequate. Be patient and empathetic. Teach your partner what turns you on, what gets you off. Train each other by giving each other lessons in your uniqueness. Another key ingredient here is being intimate with yourself; self-pleasure is the core of being a good lover. If you don’t know your body, how can you expect another to?

Also, self-pleasure makes people healthier and happier and should never stop, no matter how much sex you’re having. Remember to live by your rules, and be original. And a lot of times jealousy and inadequacies arise from issues in the bedroom. This is where you can make your lives come alive and physically show just how passionate and grateful you are for each other. Sex is primal and doesn’t have to make sense; just go for it. Be daring, different, and explore, explore, explore.

Sex is primal and doesn’t have to make sense; just go for it.

INTIMACY

Sex and intimacy are interconnected, but there is so much more to affection than what happens in the bedroom. Intimacy is created in how you talk to each other; this is your own language that you don’t share with anyone else. Is there passion in your words? Do you laugh with excitement during regular conversations? If not, work on this. Intimacy is in the small everyday nuances. Holding hands while you’re driving, hugging her from behind as she picks something up from the ground, randomly embracing him and telling him he smells good, raising your eyebrows at each other, whispering what you’d like to do to each other if you could, kissing on the cheek or behind the shoulder blade. I would say that intimacy has a lot to do with how you are in public. It’s actually quite easy to be intimate when nobody is looking. Public displays of affection make this planet more loving and beautiful. Being intimate in front of your children is one of the greatest gifts you can give them. Kissing, hugging, holding hands, looking at each other passionately are the most beautiful examples of what it means to



love. Children will always say things like, “Gross!” But they’ll be happier for it. They’ll also learn how to be intimate when it’s biologically their turn.

LAUGHTER

Never forget to laugh. It is extremely difficult to be joyful with all of the injustices around us, through the financial difficulties, and the obstacles that come our way; what matters most is not forgetting to live through the vicissitudes of life. Joke, be playful, be fun. Laughter is a medicine for longevity and overall health.

MUTUAL RESPECT

Respect means that you genuinely value your partner as an individual and respect the aspects of who they are that initially attracted you. What initially attracted you to your partner was pre-you. If you attempt to absorb your partner’s individuality into your needs and wants by being too demanding of their time, and at the expense of them pursuing their individual passions, some of the attraction will be lost. When a couple knows all there is to know, conversations get dull, and respect dies, along with attraction. Honor your partner’s need for alone time, and create a space for their unique expressions. I actually adore my wife as an individual and love the talents that she expresses that have nothing to do with me: her beautiful singing voice, her relationship wisdom, and her handiness and creativity. Jessica encourages me to pursue my music, even when this means time away from our family. She even encourages me to tour and pursue the dreams I had before I was Daddy and Husband; she finds it sexy when I play the drums. This reminds her of the man that caught her eye. This seems so rare, and friends cannot believe my wife is so supportive. “You’re lucky, Dude. My wife nags me, takes me away from the things I enjoy, and demands me 100 percent of the time! I could never do what I really want to. I gave that up when I got married.” It’s time to be confident enough to

It’s time to be
confident enough
to free-range our
spouses.



free-range our spouses. If you can't trust them with freedom, then you should rethink your relationship.

APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE

The expression of gratitude is one of the most beautiful love languages there is. Gratitude fills the soul, raises your vibration, and essentially increases the wealth in each transaction of giving. "Thank you" isn't enough; this expression is only half of the picture. Knowing how your partner receives gratitude is the full picture. If my wife has my nice pants ironed and ready for me in the morning, communicating my appreciation might look like saying thank you and doing a few tasks that she hasn't gotten around to. If I said "Thanks honey" and shot out the door, that may not be a win-win exchange. (For a transaction to increase the wealth for each party in a capitalist exchange, each party needs to believe they are getting more out of what they're putting in. Transactions are not zero sum. If it were, why act to begin with? I may want your eggs more than I want my milk, and the opposite is true for the person I'm exchanging with, which makes it mutually beneficial. This principle should be applied to your relationship.) A healthy relationship compliments and capitalizes on individual shortcomings and talents. I may decide to do this because my desire to make my wife happier is greater than my disdain for doing the dishes. I get a happier wife and am spiritually fulfilled as a result; she gets to not have to do the dishes and can spend her free energy loving on me and the children. Gratitude should be the currency of every household.

BEING ON THE SAME TEAM

So many couples have a win-lose mode of operation: Dad gains at Mom's expense, and the reverse is also true. The all-pervading perspective of a healthy marriage is being a team player, all of the time. This looks different for everyone; however, what I mean here is one's happiness should never come at the expense of their partner's.

The outcome of disputes usually creates a clear winner and loser. How-



ever, it's impossible for only part of the team to win. Rather, arguing should be used as an exercise in empathy so that understanding can lead to a clear resolution. Who wins doesn't matter, just like it doesn't matter which foot crosses the finish line first. Being wrong is an opportunity to grow and to learn a lot more about what makes each other tick. If you're on the same team, and conflicts arise, then arguments become extremely productive and healthy. Instead of shutting down, try, "I've noticed that when these situations arise, it seems to cause you to act like this. I need to know how we can do something different because you are my priority and I don't want this to hurt you." (Then be with.)

Being on the same team also means being a completely open book. This doesn't work for relationships that are anything short of marriage quality. I would never open myself fully to another person unless I was thinking of marrying them. If you are married, then you shouldn't hide anything. Unless information is given to you in confidence and it doesn't affect your marriage, your life, or your partner's life in any way, you should share everything. If you don't trust your partner to know something about you, then you may want to rethink your relationship. When you purposely hide areas of your life, this creates distance, and this withholding will show up negatively in your relationship. Sometimes getting in a habit of spending money your partner doesn't know about, or creating friendships with people your wife doesn't know about can end up spiraling out of control; next thing you know, you're leading a completely separate life, which can lead to an affair. I'm not attempting to dramatize the effects of a private life, I'm just trying to make it clear that when you're heart is completely open, your relationship is a lot more authentic. Give your spouse an opportunity to love the full you by letting everything you're purposely hiding out in plain sight.

When you're heart is completely open, your relationship is a lot more authentic.

Money is another issue in marriages. Everyone is different, there are no universals here; however, I do believe that married couples ought to combine everything; this is where socialism works! Do what's right for you; however, my ideal is a 100 percent union of finances and proper-



ty. If you can't trust your partner with the finances, then that isn't their strong point and it's your responsibility to solve the problem. When you marry someone, you take everything that comes with them, including their debt. Strategic accounting aside, combine your assets and liabilities. If you disagree and are happy in your marriage, then know this is just my opinion. My wife and I share everything. I always tell her that if I become an asshole and she divorces me, I would want her to have everything so that I could attempt to start anew. I couldn't bear taking anything from our home. If I lose my relationship with my wife, I lose everything; so I'm all in.

Teammates make the best parents. When you are a solid unit, your children become solid people. When parents are divided, children will actually exploit this to their own end, and everyone gets hurt. They'll know who to go to for what, and this actually incentivizes deception. Get on the same page as parents and always work together. Make compromises and stand united as a team. When the kids ask to have a sleepover, both parents should have a consistent, united response: "As long as you've finished your chores."

You can become teammates in a co-parenting situation. When you're divorced, you can still create a wonderful example for all the children involved. Just because the marriage needed to end, doesn't mean you can't be outstanding co-parents. A common love is all that is needed to make the most out of a difficult situation. You can love your ex for the children she gave you, and honor her as your child's mother for that reason alone. A co-parenting guide is essential, but there is not enough space here to continue. Be reasonable with each other, keep communication open, and give plenty of time and space for healing. At some point, you're going to have to put your big girl panties on and make it work. If you can spell out exactly what you need from your ex, and she can do the same, resolutions can actually be made; you can even become awkward friends. What a lesson for your child; you love your child so much that you're willing to work it out with someone that you'd otherwise not look at again.

Children are the real victims of divorce, though they can grow up strong and well-rounded through this with the knowledge that their



parents did their best and that they were blessed to potentially have two families rather than one. Also, if you find someone that really makes you happy, your children will know that, though divorce is horrible, the fragile nature of marriage can be beautiful. You can teach your children that they must always fight for their marriage, and always treat their partner well. A self-respecting person will never settle for mistreatment, even after fifteen years of marriage.

The team gets stronger through the bad times. When you're on the same page, you'll notice that the difficult times strengthen the family bond. Always remind each other that how you treat each other when things get difficult is a defining characteristic of your love; it's no great accomplishment loving life through the thick. When you're met with adversity or financial difficulty, be conscious of how you react to this and how you treat each other. Accomplishing great things together is notable, but accomplishing great things gracefully is the real success. When Jessica and I planned our first Parents for Liberty conference, our goal was to do this with grace. We asked tough questions: How are we going to treat each other when the tasks pile up and the stress builds? We kept reminding ourselves of this, and even when it got a little difficult, we actually never took it out on each other. This was a test of our commitment and we passed this time.

Always remind each other that how you treat each other when things get difficult is a defining characteristic of your love

LOVE LANGUAGES

My master and teacher, Jessica Arman, has attempted to mentor me on the idea of love languages for the last seven years, and I still have a very difficult time with this. But I'll do my best communicating this here. In a nutshell, love languages is the idea that people show love and receive love differently. Each person has their own unique language, and though you may think that you are telling your partner that you love them, if this is not how they hear love, then this will create a disconnect. Knowing your partner's language will tremendously strengthen



your bond. If loving your husband is different than his idea of being loved, then it's your responsibility to communicate what love looks like. Maybe showing love is doing the dishes together, or making time for each other to snuggle and watch an episode of *How I Met Your Mother*. Maybe he receives love when he comes home to a warm meal and his wife is fully present with him over dinner. Maybe she receives love when her husband rubs her ankles and arms at night. What's important is that we know how to love each other. Saying "I love you" isn't enough if it's lost in translation.

Saying "I love you" isn't enough if it's lost in translation

PARENT-CHILD DYNAMIC

As I hinted at earlier, spending alone time with your child is the first step toward creating a relationship. If you have multiple children then they need to be individuated. When children are lumped together, a close relationship is impossible. It's interesting what happens when it's just the two of you outside the home away from the everyday noise. Spend this time not being the parent, learn about each other person to person. You don't have to spend any money doing this. Go to the park, go on walks around your neighborhood, go on long car rides.

Daddies, take your daughter on a date every once in a while; take her to dinner and a movie, go skating with her, let her put makeup on you, and talk about life. Do what your daughter wants to do, but don't make it expensive. Create time for her. Don't force a conversation; let her lead it even if it's about silly things. The very fact that you are present with her, listening to her, talking to her as a person, is what matters. If you've created a strong bond with your daughter, talk to her about guys. Tell her the mistakes you've made in the past. Don't teach her to hate men; don't teach her that guys just want sex. Do tell her that if she's naive, she'll get hurt. Talk to her about not taking shit from anyone. Communicate that it's okay for her to like boys and to talk to you about it. Look at teen magazines with her and get an idea of her taste. If you have a solid relationship with your daughter, talk to her about the difference between sexy and slutty, appropriately, of course. Teach what you find powerful and attractive in women. Be an open book and make sure that, as she transitions into a woman, you respect her privacy and understand that your daddy-daughter dynamic will change. Mommy is probably better for sex talks and



period talks, but it doesn't have to be this way. If your daughter doesn't feel like she can come to you for things regarding sexuality, that's okay, but keeping an open dialog going is extremely important. Avoiding sex as a taboo is important. Though it is very difficult as a father to come to terms with the fact that your daughter will be a sexual being one day, you need to break this spell. Model husband material for your daughter by being a wonderful husband. Model how your daughter should be treated by men in the way you treat her and your wife. If you treat your daughter poorly, criticize her, and put her down, expect that she will become attracted to assholes. If you can honestly say that you'd like her to find a man similar to you in virtue, then you're doing a good job. If you don't want your daughter to find a man like you, then better yourself because you are sculpting her masculine ideal. Love her, adore her, and let her always be daddy's little girl. (I've left out the obvious stuff here, the list would otherwise go on and on.)

Mommies need to do the same with their daughters and create a lot of alone time. Talk shopping, talk boys, training bras, and all things girly. Moms need to work on being their daughter's friend, and to know when to stop nagging them. Moms need to transmit homemaking skills, while teaching social grace and elegance. Girls need to know how powerful they are, and that being a mother and wife are positions of honor that can change the world.

Sons must be given strength from their fathers; this can be transmitted in a loving way. Dad must model what it means to be a man by living his words. Being a gentleman is not something that can be adequately communicated; it must be present in how Dad shows up: holding open doors, being of service to those in need, pushing broken-down cars, and protecting people when the situation requires. Dad needs to treat Mom in the way he wishes his son to treat women—with respect and tenderness. Loving on your son will not make him weak; it will make him a good husband and father. Love and affection are vital, but just listen to your instincts. Wrestling is good. Allowing your son to get himself up when he falls is also good. However, there is a time when you need to kiss his boo-boos. Alone time is absolutely crucial. Take walks, go on hikes, and read together. A lot of your son's early education can simply be from reading, adventure, and your conversations. Don't be his teacher; be a fellow student. Show your son what duty to family is; show your son that age does not define adulthood. Read your

A lot of your son's early education can simply be from reading, adventure, and your conversations.



son the stories of the men (that are called teenagers today) who fought in battle, and hold him to a very high standard of maturity when he reaches adolescence. If your son is feminine, then honor his individuality; love him for who he is. A real man is secure with his sexuality, wherever it leans.

Mommies do a lot of loving and meeting the needs of their sons. Mommies give their sons the affection they'll come to look for in their wives. Momma Bear needs to understand that papa bears parent differently, and that her cub will become well rounded when the masculine and feminine are in balance.

Momma Bear and Papa Bear meet the needs of their young in different ways. Each parent has his or her own style and role to fill. Masculine is strength and resilience, feminine is support and affection. Feminine nurtures; masculine activates. But masculine and feminine do not have to correspond with male and female.

Most of our childhood friends, school friends, and work buddies are no longer in our lives, because the circumstances that created these friendships change with time. All relationships created by conditions alone come and go. Relationships that are created from common interests and like values are genuine and longer lasting. It seems that when relationships are built on the exchange of ideas and creative passions, rather than around the mundane circumstances of life, they are healthy, enlightening, and edifying. If parents want genuine, lifelong relationships with their children, then creating common interests outside of the parent-child paradigm is a necessity. As our children grow, the relationship dynamic changes, so if parents wish to see their grown-up children on occasions other than holidays, weddings, and graduations, then we must start working on the makings of a real friendship. The old school states that parents ought not be friends with their children for fear of not getting the respect due to them. Does this have anything to do with Hollywood making laughs out of the dreadful experience of calling Mom?

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HOW TO CREATE COMMON INTERESTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

1. If they are into trains, build train sets, go on train rides, visit train museums. Watch their favorite episodes of *Thomas and Friends*. Get to know the names of the engines, start having conversations about all things trains. While you're doing this, don't try to teach. Be their friend. Be a kid again.
2. If they are into *My Little Pony*, learn their names. Spend time learning about the character dynamic and the lessons being taught in each show. Go find real ponies. Go on adventures in your neighborhood pretending that you're in the land of Equestria.
3. This same thing applies with Play-Doh, sports, and absolutely everything your little one gets into. Be their friend and learn to get into what they're into.

Be their friend
and learn to
get into what
they're into.

It feels very good being a kid again. Remember how amazing it felt to have an adult's attention and shared excitement. Share this with your little ones. This is the beginning of creating a friendship and close bond.

HOW TO CREATE COMMON INTERESTS WITH PRETEENS

Families that are plugged-in start having a difficult time with their children around middle school age. Their children have had more waking time institutionalized than under the influence of a healthy family environment, which has everything to do with the disruption of the family bond. These families start losing their children during this period. Besides the effects of the state raising their children, the loss that is experienced here is really the loss of common interests.



Never lose your relationship with these general tips:

1. Stop judging their interests. If your son wants to play the drums, get him drum lessons. Don't tell him he'll never get a real job with this dream! If your daughter wants to be a gymnast, get her into gymnastics. Don't tell her that it's too late to be an Olympian! Even if you disapprove of what your children are into, as long as they aren't hurting themselves or anyone else, get over it. Voice your concerns, and then support them anyway; then, go one step further and get into what they're into. Nothing will give your preteen more appreciation than your genuine attempt to learn everything there is to know about what they're interested in. Beware of being disingenuous; they'll sniff this out in a second.
2. Communication is key. Sometimes it's hard to know what your children are really into when you've lost sight of who they really are. Create a space that gives your preteens the ability to open up. Don't force it. This may take a while. Maybe buy a pizza, or their favorite fun-food, and an inspirational movie, and talk afterwards. Stay up late with them. Most preteens have a need to stay up late, and this may be incredibly beneficial for deep conversations. When they open up, don't judge or diagnose, just listen, and ask more questions than you answer. Once you begin seeing what makes them tick, what they're interested in, and who they really are, then you can start helping them amplify themselves with support and shared experience.
3. Give preteens a voice. Allow them to disagree and state their opinions. If you have an argumentative child, treat this quality as a virtue rather than a vice. Teach them the rules of logic¹⁶

Nothing will give your preteen more appreciation than your genuine attempt to learn everything there is to know about what they're interested in.

¹⁶Teaching logical fallacies is a good start. If a child starts identifying fallacies, they can start using constructive argumentation. Teaching deductive and inductive logic and definition is the natural next step. Argumentation becomes fun in this setting. Check out these books: *Art of Argumentation* and *The Fallacy Detective*. Aristotelian logic is being taught here. For adults: Leonard Peikoff's *Introduction to Logic*, is the best course available. Liberty Classroom's *Introduction to Logic* course is pretty good as well. http://www.peikoff.com/courses_and_lectures/introduction-to-logic/ and <http://www.libertyclassroom.com/courses/introduction-to-logic/>



and the art of argumentation.¹⁷ A lot of times, children this age become highly dramatic and rebellious, which has everything to do with not feeling understood. If children are taught how to express themselves without being dominated or interrupted, they won't feel like adults are the enemy; irrationality itself becomes the enemy (this is not utopian). When you argue with rules and art, truth becomes the priority, rather than defining the winner and loser. In my home, anytime someone argues with the purpose of being right, they are immediately called out; using fallacies or clever tricks to win arguments is looked at in the same way as if someone were lying. Embracing argumentation will create a strong-willed person with the sort of intellectual defenses that liberty requires. And increasing the intellectual culture of the home where everyone is subject to the same rules encourages dignity in our youth and allows them to rise to the occasion.

4. Trust in your child. Remember, goodness is only possible when there is a choice. If you've created a healthy environment for your children and you genuinely believe in their ability to make good choices, then give them the freedom they deserve. The goal of parenting is liberating the child.¹⁸ When a child no longer needs your rules, they've grown up. Lifting rules and letting them self-govern are the ultimate realizations of successful parenting.

HOW TO CREATE COMMON INTERESTS WITH TEENS

Everything aforementioned still applies. I feel impelled to submit a shift in perspective for parents of teenagers. These parents may do well to consider that adolescence, as we've come to know it, is really a 20th century phenomenon. Teenagers were warriors, skilled and unskilled laborers, university students, and husbands and

Adolescence, as we've come to know it, is really a 20th century phenomenon.

¹⁷ *Art of Argumentation* is the name of a book, though not the meaning here. I'm referring to the respectful and constructive style alone: how to give each other a voice; how to fully observe before judging; how to always use good form expressing contrary views. The gentlemanly culture of dialectic.

¹⁸ Ana Martin said something to this effect in an interview with Mises Academy. Ana Martin has been a consistent source of inspiration for Jessica and me. Checkout "The Libertarian Homeschooler." <https://www.facebook.com/TheLibertarianHomeschooler> and <http://mises.org/media/8099/>



wives that held equal station in life. Social engineers have used schooling and public policy to extend childhood into teen years and beyond, and now nearly all parents have embraced teen dependence today. If your teen is not mature enough to self-govern and you can't trust her with freedom, this is where the system has demonstrated its influence.

1. Start holding teenagers capable. Most teenagers just covet the freedoms that their parents are terrified to extend. Try saying "yes" a little bit more and observe what happens; expand and contract freedoms as logical consequences with constant reiteration that freedom requires character and personal responsibility. Incentivize honesty and strong character by consistently extending freedom. Also note that creating prohibitions will absolutely not stop a teenager, so you'll do well to stop perpetuating the myth that prohibition has any effect on drug use. Prohibition does nothing but make parents blissfully ignorant. Teens will do exactly what they want to do, despite their delusional parents. Treating teens as capable individuals and seeing the best in them, will allow them to rise to the occasion. Try: "Hanging out with that group is going to get you in trouble. If you want to be associated with thieves and destroyers of property, then continue hanging out with them. If you get busted with them, your excuses will be irrelevant, and your freedoms will be removed."
2. Parents must realize that teens will only receive adult wisdom by making the same mistakes they did. Very rarely can wisdom be transmitted in a form other than firsthand experience. As painful as it is allowing our children to make the same mistakes that we did, take solace knowing that maturity and wisdom comes from life experiences that you are not getting in the way of. If feedback is genuinely desired, they'll ask for it. If they have to learn by experience, they will. Instead of being a roadblock, be a gentle guide. Some things we just have to learn for ourselves. Let them know that you're always here for them, and that you can provide insights you wish you had at sixteen. Never be afraid of speaking up, but know that unsolicited advice usually doesn't help.



3. Parents need to be real people. Parents need to stop creating a bullshit persona and start sharing who they are with their teens. Of course, starting earlier is always best. Building a friendship during teen years is something that the system will tell you is impossible. Bollocks! Be an open book to your children—the good and especially the bad. When your children start asking you for stories, this is where they glean a lot of information about human nature and what life is really about. Tell them the truth; let them see the contradictions, let them see you as a person rather than simply dad. The humanity is in the bad stuff; it's what makes life interesting. Knowing the bad stuff along with the good makes accomplishments and good deeds attainable for all. “Jesus wasn't like me, therefore how can I be like him? Nicholas Winton¹⁹ was just a normal guy on vacation, and he saved all of those children because he saw injustice and decided to act. I can do that!”

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY IS AN ADVENTURE THAT STRENGTHENS BOND

Creating a strong family bond has a lot to do with the experiences that you've shared together. Families burn through tons of cash trying to create happy times, and are usually left unfulfilled or disappointed in some way or another. There's a great secret that more families need to know about. Serving others, feeding and clothing the poor, and taking direct action to meet the needs of your community are ways to give your family a sense of purpose, duty, love, and honor. When children know they are being of service to something greater than themselves, it fills their hearts with joy because it reconnects them with their loving nature.

Above, notice that I wrote *direct action*. When charities and organizations act as a barrier of giving, this disconnects children from what they are actually participating in. Placing jackets in a giving-box is much different than handing a jacket to a person in need; collecting canned food is much different than handing food to a real person. Charities are wonderful, but the adventure is what strengthens the character and the bond. There are small dangers involved in going out and taking direct action in your community, but do this responsibly and you'll see the benefits of getting your hands dirty.

¹⁹ Search out the story of Nicholas Winton as told by Lawrence Reed. This was a life-changing experience for Jessica and me.



My daughter, who generally spurns the fun stuff, said this in response to an outing of the kind I've described above: "Dad, this was the greatest day of my entire life." No cash spent, just service to the community.

Also, selfless giving is extremely powerful. Not being thanked or recognized is good for the character. Think about creating adventures in giving that your family keeps in confidence. You can have alter-ego, superhero identities!

Think about creating an organization as a family that meets the needs of your community in one way or another: for profit or none. Be creative. Be entrepreneurial. What matters is that action is taken and adventure is created.

DISCIPLINE

There are as many opinions on the subject of discipline as there are butts to spank. However, there is a common debate:

1. Children ought to be spanked and punished to modify behavior.
2. Children ought not be spanked, but they should be punished.
3. Children ought not be spanked or punished. The parent should facilitate the child's experience of logical consequences.
4. Children ought not be spanked or punished. It isn't the parents' job to administer any consequences.

As much as I'd like there to be a universally correct answer (I vote for number three), I believe there isn't one. What is more constructive than debating discipline itself is considering what the goals of discipline are and whether these goals can be reached without having to hurt our children. Whether we swat or spank, associating a behavior with pain is always the motive. I don't personally know anyone that wants to hurt their children, or that enjoys threatening them, but most simply do so because they don't believe they have a choice or because they're doing what has always been done.

I've demonstrated earlier that morality only extends to areas where choice exists. If one lives by



the NAP, then initiating force as a means to an end would never be an option. However, many libertarians don't extend the NAP to how they raise their children, because they don't believe that they can raise disciplined children without administering pain. If they believed in another choice, then their principles would extend to this situation, and they would never use violence as a means for correcting behavior. They would know that initiating violence causes unintended consequences and is simply immoral.

I want to share with as many people as possible that there are choices when it comes to our approach to discipline. I've tried pain and punishment; it didn't work. I tried logical consequences, and it did. Our parenting style should reflect the world we wish to create. If we wish to create a free world, then parent with the principles that a free world requires. If we wish to create a new Sparta, violence would be a virtue and logical consequences would end up hurting our children; hitting them would make them more aggressive and aid in their survival.

Our parenting style should reflect the world we wish to create.

You really don't need scientific proof that spanking is ineffective; common sense should be enough for principled people. However, if you need evidence from long-term clinical trials to prove that spanking doesn't work and also encourages bad behavior, irrationality, and lowers IQ, start [here](http://tinyurl.com/m49g5df).²⁰

At this point, we may be in complete disagreement, but that's okay; however, what's not okay is justifying spanking with fallacious appeals to tradition. The fact that you were hit and are grateful for it is not a logical defense. However, I will admit, the claim that hitting always does more harm than good is also not accurate. John Taylor Gatto stated that getting hit upside the head by his grandpa for complaining of boredom was a positive turning point in his life.²¹

Allowing morality to govern your choices, especially those that affect the next generation, matters most of all. Living free now means having the courage to do something different and end the status quo.

Do we teach violence as a justifiable means to an end (under certain conditions), or should we stay fully consistent?

²⁰ <http://tinyurl.com/m49g5df>

²¹ *Weapons of Mass Instruction*, "Prologue: Against School," xiii-xiv



How Do We Get Our Children To Make Good Choices?

I'm not going to insult your intelligence with any airy-fairy prescriptions that advise you to remove discipline from your home altogether. So, how does discipline happen without pain and punishment? Pain and punishment are good for behavior modification, but are not good when trying to raise autonomous, rational adults.

Modeling all the traits we want our children to have is the most important thing we can do. We need to allow our children to experience the natural consequences of their bad choices. As parents, when we make bad decisions, a hand doesn't come down from the heavens and pop us on the butt. We learn from the discomfort these bad choices create. If we are saved from our bad choices, we'll keep making them. How many times do parents save their children from bearing the full-weight of natural consequences?

If your child hurts another, then the child ought to be liable for restitution. If apologizing isn't good enough, then the victim needs to determine what will make him whole again. Parents can act as facilitators during dispute resolution when this occurs amongst siblings. Here's an example: Jane destroys her brother's room after a sleepover with her friends; Johnny goes to Mom, furious over the matter. Mom asks Johnny what will help him forgive his sister, and he determines that Jane should tidy his room with a little extra cleaning on top of it. Mom agrees, and then demands this from Jane. Jane's freedom is lost until this is completed.

If your child hurts another, then the child ought to be liable for restitution.

Once complete, Jane has made good on her restitution and no hard feelings need continue. Her freedoms are restored. As Jane knows that she'll be forced to immediately make good on the damages, or face losing her freedoms, there is zero incentive for making these kinds of choices.

Children start making good choices when they can determine cause and effect.

The main objective of discipline is to help our children make good choices. Children start making good choices when they can determine cause and effect, what logically



follows from their actions; this is the beginning of their autonomy. Spanking as a consequence is non sequitur in the real world. Restitution and other discomforts that bad choices create are the only way for children to learn what logically results from their actions. As children generally connect pleasure with good, it won't take long for them to connect bad choices with displeasure. Sometimes displeasure is getting yelled at for annoying or disturbing other members of the household; sometimes displeasure is missing out on a sleepover because responsibilities haven't been met.

DEALING WITH TEMPER TANTRUMS

Tantrums make victims out of parents. When you see a child flipping out at a store because Mom refuses to buy a toy, as a nonparent, you may judge the mom, and as a parent, you may think, "What is that shitty kid doing to that poor woman?"²² Tantrums suck and are one of the worst things that all parents have to deal with. Trying to come up with overarching reasons for them is trying to impose reason where reason doesn't exist.

There is no avoiding tantrums, so consider how to deal with them. Here are some common causes of tantrums:

- being tired
- being hungry
- lack of understanding
- cannot match words with feelings
- wanting something
- any combination above

²² From a Louis C.K. bit.



HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

Dealing with tantrums is the greatest test for nonviolent parents. What always angered me most was that there was no way out of them. No reasoning, no bargaining, no compromising; just screaming and utter embarrassment.

Dealing with tantrums is the greatest test for nonviolent parents.

A tantrum is the expression of frustration. As adults, we have microtantrums when we lash out at our spouses when we're hungry. What if your wife smacked you for snapping at her? What if your husband bit your head off for snapping at him after an exhausting day with the children? Lashing out at someone or hitting them is no way to respond to a tantrum, yet parents constantly make bad situations worse when they smack their children or yell at them during a tantrum.

See beyond the behavior rather than reacting to it. This works in all relationships that we care about, with those young and old. If your child starts flipping out, it's your job to immediately get out of the environment that triggered the tantrum. Also, don't subject others to this situation. Shitty parents allow their children to scream and ruin everyone else's time. Once you're out of the situation, work on being fully empathetic with your child. Do not argue, do not try and diagnose, just be with. Hold them and let the full expression of frustration and pain come out. Don't try to stop them from feeling it. Hold them close and feel the pain with them. Don't react or feel guilty about

Children that are allowed to feel the full spectrum of emotions will be more in tune with themselves later in life.

it. Don't try to make it all better. Just allow them to cry it out with you. Don't leave them! Be with them. Cry it out, together. There's something magical that happens when you allow yourself and your child to feel the pain; it simply goes away or they'll just fall asleep. Punishing, hitting, leaving them, or yelling, are nothing short of abuse in situations like these. If you do yell by accident, it's okay. You're human, too. Apologize, kiss, hold, and comfort until it passes. Children that are allowed to feel the full spectrum of emotions will be more in tune with themselves later in life. They'll become healthier, happier people.



HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

It is possible to stop tantrums, but don't count on it. If you had to bring your tired child to the store and they see a toy they want, then you may need to just buy it for them. Children, especially tired ones, don't really understand why they can't have something when you're loading your cart up with things *that you get*. If you think you're spoiling them for buying them things or creating a bad precedent, you're wrong. Children whose needs are met can be reasoned with in the future. Rather than sticking to your guns on principle, sometimes you just have to buy the little one what he wants. If you have the means, buy the toy. You're loading your cart up with thirty or forty things; you can buy one toy to stop a tantrum!

Teach children about how much things cost as soon as they can recognize numbers. I've avoided many tantrums when my child actually understood that I couldn't afford the toys he was pointing at. My four-year-old can generally understand that numbers larger than four are too expensive. "Daddy needs to go to his office and work more so that he can buy you the big toys, son. Right now Daddy can only afford four or less."

Quick discernment can reverse tantrums once they've started. Sometimes children start having a meltdown because they think something is happening that actually isn't. Sometimes you can reach children with conversation if you're patient. There is nothing that makes me happier than to experience coming to terms with my little one—reaching genuine understanding and watching his face transform from tears to smiles. He gets so excited when we've reached an understanding.

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Also, sometimes children have tantrums because they have no way of expressing their feelings. Children are extremely sensitive to changing circumstances and being mindful of this can stop tantrums from happening. If Daddy has to start leaving for longer periods of time, the little one may scream as Daddy picks up the keys; Daddy needs to start spending more quality time with his little one when he is



at home, and help him understand that he will always come back. Maybe allow his child to call him at work and make a game out of it. Leaving will then become less stressful.

TO DISCIPLINE OR TO BE DISCIPLINED?

Like education, the virtues of being well disciplined are learned from the whole life experience. Discipline isn't defined by how strict the parent is, or the boundaries imposed—quite the opposite. The more authoritarian parents are, the more undisciplined their children become. Check out any college campus to view those that have just been released from captivity—they act like monkeys. Discipline exists in the child that self-governs in the absence of rule enforcers.

“Discipline” has two common definitions as a noun, the first having to do with obedience, which is the language of the state. The second definition deals with study, coming from the word “discipulus” meaning disciple, or student. When adults speak of their discipline, they're referring to their expertise; when children speak of their discipline, they're referring to getting taken upside the head. Strange.

Discipline exists in the child that self-governs in the absence of rule enforcers.

Maybe if discipline were treated as an adjective (self-control) rather than a verb (to punish), parents would have a more positive approach instilling the virtues that lead a person to being disciplined, and would be getting out of the business of behavior modification.

DISCIPLINE CAN BRING YOU CLOSER TO YOUR CHILDREN

Teaching discipline can actually bring you closer to your children. I've actually had my son say, “Dad, please keep my iPad away from me at night, I don't trust myself with it.” These kinds of exchanges happen when you're genuinely on the same team. Discipline for my older son is getting his day's work done the night before, so that he can read through the day and just chill out. If he has his iPad,



he doesn't get his work done and he stays up all night to finish it. He feels the guilt of not doing what he knows is good for him.

Adults have a difficult enough time self-regulating on mediums like Facebook and Netflix, and with entertainment now perfected as a science, funded by corporations with billions in research dollars, the expectation that children will self-regulate on electronics is unrealistic. If, however, your children understand that you helping them regulate gets them closer to what they want, then you will not be met with the constant power struggle. My daughter absolutely adores shows; however, she now understands that watching too many at a time leads to her not feeling well, so she understands why we've created a two-hour limit. Do we break these limits every once in a while? Absolutely.

Even if the children are too young to understand why there are certain rules, if your rules bring your family closer together, then you are on target with them. The rules should be established with the best in mind for everyone's overall health and well being.

If the rules you impose create a power struggle in your home, then your rules need to change or you need to explain why the rules have been put in place. For instance, if you conclude that cell phones may be bad for health and you restrict phone use, your children are going to fight you. If you show your daughter that phones may be linked to breast cancer, your daughter may immediately get on the same page. Banning phone use may be extreme, but negotiating safe-use rules is more reasonable. If you determine that video games are bad, and you simply ban them, fighting will probably ensue. If you talk to your son about how video games are restricting his opportunity to be creative because they monopolize his time, you might negotiate a reasonable plan for limiting gameplay.

If there is consistent laughter, joyfulness, and a creative spirit in the home, then your rules are working.

Rules should create harmony. If rules are causing a discord, they aren't good rules. I'm not talking about complaints. If a child just throws up their arms in protest every once in a while, that's okay. Being disciplined isn't always fun. However, the overall payoff is what matters. If there is consistent laughter, joyfulness, and a creative spirit in the home, then your rules are working. If complaints dominate



the environment, rules need to change or more communication needs to happen. If children don't understand why, then rules become arbitrary and enforcement causes animosity. Rules are not meant to serve the parents, they are meant to serve the household.

When administering logical consequences, keep an open line of communication. Children don't want to be lectured, but an explanation is always needed. Your children need to be consistently reminded that you love them, and their spirits can even be lifted as they face their consequences. My daughter always calls these explanations "pep talks."

If rules are meant to create harmony and bring the family closer together, then they must always adapt to changing circumstances. Be flexible with the rules you create, and don't be married to what you idealize.

Discipline is a virtue.

WHAT IT ALL COMES DOWN TO

Parenting is an art form; there is absolutely no single right way. If I could leave you with one message it would be that it takes a lot of courage being original and charting your own course; it's okay not to have all of the answers as long as your actions align with your principles.

One thing generally overlooked is how significant love is. When a home is built on a foundation of love, warmth, and joyfulness, being a success is really a consequence. When you know how to love and be intimate, how to create healthy relationships, and how to experience joy, people want to be around you, and this support becomes a wind at your back. Focusing on creating a healthy, loving environment for our children really is enough for them to become successful, kind-hearted adults.

If I could leave you with one message it would be that it takes a lot of courage being original and charting your own course.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

You'll notice that a lot of topics weren't covered here; these could fill libraries! I wrote on topics that have most significantly impacted my life, and I didn't want to bombard you with too many words. I do apologize if I've missed any topics that you were anticipating. [Write me](#).²³

Education is a huge topic. I completely neglected covering the methods, learning styles, alternative schools, etc. There are plans for another booklet in the near future. For now, I'll include a list of must-reads for those who contact me. (Also, checkout parentsforliberty.org.²⁴) There is so much to be excited about and grateful for when it comes to possibilities for our children. Public schools are becoming as irrelevant as central banks.

Please share your experiences unplugging, and continue inspiring others to do the same.



JUSTIN ARMAN

Justin Arman is a father of three, and he and his wife, Jessica Arman, are both activists in central Texas. The Armans run several businesses together, successful enough to meet their family needs. They currently homeschool their children and are madly in love. Justin is on the board of directors of a 501(c)(3) public charity in Austin called The Center For Natural Living, whose aim is to demonstrate the value of voluntary cooperation in the areas of sustainability, family, and health. With his wife he founded Parents for Liberty, which focuses on education freedom and supporting families that are exiting public schools; they host an education conference every year in Austin. He's a producer and reporter for a news program called the Liberty Beat, which airs on the top of every hour on 90.1FM in Austin. Justin is a steering committee member for the notorious Texans for Accountable Government, which he feels is the most effective grassroots activism group in Texas, and probably all of the United States. Justin is a studio drummer who has toured all over North America, Japan, and Pakistan.

²³ justinarman+Liberty.me@gmail.com

²⁴ <http://parentsforliberty.org/>