

All Pro Insights for Dads . . .



*Kids have them and
so can you
(and they're always good).*

*Old Man River
plus many others**

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Introduction

Let me just share . . .

Mark Merrill is the Founder and President of the non-profit organization **All Pro Dad**. He in partnership with former NFL coach Tony Dungy (and his **Dungy's Diaries**) are encouraging Dads to succeed in their marriages, with their families and their communities (at work, in the neighborhood or wherever they need to be). Bill Watterson you already know as the creator of the **Calvin & Hobbes** comic strip.

Now from them, the following is an example of the type of insights that they provide and I have added to . . . all in the hope of giving you some things to consider as you pursue your life as a Dad (a great privilege and a huge challenge). It is this message shared from Father's Day 2021.

First, know this, being a Dad is the dynamic mix of being challenged and being blessed. Knowing what to do and not to do is as they say, easier said than done. Second, the best dads know that learning from others, helps them to be a better dad. Third, knowing who's advice to consider, is the shortcut to success.

So, today we share the following – consider it all.

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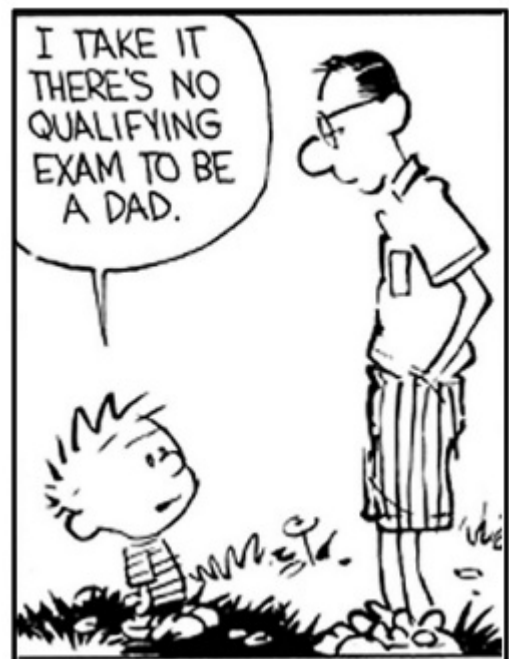
If you're interested, here you go . . .

1. *Enemies of Fatherhood.*
2. *How to have fearless kids.*
3. *Fun things to do with your kids.*
4. *Gifts to give your kids.*
5. *Helping your child when life is not fair.*
6. *What to do when things feel impossible.*
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11. *Helping your kids with their feelings.*
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14. *How to evaluate your relationship with your kids.*
15. *Lessons to teach your kids.*
16. *How to teach your kids to have grit.*

It now comes down to this.

Becoming a father is pretty easy.
Being a Dad – one who cares – is
not that easy but when you
pursue help, added insights,
and try – you're on a good
track (go for it!).

Being a Dad with no regrets . . .
I'm not sure if that is doable
but if you're like me, you will
do the best that you can.



Dungy's Diaries as the 5 Enemies of Fatherhood

[this starts with] Do you want to be an average dad or an amazing one? I'm thinking you wouldn't be reading this if you didn't want to take your role as a dad to another level (or be one who wants to help encourage other Dads that you know). The hard part about going to a higher level is it takes dedication, focus, hard work, and a willingness to change. We need to be confronted with our weaknesses and have the humility to own and deal with them. For me, I have been challenged as a man and a dad by a daily devotional called ['Move' by Brian Tome](#).

One of his (Brian's) thoughts that stood out to me is about identifying your enemies. You can define "enemies" in a lot of different ways, but we'll define them as the things that keep us from being better versions of ourselves. When I think about my enemies as a dad, it's those things that keep me from being the man my kids need—the things that take me away from what makes a great dad. I thought three that Brian listed applied to fatherhood, I added a couple more for your consideration.



#1 Anger

Uncontrolled anger can do a lot of damage.

It can make kids feel unsafe and unloved. We are going to have moments when we get angry, but we have to work on maintaining control. Whether it is stress, unmet expectations, or feelings of inadequacy, we have to deal with the underlying issue that

causes our anger. Otherwise, we will reach our breaking points and blow up. Which leads to . . .

When you lose it: Admit it, apologize for it, and ask for forgiveness (and never stop working on it).

#2 Laziness

This is the most demanding time in our lives. Our kids, our jobs, possibly our parents, and our wives (if we're married) need our time and energy. Yes, fatherhood is exhausting, but our time of influence is short. When laziness takes over, we check out and miss the opportunity to love and care for our kids.

They are at vulnerable ages and they need our engagement and guidance. Checking out can lead to stunted growth and a weakened sense of identity. Which leads to . . .

When you get lazy: Engage.
Remember that your kids need your presence. Find people to help hold you accountable for giving your all.



#3 Distraction

It is so easy to be distracted these days. We are always reachable by text, email, phone call, or whatever else you have or your workplace uses to communicate. That doesn't even cover social media, or whatever else catches your eyes. It's one thing to use these tools to connect with our kids, but too often, they take us away. Which leads to . . .

When you get distracted: Focus. Remember what is important and hold boundaries. Remove the distractions. If it's your phone, then turn it off when you come home.



#4 Selfishness

It is so easy to be distracted these days. We are always reachable by text, email, phone. Seeking our own interests leads to callousness & disconnection. Don't misunderstand me—we can certainly have our own hobbies and seek out alone time. But there is a big difference between improving ourselves and seeking rest so we can be

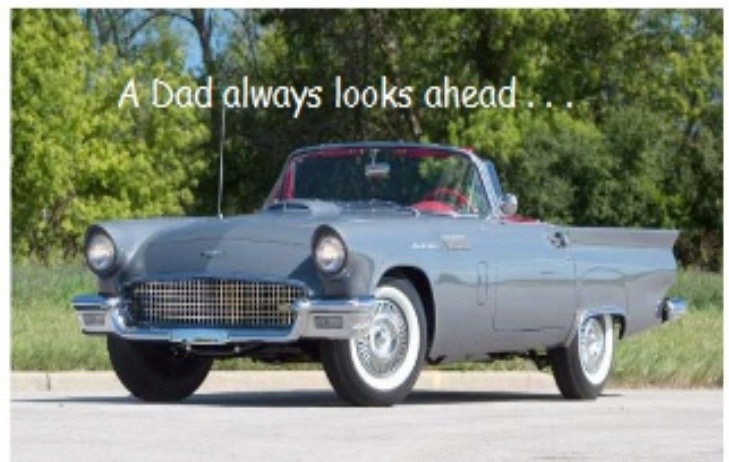
better for our kids or being selfish. Is what you are doing making you better for your kids or making you more absent?

Which leads to . . .

When you are selfish: Sacrifice. If a desire, hobby, or even a dream is negatively impacting your relationship with your kids, then give it up. Remember that being a dad is a calling. Live out that calling faithfully.

#5 Passivity

If we passively stand back, our kids will wander through life left to figure it out on their own. Your kids need you. As Brian's devotional tells us, we need to move (aka take action).



(because insights are always good)

Being a great father requires us to enter into our kids' cares,



struggles, and dreams to offer support, guidance, and even discipline. Which leads to . . .

**When you are passive:
Initiate. Study your kids and step into**

their world. Ask your kids questions, have uncomfortable age-appropriate conversations. Find a way to have talks with your kids so they know you care.

And with all of the above – and this one picture below, you can see the type of insights that we have gathered and will be sharing.

I know I am not great at all the good words to ponder but I sure do appreciate all the good ones that others have shared, that we can read and if needed . . . re-read again and again.



Learning (in my opinion) is never a one and done. For example, I've read the Bible four times now and I am working on my fifth time through. Each time, new insights unfold and that is what I hope all of the following helps for you as well.

So let's get started with more insights to consider.

How to Have Fearless Kids in a Risky World

All Pro Dad shares: Nothing prepares parents for the first time they take their toddler to a home with a swimming pool. Inevitably that child will locate the water and make a beeline right for it. It catches us off-guard because we forget that kids aren't naturally afraid of things like drowning, we have to teach them that. Luckily we're pretty good at training our kids to be afraid of things: strangers, animals, the dark, clowns. There is wisdom in this.

Children are vulnerable, and as their parents, it is our responsibility to help them navigate all of the dangers of the world well. But navigating danger is different than avoiding anything that is potentially dangerous. In our desire to protect our children from danger we have too often attempted to create a world that is devoid of risk.



There are two problems with this approach.

1. A risk-free world is a mirage. And 2. Eliminating risks eliminates adventure.

So, what to do? Consider the following.

New Parenting Perspective

As Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard said, “To venture causes anxiety, but not to venture is to lose one’s self. And to venture in the highest is precisely to be conscious of one’s self.” A full and meaningful life must include adventure.

But if our kids are going to live an adventurous life there is one thing they must consistently hear from us: *Do not be afraid.*

Courage and caution are not mutually exclusive. I’m not

suggesting that we teach them to be naïve or careless,



but we can both teach them that there are dangerous things in the world while at the same time calling them to face those realities with courage. Courage and caution are not mutually exclusive.

How to Teach Kids to Live Fearlessly

So how do we teach our kids to live free from fear?

Here are 5 Suggestions:

1. Teach them they are loved.



It's remarkable how much courage comes from knowing you are deeply loved.

[Learn how to communicate love to your child](#) in the unique way he or she understands it (which may or may not be what is natural for you).

2. Model an adventurous and meaningful life.

Take up a challenge with your

child that connects them to a bigger story. For example.

Find a 5K where the money goes to make a difference and train with your child to run it. With them, chose to invest generously in a cause that you believe in and require your child to earn a percentage of what you give. Another example would be, if you're planning a family vacation, go to a National Park where you'll hike the mountains or gaze out over the Grand Canyon to give your child a sense of the vast world they're a part of.

Consider visiting Gettysburg or a stop on the Underground Railroad or Ellis Island so your child can hear stories of real people who, with great courage, faced significant challenges.

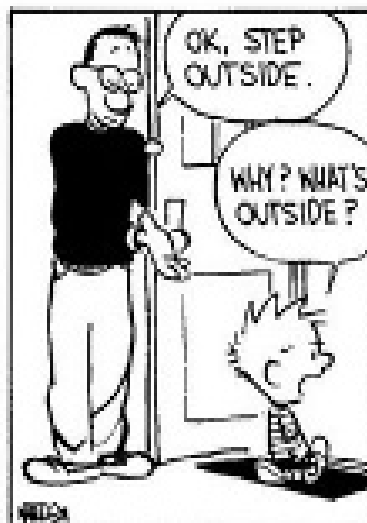
3. Encourage failure.

Far too often we teach our kids, either explicitly or implicitly, that the worst thing that could happen would be for them to fail. [This is false.](#)

Wisdom comes as we try something, fail, then learn from that failure. Allow your kids to take on things that are challenging, and don't rescue them.

When they struggle or fail, help them to learn valuable lessons.

I'M FREEZING! WHY DO WE KEEP THIS HOUSE SO DAMN COLD?!



Including, failure is not fatal! Then send them out to try again.

4. Prepare them.

Talk to your child about how to set boundaries. Teach them how to handle money responsibly and generously. Sign them up for a self-defense class. Help them make good friends.



Remember, Yoda required Luke to train. Don't send them out on adventures unprepared.

Think of the things that you wish you were prepared for and use those as your starting point.

5. Share your stories. Are there times in your life when you

stared down your fears and came out the other side? Share those stories with your kids – the successes and the failures.

OMR's thoughts:

All of the above are good examples to think about and to then as best you can, determine how want to talk on this with your kids. If we can find way to help our kids to know that they can do more than they think, but yet knowing not to cross the line with actions that are not honorable, then we have enabled them to begin building their self-confidence



around them that is very challenging. And yes, these last two comics shared – I provided as a reminder of the 'not good' type of fearlessness. We don't want a generation of kids coming along that believe they can do what they want. Because, if all that they do (and we included) is not honorable, it is most likely despicable.

So please help you young ones to under stand fearlessness as it should be and not as someone else thinks.

Keeping It Weird: 5 Fun Things To Do With Your Kids

All Pro Dad shares: How many times have you found yourself suggesting something to your kids only to have them tell you your suggestion is weird? Probably a half dozen just today. You know what “weird” means to your kids, right? It means “things my friends don’t do or wouldn’t find cool.”

But how many times has kid group-think been a successful barometer for what is good? Exactly. In light of that, here are 5 'weird' things you should do with your kids.



1. Eat dinner with them.

Very few of us do this anymore. In fact, according to a recent survey by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, over 46 percent of people admitted that regularly eating together as a family is difficult to do. You know what that means? It means eating dinner together is weird. However, there is a host of reasons why eating together is also important. This includes strengthening your relationships as a family and promoting healthy habits in your kids. So yes, finding ways to eat together as a family is not easy – but doing so, is not a regret you will have years later.

2. Limit screen time.

The average child spends more than seven hours a day looking at screens. The average child spends more than seven hours a day looking at screens. What do we do about it? [Set limits](#).

I know—weird. But if you really don't want your child on a device for seven hours a day, you've got few options. You've got to be the one who teaches your child how to prioritize real, physical, embodied experience over virtual reality.



I have friends who have baskets at their front door. Their kids' friends' phones go in the basket when they arrive and don't come out until they leave. Other friends simply set their kids' devices to lock them out automatically after a certain period of time. And still others have certain screen-free times throughout the evening, such as during dinner or for the hour before bedtime. What you do is less critical than that you do something to communicate that there is life away from the screen.

3. Hug your child.

This is easy when your child is really young. Your kids desire physical touch and gladly snuggle or climb up on your lap.

However, the older kids get, the more they try to differentiate from you both emotionally and physically. Which, by the way, is incredibly normal, healthy, and necessary. However, that doesn't mean we should simply wave at our kids from a distance and wait for special occasions like graduation or marriage to show affection physically. Recent studies point to the importance of physical touch in brain development, which doesn't end once a child becomes a teenager.

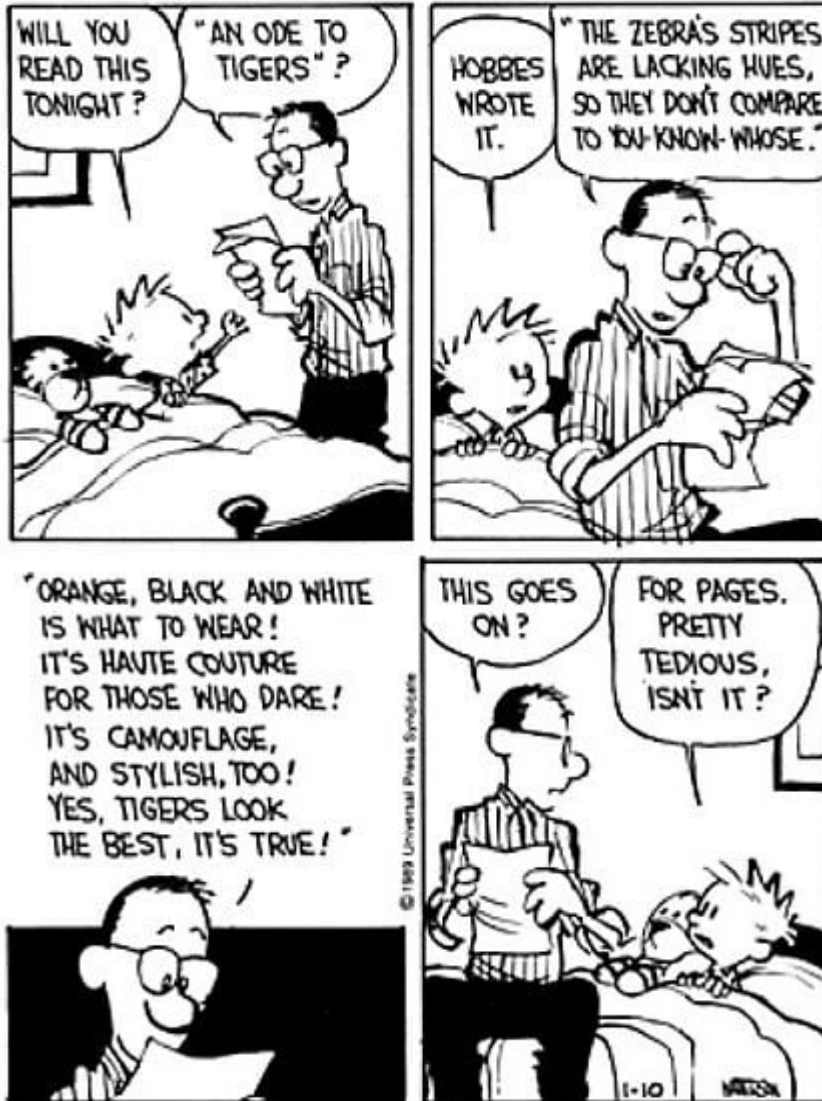


So be thoughtful about it. A big hug in front of your teenage son's buddies might not be the way to go. But an occasional hug before he heads to bed or after he's gotten disappointing news or even before he leaves for school can be a powerful tool in communicating love, building self-esteem, and cultivating his understanding of appropriate physical affection.



4. Read with your children.

This isn't just for little ones. Reading to your children when they are young helps them learn to love reading, but reading together as they get older can be a great way to build family



bonds around loved stories and engage in deep conversations. I know families who have read the *Harry Potter* series out loud together. Some folks read the Bible. Others may read something they've found online that's been particularly helpful. Whatever it is, choosing to take the time to read together can offer a unique and wonderful opportunity for connection.

5. Develop family rituals.

Life gets so chaotic that we often feel like it just happens to us. We need to develop family rituals—rhythms of life that help us orient ourselves properly as a family. Our family does this

each night with a 15- to 30-minute ritual we call High-Low. We simply stop each night prior to bed and have each person share one high (positive experience) from the day and one low (negative experience). It creates space for us to reconnect, listen to each other's joys and disappointments, and practice gratitude.

OMR's thoughts: All I can say is that anything you can do to interact with your kids – will be worth it. At a minimum it is fun times as it unfolds and for the long term – it creates memories for them and for you.

7 Gifts to Give Your Family Every Day

All Pro Dad shares: With each spring, we entering the season of Mother's Day, as well as various anniversaries and birthdays as well. It would be wise to make a list of all of the possible gifts to get for these events. However, before you put your pen away, use it to make another list of things to give year round to the people who are most important to you. Putting time and effort into choosing just the right present for someone is a great way of demonstrating how much they mean to you.



However, anniversaries, Christmas, and birthdays come only once a year, and you don't have to wait twelve months to give them something meaningful. Here are 7 gifts to give your spouse, your children, and others close to you every single day.

They won't affect your wallet and the results could be priceless.

1. The benefit of the doubt.

You sense a note of disapproval or a hint of criticism in something your spouse says. It seems that your teenage son has deliberately disregarded your rule about no dirty shoes in the house again. Don't



Don't automatically assume the

worst. Believe the best and find out

more before

jumping to conclusions that

can put you unnecessarily

put you in an adversarial mode.



2. Your attention.

One of the best gifts you can give someone does not involve bringing a present, but being present. One of the best gifts you can give someone does not involve bringing a present, but being present. Really focus on being with them, not with your cell phone. Also, focus on what they are saying to you. We men particularly need to recognize that there's a difference between hearing and listening. I may be able to repeat back to my wife word for word what she told me in a conversation, but she knows whether I'm

really listening or not. Here are some ideas on how to communicate better with your spouse.

3. A hand.

Of course, you pitch in to help when there's a big need, but those little things can mean a lot too. What can you do to help lighten their load on a regular basis? If your wife is going to be driving somewhere, you make sure the car is gassed up. It's not that they couldn't do it themselves, but that simple gesture fills her "love tank" too. So pick up the dirty clothes or replace that burned-out light bulb without having to be asked.



4. Your acceptance.

Your spouse and children need to know that you are for them. That you may not always approve of what they do, but that your love for them is not based on their actions. Let them know

I love you, no matter what. You might speak this, but you will also show it in your actions and your attitude. A smile and a hug can tell someone they are safe when the world seems to have ganged up on them. Ask yourself: Do you accept your children for who they are?

5. Your affirmation.

Encouraging words are never more powerful than when they



come from those we love. Don't just assume they know you appreciate and support them:

Vocalize it. Tell your wife how you admire the way she models integrity and faith in all she does. For the women, speak appreciatively to your

husband of his work ethic and diligence. It all comes down to this. Don't let your loved ones think they are appreciated, let them hear you say so – they'll then know you care.

6. Your best.

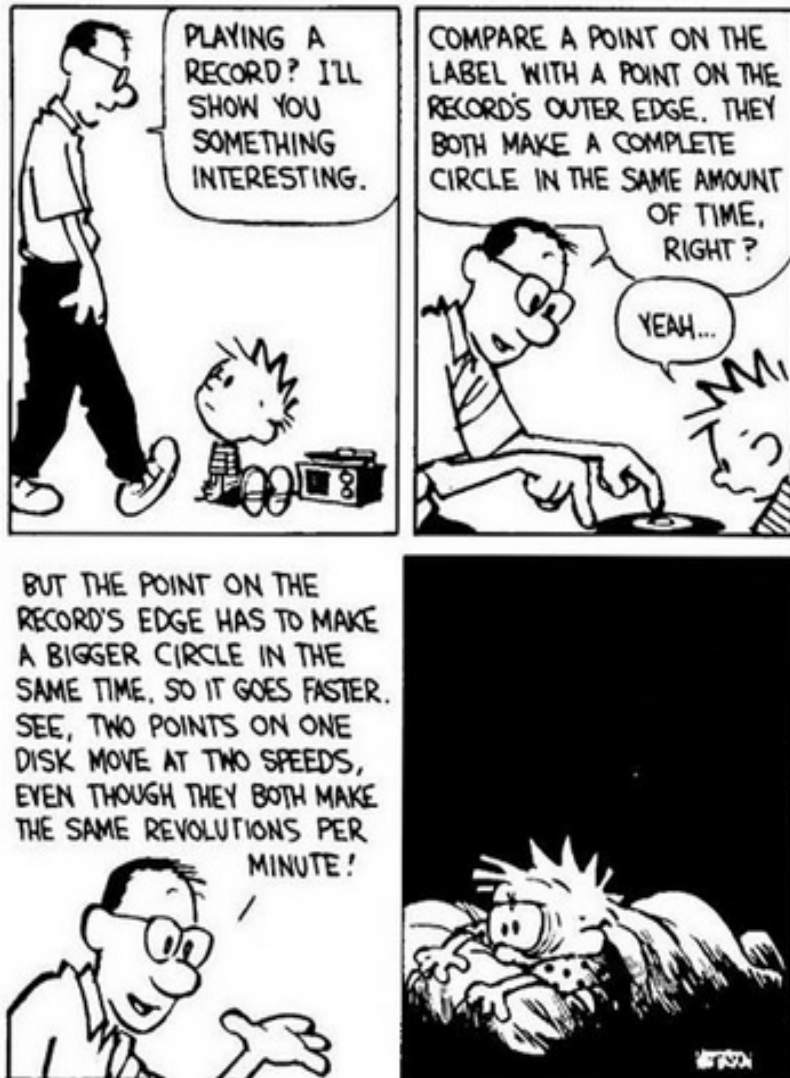
Too often those that matter most to us get the least of us.

We can be so busy running around meeting all of our obligations that by the time we come home, there's not a lot of energy left for what truly matters. We end up running on fumes rather than fueling our most important relationships. Give your family your freshest and best, not your leftovers. Make a point of reserving time for your family. And don't forget your wife - schedule date nights with your wife and keep those commitments.

7. Your wisdom.

This gift needs to be offered carefully, but it will be appreciated when shared at just the right time and the right way. As my children have grown, I have developed more of a coaching and mentoring role with them, being less directive and instead sharing with them from my experience.

Tone of voice is important, too.



Offer a life lesson, rather than a lecture. Sharing your wisdom freely with your children communicates that they are important.

OMR's thoughts: As I look back at my younger Dad years, I do know that I engaged with my kids so much more than what my Dad ever did with me and my brothers. I was disappointed about my Dad's in-actions when I was a kid, but as I got older and gained more insight on life, I realized he was just trying to do what he thought was best and needed. I was doing the same for my family and that is what I recommend for all of you dads out there. Think about what you did & did not like when you were growing up and use



those memories to help you to adjust in being the best dad that you can.

Will it all be perfect? No, but at least find ways to gift your family in the right balance of things, time and experiences (but no flamethrower gifts).

How to Help Your Child When Life Isn't Fair

All Pro Dad shares: All children often experience unfairness firsthand in their own lives, whether it's at home, at school, or in their relationships with friends and authorities. But if not handled properly, children can become very bitter and even calloused to the unfairness in their lives and the world around them. However, when life is unfair, it gives us a perfect opportunity to speak life into our child by bringing a proper balance to the situation. Our job is to help our child see that it's all about PERSPECTIVE. So the next time life throws an unfair curveball

at your child, remind them of these important principles:

1) Life will never be fair.

I like the words of John F. Kennedy, *"Life isn't fair. It never was and never will be."*

There's a lot of truth in that statement, and the sooner we can help our children to understand this,



the better. Because so many things in life are out of our control, many of those things will also often be unfair.

2) It's okay that life is not fair.

When what's unfair happens to our child, our natural tendency is to want to make right what is wrong. But in reality, most of the unfairness our children will experience in life is okay. Let's be real for a moment... It's unfair that our children were born in America, while other children suffer daily from hunger.



It's unfair that some people are born into poverty, while others are born into wealth. It's unfair that some people are gifted in ways that we will never be.

It's unfair. But it's not only unfair, it is also okay.

3) Our response to what happens is more important than what actually happens.

Surprisingly throughout history, some of the happiest people who have learned to enjoy life the most are people who have often been treated the most unfairly. Go to a third world country where they have far less & you'll be surprised at how little they talk about life being so unfair. In fact, they are often filled with joy, because it's all they have. When children get hurt or treated unfairly, it's important to remind them that life is 10% what happens to you, and 90% how you react to it.

4) There is a much bigger picture at play.

If we can help our children maintain a proper perspective of

whatever life throws at them, there is nothing they can't face.

Recently, our teenage daughter was struggling with some unfairness and I remember having some in-depth conversations with her to help her navigate through her situations.



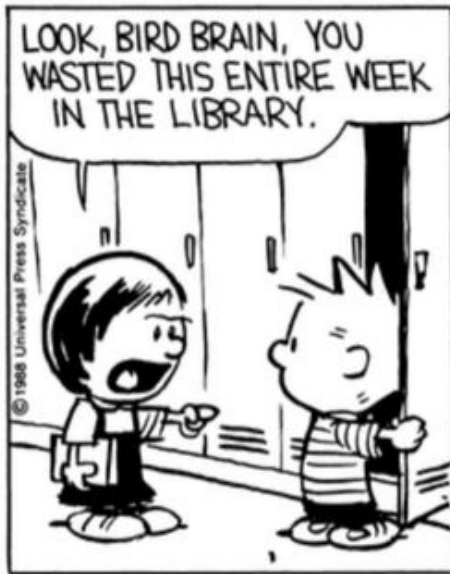
What was encouraging to me was to hear her later telling me about how God had connected all the dots in His time in ways that didn't make any sense to her at the time. We had a great discussion about how there is always a bigger picture at play than what we can usually see at the moment. If we are patient, what is unfair now may become understood later. And if we can help our children maintain a proper perspective of whatever life throws at them, there is nothing they can't face.

OMR's thoughts: All the above is good to consider as you help your kids deal with the unfair things that unfold in their lives. But know this . . . what may seem as unfair to them, may be something that you would view as 'just a part of the challenges of everyday life.' So, be careful and don't downplay something that could be huge for them. Listen, think and find ways to help them to learn from their frustrations and in what they can do to move forward aka you are helping them to gain perspective and wisdom. (I learned this the hard way and regret that I didn't know then what I have shared with you in the above).

5 Things to Do When the Situation Feels Impossible

All Pro Dad shares: Joyce Smith stood in the corner of a hospital room as around twenty-five medical staff worked desperately to save her son's life. On a balmy January day in Missouri, her son John and some friends were playing on an ice-covered lake. The ice broke beneath their feet sending the three teens into the frigid water. The other two boys were pulled out by rescue workers, but John had fallen under the

water and had been below for fifteen minutes. By the time he was pulled out, his body was frozen, there was water in his lungs, and he had no pulse. At the hospital, a large man, six feet seven inches tall, performed CPR for close to an hour. Still, no pulse. It was coming time to pronounce John dead and a doctor walked over to Joyce and told her she could talk to her son. She walked up, put her hands on her son's cold feet and said a desperate prayer, "*Holy Spirit, please come and give me back my son!*" To the utter disbelief of everyone in the room except for Joyce, John suddenly had a pulse.



It was a long road, but John eventually recovered fully. All of the medical personnel and first responders called it a miracle. The story was told in a powerful movie called *Breakthrough*.

You may be dealing with a life or death situation.

Perhaps you are experiencing relationship problems in your marriage or have a child struggling with an addiction. Maybe you are underwater financially or just overwhelmed with life. These burdens or crises can feel, and perhaps are, impossible. Take a lesson from Joyce Smith. There are several good ways you can respond to the impossible. Here are 5 to consider.

1. Pray

You may not be a person of prayer, but this is where most people turn when in foxholes and hospitals.

This was Joyce's first act when facing the impossibility of her son's survival. You may be skeptical and call it a coincidence, but the reality is a pulse came right after

her prayer and the medical workers said they have never seen anything like it. Personally, I believe in a God who is personally involved in our lives; one who has the power to not only change our circumstances, but give us peace, hope, and strength when He does not change our circumstances. Maybe



1. Write a paragraph explaining the significance of Magellan's expedition.



I'm wrong, but if I'm not isn't that the best place to start?

2. Seek Wise Counsel

If you are going to beat the odds you are going to need the best information and strategies. Seek out those people with wisdom and experience.

Learn everything you can. Make sure they are objective, trustworthy, and have expertise. If it is a professional you are just meeting, do your homework. Don't just take their advice because they have a degree. Find out as much as you can about them.

A GAS MASK, A SMOKE GRENADE,
AND A HELICOPTER THAT'S
ALL I ASK.



3. Get Help

You don't need to tackle ~~THIS~~ this alone. In fact, you shouldn't tackle this alone. Your loved ones are going to want to be in this with you. Let them know what is going on with you and invite them to share the burden. Maybe they won't be able to do something practical to fix the problem, but they can give you emotional support. In her sons most desperate hours Joyce asked the entire community to pray, and they did. Sometimes it's as simple as that.

People want to help. Let them.

4. Be Positive

Being negative has a way of being a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Joyce wouldn't let anyone speak anything but positive words and outcomes in John's hospital room. Being positive certainly doesn't guarantee that everything will work out in your favor, but in the end, it gives you a better chance. Try to visualize the outcome you want and maintain that vision. It will also help

you control your emotions. Emotions can be a great motivator,

but a terrible strategist.

Therefore, plan with your head and lead with a positive heart.



5. Work on What You Can Control

Focus on the details in front of you and execute them with as much excellence as you can. Do the best you can, when you can, while you can and surrender the rest. There are going to be things about your



situation you can't control, perhaps even the outcome. Just focus on what you can do. When clutch quarterbacks are asked how they completed a game-winning drive, many will say that they focused only on executing each play one at a time. Focus on the details in front of you and execute them with as much excellence as you can. Let the result be what it will be and deal with it when it comes.

OMR's thoughts: We all are going to have some times when we think we're in over our head and we feel pretty desperate. That is where the danger of doing something foolish can come to mind when actually, being smart is the only way to really move forward. It is in these times when you have to find a way to think and determine what you can actually do – that won't be a risk and a regret. Easy? No, and that is where time to pray actually helps as well. I have found it is best when I don't ask God to fix my problems, but for Him to help me to understand what is unfolding and what I can do to work through the mess at hand. For He wants us to learn.

3 Ways to Fight for Your Family

All Pro Dad shares: GK Chesterton once said: *“The true soldier fights, not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.”*

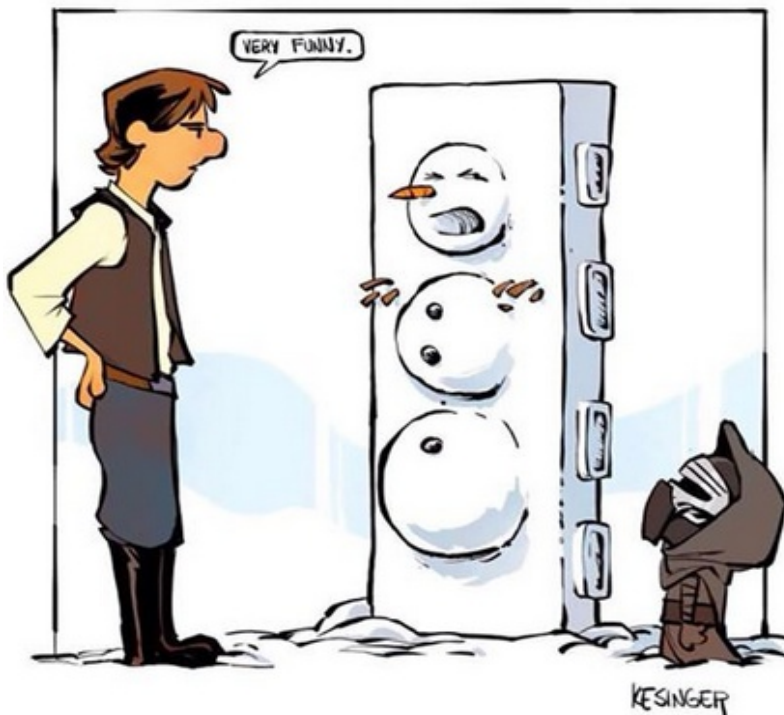
Every day in some way, whether we realize it or not, there are soldiers who are preserving our freedoms and protecting our country. They are willing to do this at the expense of family, convenience, and even the supreme sacrifice of their very own lives should it be required of them.

They are willing to take a stand to fight for what they believe in, for what our country stands for, as well as for their own friends and families. This requires a great amount of courage that is sometimes hard to find in today's culture. But not only is this kind of courage needed on the battlefield, it is also needed on the home-front as well. This is a similar kind of courage it takes to be a successful dad. Just like a soldier, courageous fatherhood requires us as dads to step up and do some things. Here are three of them:

1. Stand

In the heat of the battle, a good soldier will stand his ground.

Not because it's easy, and not because it's enjoyable, but because it comes with the territory of being a soldier. There will be times as dads when we must also stand our ground as the head of our home because it's what we're called to do. There are many voices threatening us and telling us to back down and to submit to our culture of permissiveness in our



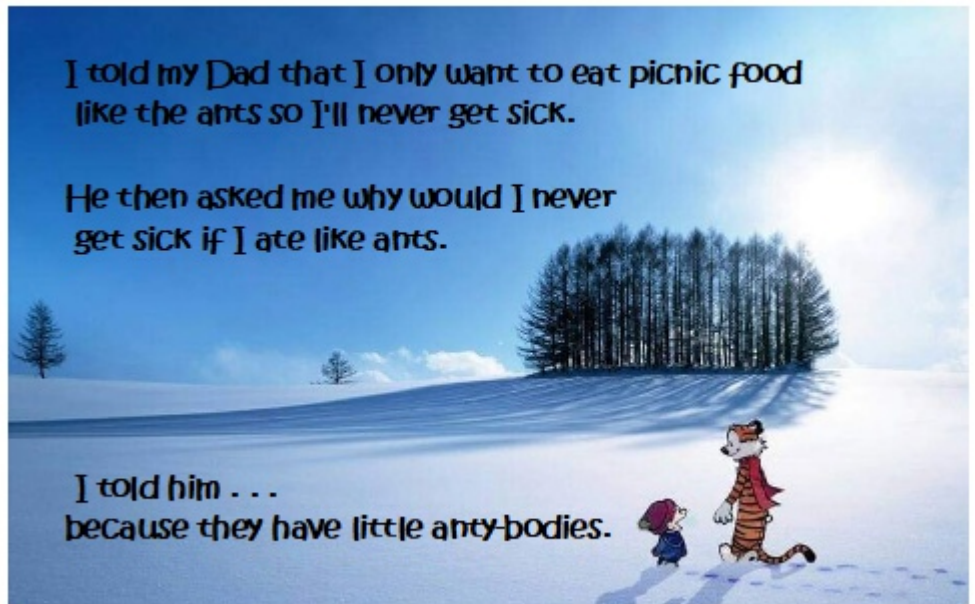
home. Voices that would downplay the importance of our role as fathers, and voices that would tell us that our family's rules and values are outdated and that we need to lighten up in areas that we instinctively know otherwise.

This comes with the territory of being a father. As fathers, we know that we are ultimately responsible for the vision, the leadership, and the direction of our home, which requires us to stand up for our family and our values, both when it's easy, and when it's not.

2. Fight

Any good soldier knows there is a real enemy who threatens the safety of everything he holds dear, and so, he is willing to fight in order to protect it. There will be times as dads when we too must fight for

our families, to protect them, their lives, and their futures, even when this makes us 'the bad guy'. There are so many things that sometimes seem

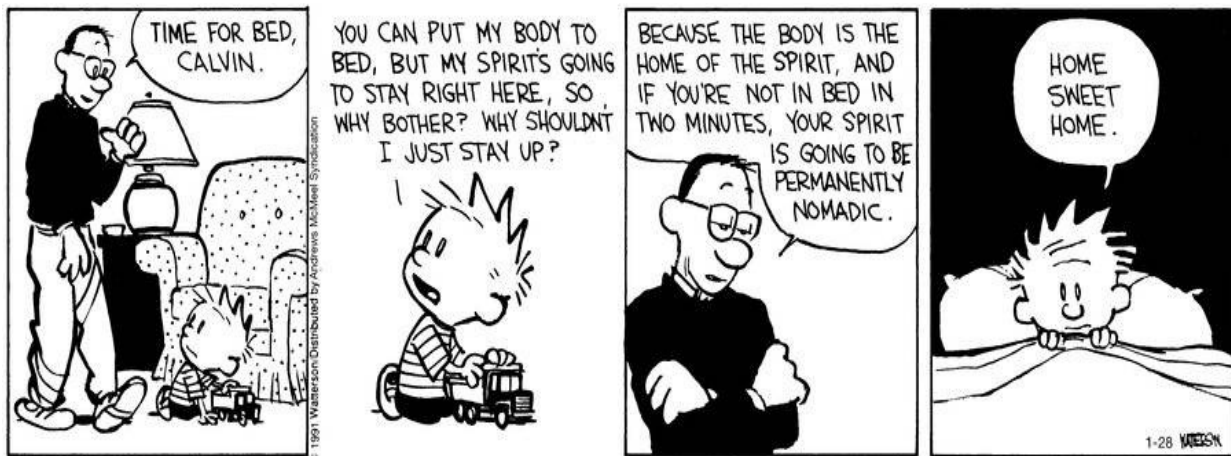


“harmless”, yet that can potentially threaten our family and their well being. And so we must always stay alert, stay informed, and stay engaged in the fight through our fatherly position, our presence, and our prayers for our family.

3. Kneel

Every courageous father must be humble enough to regularly kneel for the sake of his family. On the battlefields of history,

countless prayers were prayed, and not because they were all recorded in the history books, but because soldiers knew that what they were up against was so much bigger than they were. They needed the help and guidance of Someone more powerful than themselves. The same is true for us as dads. Our job is tough. Our responsibility is often bigger than we even realize. And so our help must come from Someone far greater than we are. Every courageous father must be humble enough to regularly kneel for the sake of his family.



OMR's thoughts: The above leads us to a very good question.

Are you ready to take on the challenges of courageous fatherhood to fight for your family?

It is easy to answer yes, but it is extremely hard to do so well.

Who Am I? (Know your Makeup to help your children)

All Pro Dad shares: A few years ago, our house flooded so badly we had to gut the house and take it down to the studs.

It was at this time that our contractor found some problems with our house's foundation. There were some deterioration in the pillars that were holding up the house. My contractor explained that if we didn't fix the foundation, we could do all the framing, drywall, painting to make the house look nice all we wanted but without making the foundation sound, we'd always struggle to have a firm structure.

The same holds true with each and every one of us. We need to make sure our foundation is sturdy and then help our children to have a strong foundation as well. If we don't, it's only a matter of time before our lives start to sink, and maybe even collapse. We and our children need to be able to solidly answer this important question: "Who am I?" Here's how to understand your makeup.

Understand your Identity

It is who you are and it's what makes you valuable. You are valuable because of who you are, not because of what you do.

You were created exclusively by God and for God. That's your true identity. God doesn't make junk. You were hand-made, custom-designed, and fully loaded by God to do awesome things!



So why is it so important to understand your value and gifts as a dad, mom, husband, wife? You can only give to others what you've got. You need to understand your value so that you can validate your kids' value.

Pursue Validation

Validating a child's identity is essential. Without some sort of validation, many children grow up spending a lifetime searching for their identity. Children burn a lot of energy always trying to prove themselves worthy to their mom or dad. And once children are grown, if they leave the home without feeling validated, they will start searching the world to find acceptance. We must love and lead our children by validating them for who they are - masterpieces, unique creations with immeasurable value. We must love and lead our children by validating them for who they are- masterpieces, unique creations with immeasurable value. You may not approve or like something your kids do and there may be serious consequences, but your children need to know that you love them for who they are, not for what they do or don't do.



Ensure Application

Does your child know you love them for why they are, not for what they do? When your son doesn't make the starting football team, does he know you still love him? And when your daughter is caught drinking, does she know you still love her? When your son makes a bad grade, does he know you still love him? Validate your children's, your spouse' identity, their makeup. It's the foundation upon which everything else in their life will be built. Once the foundation is in place, they can then better understand the blueprint for their life that God has given them to build a life that honors Him [God].

Validation is powerful!

OMR's thoughts: The above is an interesting set of ideas to consider as you look at validating who you are, and in helping your kids to do the same. The words shared are to give you some ideas as to how you may want to do so but as you think about this, I ask you to also consider this [because I'm only now realizing & starting to think on this as well]. We have too many young people taking their own lives and at least one reason - it appears to be due to an overwhelming depression that builds within them. Now, what is all behind something like this? Most likely so many things but one thing could be the wrong sense of who they are. As in . . . we have too many parents that think their kids deserve everything, don't hold them accountable and basically, have their kids believe that they are 'special'. Unfortunately, this is so wrong and hurtful to those kids. **We need all our kids to know what honor is and to feel honorable.** Life is not in getting everything we want but in feeling good for all that we have. The sooner everyone has that good view of themselves and of life, I believe suicides will decrease greatly.

(as a parent) How to Know When to Say 'No'

All Pro Dad shares: Most parents would agree that saying “no” to their children is an essential part of being a good parent and raising kids with discipline, character, and discernment. Part of any parent’s job is to protect their children from many things they aren’t even aware that they need to be protected from. But on the flip side of that, sometimes as parents, we’re



guilty of habitually saying “no” before our kids can even finish the sentence, without having given any fair consideration to their request.

And while saying “no” is often necessary, there’s not always a good reason for saying “no”, just for the sake of saying “no”.

In fact, in certain things, it’s super important that we be a “Yes” parent. So the next time you’re hit up with 20 questions from your kids of things they want to do or have, use these 3 questions as practical guidelines for how to know when to say no to their requests.

1) Is it Unethical?

What we allow or don’t allow our children to do must always first and foremost fall in line with our family values.

Our children need to understand what we stand for and what we believe is right and wrong. So when our child wants to lie or bend the truth, when they desire retaliation or revenge, or when they simply want to do something that goes contrary to those values, the answer should always be no. However, I've seen many parents who justify letting their kids participate in wrong practices by adopting this mindset, "Well, it's a whole lot better than what else they *could* be doing."

Let me encourage you as a parent to have clearly defined values in

your home that help you and your children navigate the tough (and not so tough) decisions when they come. Don't ever justify wrong behavior simply because it's a lesser evil.

2) Is it Unwise?

There will be times when something may not be clearly wrong, but it still may not be in your child's best interest. For example:



- Just because little Johnny has \$50 in cash doesn't necessitate that he go spend \$50 at the candy store.
- Just because little Susie was invited to spend the night at a friend's house from school doesn't make it a good decision, especially if you don't know the family well.
- Just because your child wants a new puppy or kitten doesn't mean they're old enough or responsible enough yet to take care of one.

When our children come to us with requests, it gives us the opportunity to teach them wisdom in their choices. Sometimes that means we have to make the choice for them. Other times, we may have to let them make their own choice and learn from it, even if it's the wrong one.

3) Is it Unhealthy?

Especially if you have young kids still at home, 50% of the requests you get from your kids are probably going to be for candy or junk food (or they may not even ask). My kids usually ask me over mom because they know they have a slightly better chance of getting a "Yes".

Why do parents say "No" to their kids when they want to have ice cream for supper and gummy bears for dessert? Because parents intuitively know that they are responsible for the health and well-being of their children.

Some of the biggest ongoing life choices that your children will have to make will concern what they do with and put into their body, so help them develop good habits while they are young for making wise health choices. They may not thank you now, but they will someday.



Even after filtering our response with these 3 questions, there will still be times when *we* know why something’s not in our child’s best interest, but don’t have a way of explaining it to them so that they’ll understand. But being able to say ‘Yes’ for our child’s enjoyment also

requires that we know when to say ‘No’ for their benefit. And sometimes we simply have to say, “I know you don't like this and I don’t expect you to understand this, but I love you, and you’re just going to have to trust me.”

[just remember this] Any good parent loves being able to say “Yes” to their children when they can.

But being able to say “Yes” for our child’s enjoyment also

requires that we know when to say “No” for their benefit.
[Yep, that was shared twice – it is that important]

OMR's thoughts: The challenge of saying 'No' is a hard one. So please, first answer this question. **How do you evaluate whether or not to say no to your kids?**

Second, once you have those thoughts (answers) in your head, consider . . . 'Am I doing handling this as well as I should?' And third, remember that no matter how good you try at managing this, there will most likely be times when you say 'No' and you should have said 'Yes'. And for those times, talk honestly with your kid(s) as to why you said 'No' but then realize you were wrong. Because kids don't mind if you're wrong from time to time, they do mind if you are always unreasonable or not trusting.

4 Things to Do When You Have Hurt Your Kids

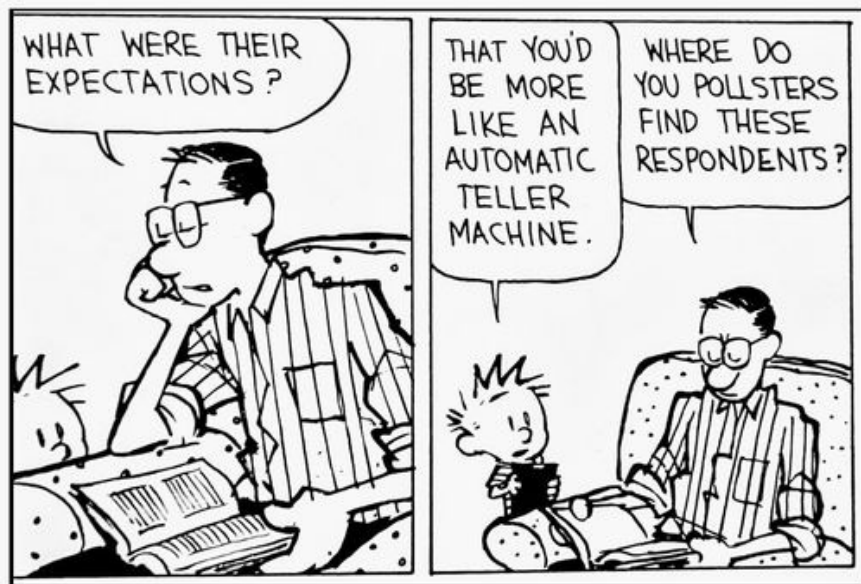
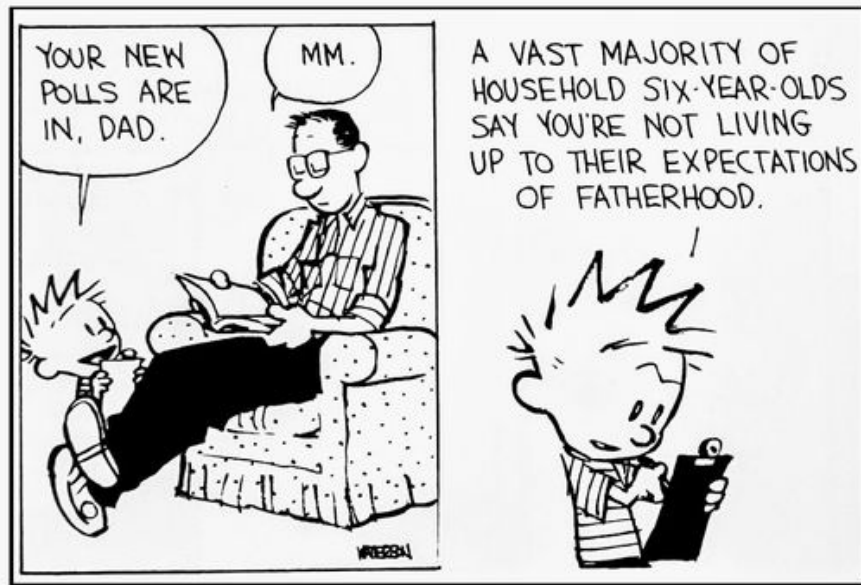
All Pro Dad shares: “He’s NOT our dad! He’s a drunk and a coward, and he is not MY father!”

Those were the words said by a character named Zach to his brother in the movie called Run The Race. Their mother had died and the father was too heartbroken to care for his sons; instead, he turned to alcohol. The father eventually attempts to mend the relationship, but as you can imagine the son’s hurt feelings keep him from giving his father another chance. In that situation, what would you do to win your child back? One thing is sure in parenting, we are going to hurt our kids in

some way. Maybe not as bad as the situation above, but even with the best intentions, we are going to mess up. However, if we don't deal with it in a way that brings healing, those wounds can have lasting effects. If you have hurt your kids and need to bring healing do the following 4 things.

1. Listen To Them and Understand Why They Are Hurt

What do you want when you are hurting? You want people to understand and empathize with you. You want your feelings validated. Although it is difficult to listen to the depths you have hurt your child you need to hear it. You need to understand exactly how you hurt them and why. Make sure to communicate that they have every right to be hurt.

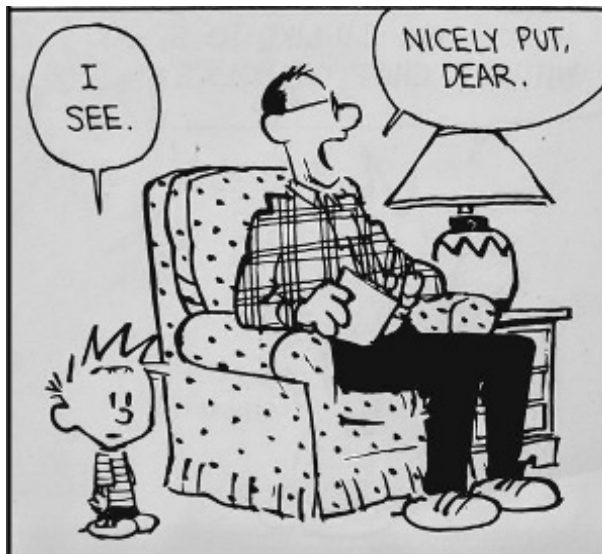


2. Own It

You may feel like admitting a mistake loses you authority with your kids. It doesn't. If anything, you will gain more authority to speak into their lives.



After you gain the understanding of their hurt feelings then own what you did to cause them and leave it at that. This is not a time for you to give, “Yes I did that, but...” answers. You may feel like admitting a mistake loses you authority with



your kids. It doesn't. If anything, you will gain more authority to speak into their lives. Don't feel tempted to “get back” the upper hand or have the last word. That will produce the opposite of healing.

3. Apologize For It

Be sincere and vulnerable. Do your best to feel their feeling.

Think about the circumstances where you have felt the same way. If you don't mean it, they will know it. And remember this, depending on the depth of their hurt feelings, you may need to apologize more than once – be willing to do so.

4. Right The Wrong

Nothing says that an apology is sincere than actions to right the wrong. Changing your behavior moving forward is a great place to start. If

you have been overly critical of your child, you need to focus on positive encouragement.

If your words are too harsh, change your vocabulary. And if you missed an important event in their life then you need to do whatever you can to make sure you are there for the next five. This is your opportunity to show them what maturity looks like (step up, you can do it).



OMR's thoughts: This is a great question to answer. **How do you initially react when you hurt your kids?** Then, once you have your answer, double check that against what was shared via the above. Do you have the right mindset and game plan? If yes, that is great but if you're not sure – that is why thinking about this and leveraging other's insights – is so helpful.

How to Help Kids Articulate Their Feelings

All Pro Dad shares: Have you ever talked to a child and



IT'S NOT FAIR!



wanted to help them through something they were struggling with, but found it seemingly impossible because they just wouldn't open up or have difficulty expressing their feelings?

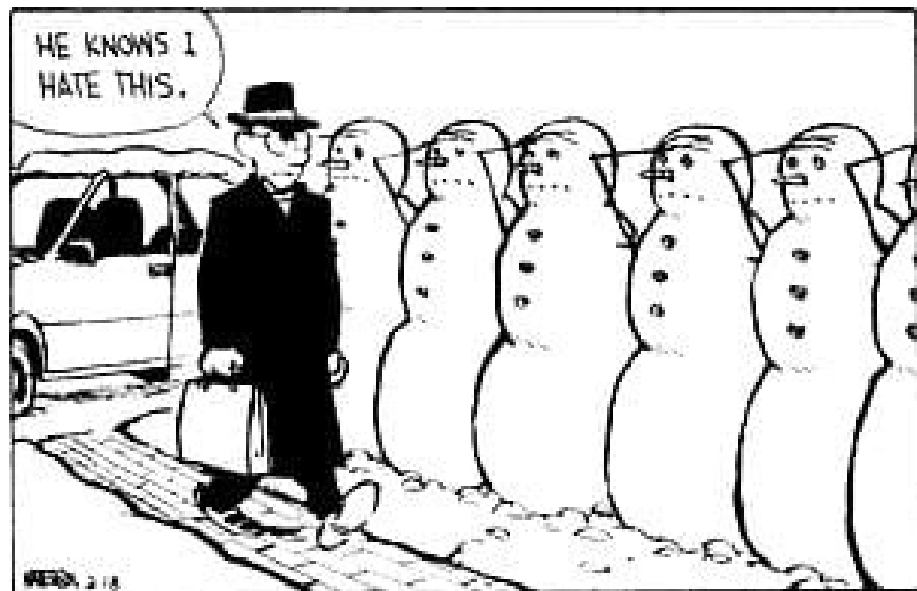
As a parent and a pastor, I've counseled many kids over the years, and one

of the great struggles is getting some kids to talk, especially when they don't want to. While you can't force a child to share their heart or their feelings, there are some practical practices that sometimes help to get them to open up, whether with your own kids or with others'. So whether a child is hurting, dealing with relational issues, has made a huge mistake, or is trying to deal with things completely out of their control, here are a few strategies to help them open up and share their feelings.

Show genuine concern.

This is huge because a child will rarely open up to someone until there is an understood level of trust and security. Listen to whatever it is they are willing to tell you and show them you

are truly interested in their situation or problem. The more you are willing to show patience and grace, the more likely they will be to open up to you.



However, trying to make them talk or guilt them into talking will cause them to be less likely to open up and more likely to simply shut down. Children want you to understand what they are feeling, but they will easily get frustrated if you do, and

will seldom share their deepest feelings until they are convinced that you truly care. Here's a few examples of how this might sound in conversation:

- I'm really sorry about what you're going through right now.
- I feel for you in this situation. Tell me how this makes you feel that this has happened to you.
- What you're telling me makes sense. Tell me more.

The more you are willing to show patience and grace, the more likely they will be to open up to you.

Ask lots and lots of questions.

Questions are the window to see into a person's heart, and especially with a child. And it's very important that you don't just ask yes or no questions, but instead, questions that require a thoughtful answer. Because

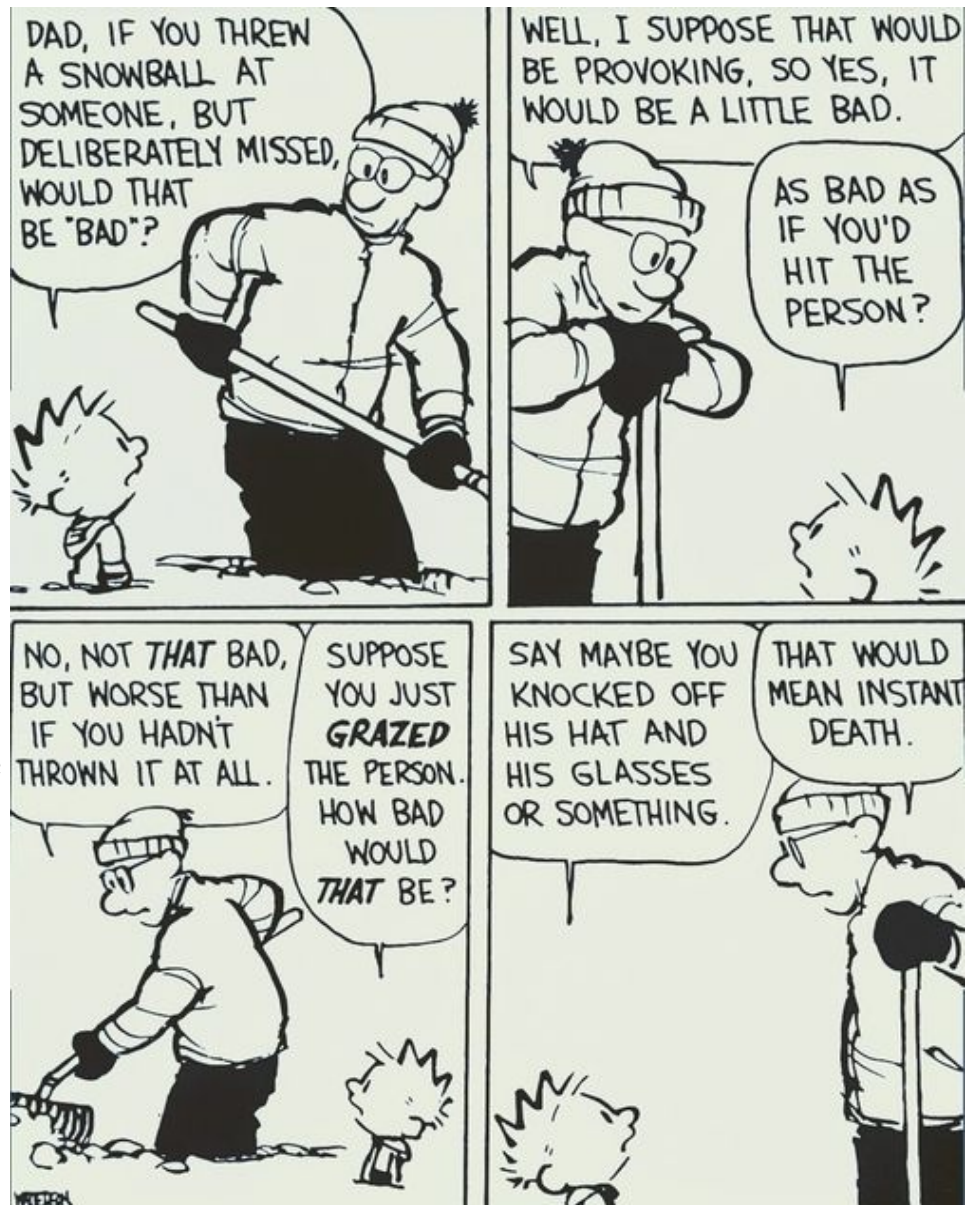


oftentimes, kids know what they are thinking and feeling, but they just don't know how to put it into words. This is where our thought-provoking questions can help unlock the emotions going on inside to help them find a way to express them. Here are some examples:

- What bothers you most about this situation?
- Can you help me understand more of what you're feeling right now?
- Who do you think is responsible? Is there anything you could or should have done differently?

Dig Deeper.

Once you get an answer from your questions, create more questions off of their answers that allow you to dig deeper into their feelings. While it would be nice if we could just passively wait for kids to share their feelings with us, we must



instead proactively give them reasons to. It's kind of like playing in a ping-pong match, where you begin to feed off of each other as you hit the ball of conversation back and forth.

Here are some examples of dig-deeper questions:

- You told me that this whole thing makes you feel angry...
What do you feel like doing when you get mad? What do you think is the right thing to do when you feel that way?
- It seems like you want to be able to control what's going on right now...Even though you can't change everything, what is one thing you could do to help make this situation better?
Who do you think you need to talk to about this?
- I completely understand why you feel so hurt right now...
What would help you to feel better? Who else in this situation do you think is hurting right now? Is there anything you could do to help them?

When it comes to helping kids articulate their feelings, the old statement is very true, that “people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.”

OMR's thoughts: Wanting to try and be good at this when needed is a great goal – but most likely, it is the easier said than done. Just leverage the above insights as you think best and don't forget – if you have multiple kids – what works for one of them on this, it probably won't work well for another or for any of the others. So just be aware and try your best (and yes, it may be best to just listen at first – which was one of my biggest challenges).

How to Discipline a Child

All Pro Dad shares: When it comes to how to discipline a child choosing the consequences is very important. When I was growing up, my dad did a couple of things that got through to me. My dad spanked me a couple of times and I kind of got the message through that. Then as I got older, he came up with a different punishment that may seem a little strange. When I



became more active and started playing sports he made me sit down on the couch, watch TV, and not move until he told me.

For me, that was the worst thing in the world; I was squirming because I wanted to be outside with my friends.

I wanted to be active and sitting in front of the television was punishment. But in this day and age that would probably *not* be an effective punishment. So I need to think about other things for my kids. Here are the strategies I normally use.



Taking Away Electronics

For most of my kids, unfortunately, taking away their electronics – no iPad, no video games – that’s the worst thing I can do. It’s especially painful for my boys.

Take Away Something That Hurts

You’ve got to think about something that is going to impact your kids and give



them something to think about the next time they have a choice to make in their behavior.

Easy? No, but that's what it really comes down to thinking of something that hurts them in a way that they will think . . . *Gosh I don't want to lose this privilege so I'll think before I act.* You need to know how each child thinks and operates to know what's going to make that light bulb go off in their head. That's how we handle it in our house.

OMR's thoughts: This is one of those that has no easy answer. The challenge for all parents is when to pursue discipline verses when to leverage punishment or something – but what? As I think back to when my wife and I had to do something, we did a mix of discipline and punishment actions – it all depended on the type of wrong did. So, this is something that I recommend you and your wife discuss and determine if you both are on a track for this that appears to be doing well, or if changes are needed. I also know that there are some who don't really pursue a D or P action. I think this is a flawed approach. If there are no ramifications for any wrongs done, then there is no motivation for changed behavior as their years ahead unfold. So please, think and act wisely on this.

Leaving it All on the Field for Your Family

All Pro Dad shares: It was one of the best days I have ever had. I had conquered one of the most difficult mountain trails and then sat on a jagged summit boulder looking out over the sky until I noticed the position of the sun.

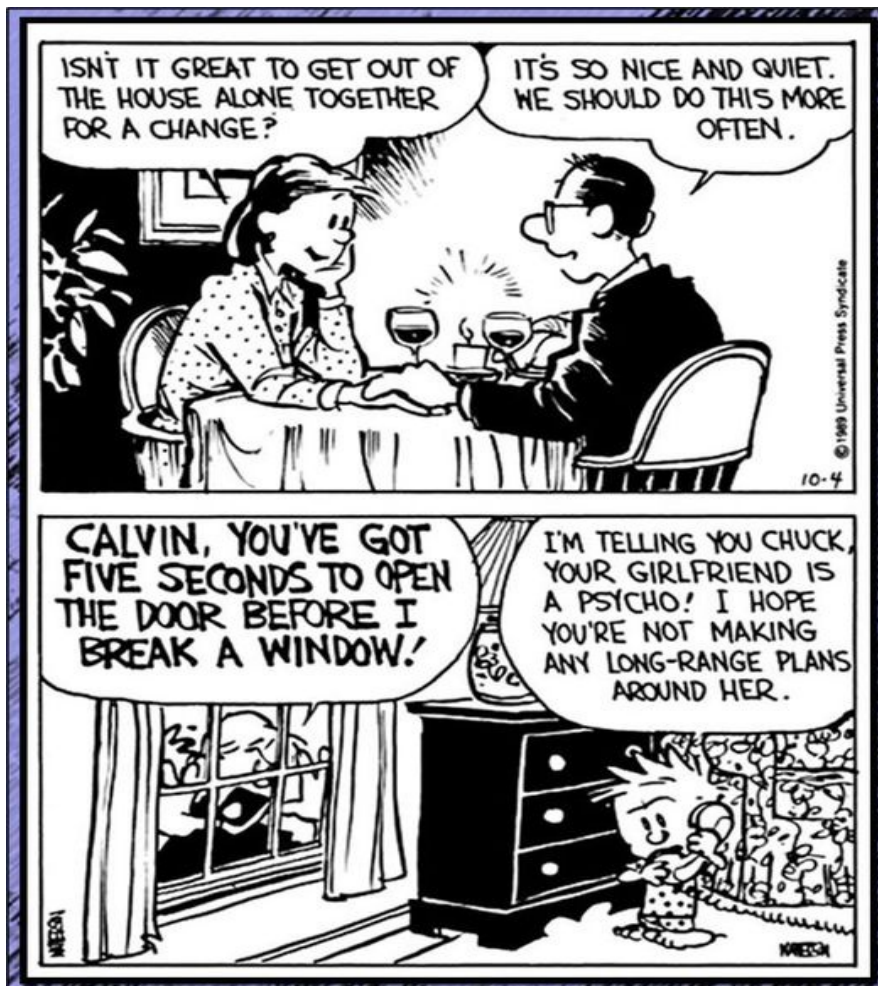
I started to panic because I was well over 7 miles away from my car. The wilderness was steep and rocky, and also contained bears. My day became a race against time to get myself out of the woods before losing the light. It took all my energy to get out before nightfall. Anything less could have been a disaster.

Being a dad requires the same type of sold-out commitment.

Here are 4 ways to leave everything on the field for your family.

1. Emotional Balance

When we fly off the handle in anger or allow fear to stifle our



movement, it leads to bad outcomes in our parenting.

Before reacting in tough situations, take moments to breathe, reflect, and absorb. Doing

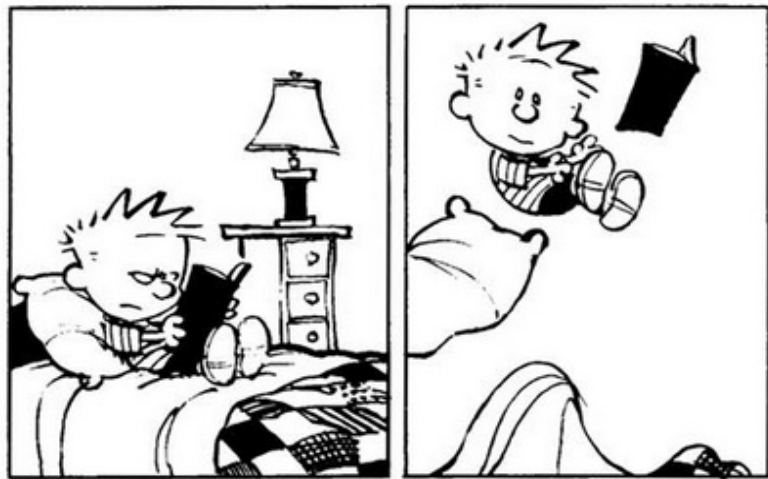
so can eliminate negative parenting mistakes, those occasions

they are challenging. Balance requires determination, effort, and practice, so keep at it until you have this in place as needed.

2. Marriage Fidelity

Sexual monogamy in marriage goes beyond religious and moral reasons. When partners are unfaithful, it leads to lost trust, feelings of guilt, and resentment. The relationship with your partner has to be anchored and bonded by a full commitment to each other and to the family you're building. This does not come easy to all men and a choice has to be

made. Choose your family. And know this - when partners are unfaithful, it leads to lost trust, feelings of guilt & resentment.

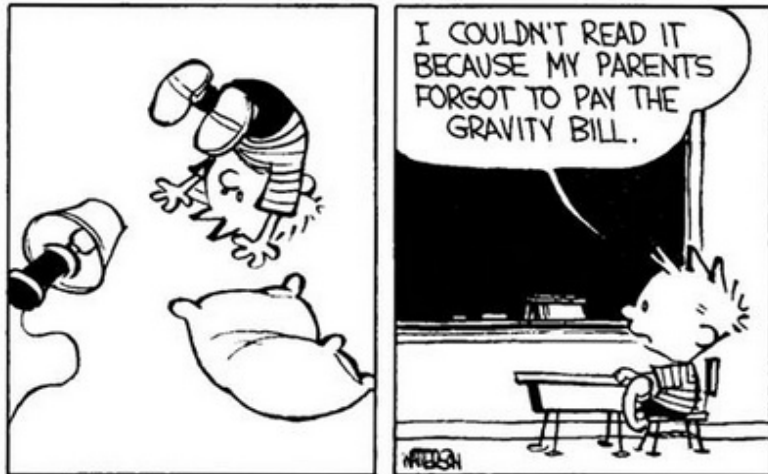


3. Fiscal

Responsibility

Raising a family has never been cheap and the costs just keep increasing. The goal is to keep large debts from accumulating to the point they begin to corrode the foundations of your

family structure. To do that, it requires we practice prudent financial responsibility and make decisions based on the best interest of the family future, and not on what we desire in the moment. Putting ourselves second is not instinctive.





JUST PUT ONE OVER EACH EAR, AND ONE OVER YOUR NOSE...



It's a chosen commitment to the betterment of the family we lead.

4. Time Management

We need to be aware

of how we are allocating and managing our time if we want successful outcomes. Each aspect of our lives including marriage, parenting, work, and outside interests wants as much of us as we can give. So, we have to prioritize and be committed to a structure that produces the best results for our family as a whole. We can't afford to be lazy.

Don't waste a moment.



OMR's thoughts: The words ... "Leaving it all on the field for your family" are ones that



none of us dads should ever take lightly. I know that I had to read all of the above twice, just to make sure I grasped all that was shared [and I recommend you do the same as well]. If you join me on this, I hope we think twice and **do what is needed** to do all that we need to for our families.

As to what does that mean? Commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, understanding and when in doubt - we put our love for them first, in all things.

How to Evaluate Your Relationship with Your Child

All Pro Dad shares: Most engaged parents want to know that they have a good relationship with their son or daughter.



But sometimes, it's tough to tell just how solid that parent-child relationship really is.

You might think things are going great, but your child might think otherwise. Or, your child might feel like things are fine, but you feel like you've fallen short as a mom or dad.

Well, the best way to evaluate your relationship with your child isn't to take an exam or ask someone else. The best way is

to ask your child. So, here are **21 questions** for kids to answer to help evaluate where your relationship needs improvement and where it's thriving. You don't have to formally ask them all these questions in one sitting. You can just casually ask as many as you'd like when the timing is right.

1) How do you know I love you? 2) Would you say I'm a bad, okay, or a

good listener when you talk to me?

3) Do I make your mom happy or sad? 4) Do we fight too much?

5) What are some areas where I can improve as your dad?

6) How often do we spend

time together and do you wish we spent more time together?

7) Would you say I'm better at giving compliments or at criticizing? 8) Am I fair when I discipline you? 9) How often

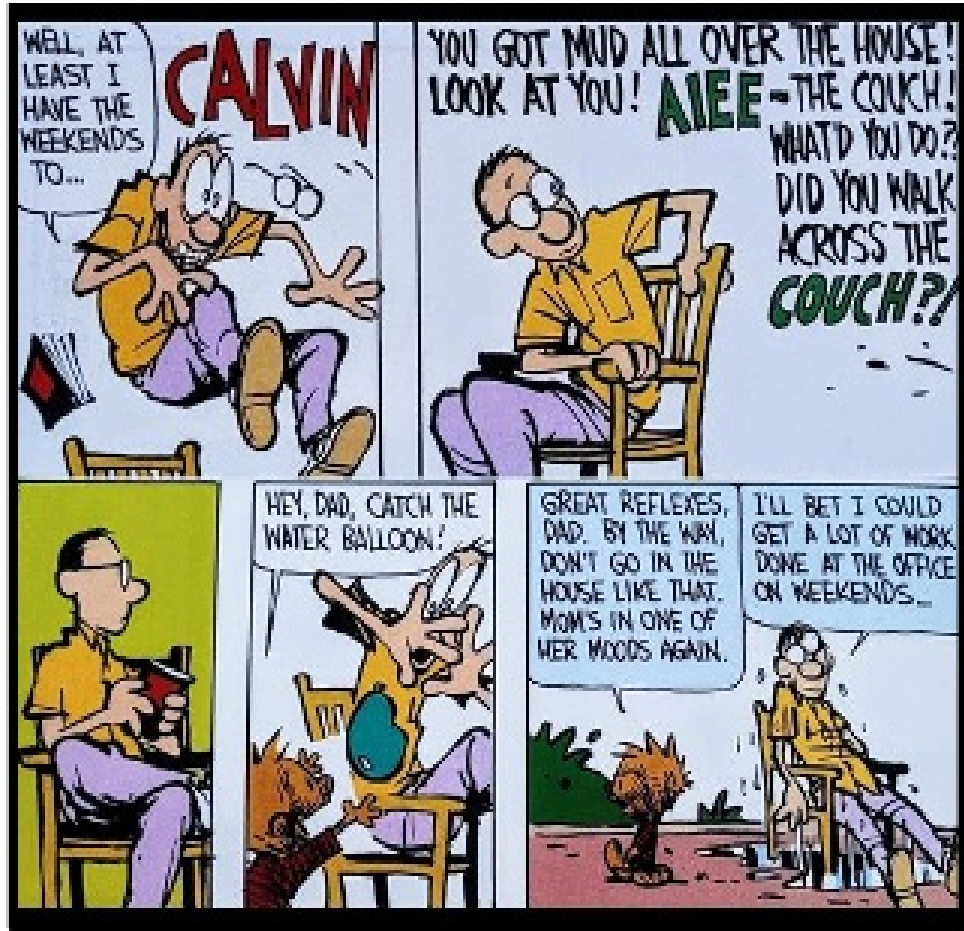
do I hug you and do I hug you enough? 10) On a scale of 1-10,

do I do a good job getting to know your friends? 11) Do you trust me in everything? 12) Have I broken any promises to

you and if so, which ones? 13) Do I treat you and your brothers/sisters equally? 14) What's the most fun thing we've

ever done together? 15) What is one thing you wish I would stop doing? 16) What is one thing you would like me to keep

doing? 17) What things would you like to learn from me that I



have not taught you? 18) If you could change our relationship in any way, how would you? 19) How have I helped you over the last couple of months, and how can I help you more? 20) What do you want most from me? 21) What do you wish I would say more often?

OMR's thoughts: Now these 21 questions above are what I think are a great example of learning from others and leveraging those good insights. I wish I would have read something like the above years back when my wife and I were raising our kids. And yes, I know that there may be better ones that could be pursued and that is good. Pick and chose the questions you would ask of your kids when they are getting older. For me, I would begin asking these questions when they are around 10 or so . . . and in settings where we are relaxed, 'how are things going' type of mode, etc. Then, when you have their answers when they are in that 10, 11, or 12 year age bracket, you can determine if adjustments are needed for the years that will unfold ahead.

Lessons All Dads Should Teach Their Kids. . .

In actuality, there are a lot of great lessons 'out there' but for this book, I wanted to focus on a good cross section of lessons that would be great for every dad to consider and to hopefully pursue for their kids.

Lets start with – if someone asked you . . .

What lessons would you teach your kids (and when)?

Well, if you are not sure, consider the following (and yes – these are examples to consider and to adapt for what you believe is best for your kids and your family):

All Pro Dad shares:

Tantrums Earn You Nothing - "When your anxiety visibly rises, you add fuel to the fire," says Hal Edward Runkel, a family therapist and the author of *ScreamFree Parenting*. And if you simply hand over a piece of candy, you encourage more bad behavior. Instead, when your kid starts shouting, be calm and attentive. Don't ignore it. This signals that you will not be rattled and the child won't win—ever. It may not work for the first tantrum, warns Runkel, but it's magic by the fifth.

Competition Leads to Confidence - Children as young as 4 start to compete with their parents—sprinting to the car, wrestling on the sofa, stuff like that. Roll with it. Let them win a lot, and then slowly ramp it up so they have to work harder for their victories. "It's a way for kids to develop a sense of strength and to let them test their muscles," says Justin Richardson, M.D., who teaches psychiatry at Columbia University. They'll start to walk more confidently and be less of a mark for bullies.

Quitting is Hard - When his son wanted to quit baseball at age 8, Runkel said to him, "Sure, but you have to tell your teammates and coach."



The boy couldn't do it. He's played for 7 years since. Show kids the pain of quitting, and they won't make those kind of decisions lightly, Runkel says. "If your kid says a school project is too hard and that he wants to give up, that's okay," says Runkel. "But say, 'Tell your teacher you're quitting and that you'll take whatever grade is appropriate.' Trust me, he'll stick it out."

OMR's thoughts: Who knows if you or anyone who has kids that will end up throwing a tantrum now or then. If they do – don't get mad because it does happen. Do your best to stay calm and find a way to make it a learning situation. Then for competition – it is a good thing for your kids to experience. Just congratulate them when they win and encourage them when they don't.

5 Ways to Teach our Kids to Have Grit

All Pro Dad shares:

Consider: the world our kids will go into is a tough one. They'll need grit in order to thrive. [so then] How do we impart determination, passion, and perseverance to them? How do we set them up well so they will have the strength to thrive in a challenging world? By imparting and teaching grit.

Here are 5 ways to teach your kids to have grit.



1. Help them to find and nurture their passions.

If your kids are going to have grit at all, it is going to start with what they love. You need to help them find what they are passionate about and help them pursue it. A great place to start is figuring out how they are talented.

They'll have curiosities toward areas of study or abilities that will come naturally. It is your responsibility to study them, ask questions, and talk with them about pursuing their passions.

*Just make sure you are paying attention
and they are pursuing the good.*

2. Let them fight their own battles.

As much as we want to protect our kids (and there are times when we need to step in), they need to learn how to fight their own battles.



At the end of the day, fighting their own battles, even with a sibling, will build the perseverance needed to overcome difficulty. Kids may need our guidance in how to do it or how to improve, but we need experience is theirs.



to make sure the



*Your challenge – knowing when to step in
and when to stay out of it.*



3. Encourage their failure (yep, you read that right).



[know this]
People who have grit are willing to step out and fail over and over again without letting it



deter them.
Our kids cannot be afraid of failure - that is essential in teaching grit. They



have to be willing to take risks.
People who have grit are willing to

step out and fail over and over again. Those with grit don't let failure deter them. In order to do that, our kids need to embrace failure as a part of the journey to success.

So encourage your kids in all that they do, even when there is failure so that they keep going after tough setbacks (that is a part of learning).

4. Teach them how to finish strong.

Teach them that when they start something they need to finish it. Ensuring that they complete assignments and chores is a great practical

exercise. However, when teaching grit, it is even more important to show them how to finish strong.

This is especially true when the task or subject is difficult.

We need to show our kids how to overcome the tendency to fade and lose concentration by overcoming that tendency in ourselves.

Talk to them about it, encourage it, but even more so, model it.



YES, FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS I'VE BEEN KEEPING IT IN THIS SPECIAL ZARNIUM-COATED BAG, AND FEEDING IT PURE AMMONIA!



Remember: Discouragement is such a 'drive killer' . . .

so help them to learn that we never quit when things get hard, but it is okay to take a rest break and then to get back at it.

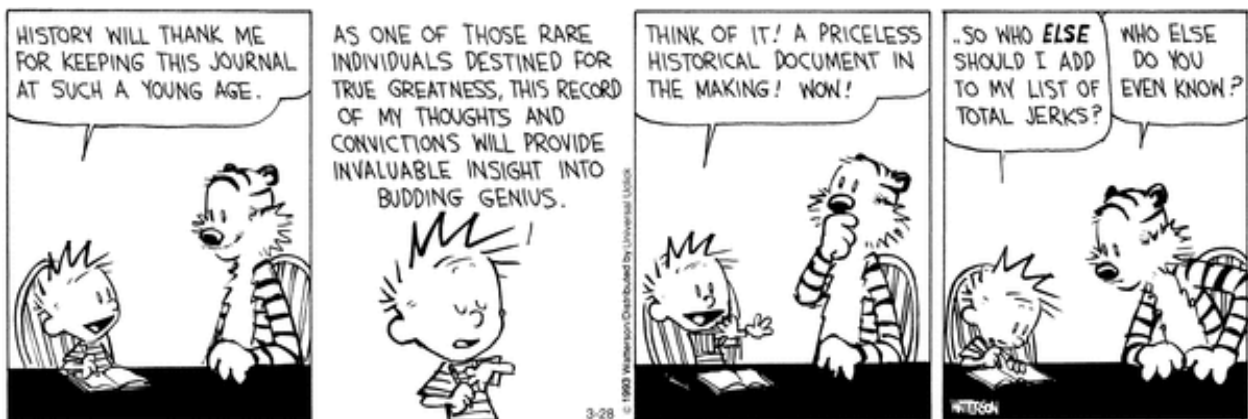
5. Help them to think long-term.

It's one thing to have passion, but we also need to know where we are going. We have to be working toward something.



Help your kids to think about their long-term goal(s). Ask them questions about where they want to be years down the road. What do they want their life to look like? How do they want to impact the world? Ask them what skills they think they need to develop in order to do those things.

Then help them set both long-term and short-term goals.



As best you can, when you can – age appropriate – help your kids to have a deeper view of values, a wider view of life and a longer view of time.

OMR's thoughts: This is such a great subject that I plead with you to not take it lightly. Because, if your kid(s) have grit, there is a great chance they will succeed in everything they pursue. So, let's take a look at these again.

1. Help them to find and nurture their passions. Don't ignore the challenge of talking with your kids when they are young, finding out what they believe are their passions and then seeing if those hold or change. **2. Let them fight their own battles.** This is an easier said than done – but find ways to let them work things on – and know that you can coach them to help them along. **3. Encourage their failure.** Help your kids to see opportunity and to take reasonable risks so that the failures may hurt a bit, but are not the end of the world. **4. Teach them how to finish strong.** Teach them to have determination. The good things normally take a lot more work than the easy stuff. **5. Help them to think long-term.** To go with the determination they need to embrace, they also need to understand the challenge of perseverance – and the benefits from it.

How you help your kids to learn these, can be done in a variety of ways. You decide the how best. And assume this – if all you have is a simple talk about this, it won't do much. Hence, start developing this early so they see their grit growing within themselves.

Grit is that 'extra something' that separates the most successful people from the rest.

It's the passion, perseverance, and stamina that we must channel in order to stick with our dreams until they become a reality.

Dr. Travis Bradberry

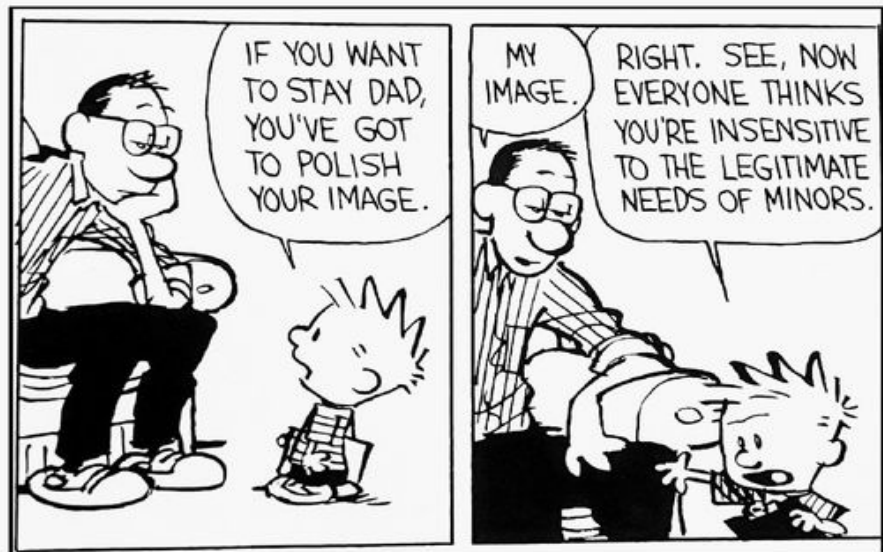


Closing

Okay, there you go. A lot to consider and my hope is that there is at least a few items shared that you may want to embrace or consider a bit further. As for the * on page one (the cover page) . . . yes you can go back and see that now if you missed it. That goes along with the **C&H** cartoon on that first page. See Dad as shown? Well, my dad had glasses and every time I see Calvin's Dad in the **C&H** comics, it always makes me think about my Dad.

He (my Dad) was far from perfect (most of us are), but despite he growing up without a father, I know he tried to be the best Dad that he could be. I am thankful for that and that is the foundation that I think all dads should start with and to build upon as best they can, to be the best Dad that each of us can be.

And no, he, like all of us just need to do what we think is best.



And with that, I'll close with these chuckles and associated words.

Think of these as your earned **Dad's bonus insights**.



First, don't forget that all that was shared via the pages above, we're just some of the many things to keep in mind as you pursue your dad actions.

Your dad years will be filled with may fun and many challenging times. Just remember as best you can . . . to do those actions that years later, you will not regret. Easy? No, but it is the goal to have as you work with your wife

on doing what you both see as the things you need to do for your kids – that helps them to learn, and to be prepared for their years ahead (yes, think long range).

Second, don't forget that everything shown in all of the above, is 'Dad focused'. And remember, some wives may be more involved with the kids and that is okay – partnering with them = goodness.

Every family's dynamics all depend on what is best for their family. For the family I have had the privilege of being 'Dad' - everything we achieved, is due to the love and the sacrifices my wife had done for our kids and me. She was the one who put her career goals aside so that I could focus on being the primary 'bread winner', and she was the one who made sure that our kids got the focus they needed as their school years unfolded. As in,



of be off on business trips - she never complained and she made sure our kids always had whatever they needed (at home and she even volunteered to help at their schools).

Now, will you and your wife have the same set of circumstances unfold as my wife and I had? No. But know this. If you want to have a happy family and kids who are positioned to do well in their post teen years - you need a great partnership between yourself and your wife. And please know this. In today's world, it may be your wife who has the primary 'bread winner' status and you have the support role. That is great as well. You both just need to be

in sync as to what is best for your family. So, thank you to my wife for everything she has done and continues to do for our family. As for you and your wife – I wish you well on your teamwork.

Third and in closing (yep, I had one last C&H to leverage), is to not wait on working to be the best dad that you can be. And yes,



although later is better than never; being an engaged dad for every year of your kid's years, will be ones that you will be able to look back on and to smile about. For it is in thinking back over all of the years when our kids were growing up – they were 98% great & 2% challenge. So a big shout out of thanks to each of our four kids.

I'm a blessed Dad!

That then means: **Dad's Book C** is complete.

Watch for **Book D** arriving down the road (makes you excited for 2023 to get here – doesn't it?).

Thanks for reading all that was shared.



I hope you found it helpful.