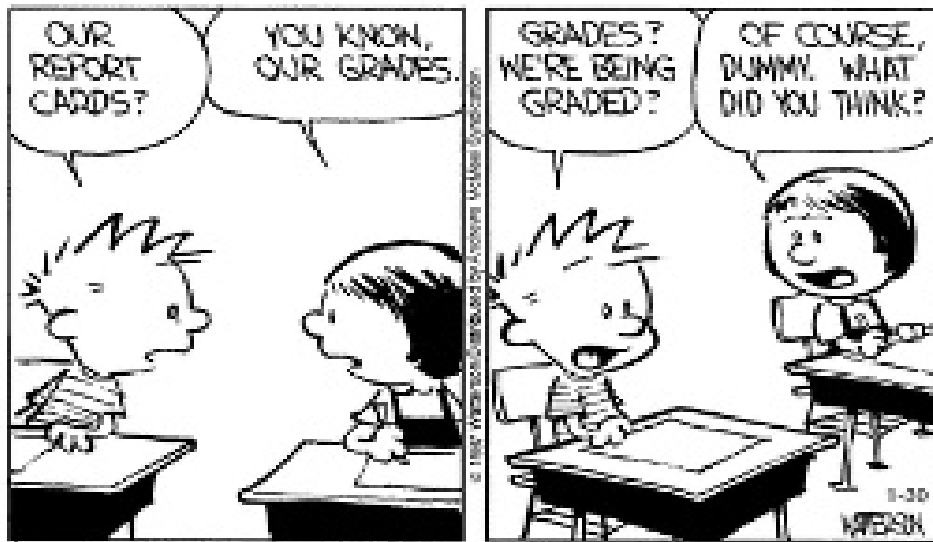
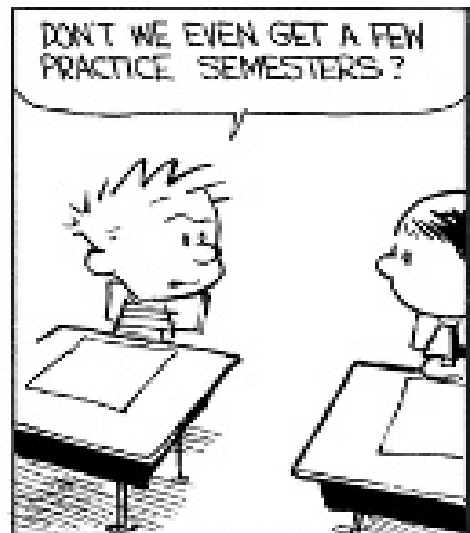


CHILDHOOD

No Place 4 Wimps.



As stirred by:
Bill Watterson,
Tony Dungy, Mark Merrill
and
Old Man River



An **Outing International Golf Course Inspiration**

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Introduction

It was a cooler Fall day of 2019 when two planes were spotted (tied up) at the **Outing Do Drop Inn** [restaurant] docks. So I popped in to see who was visiting and I was surprised to see two of my favorite guys – Tony & Mark.



Yes I know it is hard to see the two planes but there they are – and yes, it was not one of our beautiful sunny Fall days. The bad news was that we did not have long to talk but the good news was that we thought it would be fun to do a non-profit “Children's Chaos Collaboration” this Fall.

Which is as follows.

So start reading, chuckle as need to and learn on the go.

First, I can't remember if I had shared who Tony & Mark are and how we got to this little booklet (which I'll call Book A). It started a couple of years back when Tony Dungy helped share words of advice and encouragement for our Men's Meetings. He had his **Dungy's Diary** blogs and was partnered with his friend Mark Merrill who launched the **All Pro Dad** non-profit. Long story short, they had numerous insights for men and we looked for ways how we could help spread their good information to more and more men. It was in the brainstorming that I offered, wouldn't it be great if we could create some fun to read - quick reads that had some added humor? They agreed and we thought some insights for young dads with some humor from Bill Watterson, the creator of **Calvin & Hobbes**, would be a fun experiment.

Second, so in thanks to those three talented men (Tony, Mark & Bill), we have this '**Childhood . . . No Place For Wimps**' consideration book.

Third - and in closing for now - is this recap of what you'll find in the following pages.

Contents: [your checklist]

- _ Praise [is always good]
- _ Do(s) and Don't(s) 4 daughters
- _ 5 Things Dads say that crush their sons
- _ 3 Things that Parents Need to Talk with their children about

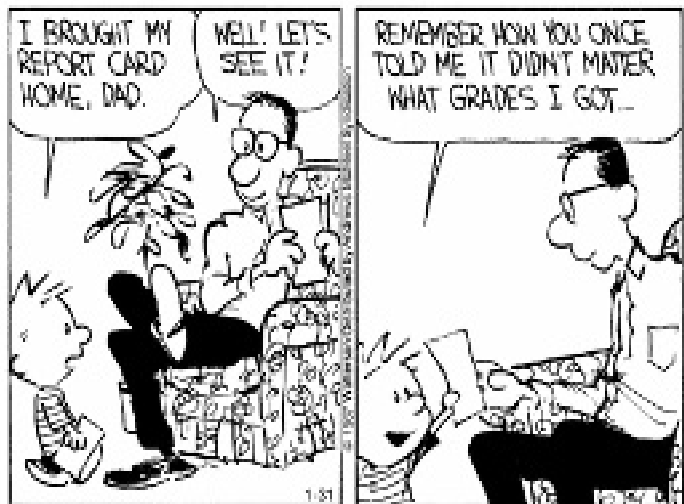


Praise [is always good]

We thought we would start with Bill's insights as shown on the cover of this booklet and then use his follow up to tie in well with Tony & Mark's following words; what he said were

3 Reasons to Praise our Kids More.

We have a much easier time noticing the bad than recognizing the good. It's also important to me to keep things clean. So even when our kids have spruced up part of the house, it's still a whole lot easier for me to focus on the other areas that are still undone than to focus on the positive, to praise the good work that's already been done. We look more often for reasons to be critical than we look for reasons to praise. I'm learning that while our criticisms can be deflating to our families, our praise can be edifying and motivating.



... JUST SO LONG AS I TRIED MY HARDEST. RIGHT?



WUOSH

Don't underestimate the power of praise. A proverb says ***“death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”***

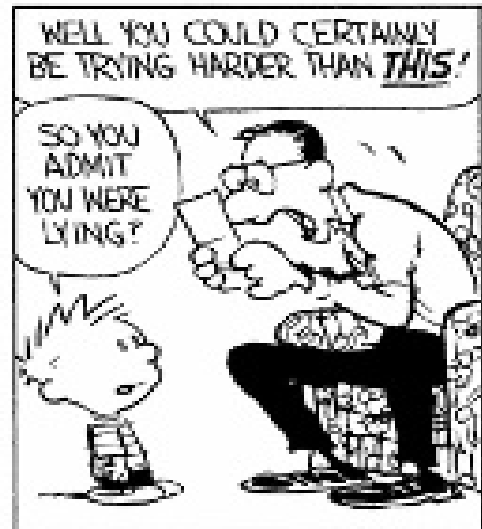
Our words matter and we will eat the fruit of them. So to help, here are three of the fruits of praise.

1. Praise is powerful.

Every day, we can infuse life into our families through words of affirmation or we can take life away and crush their spirits through unnecessary words of criticism. Our words have tremendous power. When I intentionally praise my kids, they smile instantly. Why wouldn't I want to build my family up with my words?

2. Praise is positive.

Our families face enough negative in the world around us on a daily basis. To receive praise in the home is sweet and refreshing. If we focus on the positive and praise it, our kids know we are on their side and that we are proud of them. Praise reminds our children that 'home is where I want to be, and where I belong.' And a praise-filled home is a positive place, where they know they are *loved* for who they are.



3. Praise is productive.

When we acknowledge that we've seen what we want to see, we'll start to see more of it. In any area of life, you always get more of what you affirm. When our children know we are proud of them and we go out of our way to praise them for a behavior, they're motivated to do more of the same. One of our children (Tony added) especially desires to be praised and when we praise him,

he is motivated to please us even more. I love the principle “**say what you want to see.**” When we acknowledge that we’ve seen what we want to see, we’ll then start to see more of it.

I thanked the guys for their insights. And I liked how Mark added these words which he tied into all of the above when he covered this topic in his All Pro Dad series. He said he hoped that all dads would think about their words and how what they say to their kids – matters so much. He closed and said that all dads need to ask this of themselves – to do this self-check & ask . . .

What kind of “fruit” are you experiencing in your home as a result of your words?

Do(s) and Don't(s) for our Daughter's [are not black & white]

Now, after the above collaboration, the four of us knew we would have to send ideas back and forth as to topics we could expand upon. And yes, it was the next week when Bill offered up some ideas on 'what should dads 'do' and what shouldn't they 'do'? which we then pulled together the following.

First up – an example – Do . . .
per Tony - **What our Daughters desperately need to hear from their Dads.**

Our daughters are under a lot of pressure today. They are bombarded with beauty standards that can make them feel inferior.

I THINK GROWN-UPS JUST
ACT LIKE THEY KNOW
WHAT THEY'RE DOING.



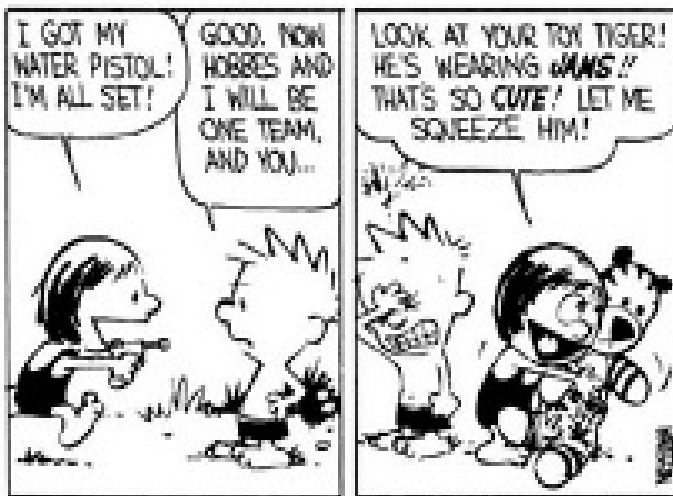
Here are their thoughts on “what’s being said to young women” and what we need to say to them instead (they need to know our thoughts as their Dad).

The World’s Message

Everything around young women—from social media and advertisements—sends a message about beauty standards. You

need to look a certain way.

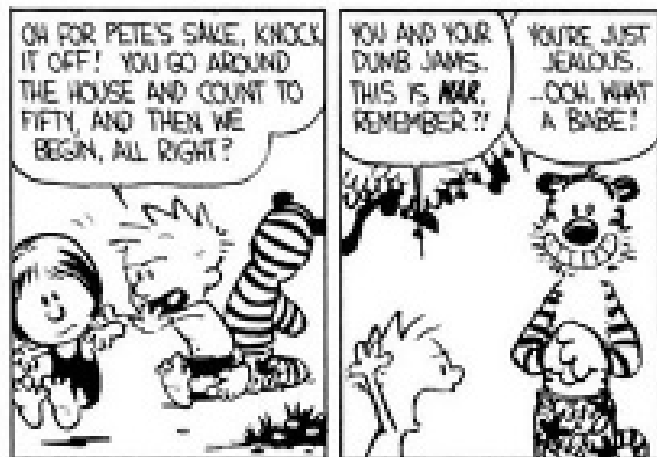
You need to dress a certain way. You need to talk a certain way.



It's an unfortunate message, it says that beauty is strictly physical: the way you look, the clothes you wear, and the car you drive.

Our Message

We can do a better job as parents by affirming our daughters. As fathers, we have to send a different message to our daughters, the message that they are beautiful because of what’s inside them. They’re beautiful



because of how God has created them. They don’t have to look to the world for authenticity. We can do a better job as parents by

affirming our daughters, by telling them their personality and internal makeup makes them beautiful in God's eyes. We have to do what we can to help our girls feel accepted and not to feel like they have to look to the world for validation.

Bill & I thank Tony and Mark for their recommendations [and yes I got a chuckle from the comics that Bill provided to go with the



above words]. Tony than told us to quit goofing off – and then he smiled and said we have to ask . . .

Dads, in what ways can you affirm your daughter's beauty?

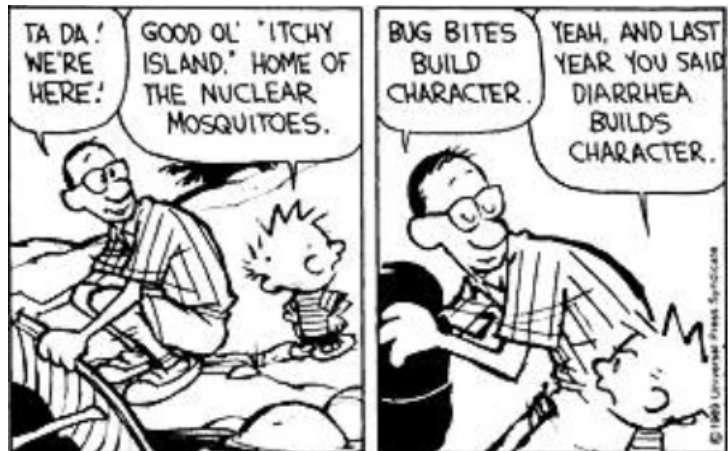
We thought that was good to close on the above but then that brought us to the challenge of don't. We talked about it and realized we had to find some good examples of 'Don't . . .'

Mark said he would have some words next week and Bill smiled this time and said "Oh yes I can do better on this one." As for me, I've been along for the ride so far so I promised I would provide some comments once I saw what they all shared. And that is this:

If you're a Dad like me, you have good intentions and want to be the best Dad that you can be for your daughters & sons. The problem, we are most likely distracted by the day to day challenges that we dealing with. We need to watch we we say and do. Our kids are watching us. So, keep any type of negatives to the minimum and be encouraging, complimentary and remember . . . if anything we think, say and do is not honorable – we're not the role-model that we need to be (when we have a family, it's no longer about us, it's about what we need to do for them).

5 Things Dads say that Crush Their Sons

Mark started with . . . The other day, I went home discouraged. When my wife asked me about my day, I told her I was dealing with writer's block. She asked me what I was trying to write, and I told her I wanted to do an article about things dads say to their sons that absolutely crush them. My son, who was in the room playing video games, said without turning from the screen, "Ha! I can help you write that one." So I asked him and he proceeded to list off many things I had said to him. Now there are things I have said that were difficult for him to hear but also truthful and necessary. I don't regret saying those. Then there are some other things I said to him where I was embarrassed and ask for forgiveness.



There is no more important and influential voice in a boy's life than his father's. Our words carry enormous weight. We can either lift them up with words of encouragement, care, and confidence or we can crush them with words of judgment and disappointment.

With that in mind, here are five things dads say consistently that absolutely crush their sons.

1. "You can't do it."

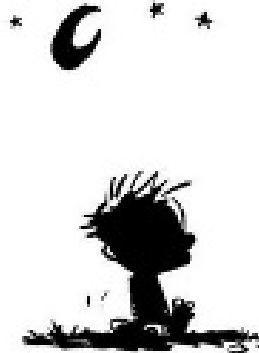
Famed basketball coach Jim Valvano once said, "My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person—he believed in me." Our sons need to know they have what it takes.

Never tell your son that you don't think he has what it takes to accomplish something. You may find his goal unattainable, but if you don't believe in him, he'll never feel good enough.

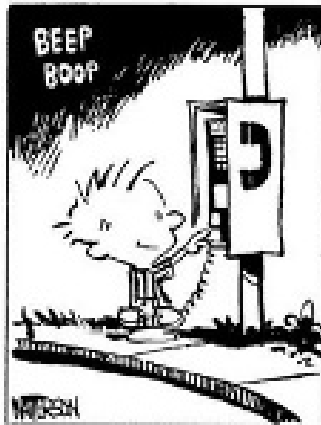
Dads need to affirm: Tell your son you believe in him.

2. “You’re not strong enough” or “Don’t be a wimp.”

A friend of mine will turn 50 soon. When he was 13, a group



of rocks needed to be moved in the back of their yard. When he told his dad he would move them, his father responded, “No. Those are heavy. Let your brothers do it. You’re not strong enough.”



Those words haunted him for decades. If there is one thing boys/men never want to be perceived as, it's weak. If that is ever communicated to a boy by his father, it will stay with him.

Dads need to affirm: Point out to your son when he shows strength. Encourage

him to have resolve and celebrate him when he does.

3. “I’m disappointed in you.”

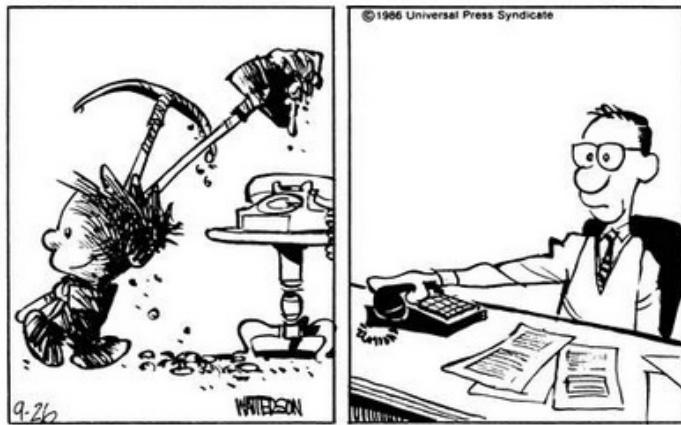
This is one my son mentioned to me. My big mistake was poor communication. **It should have been phrased . . .**

“I am disappointed in your behavior.”

There is a big difference in being disappointed in my son's behavior and being disappointed in him as a person. However, even when we use behavior in the statement, we need to make it abundantly clear. A big



problem I have (and one I think many other dads have, too) is that it is easier for me to point out the behavior that disappoints than it is to celebrate the behavior that makes me proud of him.

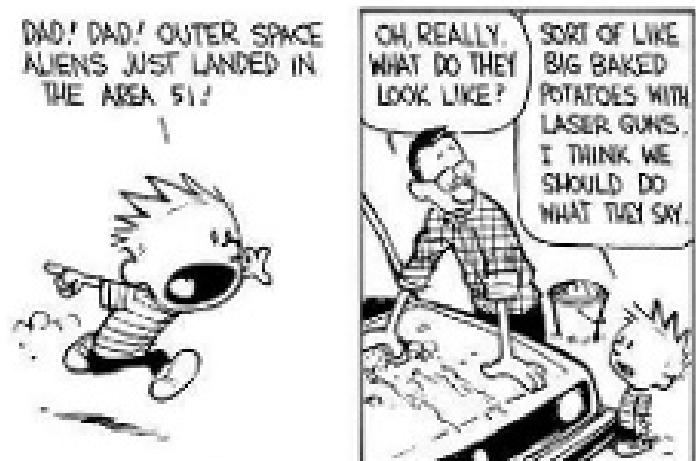


*Dads need to affirm:
For every time you point out to your son where he fell short, find a way to give him 3-5 areas where*

he has done well or things about him that you love.

4. "I'm working on something important. You'll have to wait."

We may not use the word important, but that's what they hear when we consistently keep putting them off. What they hear is that we don't think they are important. You don't always have to drop



everything for them, especially a conversation with your spouse or other business. However, they need to know that they are important to you and if you are consistently putting them off, it will communicate the opposite.

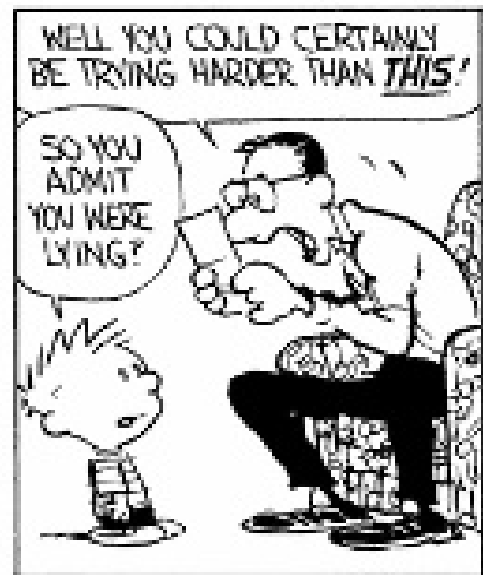


Dads need to affirm: Consistently put down what you are doing and do something with your son that he enjoys. Focus on what he is excited to tell you and show your enthusiasm.

5. “If you had done ‘X’, you could have done even better.”

Nothing kills a son's self confidence more than a dad's immediate evaluation of his performance, just like Bill showed us as shared in the middle of page 5 and we show again here. →

Negativity is the last thing he needs. If he has just failed, he needs to know that your love is not based on his performance. Be sympathetic with him on his stumble, mourn his loss with him or at least be understanding of the situation he is now in. Let him know you know how he feels and that he isn't alone. Be there for him in his down times and if he has experienced success, celebrate him. More than anything, our sons want to make us proud. Your instant negative evaluating simply feels like a beat down.



Dads need to affirm: Regularly find things your son does that make you proud and tell him.

And are you ready for a bonus? I call it the 'Nothing'.

In moments of hurt and triumph, your son needs to hear from you. It is painful for sons when their dads withdraw when they are needed most. If you have nothing else to communicate, communicate this: you love your son and will always be there for him. Kids without dads never know this and are disadvantaged because of it. This is horrible but to add to it, are those kids who have dads – who don't show them their love.

I have to admit, after all those insights from Tony and the humor from Bill, I was not sure how to add anything to the above. I told them I agree and that all the above was great to remember for our sons . . . but it was also insightful for thinking on what we shouldn't do to our daughters either.
That is when Tony then added . . .

Dads, think about what you want to tell your kids more often.



We then took a break for a couple of weeks while we thought on the possible topics we could cover next. Tony shared the following and we thought . . . 'Yep, we can run with that' and here you go.

3 Things Parents Need to Talk with their Kids about . . .

And Bill said 'Don't forget, growing up has a mix of challenges and frustrations'.

Tony then shared . . . Recently, one of our children had the opportunity to be a part of a selective leadership conference. She'd been chosen from among her peers and we were very proud. She was terrified. While she's quite social, she's also an introvert and the idea of a weekend away surrounded by people she doesn't know felt exhausting. Still, we pressed her, "Take some risks. Put yourself out there." She rolled her eyes, but she did it. And she walked away from that weekend with a growing sense of confidence in what she has to offer the world.

With the school year unfolding, there are many lessons our kids will be learning. However, some of the most important ones won't come from their academics, but from choices they make in their daily interactions. Here are what I think are 3 critical conversations parents need to have with their children – to help them as they live, learn and hopefully laugh now and then.

1. Tell the truth.

As our kids enter their teenage years, they quickly develop a penchant for lying. I don't only mean that they intentionally say things that are untrue in order to get what they want. I mean that



they learn to lie about what they think, while adopting the prevailing ideas of their friends. They lie about who they are, instead of taking on the persona that most ingratiate them to others. They lie about how they feel, instead choosing to take on the façade of being ‘okay’. Or they lie about how they look, filtering their image through impossible and artificial standards of beauty/attractiveness.

In a myriad of ways, our teens learn to lie—to themselves, to others, and to us. Talk with your child about the importance of saying what is true about themselves and the world as they see it, even as they maintain humility, recognizing that they don’t know everything. We need to teach our kids that they are a gift to the world, but only if they are themselves. And they can only be fully themselves if they learn to tell the truth.



2. Try something new.

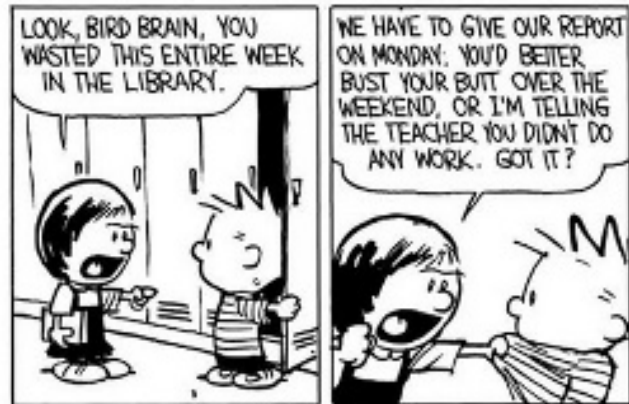
Every new year is a new opportunity—new teachers, new classes, new activities. But many of our kids are creatures of habit (as are we). This isn’t inherently bad. Habits are important and necessary features of being human. However, for our kids, as they are learning about themselves and the world, it’s important for them to push through their comfort zones. Talk to your

children about taking risks and trying new things.

Encourage them to join a new club or try out for a sport. They could take a class that's interesting but not necessary, join the debate club, write for the newspaper, or learn an instrument.

When my son was in seventh grade, he tried out for the cross-country team. Until then, he'd tried several different sports and liked them well enough, but never really excelled in any of them. He wasn't a particularly disciplined child either, so I was pretty convinced this little experiment would last all of about half a race. Boy was I wrong. Five years, one state championship, and multiple district championships, and several individual awards later,

my son can't imagine his life without running. He's currently preparing to go to college in the fall and will run for his school's cross-country team. This never could've happened had he been unwilling to try something new.



Not all new things will take off (he also tried pole vaulting, for about a minute), but who knows what your child is capable of unless he or she takes a risk to try something new?



3. Do to others what you would have them do to you.

It's popular to tell our kids to 'be kind'. Being kind is great, but it's far too generic. Is it kind to simply avoid saying something bad? Certainly. But is that the extent of the kindness we would hope that our children show? Certainly not. It's far better to talk with your child about the Golden Rule:

Do to others what you would have them do to you.

Talk to your child about doing better than kind. Do to others as you would have them do to you. If someone was picking on you, you'd long for a brave soul to step in and tell that bully to knock it off. If you were the new kid at the school, you'd dream of the courageous person who would take a seat next to you at the lunch table or

invite you to sit with her and her friends. Talk to your kids about doing better than just being kind.



We (as dads) not only need to tell our kids about the challenge of 'Do to others as you would have them do to you' but we must be role models for this as well.

As Tony's words lingered, I thought all of this was another of those . . . easier said than done challenges.

I also liked the comics that Bill shared, those were

some of my favorites. So I then asked Tony if there was anything else and he closed with . . .

Dads need to think about - what conversations are critical to have with your kids before school starts, as well as throughout the school year.

And to do it well – it is a dialog, not a monologue.

But is there more? [yes if we want it]

After all of the above, I asked Bill & Tony if they had any ideas as to what we could share next. Let me just say they both laughed and basically told me that they have provided the 90% so far and that they were going to leave the wrap up for me to pull together [aka Trust is a good thing].

So I decided to go with the following.

We just shared 17 pages of some insights and humor to help all dads to think about our role and responsibilities. The thinking is a great start but if we don't get into the doing – we are failing our kids and most likely, we are also disappointing our wives.



I know for me, I looked at my Dad & Mom and for the most part, saw plenty of failures in their actions or lack there of (at least from my perspective on what parents should try to do). Time has allowed me to put their approach to parenting into the bucket

I call . . .

"I believe they tried as best they could". Could my childhood have been better? Sure but in the big scheme of things, I probably had it better than more than half the kids in the world.

Which means, every generation has the opportunity to learn from the previous one and to then pursue the adjusted actions they deem best in moving forward. In being better adults and in being better parents.

There is no just do this and you will have a happy family and perfect kids. But what you can do is the best that you can. As a Dad – sharing with other Dads, I would recommend you consider the following for your kids.

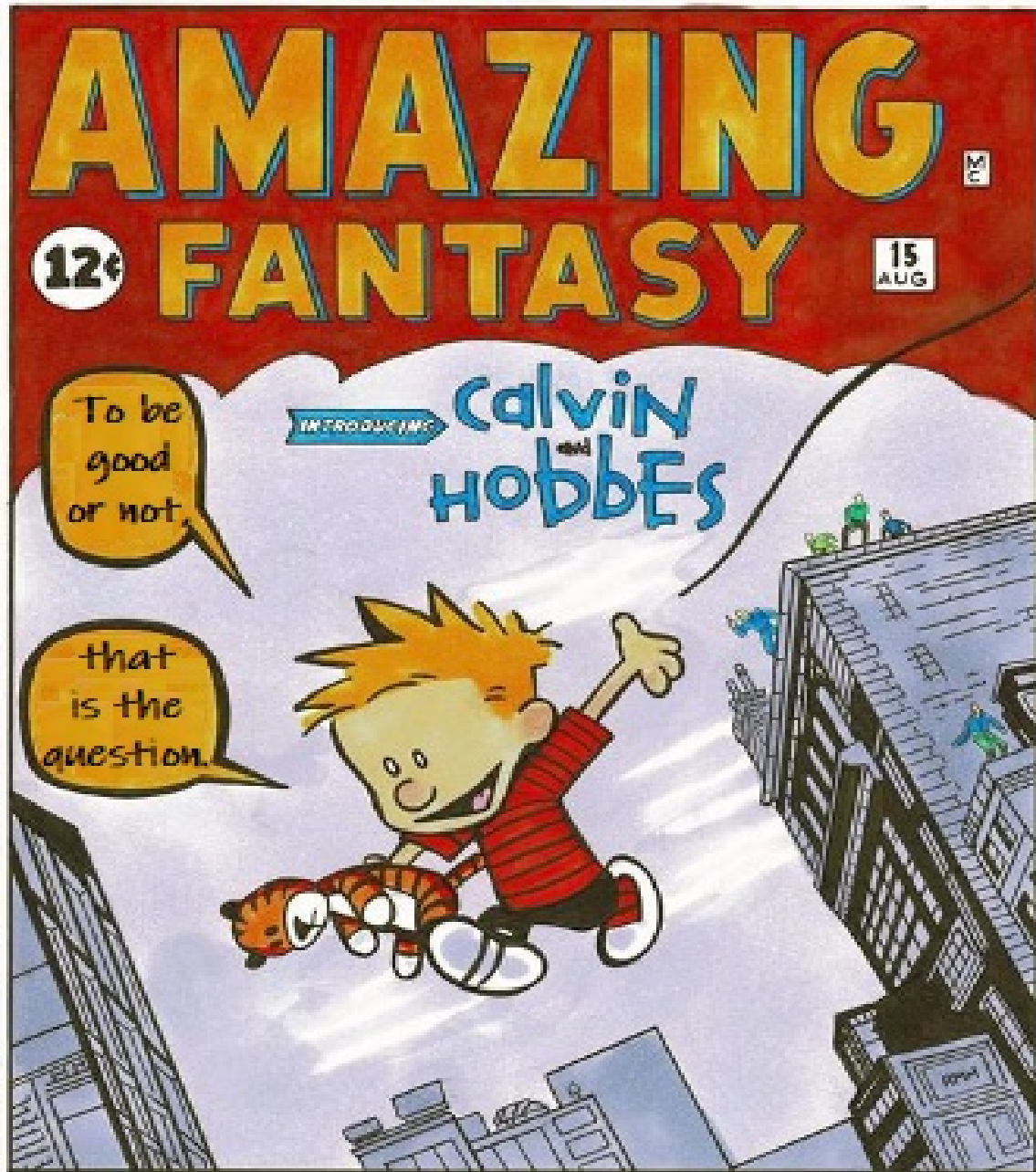
a) Embrace our Christian faith and share it, encourage it with your family. Why? Just reading the Bible can give insights to live by in regards to faith, trust, compassion, integrity, service, sacrifice, love and wisdom – as well as the challenges of anger, apathy, fear, hate, lies, covet and pride. Add to Bible study the aspects of attending church and Bible studies when you can – and you will see the benefits of embracing a longer view of time, a broader view of life and a deeper view of values. These will also help your kids so much as they learn what aspects of life that they will embrace.

b) Pursue self-confidence which means we need to teach our kids to try, to know that failure will happen, to learn as you, to speak up, to have courage, to be accountable, to lead and to be humble. Because, if our kids begin to develop these skills before they are on their own – they will be better prepared for when they will be out on their own.

c) Have compassion because they may need to be on the receiving end of help someday as well. For if we as dads – help to explain this and to show it, our kids will be better prepared to do the same. And in doing so, we and they will find ways to help others, to be more understanding and to be forgiving.

And isn't all of this at least one good way for us all
to pursue a better life?

Thanks for thinking on this and in pursuing what is good & needed.



Knowledge will give you power.
But good character will give you respect.