

# Eight Week Happiness Shift Group Mentoring



# Week 1 - WHY Continue Your Own Education:

- You can model learning
- It's easier to show confidence in your child's ability to learn if you are engaged in the same process
- Gain confidence that you can educationally lead your family
- Gives children greater confidence that they can learn
- Helps connect learning to real life
- To fill your own bucket

## How in the heck can you do that?

- Decide!
- One book available all the time!
- A second book
- Give up perfection
- Enlist your spouse
- Dinner talk
- Share
- 10 minutes before sleep
- Pad and Pen
- Read with your spouse
- Cast out discouragement
- Keep Going!!!!

# READ -

Make a short list of books that you have wanted to read. If no books come to mind ask friends and family what they have read lately that has been life changing. Or take a look at some of my suggestions to get you started. I have a running book list on my computer. I don't list books others say I should read and I don't use a list of books from the internet. I listen and watch for books that I would like to read. (By the way I buy most of my books used!)

## My Book List

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### Some of my Favorites:

The Rent Collector - Camron Wright

To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee

The Memory Keeper's Daughter - Kim Edwards

Les Misrables - Victor Hugo

Here I Stand A Life of Martin Luther - Roland H. Bainton

The Hundred Dresses Elanor Estes

Small Change-The Secret Life of Penny Buford - Belinda Yardell (LOVE this book about making a life)

East of Eden (Not for the faint of heart. My all time favorite book about choice) – John Steinbeck

Rising Strong Brene' Brown

Out of the Easy - Ruta Sepetys

The Secret Life of Bees - Sue Monk Kidd

Green Mansions - WH Hudson

8 Minute Meditation - Victor Davich

The Peace Giver James L. Ferrell

Crucial Conversations Kerry Patterson

Gift From the Sea - Anne Morrow Lindberg

Wonder - R.J. Palacio

Lost Horizon - James Hilton

1776 - David McCullough

Remember the Ice -Bob Nicoll

Mary Ann Johnson

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**Learn or perfect a skill** – There are many to choose from: crochet, painting, sewing, pottery, knitting, writing, cooking, car mechanics, how to fill out a tax return, family history, photography, hunting, fishing, gardening, quilting, swim, ski, run a marathon, build something, plumbing, write poetry, and the list goes on and on!

Decide on one skill you would like to learn:

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What resources would be needed for you to do this?

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Where can you get these resources?

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**Your continuing education check list** – When you have completed those things that will make it easier for you to continuing learning check them off.

- You have a list containing at least one book that you want to read.
- You have purchased or checked the book out of the library
- A basket for books and magazines in your bathroom
- A pad and pen on your night stand
- A book in your car or a book in a bag with a pen and paper by your front door
- You have talked with your spouse about giving you a couple of hours a week for your own study time so you can take a class, paint, read, write, etc. You have given them time if they want to pursuer their own education
- You are currently practicing having “dinner talk” about what you or anyone in your family is learning about
- You have implemented reading for 5-10 minutes just before going to sleep.
- You have a set reading time for 15-30 minutes with your spouse. You are having this reading time fairly consistently each day.
- You have a “learning buddy” that you can call and share your aha’s with.

## Week 2 – STOP Making the Suckers Choice:

**Definition:** The sucker's choice is a choice between two alternatives, with the false premise that they are the only two options available, and often both options seem bad. Don't pick one of them. There is always a third alternative and you can find it with a little creative problem solving.

### How can you avoid making the Suckers Choice?

- **Work on you first.** You are likely to benefit by improving your own approach and you are the only person you can really work on anyway. I use prayer to figure out where I might need to adjust my perspective, my response or my behavior.
- **Make sure your heart is in the right place.** Treat other people like people and not like problems that need to be solved. Have a desire to have a win-win rather than an “I win!”
- **Stay focused** on the matter at hand. Don't get lost in past experiences, behaviors or problems.
- **Don't settle for either/or. Look for the elusive “and”.** We find the “and” by asking ourselves tough questions. These questions turn the either/or choice into an “AND”.
- **Ask the hard questions.**
  - “What do I really want?”
  - “What do I want for the other person?”
  - “What do I want for the relationship?”
  - “How would I behave if I really wanted these results?”

“When we present our brain with a demanding question, our body sends precious blood to the parts of our brain that help us think, and away from the parts of our body that make us want to fight.”

(From Crucial Conversations by Kerry Paterson)

## **As You Practice:**

- **Don't expect perfection**
- **Aim for progress**
- **Celebrate successes - When you come up with a solution that succeeds celebrate your success.**
- **Cast out discouragement - Take pleasure in knowing that you and your family are improving.**
- **Keep trying! Never Quit!!**

This short video will introduce you to additional steps that can help you become a more creative problem solver in your home and marriage and avoid making a Sucker's Choice.

### **Creative Problem Solving vs The Suckers Choice**

<http://bit.ly/1NPNc8I>

**Here's to better solutions, happier relationships and greater peace as a parent.**



## **Week 3 – You Can’t “DO” Yourself Into A Good Relationship:**

You can’t “do” yourself into a good relationship. You have to “be” yourself into one. What ultimately matters is how we are when we are with them.

### **How “Are You” With Your Children –**

- Are you patient with mistakes?
- Are they allowed to be kids?
- Can you be counted on? Do you keep our word?
- Do you have control of ourselves?
- Do you act like you enjoy being with them?
- How do you respond when things aren’t going your way?
- Do you listen to them and really “see” them?
- When you are with them are you “Present”?

It takes effort manage your family. To build good, solid relationships adds to that effort. So why would you want to take that extra step?

### **The Value of Good Relationships –**

- The burden feels lighter
- You yell less because you feel less resentment
- Your patience is extended
- It can solve some discipline issues
- It can lessen conflict and contention



## Habits of Relationship Building in a Family –

**1. Be PRESENT** - In my opinion the number 1 thing you can do to build relationships with your children. It means to be engaged heart, mind and soul for as little as 30 seconds. See your child. Hear your child and respond to your child. Turn away from technology when interacting with a child.

**2. Care more about the relationship than the outcome** - Sometimes parents can care too much about the outcome and too little about the relationship. When we take time to be present with our children and let them be children, when we value their efforts, we give them the opportunity to know and love us. We give them a gift. And they in turn return that gift by loving us back. It is the best use of our time because the relationship that develops is the thing of greatest significance.

**3. Keep tabs on your “way of being” – don’t blame others for how you are** - I always know when my “way of being” is at the heart of an issue. I can tell because that is the moment I point my finger at someone or something and blame them for how I am feeling. Blame is an indicator that we need to look at our own behaviors, our own stories. How do we treat them? How good are our own boundaries? How consistent are we? Do we have control of ourselves? Do we keep the promises we make to ourselves? What story are we telling ourselves about what is happening?

**4. Touch often** – Ruffle hair, squeeze a shoulder, pat a knee, rub a back. Tickle, roughhouse, and wrestle.

## Practice:

Can you think of any time in your interaction with your children when struggle to be Present?

Is there anything you currently have your children help you with or that you do for your children when you cannot let go of the outcome, when how it turns out matters most to you? Be honest!

Pay attention this week and list any times when you felt like blaming your children for how you are feeling? Is it something that happens consistently? Is there a pattern?

How consistent are you in reaching out and touching your child aside from hugging them if they are leaving home or when you are putting them to bed. Do you forget or get too busy to think about it? Be honest!

Pick one of the issues that you have listed on this page and write it down here. Post on Facebook or email what you are working on. Practice doing better on this item for two weeks and then report how it is going via Facebook or email. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/882599805121181/fcmentor1@gmail.com>

## Week 4 – Be Careful With Expectations – Stop Sucking the Joy Out of Life

**Expectations assume a certain result and are future-based.** They actually narrow your options, retard your imagination, and blind you to possibilities. They create pressure in your life and hold your present sense of wellbeing hostage to a future that may or may not happen. Expectations create rigidity in your life and cause you to react impulsively to any perceived threat to that future you believe you deserve. We create much of our own suffering because of our expectations rather than enjoying what is actually happening now.

In contrast to expectations, **possibilities are based in the present moment.** What is possible in this activity, family event, or experience? Being open to possibilities acknowledges that what you think you want may change. Your sense of well-being or happiness isn't contingent on the future, on having an activity or experience turn out in a pre-determined way. Your mind is open. You therefore have more access to imagination and inspiration. Your mind is clear and less reactive, and you make better decisions. You respond rather than react.

This ability to respond to change rather than react to it is the primary distinction between those who live with expectations and those who live with possibilities and it is one way to have a major happiness shift.

**Things turn out the best for people who make the best of the way things turn out.~John Wooden**

## Anything can be more successful if you remember:

- Check your motives
  - I want it to look good to others
  - I want others to think I am a good person
  - It makes me feel good if it all goes perfectly because that proves I am OK
  - If it turns out I feel like a good person
- Mentally prepare for messiness – working with kids is messy but so is any goal we are working for or change we are trying to make. Look for progress not perfection.
- Your progress will look different than someone else's
- You may do it backwards, upside down or take the long way around. Let it go and keep working.
- Focus on success not error. Celebrate when you succeed.
- Failure is a great teacher. Try, try again!
- Success is not determined by how long it takes or the twists and turns along the way, but by the growth you achieve in the process.
- Less Expectation, More Exploration and Trust That things Will Work Out
- Relax More, Judge Yourself and your family Less
- Change Your Story

**Life isn't a "to do" list but a process of growing and becoming. Be patient and enjoy the process.**

# 1. How do expectations manifest, right now, in your life?

Expectations about yourself and your parenting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Expectations about your spouse or your relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Expectations about your child/children? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Expectations about how your family “should” be? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. How could you utilize the above ideas** to let go of expectations that are causing you disappointment and unhappiness. For example can you tell a different story about what is happening, do your motives need an adjustment or are you willing to see your progress and stop focusing on the times you or your children error.

Yourself and your parenting

Your spouse or your relationship

Your child/children

How your family “should” be

# Week 5 – The Importance and Power of Play

## Play helps children:

- Develop executive function
- Encourages creativity and problem solving
- Develops a sense of well-being and reduces stress.

**When you are considering how to let your children spend their time think deeply about play.**

Think about what toys and materials actually accentuate play. Observe your children when they play. Buy fewer toys. Let children create their own toys. Avoid giving your kids too much. When you do give them toys from the store check your motives – is it for them or is it to make sure you feel like a great parent. Is it because you don't want them to go without or be angry at you.

## Consider the effects of video and television on play

Turn off your digital devices, ditch technology – just for a while. Have technology free moments everyday. For example, maybe you have a TV, computer and no phone hour just before bed.

I suggest finding a few moments each day to turn technology off. I recently met a family that actually goes screen free for a whole month once a year. I got all the details from the mom, Courtney, and I want to share them with you because I think you will be so impressed that you might consider making this a tradition in your home.

The Screen Free experiment <http://home-school-coach.com/screen-free-experiment/>

**Play is what self directed, able adults are made of.**



# Week 6 – Victims Parent Poorly

Use this tool to find the “REAL” message behind your negative thoughts. Remember that every negative thought you have about yourself and your life is a lie even if it appears true. It comes from a source of power that desires your failure and destruction. The exact opposite is what is really true. All people have weaknesses and they are really our strengths in embryo. (Hebrews 11:32, 34 and Ether 12:27)

Write down your negative thoughts daily. For each negative thought write down the opposite and then answer the questions below. Do this for at least 30 days and you will begin to see a change in how you feel each day about yourself, your family, your relationships and your life

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Strength-
2. Strength-
3. Strength-
4. Strength-
5. Strength-
6. Strength-
7. Strength-
8. Strength-
9. Strength-
10. Strength-

**I feel powerful as I manage my thoughts because...**

**I feel confident in clearing out damaging comments because...**

**I feel capable in overcoming negativity because...**

**I feel peaceful in my mind because...**

## Week 7– Anyone Can Change – Even You

Remember that this group mentoring program is about having a **Happiness Shift**. We cannot move to a new place unless we are willing to leave where we are. This sometimes takes courage, hard work and faith. But anyone can change where they are now and have a happiness shift. We just need to take responsibility for our lives and not allow ourselves to fall into the victim trap. We talked a lot about that in week 6. When we accept that we are responsible for our choices, our feelings and our responses to our circumstances, we take hold of the power to change.

Overcoming weaknesses is a very essential part of everyone's life. Each person is born with some weakness. Richard Step

Things do not change; we change. Henry David Thoreau

They must often change, who would be constant in happiness or wisdom. Confucius

Our Strength grows out of our weaknesses. Ralph Waldo Emerson

# Three Principles of Change

## Principle I - Faith

- If you feel like a victim it is difficult to have faith that you can change
- You don't always have to know the way – just believe that there is a way
- Christ's promises are sure - Mormon 9:21 Behold I say unto you that whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth.

## Principle II - Awareness

- You can only change when you know what needs to be changed
- We have been given weakness so that we can develop strength
- You have a responsibility to change – you are not a victim
- It is harder for victims to change - blame holds you back
- You have a choice in EVERY situation
- “If there is a problem it is your problem”
- Clarity and the ability to articulate WHAT needs change helps you make that change
- Have a vision of what you want

## Principle III - Third, Stay the Course no matter how long it takes

- Don't get stuck believing that you can't do it anymore, it's taking too long
- Don't give up until the change of heart happens
- You have to do all you can do for as long as it takes
- Look for the holes and work on those - What is your scripture study like, daily repentance, kindness, service, learning and growth
- You can't do enough to save yourself or cause a change of heart. It is a gift after all you can do.
- Don't do more – do what you do with more pure intent.

**You don't have to stay where you are - Change is possible.**

# Change Your Belief About Your Worth

Print this out and say it every morning and evening.

## AFFIRMATION

**In the infinity of life where I am,  
All is perfect, whole, and complete.  
There is no beginning and no end,  
Everything is one great whole.  
Life is never stuck or static or stale,  
For each moment is ever new and fresh.  
I am one with my Heavenly Father and he has  
Given me the power to create my own circumstances.  
I rejoice in the knowledge that I have the power  
Of my own mind to use in any way I choose.  
Every moment of life is a new beginning point  
As I move from the old. This moment is a new point  
Of beginning for me right here and right now.  
All is well in my world.**

Adapted From You Can Heal Your Life by Louise L. Hay

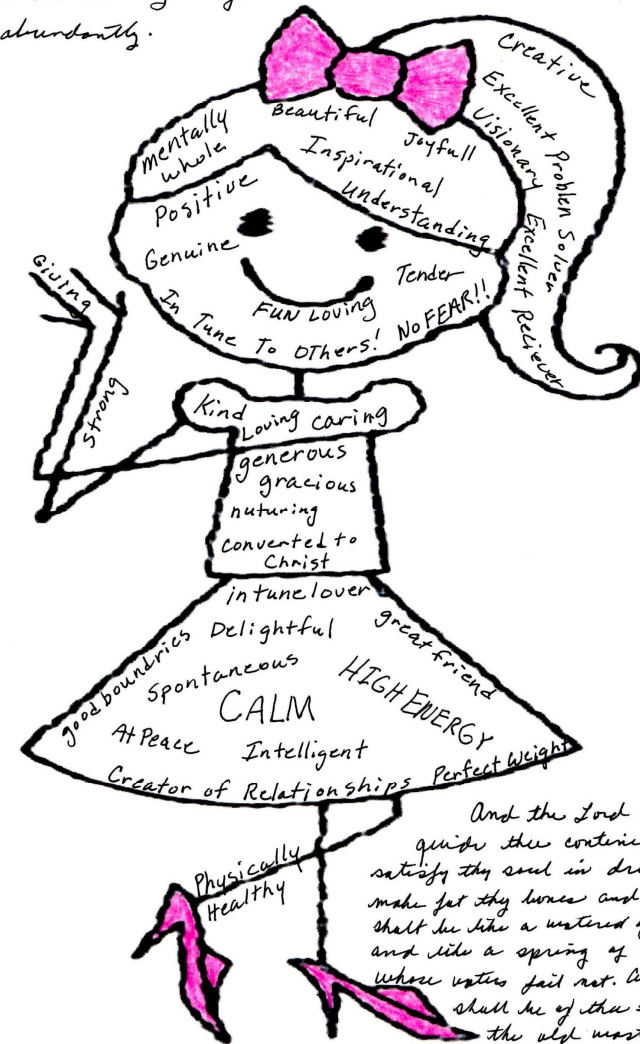
# The WHO I AM Poster

I printed out a woman and I wrote everything I wanted to be inside of her body. I didn't think about it at all. I was "free writing". I wrote exactly what came into my mind, as it came into my mind.

I would stand in front of this beautiful poster every morning and evening and recite it from top to bottom. I did this every day for over a year.

I still have her on the wall right in front of my desk so that I see it every day. These are my strengths in embryo and constantly reminding myself of that has helped them grow into my strengths.

some give and that they might have it abundantly.



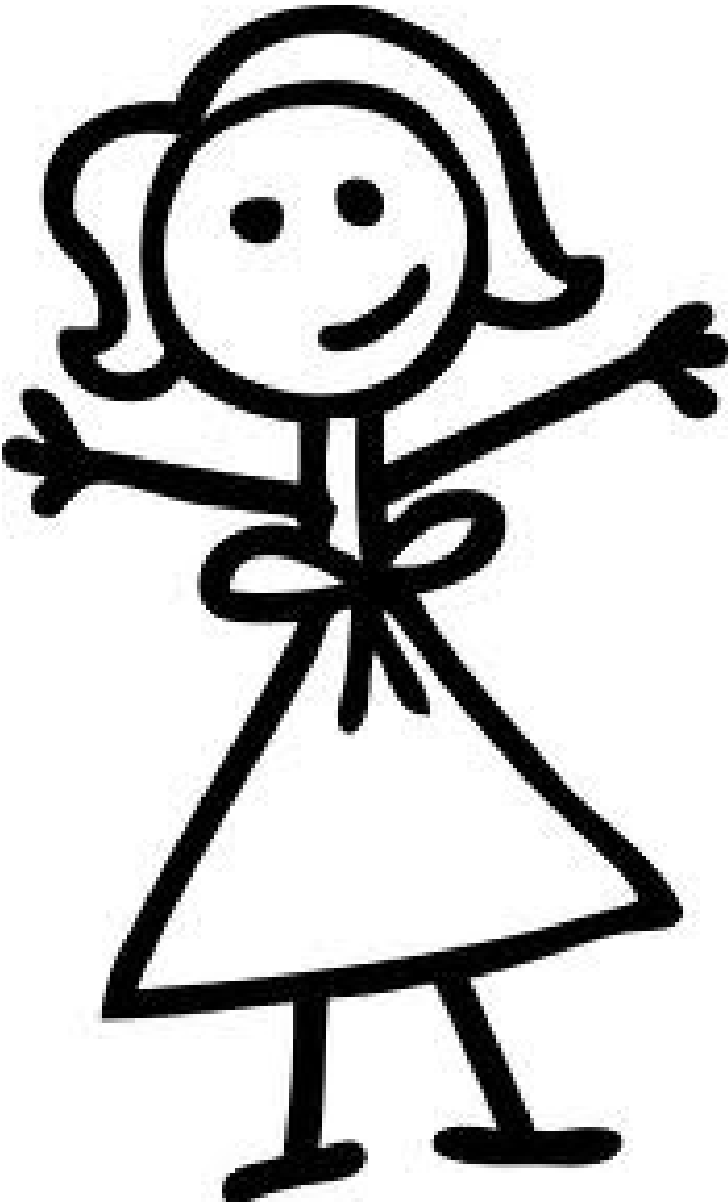
And the Lord shall guide thee contentedly, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; they shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, the repairs of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. Isaiah 58: 11-12

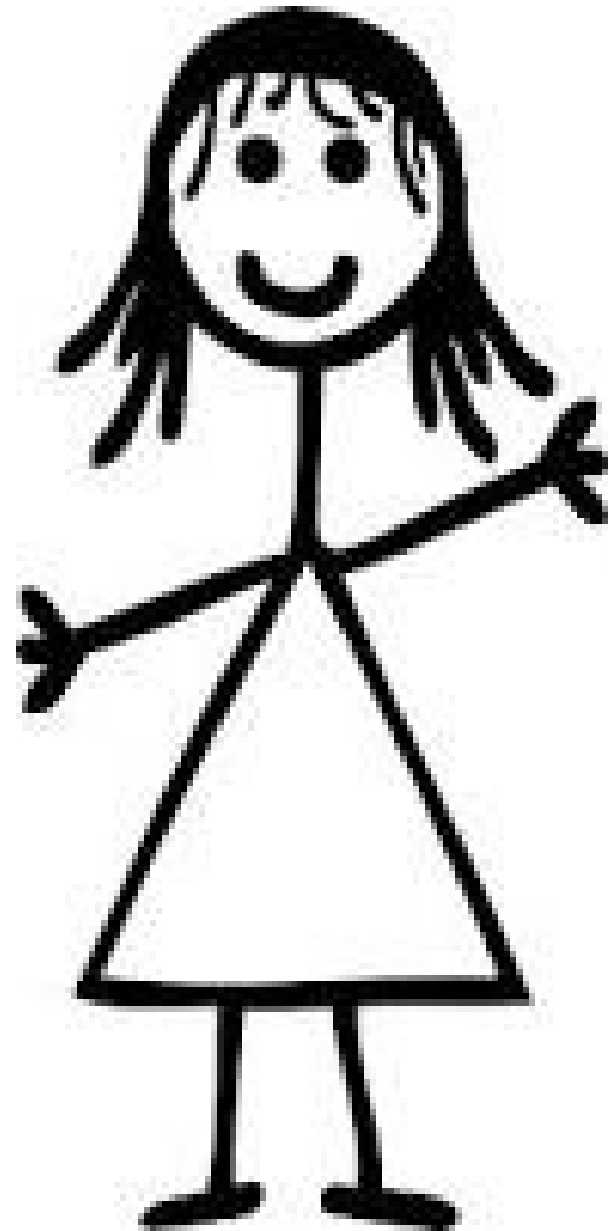
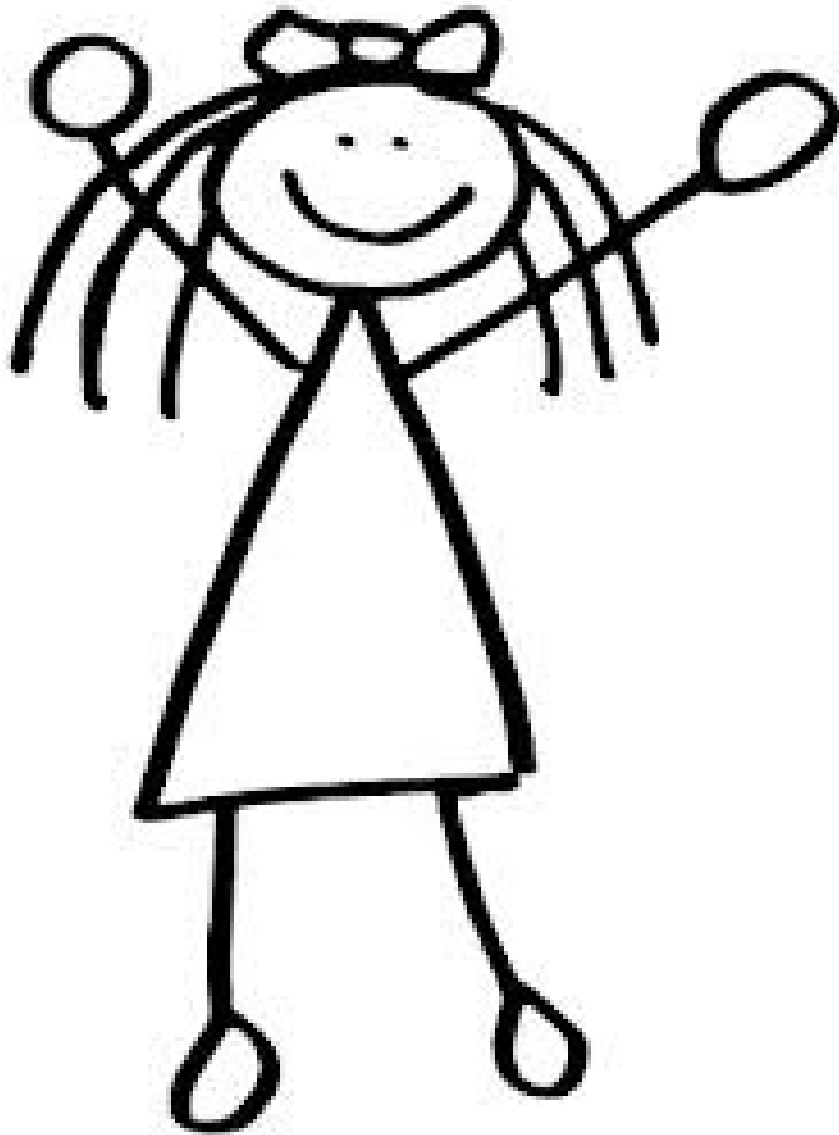
## Examples of WHO I AM posters





# Samples





# Week 8 – Let's Talk About Fathers

## Involved dads/men = Successful children

"We found that fathers who are involved with their children have children with fewer problems. That added involvement from a father helps children tremendously." Specifically, her research found better language skills and fewer behavioral problems in children with an actively involved father. Interestingly, **this result holds true even if the father doesn't live in the same home** as the child -- for example, in –divorce situations. Maureen Black, PhD

According to a study at the University of Illinois...**it's important to note that this father figure doesn't have to be a biological father in order for children to benefit. It can be an adoptive father, stepdad, or an adult male in the household.**

### Dad's Who Are PRESENT Win:

- Watch for times when you say, "Just a second," "In a minute," or "Not right now – maybe later."
- Track how often you check your messages whether email, Facebook, Twitter, texts, etc.
- Setting aside sacred parent-child time
- Touch your children, rough house with them

Dad, what changes do you need to make to make time to be PRESENT? Write it down and then do something about it.

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### FRUIT from the effort to be Present:

My children know that they are paramount in my life

- 2) I now have a direct opportunity to teach my children how to play and work
- 3) My children and I, and therefore the entire family, are closer to each other
- 4) Spending time with my children is FUN!!

## Parents that are in sync parent better! You have to talk about your goals, vision and differences.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bedtimes
- \_\_\_\_\_ How your children are put to bed
- \_\_\_\_\_ How you deal with your children if they wake up at night
- \_\_\_\_\_ How long to breastfeed
- \_\_\_\_\_ How many sweets your children are allowed to eat
- \_\_\_\_\_ How many snacks your children are allowed to eat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Expectations for children's behavior at mealtimes
- \_\_\_\_\_ How much TV or video your children are allowed to watch
- \_\_\_\_\_ What sort of TV shows, videos, or movies your children are allowed to watch
- \_\_\_\_\_ How much time your children are allowed to spend with Nintendo or computer games
- \_\_\_\_\_ How much allowance to give
- \_\_\_\_\_ How many toys to buy kids
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use of swats or spanking for discipline
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yelling at the kids when they misbehave
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other consequences for misbehavior
- \_\_\_\_\_ What to do when a child has a tantrum
- \_\_\_\_\_ How to intervene when siblings quarrel with each other
- \_\_\_\_\_ How to intervene when your child quarrels with each other child
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other consequences for misbehavior
- \_\_\_\_\_ What a parent should do if he or she has made a mistake with a child

1. When can you talk and plan. Pick a date and a time:

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2. What do you need to talk about? Make a list of a few things that you want to begin with.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

**One good way to work through questions like these is to work together to write a family vision/mission statement.**

**“A clear purpose will unite you as you move forward, values will guide your behavior, and goals will focus your energy.” Kenneth H. Blanchard, Collaboration Begins with You: Be a Silo Buster**

## **How Can We Know What We Want?**

**First, talk about what you want.** Make sure your ideas are the same and if they aren't, work those out until you come to consensus about what they are going to be. Don and I ran into walls of difference over and over again. We would argue or one or the other would back off and then feel resentful and run over. I would feel badly about saying this but in my work I see it over and over again, in all kinds of families. We parent and build families by default. It's a fact.

It would have served Don and I well if we had talked more about what we wanted our family to look and feel like. By doing that we would have discovered our differences early on. Then we could have worked on them until we resolved them or came to some consensus about how we could manage our differences and still accomplish the goal. But that would have necessitated our understanding, more specifically, a detailed picture of the goal. Once we had that clearly in mind we would have been better able to set our intention.

## **Second, Ask yourself some good questions:**

- What are the values we want our family to embody?
- What's the "feeling" we want in our household?
- In what activities or items will we invest our time and money?
- What words best will describe our family? What words would we want strangers to use to describe our family if they met us for the first time?
- What words would like our kids use to describe our family? What words would they use to describe our family right now?
- What would we like others to say about our family?
- What are our strengths as a family now?
- What do we feel our family is called to do?
- What do we want our family legacy to be?
- What does our family stand for?
- What principles should guide decisions? Are they the same for both individuals and the family unit?
- How will religion or spirituality look in our family?
- What is our family economy?

This is just a sampling of the many questions that we, as parents, can ask ourselves in order to clearly define what our intention for our family is.

**“A family mission statement is a combined, unified expression from all family members of what your family is all about, what it is you really want to do and be, and the principles you choose to govern your family life.”**

**Stephen Covey 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families**

## **Flesh It Out, Get Kids Involved, Get It Done**

### **A. Get Creative**

Start your family statement experience by getting the creative juices flowing. Before you jump into the writing portion, spend some time getting your family engaged with the idea of what a family mission statement is and what it contains. Use activities that allow each individual to privately consider what they think should be part of the family culture, and how they want it to feel in their family.

### **B. Discussion**

After you've taken the time to get some creativity flowing, and family members have begun to engage with the idea of how they want their family to feel and the elements of it's culture that are important to them, it's time to start asking the right questions to help deepen the articulation of the things that your family values.

### **C. Organize your thoughts:**

Finally, it's time to start organizing your ideas into something concrete. Don't allow this family activity to breakdown over "word-smithing" details. Later you will assign someone, usually mom or dad, the job of designing the final draft to bring back to the family for approval.

### **D. The Final Draft:**

Don't try to make the final draft as a family. It has the potential of creating too much contention. Once you've got the core ideas down, give someone the task of editing and making it sound good. Then it can be brought back to the family for the final unveiling.

**You can get more details for writing a family vision/mission statement at the links below. This is a four part series on how to make it work.**

<http://home-school-coach.com/a-family-mission-statement-part-1/>

<http://home-school-coach.com/family-mission-statement/>

<http://home-school-coach.com/family-mission-statement-part-iii/>

<http://home-school-coach.com/family-mission-statement-part-iv/>

**You can see some sample family vision/mission statements at the links below.**

<http://home-school-coach.com/sample-family-mission-statements/>

<http://home-school-coach.com/family-mission-statement-more-examples/>

**REMEMBER: Fathers help make families better but to do it they need to be  
PRESENT**