

Bold Book Notes – All Joy and No Fun – The Paradox of Modern Parenthood by Jennifer Senior

This isn't a parenting book - it doesn't tell you what to do or what not to do while raising your kids. It just gives a perspective on what parenting does to us parents.

Here are some points that I made sure to take note of:

We all want to provide happiness to our children - provide a happy upbringing, but it is unrealistic to assume that if all goes well in a child's life, he or she will be happy.

Not because life is the kind of thing that doesn't make you happy, but because happiness is not something one can ask of a child.

Children can suffer in a way that adults don't always realize - under the pressure their parents put on them to be happy, which is the pressure not to make their parents unhappy, or more unhappy than they really are.

(my take away from this? It alleviated a lot of pressure that I've put on myself to always entertain, always set up social things for the kids, program the happiness in to their lives... I'm going to ease up on that a bit..)

Survey results from the book:

85% of Americans believe that parents don't spend enough time with their kids...

Only 10% of the kids wanted more time with their moms

only 16% wanted more time with their dads

34% of kids said they wanted moms to be less stressed.

- (my take away from that statistic? Do more things that make me happy - and take some of the time that I'm putting in making sure my kids are entertained and redirect at myself and my goals. The kids will learn to make their own fun)

For a child growing up life is full of surprises, the adult tries to keep these as surprises rather than as traumas, through a devoted attentiveness. Sane parenting involves a growing sense of how little, as well as how much, one can protect one's child from; of just how little a life can be programmed.

(my take away from this - I've got to let them fail, make messes, suffer natural consequences more - this is going to be hard, but it is for their best interest, and I won't feel the pressure to make their lives "perfect" - that is just too unrealistic)

The pleasures of being a parent, more often than not, occur when we are passive. They involve just sitting back and enjoying your kids be themselves.

Parents feel it's only natural to expect happiness from the experience of having and raising children. They'll find it, not continuously, and not always in the forms they expect.