

## **Bold Book** Notes – Raising Human Beings by Ross Greene

### **Children will do better IF THEY CAN.**

*Believe this and it changes your mindset / feelings / experience!*

Most crucial task of kids' development: Figure out who he/she is

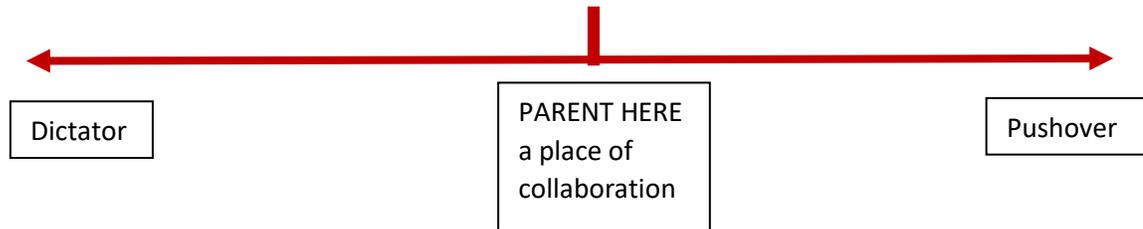
- Skills
- Preferences
- Beliefs
- Values
- Personality Traits
- Goals
- Direction

Get comfortable with themselves & Pursue and live a life that is congruent with who he/she is

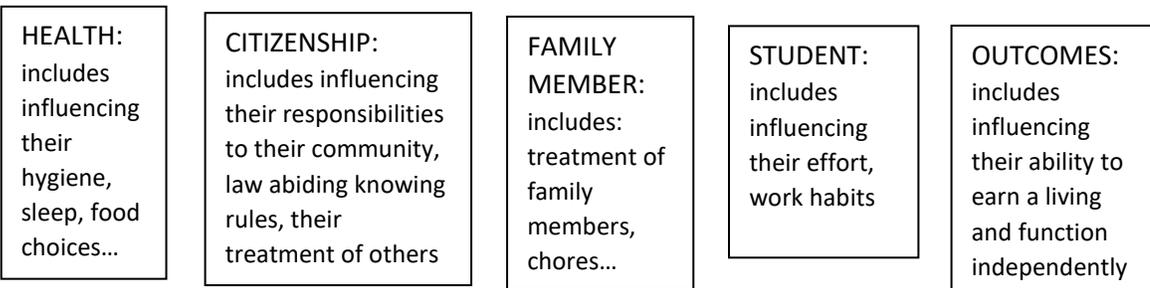
***This is ALSO CRUCIAL for us MOMS!***

As parents, our goal is to balance between these two things:

Having Parental Influence & Helping our child live a life that is congruent with who he/she is



As a mom – strive for INFLUENCE and not CONTROL Influence → expectations in many realms



MOMs – YOUR expectations MUST BE MATCHED to your child's

- Skills
- Preferences
- Beliefs
- Values
- Personality traits

Most issues are because there is an INCOMPATIBILITY Between your child's characteristics and the demands and expectations on them

**Moms** – we can be helpers when incompatibilities arise

- Helpers HELP – we don't make it worse
- Helpers have THICK SKIN – we don't take things personally
- Helpers only help WHEN NEEDED – promoting independence

We focus on the SIGNS (BEHAVIORS) of INCOMPATIBILITY

BEHAVIORS are the means by which your child communicates that there is incompatibility.

Move From:

Fixing the child → TO → Improving compatibility

**Moms:** Change your thoughts → incompatibility isn't BAD... it FUELS GROWTH!

What are you (as a parent) bringing to it?

- How you handle stress
- Your level of resilience
- Your level of patience

**The goal of parenting is to think about your role in your child's life. How best to have influence and how to foster the characteristics you value most?**

**MYTH:** All things are possible with sufficient effort.

**MYTH:** If my kid can't "hack it" (meet an expectation) it's because he's not motivated to devote the effort needed.

**MYTH:** My child's failure to meet an expectation reflects badly on me

## **MORE LISTENING & LESS LESSONING**

Your kid knows you want him to do well. DON'T belabor that point

**Remember: Kids do well if they can**

- Your child would prefer to be doing well
- Good parenting means being responsive to the hand you've been dealt.

- Your kid was already somebody when he showed up / not a blank slate
- There are natural consequences that your kid already feels – don't need adult-imposed consequences too. Kids need something different from you.

## **Moms: Change your mindset from:**

Expectations your child is having difficulty meeting → to → these are just **UNSOLVED PROBLEMS**

## **1<sup>st</sup>: Identify UNSOLVED PROBLEMS**

- Example: My son has difficulty .... Keeping his binder organized
- My son has difficulty.... Waking up on time
- My son has difficulty... following directions
- My son has difficulty... keeping his room clean.... etc.
- Start with the word "Difficulty"
- Don't have any theories about what the cause
- Be very specific

**THINK: Is my kid capable of meeting this expectation? Is it realistic? (Considering age, maturity, temperament, etc.)**

Just because you WANT them to doesn't mean they CAN.

## **2<sup>nd</sup>: Prioritize the difficulties you want to address (can't do them all at once!)**

Three plans to follow:

### **PLAN A: Authoritative**

"I've decided that...." You decide unilaterally you aren't getting at the heart of the problem.

#### **Why do we use it?**

Fear / anger / anxiety

Compare to other kids

Concern how kid is being perceived

Feeling something must be done NOW

### **PLAN B: Collaboratively**

You recognize something is in the way of meeting expectations

You need to figure out what's in the way

You're skilled at working together with the child to solve it

Empathy / reflexive listening

Define your Adult concern

Invitation-discuss and agree on a solution

### **PLAN C Set aside for now**

This is NOT CAVING

Use plan C when:

You don't prioritize the issue

You defer to child's skills

Give them the chance to solve indecently

The expectations are currently unrealistic

You have other higher priorities

Solving problems together with kids is HARD! Why?

- We are not used to it
- We didn't experience it with our own parents
- It seems easier to just lower the boom

## PLAN B – EXPANDED

**1<sup>st</sup> STEP: Empathy Step:** Gather Information about your kids' perspective / concern / point of view on a specific expectation he's having trouble meeting

YOUR JOB: Show your child you are legitimately interested in and curious about his concerns

Help us to NOT ASSUME we know what the problem is

*Example: My son was having issues with a bully making mean comments to him regularly. He thought I was on the bully's side since I wasn't going after the bully and his parents. I was trying to empower HIM with the tools to NOT let this bully's words affect his thoughts and feelings about himself. Once I understood his concerns, I was able to talk to him about why I wasn't going after the bully – (that I wanted him to have the tools to use when the next bully comes along)*

We can override or diminish kids concerns when we think we already know what's getting in the kids way.

If you're not trying hard to hear concerns and address them, eventually your child will stop talking to you.

### **Information Gathering:**

SCRIPT: "I've noticed that..." (insert your prioritized difficulty) end it with "What's up?"

*Example: "I've noticed that it's been difficult for you to follow directions when you are asked to, what's up?"*

## DRILL not GRILL

Clarify / not talking AT (Listening – not LESSONING)

Use "W" Questions

- WHO has been giving you a hard time?
- WHAT's making it hard to do your math?
- WHERE / WHEN is your bother annoying you?

Respond with honesty

Don't insist that kids talk if they aren't ready to

## STEP 2: DEFINE ADULT CONCERNS

- Your concerns are EQUAL (Yours and Your Kids')
- How the unsolved problem is affecting your child
- How the unsolved problem is affecting others

## STEP 3: THE INVITATION STEP

Inviting your child to collaborate solutions together

- *SCRIPT: "Let's talk about how we can solve this problem..." or "I wonder if there's a way..." or "Do you have any ideas?"*
- The first solution might not solve the problems durably – long term
- Tone needs to be curiosity – you really want to understand.
- You're not mad. Your kid isn't in trouble.
- Solve the CHRONIC problem, not every specific episode.
- Your parenting isn't the sole determining factor in what your child does and how well he does it.
- You're not the only influence in his life
- Gene pool expresses itself in different ways
- That kid of yours is a symphony of factors, many are not your doing and are not within your control.

## **WHEN:**

- Unmet expectations make you feel like an inadequate parent...
- You're worried your kid isn't turning out ok...
- He's struggling to meet lots of expectations...
- You're feeling embarrassed when things aren't getting better rapidly

***It's easy to go overboard on the influence and the thinking that something has to happen RIGHT NOW.***

## ***Your child needs...***

- Space to make mistakes and learn from them
- Opportunity to right the ship on his own (but be there if he's really floundering)
- You to know how to help him right the ship
- Freedom to try his emerging identity on for size

Your relationship DOES NOT have to be adversarial

You CAN influence your kid without the use of power - it is POWERFULL.

## **Is your parent anxiety TOO high? Some signs...**

- Can't stop thinking about your kid, how he's doing, problems in his path
- Losing sleep over mundane development problems
- Screaming a lot
- Overcorrecting, overcoaching, overcriticizing so they will turn out fine

REMEMBER: Kids do well if they CAN!

Plan B will work for the LONG TERM and helps you truly understand and connect with your child

## **DON'T do this:**

- Mind Read and ASSUME you know the problem and how best to fit it (remember – Be Curious)
- Catastrophizing: DON'T go into the time machine of FEAR
- Interrupt: Don't make it impossible for your kid to voice their concerns

***Remember: There is NO WAY to ensure and secure the future of ANYTHING only ways to improve odds and developing a mature connection with your child for the long haul.***

Knowing this helps you feel less anxious because the pressure is OFF!

Be clear about expectations and boundaries. (It's hard for kids to meet them if they don't know what they are.)

**MOMS:** *What are your long-term expectations? What are your academic / behavior / character expectations? Write them down. Write down why they are your expectations and why they are important to you.*

## POSITIVE QUALITIES TO MODEL (as a parent):

- Empathy
- Appreciation of how actions affect others
- Resolving disagreements peacefully
- Taking another's perspective
- Honesty



When these are present:

- Display compassion and cooperation

When these are NOT present:

- We get: insensitivity, conflict and selfishness

The mental space that was once occupied by moral struggle has been occupied by the struggle to achieve.

**Recognize: we all want our concerns to be heard, validated and addressed.**

When we aren't validated, parents, kids, everyone becomes: angry, frustrated, marginalized, alienated, prone to violence, polarized

## BE AWARE OF YOUR BLIND SPOTS

### STRESS:

- makes you lose your perspective
- makes you push yourself too hard
- makes you reactive and act unilaterally (my way or the highway!)
- Your value as a parent is NOT what you help your kid achieve (resume virtues) but the TYPE OF PERSON you help him become.

### SUPERIORITY:

- It can add to an "us vs. them" mentality
- You have experience and SO DOES YOUR KID. Especially about his skills, preferences, beliefs, values, personality traits, goals and direction.

### FEELING THAT YOUR CHILD IS TAKING ADVANTAGE

- You'll be better off reminding your child that you have concerns that need to be addressed as well. (It's an easier sell when you've shown that you truly listen to their concerns – MODEL THIS.)

### TRYING TOO HARD:

- Moms had success pre-mommy life through effort, persistence and energy  
BUT
- When kids have a difficulty meeting certain expectations, moms can respond with what worked in the past (energy, effort, etc.) and can blow past kids skills, preferences, etc.
- Unsolved problems are shared by you and your kid

- Both of you need to bring their balanced energy and effort to the challenges
- Mom's can't solve it with their energy ALONE!

## **FEELING THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS**

- You CAN'T possibly!
- Parents get frustrated when the "My way or the highway" plan doesn't get the job done. You'll have better odds for success if you work together.

## **FEAR OF APPEARING WEAK:**

- Parenting is NOT a balancing act between strength and weakness
- Collaborating with your child on solving problems that affect his life DOES Not demonstrate weakness

## **EMPATHY FATIGUE:**

- So much news about horrible things deadens our compassion muscles and causes us to respond with less compassion and empathy to our kids.

## **AMNESIA:**

- Remember making your own mistakes in childhood and that learning from mistakes is BEST way to learn.

## **QUALITIES FOSTERED THROUGH PLAN B:**

- Practice thinking about and clarifying his/her concerns
- Articulate concerns
- Showing concerns will be heard – trust
- Emotions wrapped up in concerns are powerful and can overshadow concerns which create reactions - Empathy slows the emotions down
- Kids learn concerns are valid and will be heard and addressed, not dismissed
- Parent learn empathy – Hear your kids! Ask them the questions!
- We are all searching to be heard and listened to. We are looking outside our daily relationships to be heard and validated.

YOU CAN DO THIS with your kids, spouse, parents, in-laws.

Foster internal control of behavior, character NOT outside rules

Give kids practice at considering the concerns of other people

If you use PLAN A to solve problems with your kid, it doesn't teach them these skills at all. It's the opposite of empathetic, not taking into account your child's perspective and not demonstrating an appreciation of how your behavior is affecting them.

Stop thinking of life as a zero-sum game with winners and losers. Start thinking collaboratively and use PLAN B.

# the **BOLD**MOMS

be STRONG ✨ be HAPPY ✨ be **BOLD** ✨ be YOU