



It's Just a Stage

What do you do when our kids start to grow up? How do we handle that? How do we impose new rules with young adults? One of the most important aspects of our kids growing up is that we have to also learn new parenting skills. We can no longer think of them as kids. It is not helpful to think of them as arrogant difficult teenagers, either. So, maybe it is time to realize that they have become young adults, seemingly overnight. We all are about to embark on what quite possibly could be considered the most difficult stage of their lives; when we still need to have some influence but we will never have the same influence as we had when they were children. We have to give up that desire on our part; our job is really half over. We need to start treating them as young adults, not dreaded teenagers. Treat them with the respect that we would treat someone else's young adult, but with a firm enough hand that they know the rules are made for a reason, and the biggest reason is not because we are a horse's ass. The biggest reason that the rules are in place is to protect THEM! It is not some perverse joy we have in making their lives positively miserable.

A technique I used, when my son was about 13, I sat him down and explained to him that he would soon be going through a very hard stage in his life. I explained that everyone goes through it and when I did it was probably the most disruptive and difficult stage of my life. I explained that I felt if he realized beforehand that it was just a stage that quite possibly he would get



through it without all the anger and emotions that go along with it. I then explained to him, quite simply and quickly, what that stage was.

I explained to him that it is the stage in your life when you feel as though your parents are the stupidest people in the world and know absolutely nothing. A stage where you will wake up one morning and suddenly realize you know everything you ever needed to know. You will always be right no matter what, and you will have all the answers. We parents, on the other hand, on that same morning woke up stupid; all the years on this earth and everything we learned and know will suddenly 'in your mind' fly out the window. It seemed that just the day before, when you came to talk to us and asked us questions, you trusted in our answers and judgments. But that is no longer necessary, because you have suddenly become enlightened and you have all the answers. You will feel as though you are omniscient. I explained to him that at those times when you look at us and instead of seeing our loving eyes and faces you suddenly see a horse's ass, please remember in your heart what I have told you today. "IT IS JUST A STAGE and it too shall pass just like all the other stages we go through in our lives". Anyway, soon after we had that conversation when he seemed set on disagreeing with everything I said because he was privy to all the answers of the universe, I would look at him and gently say, "Son, it's just a stage; this, too, shall pass." We bypassed the screaming matches where we both were set on being right!!! The stage where your child might look at you and see a HORSE's Ass with the mouth moving and storm out of the house. We solved our disagreements by saying those simple words. There were times he would even start disagreeing with things he had always known and believed.

Also I want you to know that being MAD isn't helping your child. I know you know that. Maybe you should take him for a coffee and start treating him like an adult (somewhat) because right now he is stuck between being a kid and an adult, and that is oh so hard. It is up to you to teach him how to be the adult. You need to show him that yelling is not the answer. Do not enter into the "I'm RIGHT" or the "Because I said so!" arguments. You don't have to prove to him that you are right, or that the loudest person wins. I used to



tell the kids flat out, "I will not discuss this with you if you refuse to speak to me respectfully. If you want to discuss it fine, but I will NOT be yelled at by you!" My daughter had once called me from somewhere, and she got mad at me and started yelling. I told her under no circumstances was I going to be yelled at by her and if she didn't want to be respectful I wasn't going to listen. I told her to call me back when she could be respectful and hung up. It took her two minutes to call back to discuss the issue.

If you and your child engage in yelling matches, this is something that you can do for yourself and also ask your child to perform the exercise. I want you to think about someone yelling at you. Do it now; go into your body and see where it hurts. Just close your eyes and think about it. Ask your body how it makes it feel to be the yeller and the yellee? You can also dowse the emotions that are affecting you in the book "Dowse This... Your Journey to Emotional Balance" if you have a hard time connecting to your body through introspection.

For me, being yelled at hurts my heart! I NEVER get yelled at. I am very lucky. I also try to never yell at anyone else. We do not even yell at our pets. We also do not ever tell our pets to SHUT UP! Shut UP is one of the MOST disrespectful two words I have ever heard. We also do not EVER swear in our house unless we are very angry. It was never okay for the kids to swear in front of me; the kids would not even let their friends swear in front of me. It was okay to swear if they needed to in order to express their anger, as long as they were not swearing at me or swearing for the sake of swearing!

Let your child be part of the solution. When you take him for coffee or sit him in your Zen Garden and ask him how he feels about the situation and listen to what he has to say. Ask him why he got so angry? Tell him why you asked him to behave in a certain manner. Tell him you have friends come into your home and when you pour them a juice you don't want to have to wonder if someone has contaminated the rim by drinking straight from the carton or whatever your reasons or issues. Tell him you are sorry for yelling. Let him



start taking responsibility for his actions. If he has broken something in anger then *ask* him to have it repaired or replaced. Tell him he needs to figure out how to do it, call a window place or whatever it takes. But let him learn to fix the problems he creates. If you just ignore what happened and fix the problem he has no reason to take ownership for his actions.

I would always try to discuss most things with the children to make them understand why they were being punished, etc. from the time they were infants. There were none of the show-stopping statements in my house, such as "BECAUSE I SAID SO". I always wanted them to know why I felt as I did and I also wanted to know why they behaved as they did. So if I sent them to their rooms as punishment, they also knew that I would give them a few minutes to think about why they were there and then I would be in to discuss it with them. Even as teenagers, if I said PLEASE go to your room, they knew that once in their room, in their safe place, in their domain, I would be in to talk to them about the issue. I would listen to their side and tell them mine and my reasons for wanting a certain behavior. If your child is teasing his little sibling, ask him if he would find it helpful to have an older brother making fun of him. Ask him how it would make him feel. Tell him as the older brother he should be setting an example. Or whatever the issue is, speak from your heart, not your anger.

Another really helpful tool to use if you want to get a heads-up on what your child has in store for his/her life and what challenges you and your child are in for, is a Life Purpose Report. The report is really more or less a roadmap of our life lessons, obstacles, how to overcome them, and for parents it's an invaluable message. My friend, who has used these reports for her own children, received the reports when her kids were in their early years of grade school. While she told me it was hard to accept that her little ones would potentially struggle with issues of addictions, bad relationships, etc, if they were not provided with creative outlets throughout their lives, she would not have had the insight to direct them into their creative ventures. Now, her children are 19 and 20 years of age, a daughter and son, respectively, and both are well-adjusted and in college. One is pursuing



computer sciences, where his creativity can be used in service to others, and the younger is seeking a degree in hospitality and restaurant management, where she can use her creativity, as well. The tool truly has helped her to guide her children out of mischief and potential downward spirals and into creative and productive lives. If you're interested in protecting your investments - the paths your children take - you can find the Life Purpose Reports at www.insightsrus.com.

Also available assisting you in discovering what is going on with your child is the Booklet "Dowse This... What is Going On With My Child?" This book is available in the PDF Booklets page at <http://mirrorwaters.com/Booklets> for immediate download and printing, or if you prefer a coilbound hardcopy you can find that available at <http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/dowsethis> .

Disclaimer: I am not an expert! I was not a perfect parent - I made a load of mistakes. I did yell when they were younger (before I learned better, coming from a house where yelling was the norm). My children are also not perfect! But we have always been good friends and for that I am thankful.