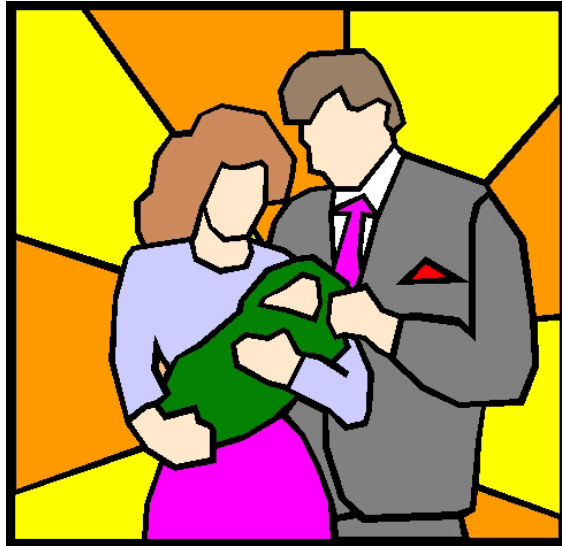


PARENT QUEST



A Guide for Parenting

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FOREWORD

Parent Quest is the culmination of thirty-three years' experience in parent education, utilizing Systematic Training for Effective Parenting course (S.T.E.P.) as a vehicle. In 1992 a non-profit parent center, Family Forum, was founded and incorporated to meet the growing demand. Family Forum, Inc. became a reality. It is located in Wayne, Pennsylvania, a western suburb of Philadelphia.

Its primary function is to promote family well being and personal growth. The Center sponsors a variety of educational programs including courses, discussion groups, and seminars. Utilizing a practical approach, parents learn to establish rights and responsibilities in order to experience more cooperation and harmony within the family.

In 2002 Family Forum, Inc. initiated the process to draft a new parent education manual. A year later the completed manuscript was introduced as Parent Quest, *A Practical Guide for Parenting*. It serves as a compass for parents in their search to gain a clearer understanding of their child's behavior and offers tools to put theory into practice. Forming relationships is a most important task in life and this book offers direction in the development of healthy, cooperative children and proactive parenting. Let the Quest begin.

PREFACE

The basis of the child-rearing principles that are presented in this manual lies in the teaching of Alfred Adler (1870 - 1937), an Austrian psychiatrist, who specialized in families and children. The ideas of the charismatic and prophetic pioneer are as applicable, effective and true today as they were in 1933.

Recognition must also be given to Rudolph Dreikurs, M.D., Dr. Adler's assistant and collaborator, who achieved an international reputation as a practitioner and as an exponent of Adler. Excerpts from three of his publications are cited in this text. They are:

Social Equality: The Challenge of Today, 1971

Discipline without Tears, 1974

Fundamentals of Adlerian Psychology, 1989

Some Basic Concepts of Adlerian Philosophy

1. Children are social beings.
2. Behavior is goal oriented
3. A child's primary goal is to BELONG and be SIGNIFICANT.
4. A misbehaving child is a DISCOURAGED child.
5. Social interest is essential
6. Children are entitled to equality in dignity and respect.
7. Children and adults view reality with mistaken beliefs - as they perceive it, not as it is.

- Human beings are social creatures with a strong need to “belong” and to have a place of value in human society.
- All behavior has a purpose. In order to understand a child’s purpose, we must first know his goal or how he has chosen to find his place of value.
- When a child misbehaves, it tells us that he has chosen an inappropriate way to be significant. There is no such thing as a ‘bad’ child, just a discouraged child
- As a parent we must come to understand our child’s goal. It is necessary to help him find a positive way to feel significant and to contribute to society (his family, his neighborhood, his school, the world in general).
- We often reinforce a child’s mistaken beliefs by forgetting to treat him with the same respect we would show another adult.

Humans need to feel connected to each other, we need to feel competent in our abilities, and we need to feel accepted for being who we are. These feelings contribute to our sense of social interest, our sense of belonging to a community. The urge to belong is very strong. If we become discouraged in our positive attempts to connect with our community, we will often act out in a negative way to gain an alternate (negative) form of connection or sense of significance.

When children are discouraged, they have lost their courage in their attempts to fit in or to feel a sense of significance. They will often express this loss through negative behaviors, which may include tantrums, whining, laziness, fighting with siblings, stealing, or depression. When a child acts out in these or other ways, it should indicate to you that the child has chosen to pursue a negative goal to achieve some sort of recognition or to overcome feelings of inferiority. Keep in mind, however, that the child, himself, may be unaware of his goal.

We, as parents, need to understand each child and the goals behind his behavior as he attempts to connect with society and find his place of significance. Then, we can more effectively help him navigate through his childhood years.

Family Forum Presents PARENT QUEST-----

You have found that family life can be both exhilarating and exhausting at the same time. In your quest to gain greater understanding, Family Forum offers a guide, Parent Quest, to help you find a balance.

What are some of your reasons for taking this parenting course?

What do you hope to learn?

To become a parent is to accept a great responsibility. Each child comes with his/her own unique package, which is filled with physical, emotional, intellectual, and social characteristics. This child may engage you, astound you, and overwhelm you. At times you may also experience frustration and even rage. To accept this package means that we are accepting perhaps the greatest challenge of our lives – to prepare this new human being for adulthood. As strange as this may seem as you look at your tiny newborn, this is, indeed, your job – to facilitate the process of this child becoming a fully functioning adult. That is our biological destiny. How we go about doing this, though, makes all the difference in the world.

This series is designed to help you explore one set of issues at a time. The most advantageous way to approach this course is:

1. to read one chapter at a time
2. to work through the problem situations and thought provoking questions in the chapter you just read
3. to participate in the discussions of the presented topics which are led by your facilitator. Issues and everyday parenting situations, much like those you are facing with your children, will be presented and explored
4. review the many beneficial appendices with easy-to-follow behavior charts, quick tips, and advice for handling common parenting challenges that are in the back of this manual

Course Overview-----

In this course you will discover ...

1. Why parenting is so much harder today than it was in our parents' and grandparents' time.
2. How to implement the democratic method of child rearing.
3. Why understanding human behavior will help you raise your children in a more positive and productive way.
4. What responsible parenting is and how to create a healthy and enjoyable relationship between you and your child.
5. What "spoiling" a child really means and how it undermines the child's ability to grow up to be a responsible adult.
6. Why a child misbehaves and what you can do to redirect his energies without fighting or giving in.
7. What discipline really means and the best way to influence positive behavior.
8. How to speak and listen to your child so that you are both heard and understood through positive communication. How to encourage your child to be free thinking, self-motivated, helpful, and respectful.
9. How to incorporate the new approaches and practical solutions into everyday situations.



Parent Quest

The Journey of a Lifetime!

We do not own our children. They are only loaned to us for a short number of years.

Your children are not your children

**They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.
You may give them your love, but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you can not visit,
not even in your dreams
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.**

From THE PROPHET by Kahlil Gibran