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Train the Trainer

June 11 - June 15, 2012

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This weeklong course teaches participants the complete Arbinger framework for enabling change and improving effectiveness in organizations and individuals.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"When the methods by which we try to change people represent more efforts to control them, these methods ultimately give children more reason to resist..."

Control will sometimes coerce



ARE YOU AN IMPERFECT PARENT?

And why it might be good if you are...

by Chris and Debbie Wallace

As parents, we often feel we are responsible for giving our children the guidance they need to become successful and happy people.

Yet, what if it was better if we did just the opposite? What if part of "good parenting" is the willingness to be the first to admit when we are wrong, the first to listen to and apply our children's advice, and the last to give advice?

Of course, this seems totally counterintuitive to parenting. After all, isn't our role to make certain our children turn out "right"? That they stay on the "right" path? To correct, teach and guide our children when they stray from that path?

If only parenting were as simple as applying steps out of a book. But our (and I am sure your) experiences tell us it is anything but simple.

Being "right," or being "in the right," or trying to make sure our children "turn out right" have not been formulas for successful parenting. Rather, they have invited the very resistance that makes parenting such a struggle (for control) at times.

Instead, we have found that being "right toward our children" fundamentally helps things go well. Here are some ideas grouped around different levels of the Parenting Pyramid that we have applied over the past 3 decades to help things go right with our children:

Diagram: The Parenting Pyramid

compliance from a child, but it will never win allegiance and commitment to the parents' professed values and never foster the child's growth in personal responsibility."

(Terry Warner)

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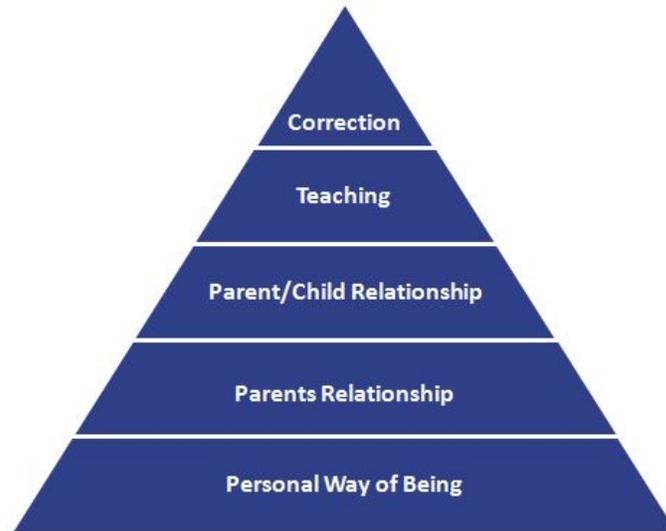
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1. Correcting is most successful when all other levels of the pyramid are honestly built.

No one (our children especially) wants to be corrected in front of others. We all know that disastrous feeling when we try to correct our children and it only makes matters worse, especially around their friends.

"I (Chris) had to learn to take Debbie's advice to correct our children privately... After hearing the child's side of things, I often struggled to be open to their sharing of blame, accusations and troubled emotions. It was only after I was able to identify times when I felt similarly that I began to see our children honestly. Debbie helped me consider ways in which I may have contributed to the situation through inattentiveness, neglect, harshness, criticism, etc. Correction was always incomplete until I began to be the first to own where I had been wrong. Surprisingly our children became more than happy to surrender their defensiveness".

2. Teaching is best accomplished when children contribute to the process.

Invite children into the decision-making process, from chore charts to curfews. Help children understand the "why" as well as the "how" as they accept responsibilities in the family. We have been helped by the thought that, "Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly" (G.K. Chesterton). This became key to our parenting. Children, like adults, must be allowed to grow into performing well. We all often fall short. As parents, allow for reasonable progress. Demonstrate a process, including work. Then, work with children, side by side as much as possible. This is a much better approach than just sending them off to complete a chore, and later becoming upset when the child did not meet (the?) expectations.

3. Building relationships requires the support of others.

We intentionally and carefully developed relationships with significant others in our children's lives who would have influence on them, including extended family, friends, neighbors, teachers, coaches, and religious leaders. Often our children hear important principles or values taught by others better than they do from us. For this reason, it became important to allow others to help in the parenting process. In some cases, when our children's friends may not have been the best influence, I (Chris) would ask, "Why are you hanging out with these guys?" The child responded defensively. Surprise! Slowly I learned to ask them to help me learn to like their friends. In this way, we began inviting our children into the process of building relationships with others who have

influence in their lives and recognizing when those influences might not be in their best interest.

4. Honoring children requires parents to recognize the child's humanity.

When we are not honoring our children (what Arbinger calls “the box”), we devalue our children and over-value ourselves. When we, as parents, willingly and honestly examine our own hearts, our own “way of being,” we begin to see ways we are contributing to problems, notwithstanding the poor choices our children might be making. When we begin to carefully and routinely identify ways in which we “dishonor” our children, our children begin to respect us for that honesty.

We invite you to listen to the recording of our conversation ([Arbinger's Global Community Call, April 18, 2012 - Click here to listen](#)), where we shared stories and tips for honoring children and helping things go right.

Chris and Debbie

WEB SEMINARS

Why don't leaders lead: Setting performance expectations in the box

with Jon Benfer, May 09 at 9am MT

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Leadership & Self Deception at Work

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- June 11-15, 2012, Farmington, Utah - [Learn More >>](#)

The Choice in Coaching Telecourse,

- Sept 4 - Dec 11, 2012 - [Learn More >>](#)

Anatomy of Peace Course by Phone,

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Questions about Arbinger Seminars call us at (801)-447-9244

