

// **Parent Ministry**
If I Had a Parenting Do Over
7 Vital Changes I'd Make
Authors: Jonathan McKee

REVIEW:

Coming out in early February is an honest and revealing book from well-known parenting author and speaker Jonathan McKee. *If I Had a Parenting Do Over* is an open and humble look into his personal parenting misses and missteps in order to help parents do a better job the first time around.

This is an outstanding read for parents with children of any age, but especially helpful for those parenting late elementary through the teenage years. It is sure to be something parents will enjoy reading and want to share with other parents as well.

SNAPSHOT

Tip the Scales

There are two parenting practices that seem always at odds with each other: *Bonding* and *Boundaries*. Parents continue to struggle to balance between *correction* and *connection*. Parents need to learn to find a “connection venue”, a setting where communication and face-to-face interaction can happen. Parents can tip the scales toward bonding by “just saying yes” to time with their children. No matter what else is going on, there is always time. The important thing, however, is not just the quantity of the time but rather the quality of the time. In the end, the scale will always end up tipping back toward boundaries, so consider a “Boundary Fast” every so often to tip the scales back toward relationships.

Let it Go

Don't sweat the small stuff. Parents need to learn that not everything needs to be a big deal, and it is okay sometimes to “let it go!” Four steps to actually “Letting It Go”: 1.) *Spot it*. Look for times to just let go of something small. 2.) *Press Pause*. Take a moment to step away before you react. 3.) *Step into Their Shoes*. Find out what is going on in with a child so there can be a correct response. 4.) *Pick Your Battles*. Parents need to choose whether or not something is worth fighting about at that moment, or just to let it go!

Notice

Parents ought to know and “notice” their children by paying attention to who they are, who they spend time with and what is important to them. Children will either choose to “*slip under the radar*” or seek parents to “*notice me!*” Three essential tools to help parents “Notice” their kids: 1.) *Duct Tape*. One of the best things a parent can get to notice their child is simply by being quiet and listening. 2.) *Well Placed Questions*. Questions are the tool that keeps kids talking and feeling noticed. 3.) *Social Media Presence*. Social media is where pre-teens and teens go to be noticed, so parents should take the time to engage online, while not coming off as spying.



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Press Pause

Parenting can be frustrating, and parents will be come angry at times. Parents must learn in those moments to “Press Pause”. Three key elements to “Pressing Pause”: 1.) *The Delay*. Parents should take the time to stop, think, and pray before reacting. 2.) *A Soft Voice*. Parents know that angry yelling gets quick results but a gentle answer is how real instruction is given. 3.) *God's Power*. Parenting done in human power alone is called “pride.” True Godly parenting can only be done through relying fully on God’s power.

Segue

As children grow and mature, so should their freedoms to make their own choices. It is called “incremental independence”. The question is not what rules parents should have in their home as much as when should parents have rules about things like music, television/movies, and apps/social media. Being strict when children are younger and learning makes sense, but as children get older, parents ought to be slowly preparing them for the real world. It is important for parents to learn to “segue” from age to age, having conversations and allowing growing independence in rule and freedoms.

Add A Question Mark

The best way parents can teach their child is by re-phrasing statements and “adding a question mark”. Parents teach not through statements but through questions. This method is used constantly in education settings. Parents can also ask their children questions, forcing them to process and think about an answer for themselves. Parents can replace “*You Should!*” with “*Should You?*,” creating a different approach to parenting situations. Some quick thoughts to consider when “Adding a Questions Mark”: 1.) *Remember to phrase your answer in a question*. 2.) *Offer to do things together*. 3.) *Delay*. 4.) *Remember incremental independence*.

Walk With

Parenting is a “walk with” experience and relationship, reflecting our own relationship with God, who chose to walk among us and “walk with” us. Parents, as well, can “walk with” their children by understanding 1.) *“Walking With” begins with Our Faith*. 2.) *“Walking With means Teaching Navigation Skills*. 3.) *It all Comes Down to Love*.

Children don’t need parent who will let them do whatever they want or just pass down a set of rules. Children need to parents who will walk with them, giving them the tools they need for the day they leave and are on their own.

The above is a very quick overview of the book. Please pick up the full book in February. You can find other great parenting books and resources from Jonathan McKee at your local book store, online at places like Amazon, or directly from his parenting website:

<http://thesource4parents.com> .

