

People Are Born To Shine!

A newsletter rooted in the Christian faith created to inspire and support all people, irrespective of nationality, race, and religion.



PARENTING

Powerful Ways to Connect With Your Children

You can create a more meaningful and deeper relationship with your kids.

Do you constantly feel the need to become a parent whose kids are happy, healthy, capable and well-mannered? Are these concerns making you worried at times? The mystery of connecting well with your kids is about to unlock.

It is pointless to think that your kids will live up to your expectations. Let them be who they are and allow them to make their small decisions.

One of the most important and fulfilling aspects of parenthood is to build a great relationship with your child. Establishing an early and deep relationship with your kids can have a lasting impression on the love that you share with each other. It is the influence of this strong bond that helps your kids to do well in society and eventually become a successful person.

The way parents today are involved in their day to day professional lives (and the obligations arising out of them), is aggravating a feeling of disconnect with their children. In addition to that, the taking over of the world altogether by emerging technology has furthered the effect of this disconnect. Therefore, to prevent this constant distraction and separation from your kids, you need to inculcate the virtues of effective parenting, which, by the way, are not as daunting as you might think.

The following seven tips will help you connect with your children in an amazing way.

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God's Brand

God rescues us because He loves us; then He equips us to share His love with others.

www.najicherfanfoundation.org

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Talk to them profusely and listen to them carefully.

Talking and listening to your kids is the most fundamental and germane way to connect with them. But there is a catch; it won't help you much if you talk and listen purposelessly. You need to engage them by telling about how your day was and asking about theirs as well. It is important for you to listen carefully and remember what they tell you so that you will be better able to interact with them on a daily basis. Asking interesting questions is a good idea because it will invoke a feeling of curiosity in them to know and find out what's happening around them. Try to create an engaging story whenever you want to tell them something new. It will help both of you to connect more easily next time you have a conversation.

Find ways to present them gifts.

It is a no brainer that children adore gifts. Gifts pave a path to make a connection with your kids. There are times when you are out of town—maybe too often—because of your professional commitments. While you're gone, your children eagerly wait for you with a hope that you might bring something for them. Giving a small token of your travels in the form of gift bags and boxes connects your kids with you like never before. You don't need to do it extravagantly. Doing this shows how much you thought of them while you were away, and how much they mean to you.

Encourage them.

Every child is unique and gifted in his or her own way. It is the parents who are the first to know and understand their children's talents and uniqueness. But it's equally their duty to sharpen their kids' skills. Children are not mature enough to choose their own path. They need their parents' support more than anything else. So, it is important for you to encourage your children as much as you can in order to make them understand their strengths. Your encouragement makes them feel they are capable of doing big things in life. They also need to know that you are on their side. Encouraging them without criticism, therefore, is an amazing way to connect with your kids.

Prioritize your time with them.

There are so many things you need to do in order to run your household smoothly. All these important tasks can sometimes make it difficult for you to spend quality time with your kids. You can't expect a healthy relationship with your children if you give all of your time to work, and

they spend most of their crucial time with their friends. In order to connect with them, you need to put extra effort into spending more time with your children. Try to get up 15 to 20 minutes earlier in the morning and take a walk with them; talk to them about health and fitness. In the evening, read an interesting bedtime story to them.

Connect with nature together.

Taking a break from your daily routine to go outside and connect with nature is a great way to feel refreshed. Your stress level goes down, making it a great time to connect with your children. Being outside also gives you endless options for activities with your kids. You can play games, throw a ball, go for a bike ride, go swimming, go hiking, camp in the countryside, or play with the your pets.

Let them be who they are.

It is pointless to think that your kids will live up to your expectations. Let them be who they are and allow them to make small decisions. To burden your kids with your expectations will only make them feel disconnected from you. Every child cannot excel in sports, shine in school, or for that matter behave perfectly all the time. Children have their own points of view that should be respected. If you put aside all of your preconceived notions and expectations, it will be easier to understand their thought process. This will finally allow you to establish a better connection with your kids, and it will also help to boost their confidence.

Invite them into your world.

Sometimes parents find no common ground between what their children want and what their own compulsions are. If you find yourself feeling this way, invite your children into your world and tell them about the things you enjoy. If you're willing to show them who you are, then perhaps they will open up and do the same. You can also take them to your favorite shows and sporting events. This will help you establish a stronger connection with your kids.

Create a more meaningful bond.

Parenting may put a lot of responsibilities on our shoulders, but we should not ignore the likes and dislikes of our children. They constantly need our support, encouragement and interaction to grow, develop and succeed. It all depends on how we connect with them and how we treat their emotions.

Source: beliefnet.com

A Major Cause of Stress

Stress is not caused primarily by people or situations, but by your own thoughts and actions.

We tend to think of stress as something that occurs because of outside events, such as financial, relationship or health problems, or from having too much to do. Certainly events such as these are challenging, but they are not the actual cause of stressful feelings.

STRESS IS AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Stress is your inner being's way of letting you know that you are thinking thoughts or taking actions that are out of alignment with what is in your best interest, or that you are trying to control something that you cannot control—such as how people feel about you or the outcome of things. Stress may also be letting you know that something in your body is out of whack. Maybe you are on medications or substances that are affecting your brain and causing the stress, or you have eaten foods such as sugar, processed, or pesticide-laden food that is causing brain toxicity, leading to feeling stressed.

When you are operating from your wounded self and trying to control something over which you have no control, your stress is letting you know that you are hitting your head against a wall and not accepting reality. The opposite of stress—inner peace—is the result of accepting what is, learning to take loving care of ourselves in the face of what is, and practicing gratitude for the big and small blessings on this incredible journey of life—even in the face of challenges.

And as many of us have experienced, gratitude offers us a stress-free way to manifest what we want, and works far better than trying to control others and outcomes, beyond stress.

Wallace Wattles, the author of the 110-year old book, “The Science of Getting Rich,” states that “Man [and woman] may come into full harmony with the Formless



Substance [this is what he calls God] by entertaining a lively and sincere gratitude for the blessings it bestows upon him [and her]. Gratitude unifies the mind of man [and woman] with the intelligence of Substance, so that man's [and woman's] thoughts are received by the Formless Intelligence through a deep and continuous feeling of gratitude.” He says that when you frequently contemplate the mental image of what you want, “coupled with unwavering faith and devout gratitude,” you set in motion the creative forces of manifestation.

Your stress is letting you know that you are doing the opposite of this—you are using your thoughts to create what you don't want and to try to control others and outcomes rather than to co-create with God.

The major challenge here is about being in faith that all of this is true. You might know that this is true from the perspective of your loving self, but your wounded self likely doesn't believe it. It is very easy for the wounded self to come in with thoughts of bad things happening, which moves you out of faith and gratitude and into stress. It is very easy for the wounded self to focus on how to try to have control over others and outcomes, which will always create stress.

It is very easy for the wounded self to turn to junk food and other substances that bring the body out of balance and cause stress. It is even easy for the wounded self to try to use inner work and gratitude as a way of controlling God! It is so important, when opening yourself to learning and moving into gratitude, to make sure that your intent is to be loving to yourself and others, WITH NO OTHER AGENDA, rather than using inner work as just another way to attempt to control others and outcomes.

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Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths



About 90 people die each day in the U.S. from crashes— resulting in the highest death rate among comparison countries.*

U.S. crash deaths fell 31% compared to an average 56% in 19 other high-income countries* from 2000-2013.

Over 18,000 lives could be saved each year if U.S. crash deaths equaled the average rate of 19 other high-income countries*.

*Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Reducing motor vehicle crash deaths was one of the great public health achievements of the 20th century for the U.S. Still, more than 32,000 people are killed and two million are injured each year from motor vehicle crashes. In 2013, the U.S. crash death rate was more than twice the average of other high-income countries. Front seatbelt use was lower than in most other comparison countries. One in three crash deaths in the U.S. involved drunk driving or speeding. Lower death rates in other high-income countries and a high percentage of risk factors in the U.S. suggest that we can make more progress in reducing crash deaths.

SEATBELTS SAVED OVER 12,500 LIVES IN THE U.S. IN 2013, YET:

- the U.S. had lower-than-average front and back seatbelt use compared with other high-income countries.
- about half of drivers or passengers who died in crashes in the U.S. weren't buckled up.

DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS CAN:

- use a seatbelt in every seat, on every trip.
- make sure children are always properly buckled in the back seat in a car seat, booster seat, or seatbelt, whichever is appropriate for their age, height, and weight.
- choose not to drive while impaired by alcohol or drugs, and help others do the same.
- obey speed limits.
- drive without distractions (such as using a cell phone or texting).

Reducing major risk factors could save thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of dollars in medical costs each year.

PROVEN MEASURES

Even when considering population size, miles traveled, and number of registered vehicles, the U.S. consistently ranked poorly relative to other high-income countries for crash deaths. Some of the best performing countries:

Have policies that address:

- o primary enforcement of seatbelt laws that cover everyone in every seat. ***Police can stop a vehicle and write a ticket for anyone not buckled up.***
- o requirements for car seats and booster seats for child passengers through at least age eight.
- o blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels. ***U.S., Canada and the U.K. define drunk driving as BAC levels at 0.08% or above; all other comparison countries use lower BAC levels (0.02-0.05%).***

Use advanced engineering and technology, such as:

- o ignition interlocks for all people convicted of drunk driving. ***This device keeps the vehicle from starting unless the driver has a BAC below a pre-set limit.***
- o automated enforcement, for example, speed and red light cameras.
- o improvements in vehicle safety and transportation infrastructure.

Implement proven measures, such as:

- o more use of publicized sobriety checkpoints.
- o maintaining and enforcing the minimum legal drinking age.

Source: cdc.gov

Natural Insecticides are Proven Yet Again to be More Effective than Toxic Synthetics



WHY USE COMMERCIAL PESTICIDES THAT ARE HARMFUL TO HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT WHEN SAFE, MORE EFFECTIVE NATURAL ONES ARE AVAILABLE?

A study published in *Industrial Crops and Products* discovered that plants native in Chile, such as canelo (*Drimys winteri*), tabaco del diablo (*Lobelia tupa*), huevil (*Vestia foetida*), and violeta (*Viola portalesia*), can be used as natural insecticides.

In the study, a team of researchers tested the effectiveness of the plants as natural insecticides. The research team used the extracts and compounds of the plants to test their insecticidal activities against granary weevil (*Sitophilus granarius*), which is one of the most common and damaging pests of stored cereals.

Results revealed that the total extracts of the plants exhibited insecticidal activity against the granary weevil insects. Extracts of canelo caused the death of 87.5 percent of insects; while tabaco del diablo, huevil, and violeta extracts caused the death of 80, 56, and 45 percent of the insects, respectively.

The research team also discovered that the active compounds in canelo were polygodial, drimenol, and drimenin, while tabaco del diablo has lobelanidine as its active compound. They then used these compounds to treat grains. Results showed that these purified compounds exhibited insecticidal activity against granary weevil in a dose dependent-time manner, with polygodial exhibiting the greatest protection.

Based on the findings of the study, the research team concluded that

these Chilean plants can potentially be used as natural pesticides for insect pest control.

THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF COMMERCIAL PESTICIDES

Commercial pesticides contain toxic substances that are meant to kill weeds, insects, fungus, rodents, and others. However, these are also toxic to every living organisms, including humans. Exposure to these pesticides has been associated with many health hazards, ranging from short-term toxicity such as headaches and nausea to chronic toxicity including cancer, reproductive damage, and endocrine disruption. They can also cause nerve, skin, and eye irritation and impairment, dizziness, fatigue, and systemic poisoning – which can be severe and deadly.

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Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, you allowed the thirsting love of Jesus on the Cross to become a living flame within you, and so became the light of His love to all. Obtain from the Heart of Jesus (here make your request). Teach me to allow Jesus to penetrate and possess my whole being so completely that my life, too, may radiate His light and love to others. Amen. Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cause of Our Joy, pray for me. Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, pray for me.

—Missionaries of Charity

Prayer Corner

STRESS continued from page 3**STRESS IS YOUR FRIEND**

Stress is your friend in that it is instantly letting you know that you are off track in your thinking and/or behavior. Instead of ignoring your stress or pacifying it with various addictions, which will ultimately cause more stress, why not do inner work and attend to it with a deep desire to learn about how you are off track?

When you really think about it, it is strange that our society tries so hard to get rid of stress with medications and addictions, instead of learning what it is trying to tell us. When you really get that stress is your body's way of telling you that you are "off the mark," (in the original Aramaic Bible, sin is translated as off the mark) in your thinking and/or behavior, you will attend to what you are doing to create it, rather than ignore it or try to get rid of it.

Source: ezinearticles.com

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Pesticides can likewise damage agricultural land as they harm beneficial insect species, soil microorganisms, and worms that naturally limit pest populations and keep the soil healthy. As pesticides go into the soil, they also weaken plant root systems and immune systems and decrease the amounts of essential plant nutrients in the soil, including nitrogen and phosphorous.

One way to reduce exposure to pesticides is to eat organic produce. Earlier this year, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) released the latest list of the dirtiest and cleanest fruits and vegetables available in the U.S. market. The "Dirty Dozen," or the food items with the most pesticide residues, for 2018 include the following (in order):

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Nectarines
4. Apples
5. Grapes
6. Peaches
7. Cherries
8. Pears
9. Tomatoes
10. Celery
11. Potatoes
12. Sweet bell peppers

More than 98 percent of the top four produce listed tested positive for at least one pesticide residue. Moreover, spinach samples had almost twice the amount of pesticide residue by weight compared to other crops. In total, the EWG found that nearly 70 percent of inorganic produce contained some level of pesticide residue.

The EWG also has a list called the "Clean Fifteen," which are fruits and vegetables that are more likely to have the least pesticide residues. The Clean Fifteen for 2018 are:

1. Avocados
2. Sweet corn
3. Pineapples
4. Cabbage
5. Onions
6. Sweet frozen peas
7. Papayas
8. Asparagus
9. Mangos
10. Eggplant
11. Honeydew melon
12. Kiwi
13. Cantaloupe
14. Cauliflower
15. Broccoli

Source: naturalnews.com

God's Brand

I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you.

—Zechariah 3:4



Scooping up the smallest children, a frantic maid raced out of the flaming house. As she ran, she called loudly to five-year-old Jacky. But Jacky didn't follow. Outside, a bystander reacted quickly, standing on the shoulders of a friend. Reaching into the upstairs window, he pulled Jacky to safety—just before the roof caved in. Little Jacky, said his mother Susanna, was “a brand [stick] plucked from the burning.” You might know that “brand” as the great traveling minister John Wesley (1703–1791).

Susanna Wesley was quoting Zechariah, a prophet who provides valuable insight into God's character. Relating a vision he had, the prophet takes us into a courtroom scene where Satan is standing next to Joshua the high priest (3:1). Satan accuses Joshua, but the Lord rebukes the devil and says, “Is this not a brand [burning stick] plucked from the fire?” (v. 2 nkjv). The Lord tells Joshua, “I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you” (v. 4).

Then the Lord gave Joshua this challenge—and an opportunity: “If you will walk in obedience to me and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house” (v. 7).

What a picture of the gift we receive from God through our faith in Jesus! He snatches us from the fire, cleans us up, and works in us as we follow His Spirit's leading. You might call us God's brands plucked from the fire.

Father, we give You our thanks for rescuing us and making

us right with You. We humbly ask for Your Spirit's guidance as we serve You today.

God rescues us because He loves us; then He equips us to share His love with others.

INSIGHT

At the end of their Babylonian exile (Jeremiah 29:10), the Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple (2 Chronicles 36:22–23). Only 50,000 returned (Ezra 2:64–65), led by Zerubbabel their governor and Joshua their high priest (Haggai 1:1). Because of opposition (Ezra 4:1–5) and economic hardships, coupled with low morale and spiritual lethargy (Haggai 1:2–11), the temple rebuilding stalled for twenty years (Ezra 4:24). God raised two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to encourage the returnees to repent and complete the temple rebuilding (6:14–16). Zechariah was both a prophet (Ezra 5:1; Zechariah 1:1) and a priest (Nehemiah 12:16). Through eight visions, Zechariah reminded the Jews that God is faithful and would restore and bless the nation (Zechariah 1:7–6:15). This fourth vision (3:1–10) pictures a court scene involving Joshua, the high priest, signifying God would remove their guilt, cleanse them, and make them ready to serve Him (vv. 1–5).

—K. T. Sim

Source: odb.org

Will You Further NCF's Work?

The Naji Cherfan Foundation was founded after the passing of the beloved Naji Cherfan. Our main goal is to praise the Lord through community work. The foundation works to improve the quality of life of the poorest of the poor of all ages, both those who are healthy and those with health problems, and those with brain injury of any kind, resulting from accident, stroke, etc, while promoting Christian values.

If you like the work NCF is doing and wish to participate, we invite you to become a member of our Board. The goal is to share our inspiration and activities in your country. Please contact us for more information at +961 (0)4 522221.

info@najicherfanfoundation.org

Quotable!

“Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay”

—Ruth 1:16

How I Remember Naji...

Excerpt from *Book of Virtual Patience*

Naji was convinced that a return to his previous life was possible. He fantasized about being well and prayed for another miracle, believing one day he would wake up perfect. Some days he imagined having brain surgery where the doctors could go in and repair everything that was damaged. He would be able to use his left arm and his legs would run instead of walking slowly from side to side in a swinging motion. He could taste the sea and feel the air on his face.

Moving at high speed, suddenly he would wake up and realize that he was travelling only in his dreams. His reality was a mind that remembered perfection and a body that could not obey. Now the desire for what he considered normal had to be based on his present condition, not his past abilities.

Naji considered his life in ten years and formulated an idea of perfection. For him, perfection required cooperation, motivation and positive influence. As these thoughts passed through his mind, he slowly began to develop a new philosophy about life. He recognized that life is a constant cycle of give and take, and it is the participation in life that makes it worthwhile. He questioned the purpose of living and man's role from birth to death.

Keeping his good humor, he became more thoughtful about certain issues. As a result of intensive therapy, Naji Cherfan challenged his mind and body in a way he would have never considered before the injury.

Naji returned to Greece on June 14th, 1997. He had not been in his own room or house for almost ten months and was in a state of anticipation/anxiety. Before the accident, he was speeding through the streets in cars and on motorbikes. Now, someone drove him everywhere he needed to go and he required help for almost all his movements.

Still, Naji had achieved an enormous amount of progress. Doctors and friends were amazed and happy at the sight of him walking, talking and making jokes. Everyone encouraged him in his struggle to return to a functional life and they tried to be understanding of the difficulties he faced.

Before the accident, Naji was self-absorbed and demanding. Now he became moody and temperamental. This was evident when he was very tired and had not slept enough. Rest was an important factor in Naji's recovery because his brain and body simply could not function at their previous levels. His temper was short and his behavior was similar to a young boy's. Emotionally immature before the injury, now his behavior was even less consistent and controlled. He shouted at people over small incidents and demanded immediate attention from those around him. Throughout this period of adjustment, Naji's friends were respectful and considerate of his moods and limitations. His male friends took him out and treated him like everyone else. His mood swings did not affect his ability to be honest or speak his opinion.

Diplomatic when he wanted something, his talent for communication remained. He was charming and convincing when he had something to gain. This was the Naji that returned from Germany, walking slowly but with determination. No one close to Naji had ever experienced what he was going through. They were proud of what he had accomplished and told him he should be proud of himself. Still, frustration and anger were emotions he experienced daily and he often wondered if he was blessed or cursed to be alive in this condition.



People Are Born To Shine!

People are Born To Shine is a bi-monthly, electronic newsletter owned by The Naji Cherfan Foundation focusing on spirituality and health. The objective of People are Born to Shine is to raise awareness among our readers on health challenges and disease prevention, while inspiring them to live a fuller, more abundant life guided by Christian values. This newsletter is dedicated to people of all ages, those who are healthy and those with health problems and those with brain injury of any kind, resulting from accident, stroke, etc.

The content has been carefully selected from internet sources considered reliable and accurate to bring you good news of health and spiritual well being, however The Naji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information. The NCF would like to recognize the devoted work of its volunteers, mainly Marianne Debs, Me. Kamal Rahal, Me. Harold Alvarez, Zeina Costantine, Joyce Abou Jaoude, Rita Kassis, Marleine Nassrany, Diala Ghostine Nassrany, Dima Rbeiz, Father Joseph Abdel Sater, Father Joseph Soueid, Reine Kassis, Nabil Khoury, Roland Khoury, Father Elia Chalhoub, Valéria de Proença, Athena and Christina Georgotas, Violette Nakhle, and all the field volunteers who are supporting NCF in spreading the words of Jesus through their institutions, churches, hospitals, establishments, etc.

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