



## **Hibiscus Coast Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren Inc.**

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### Raising Happy, Confident & Resilient Kids

Here are some notes from John Cowan's presentation. You can download a copy of his slides he used on the night from the following address: [theparentingplace.com/happy3](http://theparentingplace.com/happy3)

His opening statement was: **"Don't waste time – make the most of it"**

His suggested goals were

1. relax & enjoy your children – let your children know you are content with them and not looking for faults e.g. Your eyes show delight when they walk into the room; relax about their room tidiness etc.
2. find out what works for you and your kids – trust yourself, is this going to fit with me and my kids?
3. don't sweat the small stuff – are they going to die if wet towels are on the bed or they are looking at drinking and driving? Put your energy into the big things that are going to be harmful to them. Still work on the wet towels though as self-discipline leads into discipline outside of home
4. get a life of your own – model that to them, you're a coach on how to live life. Let them see you going out with friends etc., looking after yourself.

Discipline encourages - thinking – figuring right from wrong – making a good decision – self-control. It focuses on the future, they have come up with a better decision

The single biggest factor in your child being happy, confident and resilient is that:

**"they feel secure in your love"**

There is nothing more toxic than children competing for love with their siblings from you

**"being listened to is so much like being loved"**

Reflective listening – repeating back what they have said. Once they have talked about how they are feeling they can then think through the problem. Making understanding comments, and accepting their feelings means that you accept them.

Love languages can help you understand how your child best feels loved. They are quality time; words of affirmation; gifts; acts of service; physical touch. (There is a copy of the Love Languages book in our group library if you would like to read it)

**“indulged children are as miserable as neglected children”**

Chores teach life skills, esteem and connectedness

**“if you are doing anything for your children that they can do themselves, you are robbing them”**

**“do what you want to do when you’ve done what you have to do”**

e.g. you can go outside to play once you’ve put away your washing

**“praise what you can praise, encourage what needs to change”**

e.g. great job cleaning the sink, next time take a bit more care in the corners, you could use an old toothbrush

Notice what they have done and praise them for it.

Teaching a task

- |                   |                                                                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. You watch me   | you understand what to do (“I’ll show you how I’d like it done) |
| 2. You help me    | they get confidence                                             |
| 3. I’ll help you  | they gain skills                                                |
| 4. I’ll watch you | they are affirmed – compliment them                             |

Children follow rules better when they have come up with them themselves. Have a family meeting if something needs to change, let the children have input as to what the consequences could be.

Notice when someone is doing something right and praise them for it.

**“if you acknowledge what a child does in front of someone else you maximise the effect by about 4x’s”**

Praise when they’ve done something right/positive

Encouragement when something needs changing.

Give them a vision of what you want them to accomplish; praise them for what they’ve started; break down tasks into smaller bits if the task is large i.e. Cleaning their room

Birth order can have an impact on a child’s view of the world.

Eldest – be a bit easier on them

Middle – have some one on one time with them

Youngest – raise your level of vigilance, keep an eye on them

Personality types - there are 4 main types

1. the otter – the entertainer “trust me, I’ll work it out, let’s do it the fun way”  
ask to see their homework, get them to slow down a little
2. the lion – the leader “let’s do it my way, let’s do it now”  
may need to learn empathy, can burn off relationships/friendships
3. the beaver – the facilitator “let’s do it the right way, how it was done in the past”  
may need a nudge in getting involved social activities
4. the labrador – peace maker “let’s keep the peace, let’s keep things the way they are”  
learn self-assertiveness, the ability to say “no”, family meetings are a good way for them to learn how to hold their ground

Showing your love

**“reset your attitude to your child”**

If you are struggling to ‘like’ your child because of their behaviour you could

- make a list of things you really like about them
- stop and look at your child
- make mornings happy and positive
- give them the gift of both eyes and ears

Unconditional love

**“I love you regardless of what you do”**

For your child to know that there is nothing that they can do so that you will love them more or less. Their behaviour may be unacceptable, you may be displeased with their actions but “I still love you.” “I am cross not because you are a dumb kid, you did a dumb thing and I know you are clever.” There is still a consequence but love is still there.

Do not look to your children to satisfy your need for love. Your job is to love them but not their job to love you back.

Keep up physical contact even when they are older and seem reluctant to receive it. It could be a tussle of their hair; play fighting etc.

When there has been a disagreement retreat from each other to cool down but come back together again. Be the bigger person, make the first move. Forgive them; get over it – be a forgiver.

Try to have 20 minutes 3 times a week with each child doing whatever they choose. You are there to watch and comment on what they are doing rather than playing. This can help them to get rid of the idea that they are a nuisance, they see that you are wanting to watch what they like to do.

Routines/traditions are great for building family relationships i.e. every Friday night is movie night, on your birthday you choose what's for dinner etc. It helps to build security. Don't let behaviour derail your traditions, they happen no matter what.