

Parenting with Consciousness, Love & Compassion by Angela Smith

When we feel love and compassion for ourselves, by the very nature of modelling, children learn this for themselves. Children copy us. I repeatedly hear the things I say coming out of the mouth of my son. I'm sure that you experience this also with your children, what a true gift this is.

At a deeper level (and this can go both ways), what we repress, our children express. In other words, they magnify our behaviour tenfold until they gain our attention, our attention to the behaviour that we ourselves need to heal in our own lives. As Carl Jung so aptly puts it: If there is anything we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves?

When we observe children in our lives, we will find many truths being lived out. Most importantly though, children show us how connected we are able to be with spirit. Given the chance, children remain open and connected, often appearing to have wisdom way beyond their years. They know and remember spiritual truths that we are only just re-learning and remembering ourselves. They intrinsically know that the only moment is now. They are in touch with their emotions.

Children can sense when something is up and they won't be fobbed off; they're like little space cadets with antennas! They know when we're having a bad day, when we're rushed and when we're trying to leave the house. This confirms that they are in tune and that they operate with extra sensory perception. The advantage to this awareness is that, equally, children will respond to a calm and self-assured parent. Our frequently expressed forgiveness and compassionate behaviour towards our children will ensure that this way of being will be mirrored back to us. Children only understand love; this is their natural way of being.

Children will forgive an unkind word said or be the first to come up to you and give you a hug when you've totally lost your cool. This is especially so when we're prepared to say sorry to our children or give them a hug, no matter the extent of their behaviour to us.

As parents we can at times feel totally out of our depth as one issue after another arises to be healed. This is what happens when we

choose to be guided by consciousness. This is where trust comes into play, trusting that even though our child's behaviour is pushing every conceivable button, all will settle down and we'll once again feel the love that we thought had disappeared, returning.

When we love ourselves, this love will be evident everywhere; we will feel it in our hearts. The trouble begins when we stop seeing our experiences and those interactions between our children as love, instead, placing conditions on our children's behaviour. When we place conditions in our lives (i.e. this or that has to happen in order for me to feel good), we are immediately taken from a centred place of acceptance where solutions can be found to one of distress and blame. At such times, we're likely to feel unsettled, annoyed, betrayed and upset, and we're far more prone to take out our frustrations and anger on our children.

In such moments, what works best is to stop and accept how we're feeling right now. We can only change what we accept. Resistance to acceptance of what is in this present moment eliminates any possible opportunity of transformation within our relationship with our children or, with anybody in our lives for that matter. However, with acceptance we open ourselves to a place where true transformation can take place. We're also far less likely to get into a tug of war over who's right or who's wrong in our interactions with our children. When we take this step towards harmony and peace, we're able to feel the bliss of unconditional love that we seek.

All parenting experiences can be viewed as windows of opportunity, opportunities to experience greater compassion for ourselves and our children. In those instances where it all feels a bit too much and things have got out of hand, offer yourself and your child the consciousness, love and compassion that the situation necessitates.

There is always a way. Trust yourself and your children to find solutions. Involve your kids in your life a little more. Let them change places with you for an hour or two, i.e. they become the parent. They love solving problems and being included. You'll be surprised how understanding your kids will become and the solutions they will come up with. Explain the situation to your child and ask how they'd deal with it. You'll be gob-smacked at how ingenious they can be!

Likewise, choose a calm moment when you can see that something is up with your child or when things aren't so good between you. Ask, what's up? When we respectfully give children the opportunity to

reflect on their behaviour or a situation involving them, then the situation is far more likely to be resolved.

On the other hand, when our love is tied in with expectations, expectations that it must be a certain way children will start to withdraw. They feel the subtle or not so subtle pressures of expectation tied into performance, obedience and conformity. And when we stop modeling the love and compassion for ourselves, then disharmony begins. This is life with all its complexities being thrown in our faces to be healed.

The best way to be with our children is to be respectful to them in a fun and loving way. They love it! They simply want to be, unencumbered and joyful a bit like us really. We are the rock in our children's lives. They feel it when we're coming from a centred and open-hearted space, and they feel it when something is out of sync.

Have you noticed too that when we treat our children with respect, they become respectful; that when we trust our children, they become trustworthy; and when we look for the good in all situations, we teach our children to do the same? Set the standards that you'd like to see reflected back to you. What you do and say as a parent matters.

Take a moment to stop and acknowledge the wisdom that's contained in each situation between you and your children. Take a moment to acknowledge that children are our fellow human beings, not automations. Children are our future, but most importantly, they are our 'present'.

May the blessings in your parenting experience abound.

Angela Smith works as a writer and life coach. She loves being a mother and truly values children for the gift that they are. Her first book, *I Love Myself*, is a beautiful book that encourages greater self-esteem and love for and amongst our children. For more information or to contact Angela

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