

Qualify Family Life (II):

Successful Families have a sense of Destination

Good Morning Teachers and Students,

My dear students, do you still remember my sharing last Day 6? I shared with you my views on the importance of quality family life. But I understand that it is easier said than done. So, today, as the 2nd part of my sharing on family, I would like to tell you how to put quality family life into practice. It is not based on my own experiences, but suggested by a famous American scholar ---- Steven Covey, the author of the all-time famous book: *“The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”*

In another famous book of Mr Covey: *“The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families”*, Covey gives us some great tips on quality family life and tells parents how to raise children.

He says, “Good families, even great families are off track 90 percent of the time! The key is that they have a sense of destination. They know what the “track” looks like and they keep coming back to it time and time again. It’s like the flight of an airplane. Before the plane takes off, the pilots have a flight plan. They know exactly where they are going and start off in accordance with their plan. But during the course of the flight, wind, rain, turbulence, air traffic, human error, and other factors act upon that plane. They move it slightly in different directions and most of the time that plane is not even on the prescribed flight path! Throughout the entire trip there are slight deviations from the flight plan. Weather systems or unusually heavy air traffic may even cause major deviations. But barring anything too major, the plane will arrive at its destination.” Mr Covey shows us that *“heading for a wrong direction is common and human, but what is important is that, we must always check our direction and know how to correct ourselves.”*

My dear students, do you feel that your parents do have some plans for you? And you’re always required to fulfil certain targets or destination set by your parents? Sometimes being parents, we feel we are off our flight plan and wonder if we will arrive at our “destination”, that helps our children reach their full potential and grow into responsible and effective adults. But our children are usually not following our guidance or expectations. How should parents react? What would your parents react?

Mr. Covey points out that what parents should develop is RESPECT.

In his book, Mr. Covey tells the story of his friend who described his son as “rebellious (a person without self-control)” and “an ingrate (a thankless person).” He could not communicate with his son and they fought continually. Mr. Covey helped this man to discover the practice of respect and listening to his son. As Mr. Covey says, “As my friend discovered, there are certain fundamental principles that govern in all human interactions, and living in harmony with those principles is absolutely essential for quality family life. In this situation, the principle my friend had been violating/did not follow was the basic principle of RESPECT.” The man worked hard to first understand his son, then to convince him he truly did care and want to listen. It takes a lot of work to learn to listen to another person and to try to see things from their point of view. This father could finally see that he was trying to practice the characteristic of respect on the surface but had to learn to be sincere and consistent.

Students, until now, you may agree with Covey and wish to give him a big hand, thinking that ---- Yes, parents (or all adults, of course, including teachers) should respect their kids!

My dear students please remember: *all human relationship is two-way traffic.*

Mr. Covey says we must first seek to understand...then to be understood. That practice will open the floodgates to heart-to-heart family living. He goes on to say, “Exercising the principle of respect and being able to genuinely and empathically listen to another human being are among the habits of highly effective people in any walk of life.” As we practice worthwhile characteristics like respect in our homes and families we will become a better worker or leaders in other areas of our life and in our career. No matter you are a son or daughter, a father or mother, a leader or a follower, if you learn to really listen, to really show RESPECT, you will make a difference in the lives of the people in your family or in anywhere you work or serve.

There are many other insightful and valuable ideas in this book for you to practice quality family life in the book. I recommend it to you all, this is a book that will change you and it is worthwhile to use your time to read it from cover to cover.

Thank you for your attention.

Reference:

Ilene Mecham/Utah PTA V.P. for Leadership

(http://www.utahpta.org/Perspectives/Nov_Dec_Perspectives_webview.pdf)

