



REACHING OUT TO AFRICA FOR OUR CHILDREN

our response to child trauma

DISCIPLINE 101 – FROM THE SILENT GENERATION TO THE MILLENNIALS. WHAT SHOULD PARENTAL AUTHORITY MEAN TO TODAY’S CHILD?

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Throughout my years of training and practicing as a mediator, I have realised that there is common ground in addressing adults on dispute resolution skills and addressing parents on methods of constructive discipline skills. Today the focus of my presentation is going to be on respectfully and consciously disciplining a child using basic dispute resolution skills that moves away from the age-old adage “spare the rod, spoil the child”. The aim of my presentation is to highlight the need for a parenting style that positively impacts the emotional state of the child at a time when both parent and child are experiencing high states of angst and despair, via using the communication skills of a trained mediator. The purpose is to produce a generation of parents who respect the voice of the child, and not silence it²⁹, with the prospect of enhancing ongoing constructive relationships between parent and child.

As someone who trains professional adults in higher education institutes in the alternate dispute resolution skills of mediation and negotiation, I am often asked why do I focus on preferring divorce and family mediation and negotiation between parents at the outset over the litigious battle in resolving parenting disputes. My answer: one of the core features of mediation in parenting disputes is to preserve the ongoing relationship that these parents will have as they watch their children mature and develop over the years. Mediation moves disputing parents away from the high emotions that causes upheaval and tension between them when making decisions to a place of mutual respect and consideration. I have never negated the use of litigation or advocated that mediation is an alternate

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²⁹ Section 10 of the South Africa Children’s Act 38 of 2005 gives children the right to be heard. In Du Toit, C. (2013). Legal Representation of Children. In Child Law in South Africa. Juta p 93 ,Du Toit submits that the child's right to participate is a central theme in The Children's Act 38 Of 2005.

to litigation, instead I believe that mediation should be an ancillary legal process to the conventional choice of litigation to minimise time and costs spent in attempts to reaching solutions.³⁰

Mediation is key in enhancing the communication skills of the parents to actively listen, ask open ended questions and engage in problem-solving³¹ so that in the event that unforeseeable difficulties arise along their path of raising their children, they are able to communicate directly with each other in an effective, reasonable and realistic way forward that does not perpetuate a destructive relationship.³² Attending mediation sessions with a competent mediator will influence parents to respond with perspective and understanding before reacting to any dispute that arises between them. By listening to each other's needs, fears and concerns, parents co-operate and reach mutual agreement that is beneficial to their particular family. This leads to an eventual change in the dynamic in how they handle any frustrations that once may have driven them to lash out at each other and break down their relationship, to being one of collaboration and respect.

While conducting mediation and negotiation training programmes, I realised that a parallel method of teaching parents the communication skills of a mediator should be endorsed to assist parents in addressing misbehaviour with constructive discipline and not destructive punishment. The mediator is trained to facilitate discussions by *inter alia* asking open-ended questions, paraphrasing, rephrasing and summarising what has been said, to guide the parents towards agreement.³³ For parents, training on these communication skills will involve taking into account the child's right to be heard³⁴ with the parent having to take time out to fully understand and pay attention to what the child is saying, why the child has engaged in wrong doing, and the parent thereafter responding to the child in a manner that is age appropriate.

In his book "*How to Father*", Dr Fitzhugh Dodson's view was "Punishment is a very ineffective method of discipline... for punishment, strangely enough often has the effect of teaching the child to behave exactly the opposite way from the way we want him to behave! Many parents use punishment simply because no one has ever taught them better ways of disciplining their children".³⁵ Punishment as a deterrent however takes away a child's thought process to shift his or her focus of how to deal with the violation he has experienced instead of processing his or her own misbehavior.³⁶ By teaching children how to develop a thought process where they are able to express their current state of

³⁰ Srikison. V. (2020). Mandatory Child-Inclusive Mediation – A Possibility in South Africa?. LLM Mini-Dissertation, University of Pretoria. I began my research in 2016 on why mediation is the appropriate forum to support child involvement in all matters related to them. So to I believe that when disciplining a child the consequences of what ensues between parent and child when addressing untoward behaviour must be beneficial to the child's development and I believe this is only possible by engaging with the child on the effects of their wrong doing to minimise such wrong doing from recurring.

³¹ O'Leary J. (2014). Mediation in Family & Divorce Disputes. Siber Ink. p 26-27.

³² De Jong M. (2017). Child-informed Mediation and Parenting Co-ordination. In Child Law in South Africa. Juta. p 134-135.

³³ O'Leary. (2014) p 28

³⁴ Sec 10 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 of South Africa

³⁵ Faber, A & Mazlish E. (2001). How to Talk so Kids Will Listen & How to Listen so Kids Will Listen. Piccadilly Press Ltd. p 116

³⁶ Faber et al (2001) 93; Siegel et al. (2015) p 24.

emotion and challenges, parents will be able to engage with their children in a mature and reasonable manner creating a family standard of dispute resolution.³⁷ In the long run, this type of engagement between parent and child will protect the mental health of children and break any generational cycle of emotional abuse caused by physically and/or verbally abusive punishment disguised as discipline, from perpetuating.³⁸

A parent's first lesson to disciplining consciously must understand the difference between punishing a child and disciplining a child. In their book "*No-Drama Discipline*", Siegal and Bryson submit that many parents throughout time have believed that "punishment is what discipline is meant to be", however the writers submit that the discipline has its roots from the word disciple meaning student or learner.³⁹ The writers add that, "a disciple is not similar to a prisoner or any recipient of punishment but rather one who is learning through instruction".⁴⁰ For discipline to be effective between parent and child, as with a teacher and student, mutual respect and trust must be present.⁴¹ This requires a mind shift within parents nowadays to move away from the archaic view held by generations before that a child must obey the command of their parent at the cost of the child's integrity.

In this paper I will briefly demonstrate the parallel between mediator skills training in getting parents to co-operate in the midst of a dispute and parenting skills training related to disciplining their child in the midst of misbehaviour. Together we will go on a quick journey of understanding that split moment in time in a parent's mind, when a child misbehaves and the parent needs to decide whether to react with punishment or respond with discipline.

As in dispute resolution training, every trainee begins by introspectively understanding themselves, their prejudices, biases and perspectives. This is done by engaging in self-reflection activities. This involves a deeper understanding on they handle conflict and disputes within their own lives and how much effort they make in actually paying attention and listening to others while understanding another's perspective. The training includes understanding the difference between conflict and disputes. This is something I want you all to keep in mind as I take you through understanding the difference between a conflict and a dispute and its relevance to the difference between punishing a child and disciplining a child.

Conflict refers to a state of being in a long term disagreement.⁴² Usually where there is an opposition in thought between individuals in their interests, ideas, principles, values, authority and power.⁴³ The

³⁷ Siegel, DJ. & Bryson, TP. (2015). *No-Drama Discipline*. Scribe. p xiv.

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Siegel *et al.* (2015). p xiv.

⁴⁰ Siegel *et al.* (2015). p xiv.

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Available at: <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-conflict-and-vs-dispute/> (accessed May 2019)

⁴³ Available at: <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-conflict-and-vs-dispute/> (accessed May 2019)

possibility of resolving the conflict is slim to none with a continued state of disharmony between the individuals.⁴⁴

A dispute on the other hand is a short-term disagreement that can be resolved.⁴⁵ This resolution comes about by evaluating and considering the interests of those concerned in the dispute and determining their rights through a reasonable solution.⁴⁶ It is important to note that disputes can stem from a larger conflict which is important to remember when understanding the consequences of punishing a child.

The next step to gaining inner perceptiveness is to understand how each trainee responds to conflict or a dispute. They individually subject themselves to a personality evaluation by taking the Thomas Killman test.⁴⁷ With the axis on each side of the Thomas-Killman graph being that of co-operation and the other assertiveness. The level of importance each individual places on assertiveness against co-operation by answering a series of questions determines the trainee's dominating personality type during a conflict or dispute from a choice of five possible options. These options are, to have either a competing, avoiding, accommodating, collaborating or compromising dominant side in the manner in which each person handles a dispute or conflict.

Competing type is very high on being assertive with very little co-operation. They give little to no attention on the relationship with the other person. Competitors are swift decision makers and are good to have around in instances of an emergency.⁴⁸ Avoiders are people who usually bury their heads in the sand and walk away from disputes.⁴⁹ Avoiders are low on assertiveness and low on co-operation.⁵⁰ Accommodating personality types are low on assertiveness and high on co-operation and maintaining relationships. Accommodators agree to everything at the expense of their own needs.⁵¹ They will do anything to have a good relationship with someone.⁵²

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Available at <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-conflict-and-vs-dispute/> (accessed May 2019)

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Available at <https://kilmanndiagnostics.com/assessments/thomas-kilman-instrument-one-assessment-person/> (accessed May 2019)

⁴⁸ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFLydyH2H8Y> (accessed May 2019)

⁴⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Ibid⁵² Available at <https://kilmanndiagnostics.com/assessments/thomas-kilman-instrument-one-assessment-person/> (accessed May 2019)

⁵² Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFLydyH2H8Y> (accessed May 2019)

⁵² Ibid

⁵² Ibid

Compromising in a dispute means there is a give and take but not necessarily an equal give and take.⁵³ Instead the give and take happens as an easy way out.⁵⁴ After a compromise, no one is usually left satisfied and the relationship becomes strained when the exchange is not deemed fair.⁵⁵ Collaborators on the other hand engage in problem solving.⁵⁶ They work through disputes to find a solution.⁵⁷ Collaboration takes time with back and forth honest discussions and in the end there is an understanding of what each person needs.⁵⁸ Both co-operation and assertiveness rank high in collaborative problem solving.⁵⁹

Every single one of us in this room today can identify with a personality type on the Thomas Killman model. The same holds true for every parent. Coupled with having identifying a personality type in dispute resolution, each parent identifies with a parenting style that influences their parental authority. In their article for the Journal of Sociology and Social welfare (June 2018) Brittany Hearne and André Christie-Misell identify four commonly known parenting styles parents use when developing their relationship with their child; authoritarian uninvolved, permissive and authoritative.⁶⁰

Authoritarian parents are neither warm nor responsive to their children⁶¹. They are instead strict, demanding and their communication is through rules and orders to their children. “The lack of negotiation and explanations of rationale for rule may lead children to fear their parents.”⁶² This harsh parenting style builds resentment and inhibits children from taking ownership of their actions.⁶³

Uninvolved parenting also known as indulgent parenting is characterised by a lack of responsiveness to a child’s needs and parents exhibit emotional distance from their child.⁶⁴ Unresponsive or uninvolved parents do not impose rules and expectations on their children.⁶⁵ As a result of a lack of

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFLydyH2H8Y> (accessed May 2019)

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Hearne, BN & Christie-Mizell, CA. (2018). Educational Attainment in Young Adulthood, Depressive Symptoms, and Race-Ethnicity: The Long-Reach of Parenting Styles in Adolescence. The Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare. Vol 25(2). p 94-96

⁶¹ Hearne *et al* p 95

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Hearne *et al* p 95

⁶⁵ Ibid

supervision children respond to this lack of warmth and attention with defiance so as to elicit parental attention.⁶⁶

Permissive parents allow their children to be dominant in the parent-child relationship. Permissive parents also lack demands and expectations from their children while allowing their children to be the dominant communicators within the family social structure.⁶⁷ Although permissive parents provide emotional support allowing their children to have independent decision making skills they avoid discipline and confrontation with their children.⁶⁸ In this relationship there are no strict rules and children of permissive parents reject outside authority as well as that within the household.⁶⁹

“Authoritative parenting includes setting clear limits, engaging children in reason and being responsive to their emotional needs”⁷⁰ Authoritative parents engage in conversations with their children regarding rules and expectations.⁷¹

By identifying your parenting style you will have insight into how your relationship with your child has developed over the years and your reactions or responses to your child’s misbehaviour. Do you assert yourself onto your child with your punishments or do you have a more collaborative approach and engage with your child when they misbehave? Do you choose to use spanking or some form of physical punishment as a quick fix to stop bad behavior, after all do you believe that it is your house so it should be your rules that must be obeyed. By understanding that punishment and discipline are not one in the same, what is the most appropriate manner in which to effectively discipline your child?

Such question was posed by Chief Justice Moegeng in the Constitutional Court case of *Freedom of Religion South Africa v Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and Others* heard in November 2018.⁷² In this case the Constitutional Court heard arguments on whether the use of “moderate and reasonable chastisement” to discipline children forms part of a parent’s responsibilities and rights or whether it is in the interest of the child for parents to refrain from corporal punishment altogether. This was after the lower court ordered that parents who ‘smack’ their children will no longer be able to plead the special defence of reasonable chastisement in court if criminally charged for assault against their child.⁷³

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ ibid

⁷⁰ Hearne *et al* p 94

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² *Freedom of Religion South Africa v Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and Others* [2019] ZACC 34. At the time of delivering this presentation, no judgment had been given on the court’s finding. However at the time of submission of this paper for publication, the Constitutional Court ruled in September 2019 against the defense of reasonable chastisement as a means of conducting corporal punishment in the home, declaring such defense unconstitutional.

⁷³ Available at: <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Local/City-Vision/corporal-punishment-challenged-in-court-20181205> (accessed May 2019)

It was submitted by the representative for the Minister of Justice and Social Development, that the common law defense of reasonable chastisement allows parents to moderately and reasonably chastise their children to maintain discipline at home. It was argued that this defense encouraged conduct by the parent which would otherwise be considered as assault when applied to adults but is excused when it is applied to children.⁷⁴ Professor Ann Skelton, on behalf of the fifth, sixth and seventh respondents, submitted to the Constitutional Court that “adults have protection against any violence” whereas children are susceptible to private abuse without any protection leaving their right to dignity and protection from violence open for infringement through the common law defense of reasonable chastisement.⁷⁵

The counter argument from the representative for the Freedom of Religion South Africa, was that there is a difference between violence, corporal punishment and “moderate and reasonable use of chastisement and should not be considered one in the same.”⁷⁶

Chief Justice Moeng asked “what would be the pragmatic substitute for parents to instill discipline within the household?”⁷⁷ He asked further what options do parents have within their rights to discipline children, pointing out that most members of the bench experienced some form of physical punishment when they were badly behaved.⁷⁸ I believe that what the Chief Justice points out as generational forms of punishment at the hands of the parent as being true.

“Over the generations” there have been two schools of thought “spare the rod spoil the child”, and the “free to be you and I” school of thought.⁷⁹ Those parents who were from the generations as far back as the 1920’s until 1945 (known as the silent generation) upheld traditional values and were set in their ways to respect authority.⁸⁰ Their identity was more group focused, free from technology and loyal to their personal beliefs. They are now the grandparents to grandchildren raised by the Gen X and great grandparents to the millennials’ child.

The current youngest generation of parents, known as millennials, born from approximately the early 1980’s until 1996 are less influenced by traditional beliefs that physical punishment will get your children to obey you. With the parenting views of the millennials being influenced by social media and their focus on individual rights, one only has to follow the online parenting portals that millennials frequent for child raising advice and information to understand that those considered as “new age parents” are more open minded when it comes to controversial topics such as punishing children and prefer to engage with their children on a *quid pro quo* basis, you respect me and I will respect you.

⁷⁴ Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2018-11-30-what-is-the-best-way-to-discipline-children-asks-justice-mogoeng/> (accessed May 2019)

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Siegel *et al.* (2015) p xvi

⁸⁰ Faber *et al* (2001) p 9

In the past twenty years, during the generational gap between the silent generation and the millennials, scientists have been giving more attention to the brain's function and its response to discipline.⁸¹ They have been looking closely at the developmental connections in the brain from negative destructive discipline methods and the developmental connections in the brain from effective discipline methods.⁸²

It has been argued by Siegel and Bryson that when “discipline is called for” it is those “important moments of parenting” that parents have to shape their children in the most powerful way that uplifts their development not stunts it.⁸³ Therefore when faced with a child that has exhibited bad behavior parents need to ask themselves in that moment, what do I want to achieve from my actions if I were to punish my child? According to Siegel and Bryson “as a result of the words we use and the actions we take in front of children, children’s brains will actually change and be built as they undergo new experiences causing brain connections to be formed from repeated experiences”.⁸⁴ In effect, as they develop, children are forming their ability to understand the parenting style of their parents when watching and experiencing their management of frustrations, disagreements, disputes and conflict.

In their book “*How to listen so kids will talk and talk so kids will listen*” Adel Faber and Elaine Mazlish submit that for parents to take make progress towards disciplining their child with authority as opposed to punishing their child, such progress begins when the parent is able to hear themselves and are attentive to their own reactions at the time of the disagreement.⁸⁵ The ability to react and respond are triggered at the same time. However, a split moment will determine whether a person will react or respond to their child’s misbehaviour. To break the pattern of negative reactions a parent needs to know that in that split moment they can activate their ability to respond if they choose to. When parents believe that they have no choice but to punish their child otherwise they will lose control over that child Siegel and Bryson submit that punishing a child creates a pattern of behavior that is “kids act, parents react, kids react” causing a cycle of reactions and ensuing drama.⁸⁶ Reactive behaviour stunts everyone’s ability to listen and felt heard.⁸⁷

Parents need to move away from thinking of their child as being a problem that needs to be corrected.⁸⁸ Once again I advocate that parents must exhibit an authoritative manner when disciplining their child. Authoritative parenting entails first gaining the perspective of the child in the circumstances they are faced with, by understanding the underlying cause of the misbehavior or wrongdoing. In mediation training we term this activity as going below “the iceberg” to understand each parent’s fears, concerns, needs and interests of the parents (disputants).⁸⁹ This is done by using the

⁸¹ Siegel *et al.* (2015) p xvi

⁸² Siegel *et al.* (2015) p xvii

⁸³ Siegel *et al.* (2015) p 21

⁸⁴ Siegel *et al.* (2015) p 24

⁸⁵ Faber *et al.* (2001) p 3.

⁸⁶ Siegel *et al.* (2015) p xix

⁸⁷ Faber *et al.* (2001) p 109

⁸⁸ Siegel *et al.* (2015) p 109

⁸⁹ Available at: http://ombudsfac.unm.edu/Article_Summaries/Search_Beneath_the_Surface.pdf (accessed May 2019)

communication skills of the mediator to get parents to open up the cause not reaching agreement. While asking questions about the fears, concerns and needs, and subsequently reality testing the options before the parents, the mediator is gathering information for both parents to engage in lateral thinking, overcome their obstacles and find mutual ground for agreement.⁹⁰ This activity eventually leads to the parents making informed decisions and understanding the context of such decisions.

So to in parental skills training, for a parent to truly understand the child's perspective, that parent would need to gather information in an age appropriate manner, from the child about what had caused the misbehaviour and explore the child's interests, concerns, fears, and needs to move away from reacting with punishment. Once the parent is properly educated as to what led the child to behave in the manner that he or she did, the parent will make an informed decision on the effective discipline that is required, consciously taking into account the age, stage of development and maturity of the child. To skip the phase of gathering information to gain an understanding, parents will maintain an egotistical attitude of always being right. This creates underlying tension between parent and child, which will lead to constant future misunderstandings and an eventual breakdown in the relationship causing conflict within the family.⁹¹ From your understanding of what conflict looks like you know that sometimes these unresolved issues can lead to long-term disagreements and a break down of the parent -child relationship even when the children are adults. The aim of every parent faced with a disciplinary issue is to resolve the dispute before it is left to fester into an ongoing battle of wills. To do so, I submit that today's child must experience the discipline methods of an authoritative parent to truly benefit from parental authority.

While it is acknowledged that every child is different in their nature and mannerisms, the generic use of the authoritative style is to elicit co-operation from a child and to assist such child in behaving in an acceptable manner as the short term goal, with the long term goal being to equip the child with the skills and capacity to "handle challenging situations, frustrations, and emotional storms that might make them lose control".⁹² When using the authoritative parenting style, parents will break the cycle of reactions and move the child from the reactive side of their brain (flight, flee, freeze or faint) to the receptive part of their brain⁹³ thus causing the child to listen and to be heard. Once both parent and child have calmed down and are ready to engage in responding respectfully towards each other, they may brainstorm options on an appropriate consequence to the misbehaviour. During this phase of gathering of information and problem-solving, the parent appeals to the child's "more sophisticated upstairs brain" allowing the upstairs part of the brain to take control of the more reactive downstairs part of the brain. Siegel and Bryson submit that "by demonstrating respect for the child, nurturing the child with lots of empathy, and remaining open to collaborative and engaging in reflective discussions" the parent is communicating that there is "no threat" and the reactive part of the brain then relaxes.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ O'Leary J. (2014) p 33

⁹¹ Faber *et al* (2001) p 109

⁹² Siegel *et al* (2015) p xv - xvi

⁹³ Siegel *et al* (2015) p 47

⁹⁴ Siegel *et al* (2015) p 47

The prefrontal cortex takes control and the child engages in calm decision making- controlling their emotions and impulses.⁹⁵

If I were to apply the Thomas Killman test to parenting styles, I would place the authoritative parenting style as being high in assertiveness at the same time high on co-operation. My reasoning would be that the authoritative parenting style is high on building the relationship between parent and child while keeping the drama low. I believe that to break the cycle of generational abuse of punishment disguised as discipline, we need to educate the current generation and future generations of parents into becoming authoritatively responsive parents to curb any misunderstanding on how to raise children responsibly.

Faber and Mazlish support authoritative parenting and provide that problem solving with a child means taking time out to really get to the heart of the child's misbehavior and the cause of it.⁹⁶ Using body language to calm the child must be included, the child is sensing the parent as a threat. Using non-threatening body language will assist in getting the child to be more receptive. The aim is to change the narrative in a parent's mind from being too punitive or being considered a doormat to being assertive using problem solving skills minus punishment.

When realising how much effort it takes to use the authoritative style of parenting, parents complain about not having the time to follow through on the connection and redirection it takes to problem solve and engage with their children. Siegel and Bryson argue that the time it takes to calm a child down, engage on an emotional level and obtain co-operation is far less than the time spent on the cycle of reactions and the display of high emotions.⁹⁷ Redirection happens while you calm your child by using a tone of voice that displays concern and start to direct the child towards problem solving.⁹⁸ Faber and Mazlish concur that once a child becomes accustomed to problem-solving, s/he will begin to subconsciously take responsibility in resolving conflicts as they grow older.⁹⁹

Every activist endorsing positive discipline and promoting the authoritative style of parents admits that as a parent in the heat of the moment of misbehavior, it may be difficult to experience that mind shift from wanting to react harshly to responding authoritatively.¹⁰⁰ You may not always get it right however a step in the right direction would be to start practicing this parenting style now onwards.

To provide an answer to Chief Justice's Moegeng's question, *what would be the pragmatic substitute for parents to instill discipline within the household?*, I submit that parents need to engage in dispute resolution skills to demonstrate and teach their children that disputes and misunderstandings can be negotiated and resolved. What needs to be the overwhelming message and change in mindset that each person takes away today is that parental authority when disciplining today's child must be communicated verbally and physically under the umbrella of respect and patience.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ Faber *et al* (2001) p 102

⁹⁷ Siegel *et al* (2015) p xxii

⁹⁸ Faber *et al* (2001) p 102 - 111

⁹⁹ Faber *et al* (2001) p 132

¹⁰⁰ Faber *et al* (2001) p 108

¹⁰¹ Siegel *et al* (2015) p 50-56

With discipline meaning education¹⁰², it is “essentially programmed guidance that helps people to develop internal self-control, self direction and efficiency.”¹⁰³ Effective discipline methods used over time will promote good behavior, and teach skills and nurture the “connections in a child’s brain that will help them make better decisions and handle themselves well in the future”¹⁰⁴ The inevitable goal for each parent when disciplining their child is not to win a battle declaring their child the loser at the expense of an ongoing respectful relationship with their child, but instead to give the child the tools to actively participate in problem solving which prepares them to deal with disputes in the world they will be let into.¹⁰⁵ When reflecting on how to interact with your child, a saying I once heard comes to mind, “you can be right or you can get along with your child”. All parents have the ability to be empathetic, we were all children once. It is in your hands to create a meaningful respectful relationship with your child that is not at the expense of their bodily integrity and dignity.

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¹⁰² Faber *et al* (2001). p 116

¹⁰³ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁴ Siegal *et al* (2015) p xvii

¹⁰⁵ Faber *et al* (2001) p 109

<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Local/City-Vision/corporal-punishment-challenged-in-court-20181205> (accessed May 2019)

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