

# Loving Our Kids Into Independence

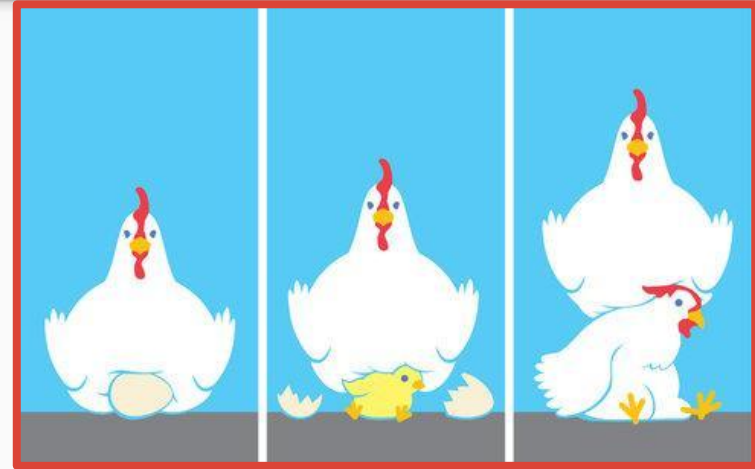
Book Group on "How To Raise An Adult"

Presentation by Margot Parker, MA  
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# How Did We Get Here?

- Love (Hand-Holding -- “Concierging”)
  - Want to be there for our children
  - Want our children to be happy
  - Want to provide what our parents could/did not
- Insurance (Overdirecting)
  - Set our children up for when we are not there
  - Make sure they have everything they need to succeed
  - Provide our children with many opportunities
- Fear (Overprotecting)
  - Want to keep our children safe from danger
  - Want to cushion them from hurt -- physically and emotionally



# Where do we go from here?

What is your parenting style?

Are you happy with it?

What about it works?

What is hard about your style?

What was **your** parents' style?



# Unstructured play time

“Kids who are allowed to play freely have greater social success as adults.”

M. Parker  
2019

Source: Greve, W., Thomsen, T., Dehio, C (2014) “Does Playing Pay? The fitness effect of free play during childhood” Evolutionary Psychology.

## What Are Structured And Unstructured Activities?

### Structured Activities

- occur at a specific time and place
- are organized and delivered by adults
- contribute to about 25% of kids' overall physical activity
- examples include playing on a sports team, taking swimming lessons or going to a gymnastics class

### Unstructured Activities

- self-motivated and spontaneous play
- directed by children
- are reported by kids to be associated with fun, pleasure, choice and freedom
- examples include building a fort, climbing rocks or trees, splashing in puddles, playing hide and seek with friends



## Soft Skills Employers Seek

- Acting as a team player
- Flexibility
- Effective Communication
- Problem-solving & Resourcefulness
- Accepting feedback
- Confidence
- Creative Thinking

# Life Skills and Hard Work

Also known as chores....

Progression of helping our children learn their chores

1. We do it *for* you
2. We do it *with* you
3. We *watch* you do it
4. *You do it* independently

They are watching us; we are modeling



# Creative thinking and problem solving

- Come up with a topic to discuss
- Ask your child(ren) what they think
- Play devil's advocate and express a counter opinion
- Encourage your child to respond to your point of view
- Do not finish their sentences, thoughts, words, or interject for them



# Face Challenges and Build Resilience

Please look at the scenario on your card and discuss with a partner how you would respond to your child in this situation.

- Show love
- Help them grow from experience
- Let them make choices and mistakes
- Help them develop perspective
- Give specific authentic feedback for positives and negatives
- Model it - share your challenges and setbacks





# Our Job

Listen to our children

Look after ourselves

Do a reality check

Give them independence

Build a community of like-minded adults and see those who “walk the walk”



# Their job

*"When we adults think of children, there is a simple truth which we ignore: Childhood is not preparation for life, childhood is life. A child isn't getting ready to live – a child is living.*

*The child is constantly confronted with the nagging question, 'What are you going to be?' Courageous would be the youngster who, looking the adult squarely in the face, would say, 'I'm not going to be anything; I already am.'"*



*Quote taken from: John A. Taylor, University Chaplain, Cornell University, Taken from Notes on an Unhurried Journey, page 45. Four Walls, Eight Windows, New York, 1991.*

# We can do this...together!

Take a deep  
breath. Relax.  
**LET THEM GO.**

Trust them.  
Have faith.  
**STEP BACK.**

Let them explore.  
Let them follow  
their hearts.  
**SET THEM FREE**

