Redefining "Good" Parenting

Parenting is a deeply personal journey, often shaped by societal expectations, family traditions, and personal beliefs. The idea of being a “good” parent can create pressure and self-doubt, especially when trying to meet unrealistic standards. This worksheet is designed to help you redefine what “good” parenting means to you—based on your values, your child’s needs, and your unique family dynamics.

STEP 1: Identifying Expectations

Start by reflecting on some of the expectations you’ve held about being a “good” parent. These might be internal (self-imposed) or external (from family, friends, or society).

Reflection Questions:

- What are some things you believe a “good” parent must always do?
- Where did these beliefs come from (e.g., your upbringing, media, etc.)?
- Which of these expectations feel overwhelming or unachievable?

Write down 2-3 expectations you’ve identified in your own life:

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STEP 2: Reflect on Your Values

To redefine "good" parenting, it's important to reflect on your personal values and what truly matters to you as a parent. Values help guide behavior and set priorities. Read through the values below to identify important guides for your parenting.

Kindness

I want to be a parent who models compassion and empathy.

I can show kindness through my actions, even when I'm upset, by treating my child with respect, listening when they have concerns, and helping them see the value of kindness in their interactions.

Independence

I want to encourage my child to make their own decisions and develop problem-solving skills.

I will allow my child to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them, rather than stepping in to solve every problem for them.

Honesty

I want to be open and truthful with my child so they feel safe being honest with me.

I'll model honesty by being transparent about my own feelings and mistakes, and by encouraging open dialogue, even when the truth is difficult to share.

Resilience

I want to help my child develop emotional resilience and the ability to handle life's challenges.

Instead of shielding my child from all adversity, I'll support them through difficult times, helping them build coping skills and learn how to bounce back after setbacks.

Courage

I want to encourage my child to be brave and stand up for what they believe is right.

I'll model courage by facing my own fears, discussing tough situations openly, and encouraging my child to express their feelings and opinions, even when they go against the norm.

Curiosity

I want to nurture my child's natural curiosity and encourage them to explore the world.

I'll provide opportunities for my child to explore their interests. I'll encourage questions, exploration, and creativity in their learning process.

Patience

I want to model patience and teach my child the importance of taking time to understand situations.

I'll practice patience in my own responses, showing my child how to approach frustration with calmness and understanding, even when things don't go as planned.

Gratitude

I want to raise a child who appreciates what they have and expresses gratitude.

I'll make a habit of practicing gratitude, like reflecting on positive moments at the end of each day, and encourage my child to recognize the good things in their life.

Respect

I want to teach my child the importance of respecting themselves and others.

I'll model respect in my interactions with others, especially when we disagree. I'll also show respect for my child's autonomy and boundaries, helping them understand the importance of mutual respect.

Self-Compassion

I want to teach my child to be kind to themselves and not expect perfection.

I'll model self-compassion by acknowledging my own mistakes and showing my child that it's okay to not be perfect. I'll encourage them to treat themselves with kindness rather than self-criticism.

Flexibility

I want to be adaptable and open to change, especially as my child grows and their needs evolve.

I'll adjust my expectations, knowing that every stage of my child's development requires different approaches. I won't rigidly adhere to societal timelines or milestones.

Balance

I want to teach my child that it's important to balance their responsibilities and their well-being.

I'll demonstrate the importance of work-life balance by prioritizing both family time and self-care. I'll teach my child that it's okay to rest and that productivity isn't the only measure of success.

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Reflection Questions:

- What values do you want to instill in your children (e.g., kindness, independence, honesty)?
- What kind of parent do you want to be based on your values?
- Instead of feeling pressure to meet other people's ideas of “good” parenting, how can you make parenting choices that align with your values?

List 5-6 core values that you want to guide your parenting:

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STEP 3: Define Your Version of “Good” Parenting

Using the expectations you’ve released and the values you’ve identified, begin to craft your own definition of what it means to be a “good” parent. Focus on the qualities that align with your values and what’s achievable for you and your family.

Reflection Questions:

- What does being a “good” parent look like in your day-to-day life?
- How can you focus on progress, not perfection, as a parent?

Write your new definition of a “good” parent in as much detail as possible:

A good parent is someone who...

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