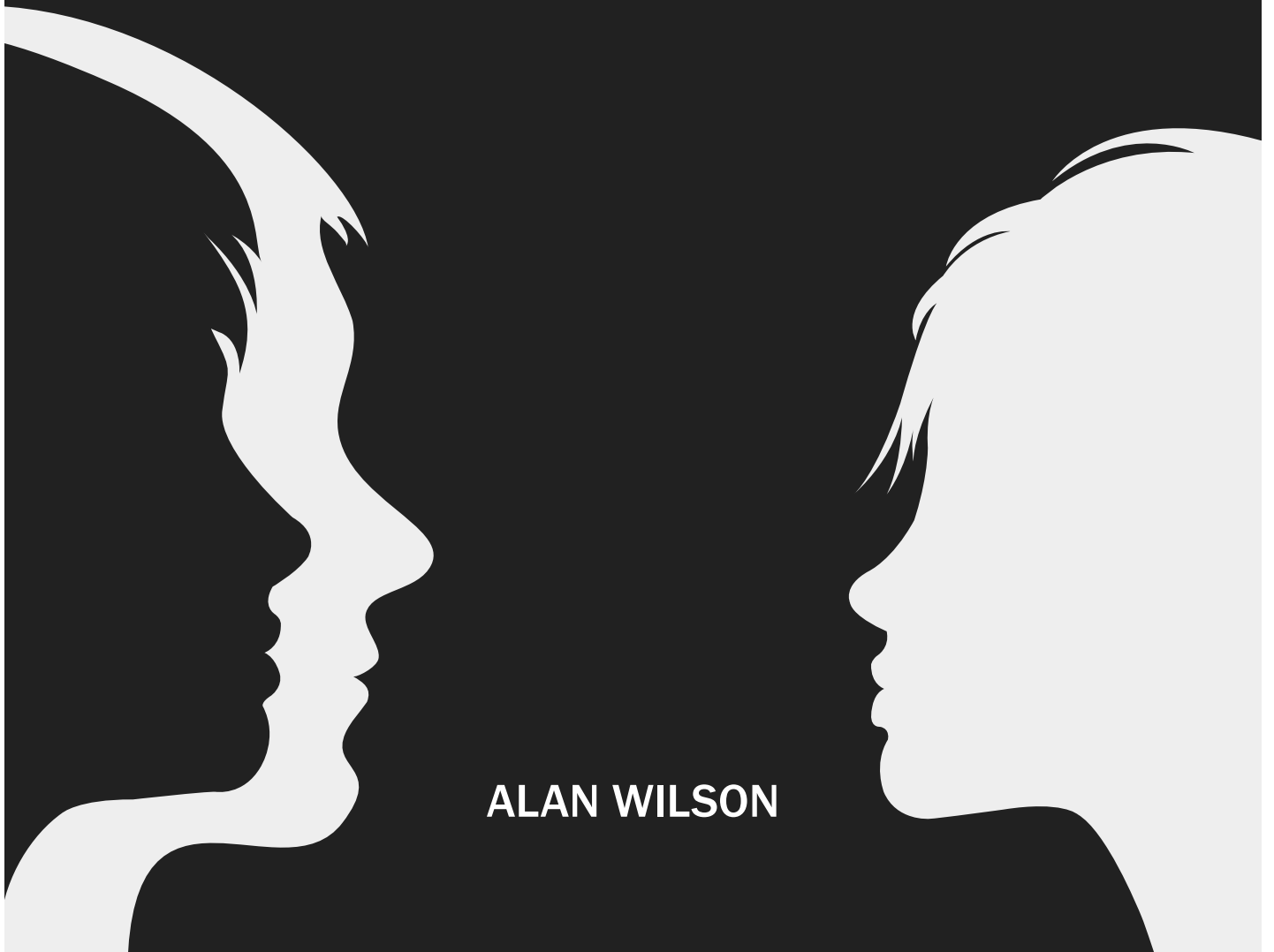


I ~~don't~~ know you ~~anymore~~

7 steps to reconnect with your teenager



ALAN WILSON

“This book is very important, very understandable, and I recommend it to every parent and teacher.”

– **Sir John Whitmore PhD** (Founding Father of Coaching)

This book will help you to change your relationship with your teenager!

Of course, we love our children, but even the best of parents sometimes feel that they could improve their ever-changing relationship with their child. In fact, it is a sign of your devotion as a parent that you are exploring ways to make that bond stronger.

It is a widely acknowledged fact that the most important job in the world comes with no training whatsoever, but we are on hand to help.

This book offers a unique and varied 7 Step Approach that includes a range of proven tools and techniques to help you through those troublesome years of parenting a teenager. It is not a typical parenting book or a self-help book. Generally, a parenting book is focused on ‘fixing’ your child. This book re-energises your vital relationships, helping you to see both your parenting and your own children from an entirely different perspective.

“Incorporating the concepts and using the tools in this book will magically transform your outlook on parenting and relationships.”

– **Dr Rani Bora** (MB BS, MRCPsych Psychiatrist,
Life Coach and EFT practitioner)



Alan Wilson

Family coach, trainer
speaker and writer

teenagerproblems.info

ISBN 978-0-9551130-6-2



Price: UK £9.99

*I ~~don't~~ know
you ~~anymore~~*

7 steps to reconnect with your teenager

by ALAN WILSON
Develop Your Child CIC

Copyright © 2013 by Alan Wilson
Published by Develop Your Child CIC
25 McKenzie Court,
Maidstone,
ME14 1JU
UK

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be produced by mechanical means, photographic, or electronic process, or in the form of a phonographic recording; nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or otherwise be copied for public or private user.

The author of this book does not dispense medical advice or prescribe the use of any technique as a form of treatment for physical or medical problems without the advice of a physician, either directly or indirectly. The intent of the author is only to offer information of a general nature to help you in your quest for emotional and spiritual well-being. In the event you use any of the information in this book for yourself, which is your constitutional right, the author and the publisher assume no responsibility for your actions.

Printed in the UK by Lightning Source UK Ltd
ISBN 978-0-9551130-5-5

*I ~~don't~~ know
you ~~anymore~~*

7 steps to reconnect with your teenager

by ALAN WILSON
Develop Your Child CIC

Contents

Preface	14
Foreword – by Sir John Whitmore PhD	15
Acknowledgements	18
Preamble	19
Introduction	21

Part 1 – It starts with you

Chapter 1 – Why this book?	34
Chapter 2 – Getting in the mood – step 1	49
Chapter 3 – Creating a SMART goal – step 2	70
Chapter 4 – The power of thought – step 3	81
Chapter 5 – This is where the magic begins – step 4	87
Chapter 6 – More about energy – step 5	98
Chapter 7 – Success breeds success – step 6	108
Chapter 8 – Another resource – step 7	115

Part 2 – When they are ready

Chapter 9 – A different approach	121
Chapter 10 – Setting up a Coaching Agreement	127
Chapter 11 – Create the right environment	132

Part 3 – Additional resources

Chapter 12 – A problem solving strategy	135
Chapter 13 – Understanding how your child learns	142
Chapter 14 – Connecting with your child	149
Chapter 15 – Some exercises for the younger person	166
Chapter 16 – Celebrate each and every step	177
Chapter 17 – Review and sustainability	181

Note from the Author	189
Bibliography	190
About the Author	195
Appendix I – Coaching Lessons from the film ‘The Kings Speech’ by Martin Goodyer	202
Appendix II – Life coaching for mental health recovery: the emerging practice of recovery coaching by Bora et al	208
Appendix III – ‘Kids are really different these days... pioneering an evolutionary world’. A conference report by Dr Graham Taylor	241
Appendix IV – Why I’m the luckiest Dad in the World by Alan Wilson	251

Preface

*I believe that children are our future
Teach them well and let them lead the way
Show them all the beauty they possess inside
Give them a sense of pride to make it easier
Let the children's laughter remind us how we used to be
Everybody's searching for a hero
People need someone to look up to
I never found anyone who fulfilled my need
A lonely place to be and so I learned to depend on me
I decided long ago never to walk in anyone's shadow
If I fail, if I succeed at least I'll live as I believe
No matter what they take from me, they can't take away my dignity
Because the greatest love of all was happening to me
I found the greatest love of all inside of me
The greatest love of all is easy to achieve
Learning to love yourself is the greatest love of all*

From the 'Greatest love of all' written by Michael Masser and Linda Creed

For me, these are the most beautiful words in the world. I love this song because it captures so many aspects of parenting and personal empowerment: the very essence of children, the importance of their own identity, their independence, the value of a role model and how much children can teach us if we allow them to!

Remember - if you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you've always got.

Foreword

by Sir John Whitmore PhD

I love this book; I love Alan's style of using separate, clear and important sentences to make a large number of key points. It is a book that one can pick up for a short time while travelling and extract real thought provoking ideas and value. It really works for me and I expect it will for many others too. Alan challenges parents who are so obsessed with controlling their children and not allowing, let alone encouraging, them to be themselves. Who else can they be, may I ask? I am so delighted that he recognises the value of learner centred communication advocated by Carl Rogers, which is so apposite for children's education and development. Rogers was a great pioneer of human skills whose key work is still not fully appreciated or adopted. I was fortunate enough to know him and attend person-centred workshops with him at Esalen Institute in California in the 1970s.

We want our children to be self-responsible of course, but telling them to be often has the opposite effect. Offer them a choice and they will welcome the freedom that choices offer. A child soon discovers that all choices have consequences and by experiencing those consequences, they quickly learn how to make better choices. The act of making a choice gives instant self-responsibility, and the child continues to become a more skilful choice maker.

This massive benefit applies to all those things that may cause children lifelong difficulties if they make bad choices, such as: drugs, alcohol, food, anger, envy, exercise, fear, knives, sex, health, violence, people, and more. None of these are intrinsically bad but the

consequences of bad choices in dealing with any of them may well be. Children begin to believe in themselves and feel better about themselves as they make good choices. I cannot emphasise more the importance of this. Alan never lets this slip from the readers mind.

My ex-wife created and runs an award winning teenage pregnancy programme for schools, one of the most effective in the country, which are based on these principles and I am an advisor for driver education which focuses on young male drivers who have far more fatalities than other age or sex sectors throughout Europe because of their inability to make sensible choices. This issue of encouraging choice making, in my mind is the single and most important psychologically healthy and life giving principle that is missing from education and parenting. This must change and I hope the relevant authorities read this book and wake up to it.

The structure of this book is excellent for its purpose of reaching all kinds of parents easily and in very direct simple language. At the beginning Alan lays out the purpose and intent of the book and then goes on to express very clearly his philosophy and thinking behind it. It has qualities, readability and clarity that is rare in many academic books about parenting and education. Many of Alan's statements are memorable and quotable, and at the start of each chapter is an entirely relevant quote from a well-known figure.

In the book Alan challenges 'conventional' thinking in how to communicate and connect with your children. It is a natural process, which as he says creates the opportunity for the parent to parent naturally. Alan has been pioneering this approach, which has shown remarkable results. Parents can choose to be happy, congruent and trust their instincts; this is an innate process, which needs to be developed. I was fortunate enough to witness him in action and I

must say I was astounded at the effect on his coachee - I thought it was brilliant.

Alan offers a large number of exercises that have great value when undertaken fully. They are for action not just reading and passing over, as people are often tempted to do. He also advises people to photocopy the exercise pages for their use so the book remains unmarked, but he suggests that several copies are made so the exercises can be done several times over the passage of time, six months or even a year or two. A great idea is to involve the whole family. Alan also includes in most chapters pieces written by people after attending one of his courses. Alan is also unafraid to reveal some of his own struggles in life, which makes the reader see him as human like all of us, and not infallible as some writers pretend.

I could not recommend a book or an approach to education in these difficult times more strongly than I feel about this one. Alan has a passion, like my own, to change education to allow children to believe in themselves. This will have huge impact and create a more self-responsible society; I think we all want that! Whilst it is primarily intended for teachers and parents, I believe that many more of us can benefit from reading it and doing the exercises.

Try it and then tell others about it.

“Do your children listen to you?”

“Not very well or often”

“How well or often do you really listen to your children?”

Acknowledgements

To the three most important people in my life, my children Toby, Holly and Cassy, for all they have taught me and continue to do so.

Also Emma Anderson, Claire Ashby, John Bayford, Phil Browne, Peter Burke, Mike and Anne Bushell, Vee Cadby, Richard Carey, Sonya Chowdhury, Alan Chuck, Anca Ciobanu, Andrei Ciursa, Barry Clout, Toni Clarke, Martha Collins, Kirsty Cruttenden, Hanife Dacosta, Della Dingwall, Christine Doorbar, Richard Earp, Dorothy Eckes, Thrity Engineer, Shinina Fernandez, Nic Fiddaman, Sandra Garrod, Diane Graham, Santari Green, Soleira Green, Tina Gobell, Andy and Sue Gower, Karen Halliday, Derek Handy, Fiona Harrold, Diana Haskins, Steve Hatt, Lynne Healy, Mark Holmes, Geraldine Hurstfield, John Hyatt, Terry Ingham, Paula Jago, Ernie and Gill Jones, Noelyne Jones, Stuart Kerslake, LaJeanne Kline, Marci Lebowitz, Ian Lewis, Debra Littleboy, Ian Longstaff, Michael Low, Jane MacAllister Dukes, Kerry McMorris, Dr Roger Mills, Judith Morgan, Juliet Platt, Alan Povey, Dick and Linda Reynolds, Sandra Rounthwaite, Anthony Sands, Georgina Saralis, Debbie Simpson, Andrew Smith, Janet Swift, David and Rosalind Taylor, Graham Taylor, Jo Trice, John Turner, Linda Turner, Ann Waters, Lisa Waters, Mary Whelan, Susan Wilson, Clare Whiston, Gemma White, John and Irene Whiting, Sir John Whitmore, Sarah Wilkins, Georgina Woudstra and Vivienne Wrelton, Ady Young who have all contributed in some way to my personal growth and the value of this book.

Preamble

Welcome to my world of infinite possibilities - this book is going to change you and the way you parent forever.

You know how a Mum instinctively knows, when she is relaxed, what her baby wants - I believe that depth of connection is always available to us, and not just to Mums.

This is not a typical parenting book or a typical self-help book. Generally a parenting book is focused on 'fixing' your child, this book helps you see your children from a different perspective.

More than a self-help book, it comes with a series of personal development exercises. You will not only be a better parent you will also get your life back.

The bottom line is for you to be happy and comfortable in yourself and when you are - you will parent naturally.

Have you noticed how when you're happy everything is a breeze and you sail through any challenge? By becoming your most powerful self, you will have a deeper connection with your children and add magic to your family.

This book won't be looking at teenage behaviour or its causes. We will show how to make changes in yourself, which dramatically change your relationship with your teen. And you will have the tools and techniques to unleash their potential.

We are breaking the mould in three critical areas:

1. We recognise children are sensitive to parents' emotional state and take responsibility for it – happy parents equals happy children.
2. We provide a unique personal development approach to create self-awareness, change and sustainability in you first and then your children.
3. Parents can parent naturally and create empowered and resilient families, whose influence overflows into their community, helping to create a more positive society.

How do I know this is possible? I've been there and done it. After bankruptcy, divorce and a nervous breakdown all within 12 months, I was far from the ideal parent. I recognised that, as I became more positive and personally empowered, my relationship with my children changed dramatically, as did their view of themselves and relationship with each other. This book is the distillation of all the great things I learnt on my journey from that place.

Alan Wilson – Family Coach

Introduction

If I had my child to raise over again

*'If I had my child to raise over again,
I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.
I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.
I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.
I would care to know less, and know to care more.
I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.
I'd run through more fields, and gaze at more stars.
I'd do more hugging, and less tugging.
I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.
I'd teach less about the love of power,
And more about the power of love.'*

Diane Loomans

This book is about helping you to reconnect with your children at a deeper level. Once you have achieved this, you will be connecting with them in a whole new way and opening a whole new world full of possibilities for both of you.

The word 'empower' tends to be overused but I make no excuses for adopting it because it captures the essence of our work - to create personal empowerment in parents. The Cambridge International Dictionary of English definition says 'something that is empowering makes you more confident and makes you feel that you are in control of your life'.

My role is to help you identify that ‘something’ so you can create the respectful and resilient family relationships you desire.

Children are our future and we, as parents have the most challenging job in the world. Children don’t come with a manual and there are no ‘one size fits all’ solutions. The decline of the extended family, coupled with the influence of persuasive advertising, online challenges and a ‘have it now’ mentality, means that successful parenting has become increasingly difficult. That’s without all the pressure we put on ourselves to be the perfect parent.

The area of emotions is critical. How often are we beating ourselves up because we are falling short of our own expectations of ourselves? But I say to parents “what did you learn about ‘emotional literacy’ at school?” so lets be gentle with ourselves and have more fun!

There is a great deal of interest and media attention on how we communicate with our children. What’s missing is the understanding that parents are doing the best they can with what they know and that communication is much more than just talking and listening.

In my work with parents, I’m regularly asked “how can I get little Charlie to listen to me?” If I replied, “well, have you listened to him?” in some cases I might well have risked physical injury! By ‘listening’ I don’t mean just to the words that a child says; I mean what lies behind the words - i.e. deep listening - what is that wonderful small person trying to communicate to you?

I coined the phrase ‘energetic listening/connection’ as a generic phrase, it could also be known as instincts, intuition, gut feeling, sensing, love etc. Some children call it magic! It’s a very powerful process that needs a little guidance in how to become aware of it,

although it's innate in all of us and is happening all the time. It allows a deeper connection with the person you are communicating with. Mastering this process/art is the foundation of fulfilling relationships and it works with children, teens and adults.

Many parents have low self-esteem and little time for themselves. They find it very difficult, if not impossible, to communicate effectively with their children. Parents can choose to feel better about themselves and try new tools and techniques to enable them to take a new approach to life.

Sometimes that choice isn't always clear or easy to take because they may feel locked into a cycle of reactive behaviours, and to step out of their comfort zone is a challenge too far. I can only say if you don't change something in your life, you will keep getting what you've always got. Freedom can be achieved by increasing your personal empowerment. And that's exactly what this book is about.

When a parent connects with a child or teen in this way, their whole life and family relationships change! They parent naturally.

When parents show respect for what their child has to say and allow them to experience, even in a small way, their own independence, the changes are immense - and it spreads throughout the whole family.

I've seen this with almost every parent I've worked with as a Family Coach and Parenting Tutor. There is a case study at the end of each Chapter to give you some real life examples of how some parents and carers have transformed their families and the tools and techniques they used.

These case studies are taken from groups of parents who've

attended courses and an independent evaluation is available on the www.developyourchild.co.uk website. During a course there are time limitations so we are usually only able to cover a fraction of the content of this book.

Most parents are run ragged, going round in circles in an attempt to keep everything together at all costs – mostly to themselves. Once I get them to hear me - and that's not easy – I teach them to look at themselves as individuals and to work towards their own personal empowerment. This has to be felt in the body, the mind and the heart before it really kicks in. When parents discover this for themselves, they feel empowered, then everything changes in the way they want it to.

I come from a life coaching background – that is taking you from where you are now to where you want to be. Life coaching and associated techniques create self-empowerment. An empowered parent is a congruent parent more open to change. Coaches are non-judgmental; we value our clients' gifts and support them to recognise these gifts and to move forward in their lives.

I've worked directly and indirectly with thousands of parents and carers to create this unique personal development approach, over the last 11 years, to build family resilience and self-responsibility

Any personal development work needs to begin with a sound foundation in self-esteem/confidence and that is always my starting point. The most common complaint I hear from children and young people is that their parents don't listen to them, value them or respect them.

My belief is that we are all born wonderful, resourceful, creative and full of potential - and then life kicks in! I see my role as a facilitator

helping reconnect both children and parents with their innate abilities and then engaging them together.

I also believe that children these days are more right-brained and creative. This leads to disaffection in school; the National Curriculum is largely biased towards academia, left-brain functionality. Through no fault of their own, teachers have become starved of opportunities to develop the inter-action with children, which attracted them into the profession in the first place.

I read some research recently that showed children required acknowledgement, empathy and acceptance with and from their peer group and that that is more important to them than achieving academic success.

I don't know if you've heard of the Generation Y or Millennial Generation thought to be born from the early 1980s to the early 2000s. These young people are said to be hypersensitive, feel their way through life and sense a lack of authenticity and will switch off. This is providing challenges for society, business and education.

I personally feel that the most important aspect of an education is to explore the innate gifts and abilities an individual has and to help them identify their passion. There are so many young people diagnosed with 'Special Education Needs' who are actually very creative and skilled but are challenged in an academic setting.

We are working to introduce our unique approach into mainstream education where the teachers, pupils and parents are working together to change the culture of the learning environment.

It won't be long now before the education system explodes or implodes!

The Government is putting more and more pressure on parents to take responsibility for their children's behaviour - truancy, ASBOs, bullying etc, whilst providing woefully inadequate support.

There is no support for parents of teenagers, when communication can start to breakdown (does 'teenage' start at 7 years old these days?). This is the critical time when parents and children start to go their separate ways. The tragedy is that the children tend to rely on their peers and their peers cannot help them emotionally, with life experiences or wisdom.

There is a huge gap in emotional literacy and that is the root cause of so much misunderstanding and conflict.

Parents, particularly those under pressure, need comprehensive and integrated support that they can access without feeling stigmatised. It doesn't exist and the increase in family breakdown has further wide-ranging, detrimental effects on children.

It doesn't matter whether or not you have the same views as I have; I just want you to know where I'm coming from in the hope that it will give you some more options.

How you feel about yourself is the single most important awareness you can take away from this book. Together we will look at the tools and techniques I have found to be very effective and simple to use.

There are a number of exercises throughout the book, so you may want to photocopy the pages or transfer the details to a separate

notebook or journal. By keeping the book pristine others can do the exercises. And you can redo them after 6 months or so to see your progress. A great idea is to include your children and family in these exercises.

Our children are facing unprecedented rates of change and we are trying to prepare them for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented in order to solve problems we don't yet know about.

There has never been a more important time to create personal empowerment in children and young people.

Over the last 50 years, the relentless pace of change has brought with it intolerable social and financial pressures. For many of us, feelings and emotions have been dulled down until we have, almost literally, disconnected from our bodies.

As a result, our behaviour has become little more than a series of, usually inappropriate, reactions to our experiences, which leave us unable to trust our own instincts/intuition/gut feeling.

Adults who take the time to understand and develop themselves are better able to trust this vital power. They can raise their children to be aware of its importance – and teach them how to use it. We must empower our children to develop this skill because they will be responsible for the world's future.

The book is in three parts to take you from where you are to where you want to go.

Part 1 – It starts with you. We need to get you in a place where you can tap into your most resourceful. As you are starting to make these changes those around you will have noticed them and it's likely you will be tested. That's OK and normal because the vast majority of people are not comfortable with change, just like you before you started!

Part 2 – When they are ready. As you become more familiar and comfortable with these tools and techniques you will no doubt want to give your children the benefit of them. This part of the book is for when they are ready. The most important step is not to force this on them, just carry on being your powerful self and exceptional role model. Soon they will recognise the value in wanting to change and will ask when they are ready – fantastic!

And **Part 3 – Additional resources.** In this section there are some additional tools and techniques, which you may find useful if they are appropriate for you.

We will touch on many aspects and concepts that you may want to explore further. If you need further guidance, please contact me info@everyfamilymatters.org.uk and I will do all I can to help.

It's time to brace yourself for the ride of your life and create the life you deserve!

NB. This book is written for you. However, when you want to apply these tools and techniques to others you may need to adapt some of your questions and exercises to suit that persons stage of development. As a parent of a teen this can be a challenge as they have been subjected to all sorts of influences outside the home. This has probably pushed them further from you, so the

changes you are making will be tested and will call for you to be resolute in your determination to change.

But have faith and trust yourself, every parent I know who has been determined has been successful. We've had loads of parents telling us things like "I don't know what your doing Mum but don't stop" or "You're so much calmer now and I love you again" and "You've changed so much Mum, how did you do it?"

Also if you want a reminder – ask yourself – were you happy going round in the same circles day after day after day?

For the sake of expediency 'child' includes adolescence, teenagers and young people.

Case Study Mrs KA

“I’m going to hold my hand up and be totally honest: when I embarked on the Parent Champion course, I wondered, deep down, whether this course was really going to be worth the time commitment - eight weeks of two hour sessions - required. I wasn’t really sure what to expect; indeed it all sounded a little nebulous. So I approached the course without the degree of enthusiasm it deserved from me!

After two sessions, something clicked, and I could sense subtle changes in the way I thought about many things, not simply my family life. Interestingly, the course started just as we were going through some particularly difficult issues with my oldest daughter (it’s funny how these ‘coincidences’ occur, isn’t it?!) and I am convinced that the turn-around we have seen in her is in large part due to the - very small but very significant - changes brought about by the Parent Champion course.

I was at a very low ebb right at the beginning, wondering how on earth we would manage to help our daughter. The support provided not only by the course guidance, but also by the other parents in our group, were both key to me being able to embark on a new approach. It is still hard work staying on track, and it is all too easy to slip into old habits, but it is possible - and life-changing.

My approach to the problems we were having at the time was to keep open the lines of communication with our teenage daughter. I had seen too many families experience difficulties through poor or no communication, and I was determined that this would not happen to us. However, subtle changes in me led me to

'know' intuitively and instinctively that I needed to be clearer in my approach to my daughter - even if she didn't like what I had to say - rather than fudge issues as I had been doing. In addition to this, I was able to put responsibility for her actions back 'in her court', rather than feel responsible myself for every misdemeanour that occurred. But at the same time, I was able to listen - deeply listen on a totally different level to before - to what she had to say. We are on a different track now, a more positive one, which feels much better, and I feel much more optimistic about the choices she is making, as does she.

It would take a chapter in a book to explain the many and different changes I have observed; taken individually, they seem tiny, but it is the sum total of their combination, and the profound effect they have had, that is huge.

Some aspects were much easier to harness than I had thought they would be, for example, the encouragement to be aware of making judgemental comments. 'Letting judgement go' was considerably easier than I had expected - it was almost a relief, making me feel freer in spirit!

Our group consisted mainly of mums - with one long-suffering dad - and it was interesting how every single person professed to feelings of guilt at taking time out for themselves. It's not easy choosing to do something that is all about you, when you have spent so many years thinking and planning with everyone else's interests in mind. With practice, it is achievable, and it is truly uplifting to spend time doing something you really enjoy - which of course has an effect on your family, as you are in a better 'place' when you have taken time out. Indeed, they like this 'different person' who miraculously emerges at home!

I feel more light-hearted, as though a burden has been lifted from my shoulders. I don't worry as much as I used to, particularly about things I cannot possibly affect – and this was a real problem for me as I used to take on the world's heavy load, knowing, and feeling very sad in this knowledge, that I could only touch a micro-fraction of it. I am more able to accept the limits of what I can do. (Another concept I gained from the course – don't be so hard on yourself all the time!)

And I have been reminded by the course that our thoughts cause our actions. Indeed, with the latter point in mind, I recall a beautiful and very true quotation that says: 'Energy follows thought and thought attracts its own kind' – something to bear in mind on those days when I am not naturally inclined to be truly, energetically positive in my thoughts. Each one of us can affect the world around us by subtle shifts in what we think and do.

All these – and many more – aspects need working on, as there are so many old habits that have built up over the years. But there is no doubt that, by following this path, you won't simply be enhancing your qualities as a parent, but also as a person. By so doing, there are no limits to what you can achieve.”

Mrs KA

“PS: I understand that the course is for parents and children. Perhaps I have missed something, but are teachers usually included within the course framework? Are there Teacher Champion courses? At our school, some teachers have been given the opportunity of being involved within the course, but this is clearly not possible for all during school hours. The teachers' frame of mind and their energy profoundly affect the school atmosphere,

and therefore the progress of the students, so it seems to me that it is crucial that they are as involved in this life-changing mindset as us parents are.”

PART 1 – IT STARTS WITH YOU

CHAPTER 1

Why this book?

Priorities

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove, but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child...

Forest Witcraft

Perhaps I should start by telling you about how my beliefs and life events combined to put me where I am today. See also Appendix IV - Why I'm the luckiest Dad in the World.

1. I've always felt that school didn't properly prepare children for life. I couldn't be specific then - but I can now. Today's curriculum has very little, if any, emphasis on building self-esteem, emotional literacy or life skills.
2. I've always been inquisitive about what makes people tick. I'm always saying 'penny for your thoughts' and I was the pain at parties asking 'why?'. Not the best question in a life coaching context as it puts people on the defensive and you're not going to learn very much from their response – except how to duck!

3. In my previous life of advertising and marketing, I was always challenging clients and supporting them to come up with a different or unique solution. I was quite happy even if that strategy was successful even if that solution meant they would not be spending their promotional budget with me.
4. I was lucky enough to get a second chance with my parenting role, having a daughter later in life. I realised I wanted to “do it differently” this time around.
5. I found the power of life coaching and was swept off my feet with the positive, future-orientated approach that encouraged you to accept the past and, instead, looked at where you wanted to be and inspired you to create a strategy to get there.
6. At the same time I found my passion – to holistically develop children. I started writing programmes for children of all ages to create a sound foundation of self-esteem and confidence.
7. I found, all too often, that any child with a problem had a parent or carer with a bigger problem - usually emotional.
8. And I wanted to build on the work since my first book “Listen to your children... and they will listen to you”.

All of these things have come together to enable me to help create respectful and fulfilling family relationships for others and myself. I achieved this by using my experience of life, life coaching and related techniques, and the laws of the Universe to empower children and the people who influence them. I've been on this particular path for the last eleven years and seen huge transformations in families, so I wanted to share this with you.

I believe every child has limitless potential. It starts as a spark, which needs to be identified, protected, nurtured, developed and respected. This spark must grow into a strong flame to survive the school system, parents under pressure and the influence of some peers.

Together, we will fan the flames of self-esteem and confidence to explode the potential of the world's children.

My vision now is to take this approach into schools and work with the teachers, support staff, pupils and parents to create a whole school ethos of empowerment around young people, to change the culture of the learning environment.

Children don't come with a manual. If they did, it would need to be online – because it changes every day/minute. But children are our future and we, as parents, have what is the most challenging and most fulfilling job in the world and we learn as we go. We are all a work in progress.

Other than drawing on our own childhood memories and experiences, there is little preparation for parenting. Added to that are the pressures from society and even more stressful, all those pressures we put on ourselves.

With so much information for parents these days, it's easy to become confused and not really know where to go or who to trust.

It's also possible that our memories of how we were raised are not those we want to replicate with our own children.

Dr Tanya Byron a leading clinical psychologist, who used to produce 'The House of Tiny Tearaways' and various parenting programmes

said “I’m not doing any more parenting programmes as a clinician at all. I think it’s important that parents find their own way with their children that advice is helpful, but you need to trust your own instincts. I do still do one day a week clinical work and I find a lot of parents come to me feeling completely disempowered, because there’s a lot of advice and they don’t know what to use.”

I propose an approach that allows parents to trust their instincts and be able to parent naturally – that is what this book is all about.

Bringing up a child is not easy. However, as you already know, the difficulties are more than outweighed by the joy of watching your child grow, develop and thrive.

It is my desire that this approach will be one of the best things you will ever do for yourself and your child, and will be extremely fulfilling for you both.

There is a clear distinction between this approach and the range of ‘parenting’ programmes available.

This unique approach has evolved over 11 years and been co-created with 1,000’s of children, young people, parents and professionals working in homes, schools and Children’s Centres. The theoretical approach is a rich mixture of advanced coaching, emotional literacy, Neuroscience and the work of Perls, Kolb, Jung and Rogers.

Fritz Perls (1893-1970) developed Gestalt Therapy, which focused on raising self-awareness in order to distinguish between a person’s true nature and the personality they have developed in order to adapt to their environment. By becoming aware of their true nature, a person can then identify ways to achieve what makes them happy.

David A. Kolb (1939) has developed a theory (experiential learning) on the ways in which adults more successfully learn. He believes that we learn best by having hands-on experience of whatever it is we are learning and by then reflecting on our experiences, which then leads to greater absorption of the subject matter.

Carl Jung (1875-1961) made a huge contribution to the way in which we view the nature of human development and existence. One of these contributions was the idea of the Collective Unconscious, which is the linking of all people in the deepest part of our minds.

Carl Rogers (1902-1987) developed the person-centred psychotherapy approach in which he believed that if a person was provided with a totally accepting, non-judgemental relationship they would then be able to resolve their difficulties and find ways to successfully restructure their lives.

What does that mean? It means although our approach is innovative, it is soundly based on proven theories and when it comes to your precious relationships - that is very important.

Using advanced coaching, emotional literacy and Neuroscience we empower parents to see themselves differently, make changes for themselves and their children, to change their whole family dynamic and parent naturally.

Relevant definitions

Coaching (from Wikipedia)

Coaching refers to the activity of a coach in developing the abilities of a coachee. Coaching tends to focus on an existing problem (from which to move away) or a specific outcome that the individual wishes to achieve (move towards). In both cases, the coach aims to stimulate the coachee to uncover innate knowledge so they can achieve a sustainable result. Coaches will normally check that the specific learning can be successfully re-applied by the coachee, to deal with other problems in the future.

The structure and methodologies of coaching are very numerous with one unifying feature, coaching approaches are predominantly facilitating in style; that is to say that the coach is mainly asking questions and challenging the coachee to learn from their own resources. The coaching process is underpinned by established trust in the coachee. Coaching is differentiated from therapeutic and counselling disciplines in that the problems and outcomes have contexts which are important in the present and with aims for the future - these do not have emotional aetiology, or baggage, from the past - in other words, the coachee has the resources they need to make reasoned progress at the time that they seek coaching.

Coaching is often confused with mentoring, the difference is that a mentor will give advice based on the mentees experience and a coach will ask a question that will facilitate the coachee to find the answer they have inside.

It's surprising how coaching has and is featuring in our everyday lives. For instance how Lionel Louge the speech therapist in the wonderful

“The Kings Speech” film, used coaching techniques, see Appendix I. Also how coaching is being used in mental health to help patients focus on their strengths and improve their lives in Appendix II.

Sir John Whitmore introduced coaching and leadership into major multinationals in the UK over 30 years ago, and today it’s used in almost 90% of companies. Sir John is now the Chairman of our charity Every Family Matters.

Emotional literacy (from Wikipedia)

Emotional Literacy is a term that was used first by Steiner (1997) who says: Emotional Literacy is made up of ‘the ability to understand your emotions, the ability to listen to others and empathise with their emotions, and the ability to express emotions productively. To be emotionally literate is to be able to handle emotions in a way that improves your personal power and improves the quality of life around you. Emotional literacy improves relationships, creates loving possibilities between people, makes co-operative work possible, and facilitates the feeling of community.

He breaks emotional literacy into 5 parts:

- 1. Knowing your feelings.*
- 2. Having a sense of empathy.*
- 3. Learning to manage our emotions.*
- 4. Repairing emotional damage.*
- 5. Putting it all together: emotional interactivity.*

Having its roots in counselling, it is a social definition that has interactions between people at its heart. According to Steiner emotional literacy is about understanding your feelings and those of others to facilitate relationships, including using dialogue and self-control to avoid negative arguments. The ability to be aware and read other people's feelings enables one to interact with them effectively so that powerful emotional situations can be handled in a skillful way. Steiner calls this 'emotional interactivity'.

Steiner's model of emotional literacy is therefore primarily about dealing constructively with the emotional difficulties we experience to build a sound future. He believes that personal power can be increased and relationships transformed. The emphasis is on the individual, and as such encourages one to look inward rather than to the social setting in which an individual operates.

Thank goodness emotional literacy is finding its way more into the National Curriculum because it is such a critical knowledge to have. I particularly liked the quote from the film 'The Secret' where Dr John Hagelin PhD. A.B.M.A said "We are using at most 5% of the potential of the human mind, 100% of human potential is the result of proper education. So imagine a world where people are using their full mental and emotional potential. We could go anywhere, we could do anything, achieve anything."

Neuroscience (from Wikipedia)

Neuroscience is the scientific study of the nervous system. Traditionally, neuroscience has been seen as a branch of biology. However, it is currently an interdisciplinary science that collaborates with

other fields such as psychology, mathematics, physics, chemistry, engineering, computer science, philosophy and medicine. The term neurobiology is usually used interchangeably with the term neuroscience, although the former refers specifically to the biology of the nervous system, whereas the latter refers to the entire science of the nervous system.

The scope of neuroscience has broadened to include different approaches used to study the molecular, cellular, developmental, structural, functional, evolutionary, computational and medical aspects of the nervous system. The techniques used by neuroscientists have also expanded enormously, from molecular and cellular studies of individual nerve cells to imaging of sensory and motor tasks in the brain. Recent theoretical advances in neuroscience have also been aided by the study of neural networks.

NB. These three definitions have been taken from Wikipedia for consistency and online there are additional links to other entries for further explanation.

Here's a very straightforward explanation from Daniel Goleman's 'Social Intelligence' "Neuroscience has discovered that our brain's very design makes it sociable, inexorably drawn into an intimate brain-to-brain linkup whenever we engage with another person. That neural bridge lets us affect the brain - and so the body - of everyone we interact with, just as they do us."

Science is justifying what I know to be true and seen in action.

We have to want a different result before we start any personal development work. It's not easy to step out of our comfort zone and it requires determination. Over and above this, we need an

understanding of how our thoughts and feelings affect our behaviour. I've heard it said that "we are what we think" very profound and absolutely true. Once we become truly aware of this, we can start to develop our own empowerment and identify our passion.

This will help us to connect with our intuition, which is, consciously or – for most of us - subconsciously, the driving force in our lives. Many of you might recognise this as your 'gut feeling' or instincts. Generally, we ignore this in order to 'keep the peace' externally, at the expense of keeping our peace internally. I believe that, when we learn to trust our intuition/instincts we are self-empowered.

The earlier children learn these techniques, the more enriched and fulfilling their life will be. This belief underpins all my work and is underwritten by my coaching philosophy.

Today's children are incredibly sensitive to the emotions of people around them - rather like barometers are sensitive to changes in the weather. And, from their perspective, when they sense that you are stressed or unhappy, they feel responsible and want to make things better for you.

The causes of your stress or unhappiness may be nothing to do with them. But your children don't know that. You may be doing the best you can to shield them from what's going on, but they can feel your discomfort. When they ask you what's the matter and you say "nothing": because you want to protect them or don't have time to explain, they can sense you are not telling the truth and not being authentic or congruent.

You may be doing the best you can to protect your children. But they are confused by mixed messages. This can have a detrimental

effect on their self-esteem and confidence. Because what they are feeling/sensing doesn't match what they're being told, they start to doubt themselves. If this goes on too long, they lose confidence in themselves and start to 'act up'. That's when parents can get frustrated and try, in vain, to control their behaviour.

Parents know when they are happy their children are happy but what very few know is that their children, being sensitive to a parents emotional state, also take responsibility for that emotional state. Children don't have the confidence or the communication and emotional abilities to express their concern, so they kick off in the only way they know how to get attention. That might be screaming, hitting out or storming out of the room shouting "you don't understand me" as they slam the door.

If you can accept you don't actually have control over your children's behaviour and the best you can do is influence them positively, then you are making progress. How you influence your children depends on the quality of the relationship you have and the way you behave.

Just how do they know what kind of mood you're in before you enter the room? This is where our unique personal development approach comes in.

Children feel they are not listened to, valued or respected. It's true too, that many adults feel the same about children – so it's our choice, as adults if we want to change things. Knowing how to develop a high-quality relationship maybe the most important skill in parenting.

Our children are facing unprecedented rates of change in technology, communication, population dynamics and culture. We are trying to

prepare our children for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented in order to solve problems we don't yet know about. And as a society we can't even deal with the problems we have now.

Today's parents need new skills and I'm not talking about 'parenting skills', I'm talking about personal development skills.

You know how 'Supernanny' tells parents what to do and then leaves them for a while and comes back to chaos? Well, our approach is different. I believe you already innately know what's best for you; you just don't always trust yourself. We ask you, as parents, breakthrough questions so you can find the answers you already have inside. Then we ask you questions that will motivate and inspire you to create your own strategy to go forward.

These skills are behind our unique personal development techniques – you'll find more in this book.

Can you imagine what life your children will have when they become self-empowered? They will be able to discover gifts, abilities and passions neither you nor they, knew they had, and they will be able to reach their full potential. WOW!

What an awesome gift you are giving your children.

Children develop at different speeds, learn with different preferences and are influenced by many outside role models. This may present a further challenge but such challenges are part of being a parent. Using a personal development approach can involve and include your child in identifying their best way forward.

This approach is designed to contribute to your continued development of you as a parent - a parent whom your child values and holds in high esteem. It gives you some ideas to help you both, in partnership, to maximize your potential and live life to the full.

Case Study Mrs Z

“Before I started the course I was at my wits end with my life and my children. I had no relationship with my eldest daughter except shouting at one another. I felt a failure as a mother and the life and relationships I wanted was far away and I could not reach them. I had no idea how I could change things to get that life and those relationships I wanted desperately.

I always saw the worst in everything I did or was going to do. I dreaded every day whether or not to argue with my eldest or someone was going to tell me I was doing it all wrong. I was on a roller coaster that wouldn't stop! I needed help but didn't know where to go.

At her school I was introduced to the home school support worker who helped me tremendously. She asked me if I'd heard of the course and explained a bit about it and asked if I'd like to go on it. I agreed to go because it sounded like it could really help. I was so scared of what might happen and how people would look at me but I knew I needed to do it.

My first session was scary, I didn't know how to process what was going on. I was scared to go as I thought I was admitting that I had failed. But when I was there I realised there were other

parents feeling the same as me and that I was a good person. I just needed a different approach to things.

I was sceptical on how the course would help me and my children but I kept an open mind. (Each week put the bit in place that the trainer spoke to us about and started seeing changes in myself.) I was calmer and more patient with my children and others. My mum started to see how I handled situations calmly and dealing with the children's problems in an efficient manner without stressing and shouting.

I now realised I was a very stressed person and my energetic core was very fuzzy to myself and when I connect more energetically I found things very difficult to cope with, but I now enjoy spending time with myself and my children. I share more problems with the people closest to me to find better solutions to my problem if I cannot find one. I know now that success in life can be big or small and mean more to me than anyone else. I praise my children more for their successes and have a better relationship with my eldest.

I also think about the consequences more and choose not to do things that have bad consequences. I allow my children to solve their own problems and find their own answers with a little guidance to help them grow into even better adults and parents.

Other people have noticed changes in me and asked how. I have told them about the course and how it's helped me and how grateful I am for everything it has shown me.

I got with my partner in October when I was low and relied on him a lot. Whilst doing this course he could see a change in me

and the children. He did not like this and put me down a lot. I did not argue with him instead I sat and thought about things and then spoke to him in a reasonable manner but he always made it about him. I think he didn't like me being stronger than him.

I am going to keep practicing everything I have been shown as I know I have still got a long way to go before my life and relationships are the way I want them to be. The relationship with my children will keep growing and they are a lot happier and relaxed.

I know now good things happen if you believe they will. Positive energy not negative!!!! I will let my children make their own choices as I do not own them. They are our FUTURE!!

I would like to see myself go back to college to get qualifications I need to become an accountant, then get a job and see my children grow into loving and beautiful adults.

Thanks to the course for showing me a new and better way to look at life that works for me. I am a good person and deserve more and so do my children."

Mrs Z.

"PS Also during the course I moved house!!!"

Getting in the mood

Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.

Albert Schweitzer

The biggest challenge today is the pace of life and we are trying to do too much too quickly. Also there is a strong belief that we cannot change our lives, and this book addresses that belief. The other challenge is for you to value yourself enough to create some 'me' time and that is what this chapter covers.

As a parent you have lots of juggling to do but if you want to help develop your child you must be in the right frame of mind and take a fresh look at your life.

You may need to consider changing your current habits and look at creating new ones. After all, if you keep doing what you're doing, you'll just keep getting what you're getting now! Simply committing yourself to making one small improvement each day can make all the difference.

It can be as easy as that. In reality it is not always that easy because you've tried it before and keep going around in the same circles. If you are serious about wanting to make a change in your life and are ready to work at it, then let's start you on the path now. You will

gain a great deal from this exercise including getting some clarity and a different sense of priorities in your life.

There are a number of worksheets in this chapter that you may want to copy so that you can use them in the future. I do these exercises every 6 months or so. It is incredible how much can change in that short space of time when you have a different focus and start to create momentum. Some people create a journal to capture the key learning points as they evolve.

Step 1

Preparation

Before you start each exercise, get into an energised and positive frame of mind to get yourself motivated. Think about what makes you feel good and do it for a while!

- take a brisk walk
- play some music loudly and sing along to it
- stand up and have a big stretch
- jump up and down ten times
- stand outside and take some deep breaths of fresh air
- think of something you enjoy and breathe deeply
- think about the best your life could be. Where are you? What are you doing? Who are you with? etc.

Step 2

Don't fall into the trap of just looking at what's wrong or what you feel you don't do well.

Start noticing and take time to reflect on what you do well! Go one step further and make a list to keep near you as a reminder. This can provide a great boost to your confidence and self-esteem, which really can help you to push through barriers and move you forward towards what you want.

So, are you ready to make a commitment to yourself and start creating a life that you love?

What I do well

Make a list of at least 6 things you 'do well' and more if you can. The more you do, the better you will feel and when you think you've completed the list make an effort to come up with one or two more. The ones that are locked away are the gems!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

I want to encourage you not to use the word 'try' it doesn't inspire commitment. Instead get into the habit of using the word 'choose'. You can then choose to do something or not after assessing the consequences. It's a very powerful word to use with children, to give them a choice of what they want to do and encourages self-responsibility. Also when their choice is actioned it fills them with confidence and they are more committed to the result.

Step 3

Do eliminate the word 'failure' from your vocabulary - it can be quite a liberating experience!

Start thinking of failure as just a different outcome or result to what you had wanted or expected!

Some of your greatest learning will come from these 'different outcomes' so don't deny or ignore them. Rather, celebrate the experience and the learning you have gained. Also make a note of what's good in your life right now. We can sometimes be so focused on what's not good that not only can we miss valuable opportunities but also we miss the good stuff that's actually happening around us!

How are you? I'm often asked by cashiers and passing acquaintances.

I'm in the habit of saying 'I'm fantastic/fabulous/wonderful', with a smile, which very often causes a smile and a question of 'why?' Even when I'm not so good, I rapidly have to think of justification and something good in my life at that moment. By the time I give them a reason, I'm feeling a lot better and they might share something or just smile – a win/win situation.

What's good in my life now?

Make a list of at least 6 things that are 'good in my life now', more if you can. The more you do the better you will feel. When you think you've completed the list choose to come up with one or two more. The ones that are locked away are the gems!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Step 4

This Wheel of Life exercise will help you to put some priorities in order and also to look closely at your life at the moment.

In the centre section of the wheel below, write the eight areas of your life that are most important to you. For example; family, children, money, health and vitality, physical environment, friends, partner, fun and recreation, personal development/growth, quality time children/partner, emotional well-being, social life, spiritual life etc. If you need to, you can add more segments. Can you think of one or two more areas specifically for you?

Give each area a score of between 1-10 as to how you feel about that part of your life right now. For instance 1 is the lowest and might be rated 'catastrophic' and 10 is the highest and might be rated 'fantastic'.

For example:

Business – 6 / Money – 2 / Family – 5 / Partner – 1 / Health – 6
/ Fun – 3 / Personal development – 8 / Spiritual – 8
(You can give the same score more than once)

In the middle section of the wheel write one thing that **would greatly enhance** this particular area of your life. Think about what would make it a 10. Or if you've got a score of 10 already, what would make it even better?

For example:

Family - arrange more regular time together

Health - do more regular exercises

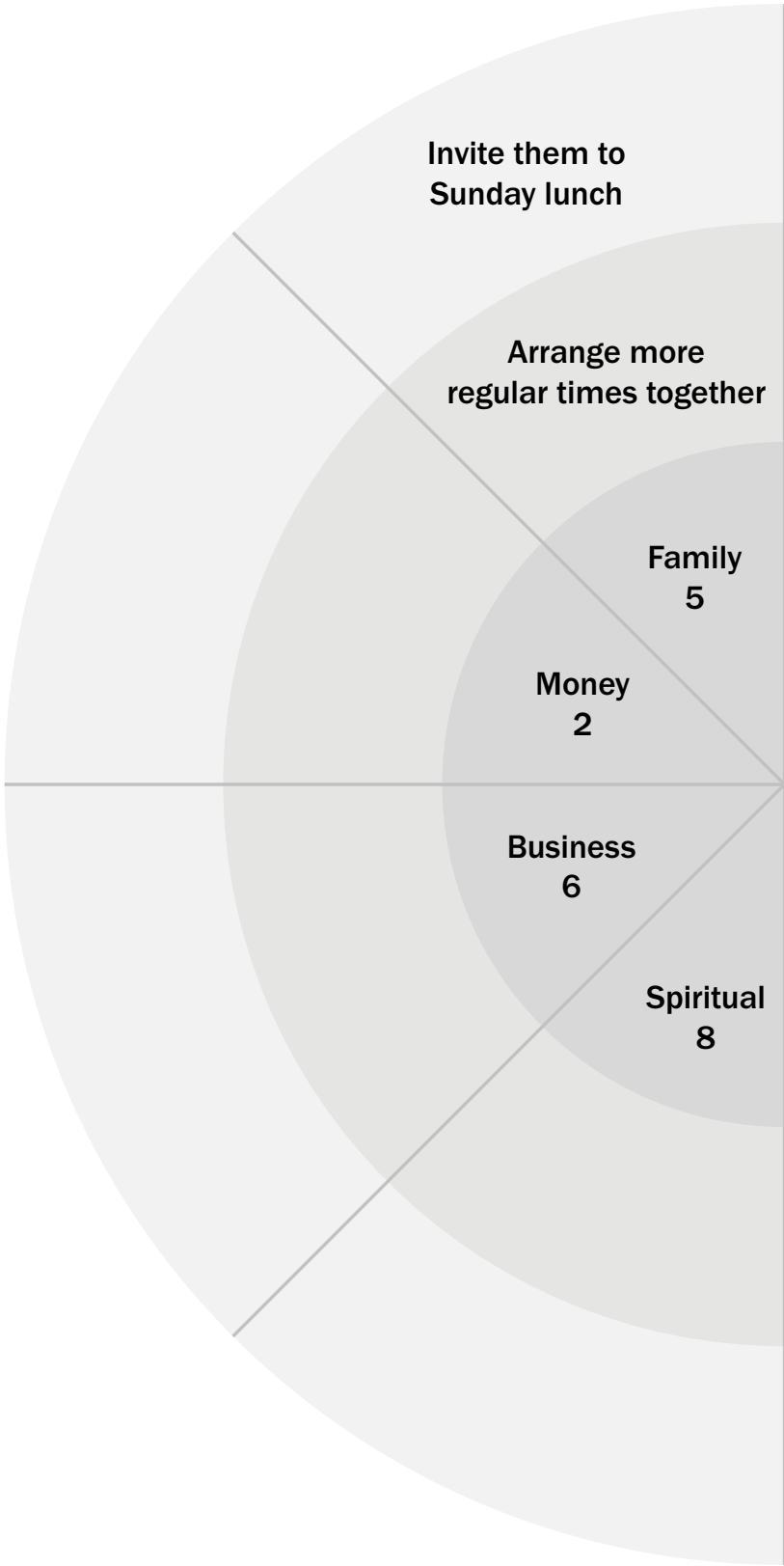
In the outer section of the wheel write one thing that you could do right now that would improve this area of your life.

For example:

Family - invite them for Sunday lunch

Health - join a health club

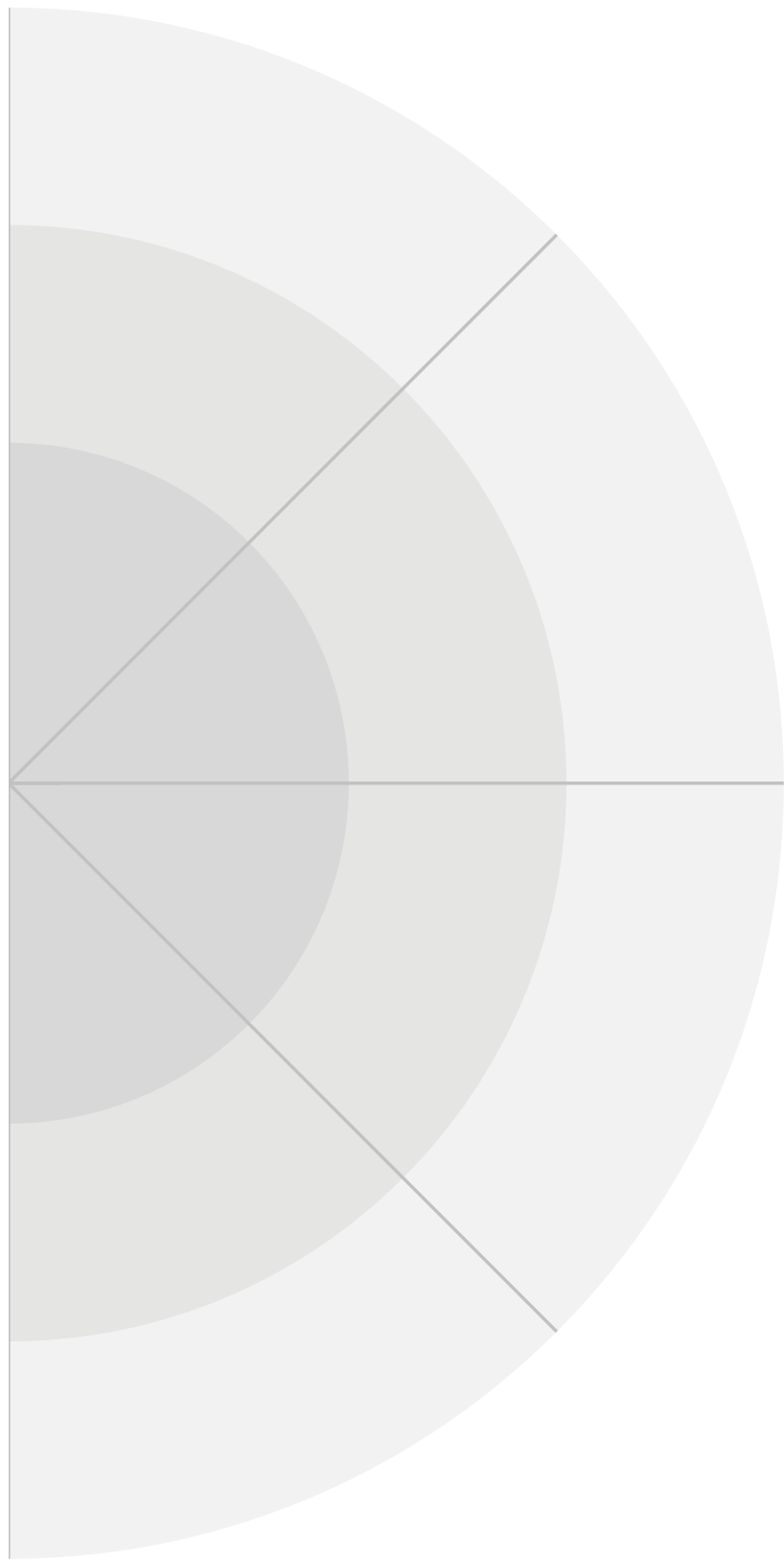
Example Wheel of Life





Your Wheel of Life





Step 6

What's important

Pick the six things you most want to do or you resonate with from the combined three lists and write them below (do not worry about the order or priority).

Under each 'want' briefly write how, if you had it now, it would improve your life.

1. Want

How will it improve my life?

2. Want

How will it improve my life?

3. Want

How will it improve my life?

4. Want

How will it improve my life?

5. Want

How will it improve my life?

6. Want

How will it improve my life?

Step 7

Here's how to score

We're now going to figure out which 'want' will have the most positive impact on your life as a whole using the Wheel of Life you completed earlier.

First of all, make a table that has three headings 'Wants' 'Score' and 'Total' across the top and a list down the side from 1 to 6 and list your 'wants'.

Referring back to Your Wheel of Life, ask yourself if you had this 'want' would it improve the individual areas of your life, e.g. Partner, Health, Fun, etc.? Go around the wheel for **EACH area ONE at a time**

and ask yourself the same question. If it will, give it 1 point under the 'Score' heading. If it won't improve your life, leave score blank and move on to the next area. **Continue around the wheel until you have gone through all of the areas and entered a score for each.**

Repeat this exercise for 'wants' 2-6. Then add up the scores for each 'want' and enter them under the 'Total' column. Your maximum score can be 8 in this example.

	Wants	Score	Total
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

You may find that 2 or even 3 'wants' score the same, or there may be one that's way above everything else. Focusing your attention and effort on the highest scoring 'want' will have the greatest positive impact on your life as a whole, and is a great place to start making some changes!

Choose one area to work on initially, then create your SMART goal - see the next chapter.

Remember to get into your most powerful/resourceful state.

Case Study Mrs R

“Before I started the course, I was a person that seemed to get angry and frustrated over the smallest of things, I felt I was overloaded with work and kids and finding it really hard to juggle everything and consequently letting myself and the people around me down, which resulted in arguments.

I could see the effects of this on my children and how they responded to a situation, which was to shout, there seemed to be a real lack of respect and communication in our family and I just felt myself going around in circles and didn't really enjoy life. I wanted to break this circle but did not know how.

When I saw the advert for the Course, it felt like someone had read my mind; I rang to sign up straight away. It took me a couple of weeks to open up to the rest of the group and really express myself deeply and I believe this was due to believing others would judge me and my situation, but as time went on, I realized everyone in the group was in the same boat, my trust grew and it was a relief to talk about my situation and I came out of the course feeling empowered and knowing I could change my situation.

The course has helped me by firstly looking at myself and changing things about myself. Just making small changes has had such an impact on my family life. The two most important tools I have gained from this course were listening and changing my thought process. I have learnt to listen to my children, actually energetic

listening, sitting there and really getting to know what they're trying to say and trying to understand it by asking them open questions, which help them to express themselves a lot more which helped them to communicate and express their feelings and emotions, I in return would also open up and express how I felt about things.

The second tool was to change my thought process, just understanding I could change my thought process at any time and react differently to situations, for instance instead of shouting, I could just walk away, calm down and then deal with the situation, I found this quite hard to do, but, reflecting on situations that I have used this skill in, makes me more determined to continue.

Towards the end of the course I felt that things weren't a problem and more of a challenge, which can be overcome. I have changed my way of thinking and don't worry about the small things anymore, changing me has changed my husband and children. It is also a challenge to continue with the changes as it's so easy to fall back into your old ways, that's why I feel the weekly Family Coaching Café is a great idea as it gives you a boost and reminds you of where you were and where you are now.

It is also provides opportunities to make a difference to other people, by talking about your situation and to show them how far you have come and that they could achieve the same."

Mrs R

Some book reviews

"I found your style of writing very personal and easy to read (I get very bored reading long words). I also found the writings of clients very interesting and "real" and could relate to many of the feelings they talked of through my own experiences of parenting and working with other parents.

I will definitely be recommending your book to others. In fact I already have a list of those who I think will benefit although in an ideal world I would probably put it on an essentials list so every parent to be had to read it before the baby was born."

Penny Lazell RGN RHV, Health Visitor 4 U

"I love your whole concept of 'energetic connection' and I really like the way you make it so practical and down to earth because it is a little outside what some parents' experience and it is a great way to introduce them to it. It's a great introduction and it works really well.

I know the idea of connection runs through the whole book and it is a powerful message. It's really easy to dip into and every chapter gives me great ideas to help me be the Mum I want to be. It's also great and inspired that all parents can get ongoing support through the community website."

Lorraine Thomas, Chief Executive, The Parent Coaching Academy, Author, 'The 7-Day Parent Coach', 'Get A Life' and 'The Mummy Coach'

“A well thought and well written book involving every aspect of parenting starting from problem solving strategy to celebrating each step. A unique book with fun and entertaining exercises for kids. I really like the idea of a Happy Book for younger kids where the Author has adapted the ‘Power of thought’ and ‘Power of Positive Affirmations’ concepts which I believe works very well with the kids.

By adapting the techniques mentioned in this book will not just change an individual but the whole family. Parents today are under pressure to be perfect parents but this book allows a parent to enjoy the journey of parenting in a positive way.

*A very inspiring quote that is dear to my heart... “To be in your children’s memories tomorrow, you have to be in their lives today.”
- Barbara Johnson”*

Seema Thobhani, Author of a series of 6 positive books for children and a Child Well-Being Consultant, Kidz4Mation Ltd

“This is not a typical parenting book; the focus is not on fixing but on maximizing potential! In this inspirational book Alan Wilson brings to life many wonderful, key concepts. This book will teach you how to empower you (as a parent) and your wonderful offspring!

I’m also delighted to inform, this book is congruent; it really does what it says on the tin!

“When you are at your most resourceful and set the intention to connect with someone who is equally receptive, you will open up a whole new world of connections and possibilities!!! This is

magic in action.”

This book focuses on the concept of ‘energetic connections’. This is truly an eye opener. This book highlights the joys of being deeply connected with yourself and your children and provides you with resources to support you to unlock your parenting potential to maximise your parenting successes. Alan’s writing allows you to experience his wonderful sensitivity and this goes a long way to help you to support the real needs of your children and young people.“

Vivien Sabel UKCP. MBACP. ScPTI. MNCP, Writer, Researcher, Infant Body Language Expert, Parenting Expert, Psychotherapist & Mother

“The book contains photocopiable pages where parents can make note of their goals, aspirations and priorities. I loved the “Wheel of Life” which allows us to look at eight areas of life that are most important, and find ways to enhance these areas and coming up with one thing that could improve them right now. We can make SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed).

When we implement these exercises and start to see improvements in our own life, the positivity impacts on the whole family. We can learn to listen to our children, make them feel special and valued and help them to achieve their potential giving support, respect and appreciation. We are encouraged to celebrate our successes and share our achievements as a family.”

Wendy, Inside the Wendy House

“It is unusual in that it does not simply tell you ‘what to do’ but gives you a series of personal development exercises showing you how to be happy and comfortable yourself, making a better parent and advising how to be a ‘Parent Champion’ to your family, perhaps easing the sometimes stressful road of raising children. It also offers free ongoing support within a community of like-minded parents.”

Bloggomy

Some reviews of the approach

“Alan provides an insightful and accessible approach to helping families. Boldly encouraging parents to consider their energy and intuition, he taps into knowledge about how the human brain operates and reminds us that our outlook towards ourselves and others influences our communication – and the communication that we receive back. You can really hear his enthusiasm and having met Alan, I am not surprised to hear about the positive difference his courses are making.”

Rachel Bamber, Brighter Thinking & Head of Assessments, Lead Trainer, NeuroLeadership Group. Rachel is 1 of the first 6 people in the world to achieve a Post-Graduate Certificate in the Neuroscience of Leadership, currently studying for the Master’s

“Coaching is the practical tool to deliver strengths based ‘Recovery Model’ type interventions with families and individuals. I

am in support of using this approach to families both because of it's effectiveness and it's congruence with a person centred approach. From a more systemic perspective because it develops transferable skills it does have the potential for a viral impact. The DofH last year agreed with our proposal to use the Recovery Model to bring about coordinated multi agency direct practice with users of the new multi million pound centres for disabled children opening in Swale, Thanet and Ashford in April."

Graham Smith, East Kent Area Manager for Disabled Children's Services, Kent County Council

"Incorporating the concepts and using the tools in this book will magically transform your outlook on parenting and relationships."

Dr Rani Bora, MB BS, MRCPsych Psychiatrist, Life Coach and EFT practitioner

"One of the parents on the course (now Parent Champion level 2) asked me what she can do next and I advised her that any 'parenting' programme would in fact be a step backwards. I think there's real value to this programme and why shouldn't everyone access it? There's a definite gap to be filled, families that have had counselling or need a way to move on, especially with self esteem issues and also taking control of their lives – it's a perfect fit."

Mrs Anita Smith, Children and Families Coordinator, Bligh Children's Centre

"Awareness of the power of how deeper listening can transform relationships has helped me to engage more effectively with my students and they with each other; it forms the foundations of

powerful communication skills and builds self esteem.”

Georgina Saralis, Deputy Head, SEN School

“Since starting on the course (now Parent Champion level 2), Mrs D has become more confident in her parenting of her children. She is more assertive in setting boundaries and can maintain those. Her confidence will hopefully allow her to make the right choices for her and her family even though they may not be easy ones. The social worker Tatjana Ramshaw has noticed a great difference.”

Ms Caroline Lindesay, Senior Practitioner, Chatham Integrated Services Team

“To empower and respect anyone, never mind just your children, you have to first empower and respect yourself - and this book does a great job of teaching you how”

Martin Goodyer, MBPsS MAC, Business, Corporate & Executive Coaching

“I know that several parents attended the Parent Champion Programme over the last eight weeks and the teachers have been reporting back to me about the changes they have seen in the parents’ relationships with the children and indeed the children themselves. The outcome has been very positive.

I can see the impact your programme is having and feel it is providing a vital service for parents. It is apparent that life is faster paced, often resulting in more stress for some families. The relationship that teachers have with parents has evolved with

parents being more open, wanting to share their problems and seeking sources of advice. Parenting has always been a difficult job, never more so than now and so programmes such as yours are greatly needed to positively empower families.

Keep up the good work!.”

Miss T J Gobell, Headteacher, Bligh Infant School

“Alan seems to really have a knack for inspiring single mums with confidence and getting things to look up for them and their kids”

Mark Reckless MP

