



# CBTS NEWSLETTER



November 2008

## TEACHING THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

### CBTS

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"Gratitude is more than an attitude. Recent studies show that grateful people are happier, more resilient and less depressed. They also have higher self-esteem and better relationships. The beauty of gratitude is that it does not have to come naturally. It can be taught

*Daily Dose.* Take time each day to encourage your children to express gratitude. They can do this by making an entry in a family journal or by simply talking about what they are grateful for.

*Model Thanks.* As with everything, modeling is the best way to teach your children to be grateful. Be lavish with your thanks. Thank the cashier for ringing up your groceries. Thank the bus driver for returning your child home safely. Letting your children see that you are grateful will encourage them to be so as well.

*Establish Rituals.* We all know the importance of family rituals. Establishing rituals that highlight being thankful is a wonderful teaching tool. Start dinner with each family member sharing what they are most thankful for. Say goodnight by sharing what you were thankful for that day.

*Volunteer.* Volunteering is a great way for your children to see gratitude in action. Your children not only benefit from that, but they also get to

experience the warmth of appreciation.

*Assign Chores.* Children learn by doing chores. They learn what it means to be part of a whole. They learn their contributions are important. They also learn that most things take effort.

*Thank You Notes.* Writing thank you notes for gifts is a very literal way of teaching your children gratitude.

*It's the Little Things.* A little common courtesy can go a long way and taking time to notice the little acts of service in a family or a neighborhood can be so positive. Look for ways to say thank you often.

*Make being thankful fun.* Start a gratitude journal, do something called the gratitude dance or even make a scrapbook with your children by cutting out words of gratitude and pictures that represent times they are grateful for.

*Focus on the Positive.* When we focus on the negative it blurs everything else. Noticing what's positive in your life seems to simplify the good things. When your children start being negative, help them flip it around by reminding them of what's wonderful in their world."

love builds the warmest nests

## PARENTING THROUGH CHANGE

### *Shake It Up to Break It Up*

"Sometimes you have to shake it up to break it up. Shaking up dysfunctional behavior patterns and family relationships can be a great tool. Creating disequilibrium in an unhealthy family structure can be extremely useful and appropriate if the patterns and alliances that define it are causing problems and are deeply entrenched. By creating a major shift in how things are working around your house you can clear the way to getting your family back on track. When old habits and patterns all of the sudden no longer work your child will be vulnerable to your efforts to redefine things.

All families have a structure, and if yours is counterproductive, then it's time to make a plan to start over. You can't keep doing what you've been doing and expect to get different results. Things have to change. That change can be accomplished efficiently and dramatically when the adults in the house stop playing patsy and start being parents. The idea is for you, the parents, to step up, start running things again and set clear objectives implemented with a strong, shoulder-to-shoulder unified front and a newfound commitment to consistency instead of constant waffling. Self-destructive patterns are put

on a hit list to be eliminated, and new patterns are adopted.

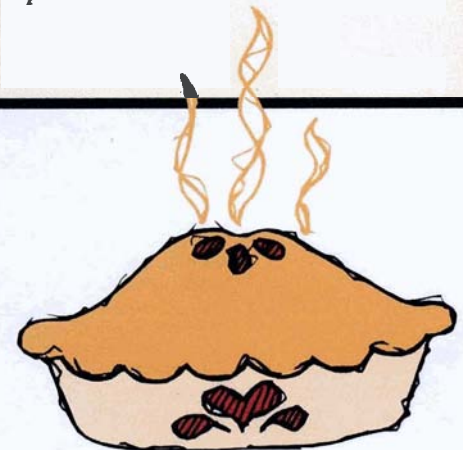
The dominant child will naturally be upset and confused about being tossed out of power. Good. That can work in your favor as parents. Again, in this situation, confusion can be constructive. Children in these circumstances, regardless of age, will at first show frustration marked by extreme whining, temper fits and so forth, but will ultimately seek security, predictability and sameness.

I don't know for certain how it happened, but many parents today have bought into their children's sense of entitlement. Some operate under the theory that they're better parents if they spare their children any difficult times or challenges. Sometimes it is guilt, insecurity or maybe just plain parental laziness. It's easier for some to cave in than it is to take a stand. Here is one piece of advice: Give your children too much love and not enough money. They can handle that. They will adjust. Remember, you teach people how to treat you. If you spoiled your children, then you have to be the one to un-spoil them."

(cont.)

### Top Ten Most Common Excuses for Not Shaking Things Up

1. *I can't do it alone and my spouse either won't help or will undercut me.*
2. *There is no point, my child just doesn't respond to parenting like other kids.*
3. *It is just a phase; kids will be kids and I don't want them to just hate me.*
4. *I just can't deal with this right now; I have too much going on in my own life.*
5. *I'm so tired of hearing complaints. I just want some peace.*
6. *They have shut me out and couldn't care less what I say.*
7. *They don't love or respect me so I just don't care anymore.*
8. *I have my own problems and I have to fix me first.*
9. *I tried and I failed. It's too late now.*
10. *I know me and I'm just not tough enough to pull it off.*



"It's essential to remember that the most important things you should feel compelled to give your children are protection, preparation for the world and love. Everything else is a luxury. But you can't expect children to know that. Creating disequilibrium, resetting the context for a disgruntled, complaining, sourpuss child, might mean taking away everything that is not essential to their welfare. I'm not talking about deprivation here. Your children should still have food, shelter and clothing, but feel free to cut out everything else to shake them up and get their attention. Research is very clear: Children who are overindulged are typically unhappy. They're unhappy because they appreciate nothing. Misbehaving and ill-mannered children should not enjoy a rich and luxurious lifestyle. If you allow that imbalance, if you continue to reward bad behavior, you might as well teach them to go on red and stop on green and then pitch them the car keys. That's not how the world works and you must remember that your job is to socialize them and prepare them for the world.

To create disequilibrium in a dysfunctional family where the children have seized control or are behaving in immature and unproductive ways, there are techniques that can be very effective. Parents must first declare the house a guilt-free zone for all adults with the title Mother and Father. You must free yourselves to set boundaries, redefine rules, renew mother and father alliances and generally rock the house. Give yourself permission because it's your job to raise your children responsibly. It's not your job to win some popularity contest with your children. They may like you for it and they may not; either way it's your job. They didn't give you that responsibility and they cannot excuse you from it. Your job is not for your children to like you, your job is for them to respect you and be guided by you."



## Ways to Create Constructive Disequilibrium

1. **Gather the army.** Your army is the parent team. Your mission is to recognize that you've lost control of your kids and then to take steps to reclaim it. Make a commitment to each other that you'll be mutually supportive. You must agree that your first obligation is to present a united front.

Create a timetable to implement the steps. It takes some planning. Rehearse your approaches so that both of you are clear on the plan. Create a game plan with a plan B. You might use the following tactics:

- ♦ Hold a family meeting
- ♦ Explain some of the concerns and potential future consequences if you continue as before.
- ♦ Explain that many of the plans will create a change in the normal routine and that not everyone is going to be happy, but this is a position you're taking for the benefit of all concerned.
- ♦ Set the date for implementation.

Write an expression of commitment. This may seem daunting at first, but if you work together and don't try to cover every possible incident, it will become a source for further amendments. Remember, you don't have to be perfect. Just a beginning and you can always change it later.

2. **Anticipate animated resistance.** Think ahead and make a list of your child's most probably power plays and plan a reaction to each.

3. **Develop a communication system.** It will be important to develop a communication system between the parents so that the children will quickly understand that they cannot divide you.

4. **Stay positive and look ahead.** When you commit to shaking up your dysfunctional family, it can seem like a daunting and dreary task, so you need to keep in mind that you're doing an important, honorable and exciting thing. This is an opportunity to create the family environment you've always wanted. It is, by far, the most important work you'll ever do. It will have long-lasting rewards in the form of children who grow up to be better parents themselves. You're breaking a cycle that otherwise might well make their lives very difficult.



## CBTS PROCTOR TRAINING

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

6:30 p.m.

220 East 3900 South #16

Presenter: Carlos Serna



## CPR/FIRST AID CERTIFICATION

Hunter Library (4800 W. 4100 S.)

Thursday, November 6 5:30 p.m.

Sandy Library (10075 S. 1350 E.)

Saturday, November 15 10:15 a.m.

Riverton Library (12860 S. Redwood Road)

Wednesday, November 19 5:30 p.m.

### 14 Lines to Make You Smile

1. My ex-husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God and I didn't.
2. I don't suffer from insanity; I enjoy every minute of it.
3. I used to have a handle on life, but it broke.
4. You're just jealous because the voices only talk to me.
5. I'm not a complete idiot - - some parts are missing.
6. God must love stupid people; He made so many.
7. Consciousness: That annoying time between naps.
8. Wrinkled was not one of the things I wanted to be when I grew up.
9. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a cash advance.
10. They call it PMS because Mad Cow Disease was already taken.
11. He who dies with the most toys is nonetheless **DEAD**.
12. The trouble with life is there's no background music.
13. Out of my mind. Back in five minutes.
14. Stupidity is not a handicap. Park elsewhere!

The first 1.5 hours is CPR training and the second 1.5 hours is First Aid. If you attend the course, make certain you let them know you are with CBTS. They will send the bill to us. All proctors must remain current in both CPR and First Aid. The course cards are good for two years.



Thanks to his new pop-out fullness Indicator, Andy was able to leave the Thanksgiving table satisfied, not stuffed.

## BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTS

### Benefits of behavioral contracts:

- ♦ It gives the child a sense of justice and control, making him or her more compliant to the agreement and it gives the parents the clear understanding of the plan.
- ♦ The essential components of a behavioral contract are clear, unambiguous statements of (1) the target or problem behaviors, (2) the consequences and currencies for performing (or failing to perform) them, (3) the contingency between the behavior and the consequences and (4) the time frame in which the contract will be enforced.

- ♦ By writing the agreements down with the specific currencies and behaviors, the contract can be final authority, which underscores the importance of stating the terms of the plan so there is no confusion or slipping between the cracks. Signing the contract increases the commitment of the parent and child to fulfill their roles as stated.

"It's always a good idea for two parties to get an agreement in writing, and that holds true with parents and children too. It can very be effective to put down on paper just what you expect of your child and what the consequences will be if the child does or does not go with the program. These are called behavioral contracts. In addition to providing a good record of what has been agreed to, these tend to have a crystallizing or memorializing effect on the child. Once they've seen it in writing, it's hard for them to deny that they understood it.

Creating a contract is also good because it is a positive problem-solving communication. It is an active two-party negotiation in which both sides are interested. And it is something that is jointly owned by the two parties involved. This can be used with any child old enough to read and understand what is included in the contract. For younger children it is sometimes helpful to substitute a wall chart that includes a list of duties, chores and responsibilities for the child.

Behavioral contracts should provide very clear and understandable language about such issues as behavior, health, safety, social conduct and academics. They should address expectancies in each of these areas and positive and negative consequences for performance or failure of performance. The contracts should involve language that is age-appropriate and can be clearly understood by the child.

Contracts are good because they take the personality conflicts out of the situation. If something is agreed to in a contract and the child violates the agreement, the child has only to look at the agreement to understand that he failed to comply. It's important that children own up to the consequences of their own choices rather than being frustrated and angry with their parents. Without written agreements, discussions often become forgotten, especially when it is to someone's benefit to do so."

"The dictionary is the only ace that success comes before work. Hard word is the price we must pay for success. I think you can accomplish anything if you're willing to pay the price."

Vince Lombardi

"It is not a question of how well each person works. The question is how well they all work together."

Lloyd Dobens

"Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

Henry Ford



## BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTS

*The dictionary is the only place that success comes before work. Hard work is the price we must pay for success. I think you can accomplish anything if you're willing to pay the price."*

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## BEHAVIORAL CONTRACT



### *Example:*

I \_\_\_\_\_(the child) and we \_\_\_\_\_(the parent) enter into the following behavioral contract in order to create order and harmony in our home. This contract will be reviewed 30 days from the date of signing, at which time it is subject to either being continued or renegotiated. By our agreeing to the terms and conditions of this behavioral contract, all parties understand and accept that they are bound by the contract and are not free to vary from the terms and conditions.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (the child) agree that I will perform the behaviors listed below in the manner that they are set forth and described. (Insert defined behaviors, such as completing homework in a timely manner, being home on time, addressing my mother and father in a respectful tone, not getting online or on the phone, etc.)

I \_\_\_\_\_(the child) agree that should I violate the contract by failing to perform the behaviors set out above that I will be choosing to suffer the following consequences. (Insert penalties or loss of privileges associated with poor performance about the specified target behaviors.)

### *Parent Section*

We, \_\_\_\_\_(the parent), agree if \_\_\_\_\_(the child) performs the behaviors as outlined above, that in addition to escaping any of the negative consequences outlined above, he/she will have earned the right to the following privileges. (Insert privileges to be earned, such as free time to watch television, use of the family car, movie, gift, etc.) Both parties acknowledge that this contract is entered into voluntarily and that the terms and conditions will be respected. If performance is accomplished, parents agree that the child shall not be denied privileges and other consequences. \_\_\_\_\_(the child) agrees that if he/she fails to perform that it is him/her and not his/her parents who have chosen to forfeit the consequences, and he/she will not whine, complain, or rebel.

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The Parents(s)

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The Child

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Date