

Creative discipline

I feel as though I need to start a session on discipline with a million caveats. So I want you to understand as we work through today's session that we are empowering you with tools to have in your arsenal to use when times are warranted for it.

Who was at the movie night? In the movie parental guidance he says I'm going to take out my cool tool box, my repair square, and talk in my cool blue voice, and use my exit shoes... the analogy is great because he can use different tools in all kinds of situations to parent. One overall strategy can't blanket cover every possible thing.

Suppose you were building a house. Could you approach each phase of the house with only a hammer? No! Different parts you would need different tools. And possibly multiple ones to do one job. You couldn't put in the plumbing or the electrical with only a hammer. I want us to think of our kids this way for a bit. Our kids, their emotions, and their personalities, as well as a host of external factors means that we are building different parts of who they are. Not every time that we come upon a situation can we be guaranteed to use the same approach. So today when I'm talking about different ways to approach your child, you may scoff at some "thinking that won't work for my kid" keep listening, keep your mind open to ALL the options at your fingertips. There may just be one that works.

Also I am by no means standing up here saying I have it all together.. I could walk out of here and have an epic parenting fail as we're leaving church today. This is where we need to come together as moms and support each other in as we figure out these super complex little people that God gave us to raise. Grace for our kids, grace for others, and grace for ourselves... Parenting like many things in life is a skill that we need to work on to get better at.

First and foremost when we engage with our kids in discipline we need to get our understanding of what discipline is.

Discipline comes from *discipulus*, the Latin word for **pupil**, which also provided the source of the word **disciple**.

Definition of discipline

1

: **punishment**

2

obsolete : **instruction**

3

: a field of study

4

: training that **corrects**, molds, or perfects the mental **faculties** or moral character

5

a : control gained by **enforcing** obedience or order

b : orderly or **prescribed** conduct or pattern of behavior

c : **self-control**

6

: a rule or system of rules **governing** conduct or activity

so.... This means that when you discipline the MAIN goal is to TEACH!!! sometimes punishment or consequences is needed, and warranted, but with the goal in mind that they are LEARNING!

And we don't want just behaviour we want HEART!!! We want to change their heart to be empathic to others, to feel loved and connected to us to feel confident to come to us when they are overwhelmed.

Has any of you ever learned a new skill that another person had to teach you?

How many of you learned to drive standard? My first car was a standard, my dad took me out to teach me. He was patient, calm, and understanding. Did I stall out? Lots! was it embarrassing for him? sure! But he knew the more flustered and frustrated he got so would I. He needed to remain calm so I could remain calm. Or if you haven't learned standard. Cooking...

AS we approach parenting situations we need to check ourselves before we engage. Am I ready to teach? Or do I just want consequences for this little guy who keeps pulling his sisters hair!? We are teaching them new SKILLS every day!!

AS WELL AS GROWING OUR SKILLS!!!

In the whole brain child by Dan S and Tina payne Bryson says this "AS parents become more aware and emotionally healthy, their children reap the rewards and also move towards health. That means that integrating and cultivating your own brain is one of the most loving and generous gifts you can give your child"

What he's saying is understanding yourself, why you react, and how you react and becoming a better person yourself will help you to have healthy happier well balanced kids.

More and More I am realizing the importance of being able to go into my brain and control my own emotions and analyze why I'm reacting the way I am and work on me before I can work on my kids. This is like a muscle... anyone ever started a new exercise routine. How much did the first day suck.... Spin story, but I'm getting better and stronger. My muscles remember, they recover faster, and grow stronger. Bonnie did such a great job last session on working on recognizing our emotions and when we are in overwhelm and working on positive ways to come out of it. I can tell you from being on this journey of understanding all of this brain stuff that recognition is the most important step. If you can recognize in your self when you are in overwhelm, you can work that muscle better and better to come out of it. There are areas in my life I can tell you I have really good skills in that area,.. and then I'm hit with a new one where I can grow, and this brings me back to my initial point. When I heal myself, and work on me, I am doing it for my kids. A whole new area I can be better in.

Once we recognize when we are in overwhelm like Bonnie mentioned it is better to walk away unless someone is getting hurt if you feel like you are not in the green zone (which is when you are ready to engage and so is your child) When you are ready to teach... not discipline.

We as the parents actually need to figure out how to pull ourselves out of overwhelm before we can engage in pulling others out of overwhelm. You cant save a drowning person if we are drowning ourselves.

Ever heard that saying its 20 percent of what happens to you and 90 per cent of how your react.. so lets work on how you react.... I believe that applies in parenting to.

So today I want to look at some practical ways to teach your children and minimize overwhelm in your home.

PRAY

I know... i know... obvious... but I cant tell you how many times God has given me a strategy, calmed my overwhelm, or given me a new perspective on my kids/husband. When we walk out that we go to Him when we are troubled our kids see that. Don't we want our kids to know that in this great big crazy messed up world that there is a constant!! I do... I so do... I will not ever have all the answers but He will...

Can I get a show of hands of people who have prayed about a strategy for their kids and received something in prayer that worked? I have.. and lots of those strategies I wouldn't have found in a parenting book.

If your struggling with your devos or connecting to Him bring your overwhelm of your kids to Him.. he cares about them so much more than you do!

REFLECTION & PLANNING

Take a good look at your life and see if you need to slow down. In general and in the moment... and make a plan

- is selah days crazy to get here? of course! Do you need to get ready yourself before the kids are up? I noticed with Gray I would keep barking commands at her and then run off to do my own thing. I would come back and she wouldn't be done it and then I'm mad. But if I was ready and could stand there encouraging her to do the thing that I asked her and be more focused I would have a smoother morning.

-Maybe putting things out the night before... everyone have their ski pants, mittens, hat, boots, lunch kit packed, coffee ready to just be turned on, clothes picked out. The power of routines in your life can be transformational. I want you to LEAN into it. just one thing you can do different today to reduce a moment in your life that continues to throw you in to overwhelm day after day.

- in our house, thats the hour between when my little guy wakes up for a nap and the girls get home and when dad gets home for supper. I am trying to get supper going, Cade wants snuggles, the girls are emotionally needy about their day...I needed to do something to change it. I had to reduce my expectations about WHEN supper would be ready. I wanted it ready the moment Tim walked in the door. But I need to sit with all my kids for a few minutes and I could reset the evening. A mom once suggested to me once to set a timer for 15 minutes and just sit on the floor. So I do.... and it works. I usually get more accomplished if I stop and connect with them and then move forward then if I bull doze into task mode.

ARE YOU HUNGRY OR TIRED or sick? and should not engage?

obviously you should not be permissive in this but sometimes there is situations where your awareness is that I am really really tired, or we are all hungry and acting out. You are allowed to say, "We will discuss this later." But then following through in a later conversation about how we should actually act.

GET THEM TO SWITCH POSITIONS TO CREATE A PAUSE.

- that pause can be all you need to not enrage your child but engage your child.

What we are doing when we are parenting is creating a culture in our home. Either a culture of love where emotions are embraced and your allowed to be and feel. Or a culture of seperation, emotions are shoved down and not discussed.

One of the shifts in thinking that you have to get into is that this isn't a "situation by situation" parenting approach. Its a overarching culture of your home that is created through many encounters with your kids. For example. If one child takes a toy away from another kid in your home. You engage with that child in that situation explaining how was cant take toys away from each other, being kind. But later in the day a toy is taken away from the child who was the taker by another child. Now is a great time to engage the empathic side of their brain. "remember when you took that toy away, it doesn't feel good to have the toy taken away right?" " it made you sad to have that toy taken away from you?" linking situations together helps them create connections between their emotions and their actions.

You are creating a re- routing of their brain, building that staircase in their brain from a rickety weak one to a strong industrial one. co-construction pg 85

ROLE PLAY and WHAT TO DO INSTEAD:

And then we need to give them a better strategy.

What should we do instead?

Often we tell them what not to do..but not what to do instead. Because thats work right?

We've come up with in our home a 3 step approach for them to remember.

- 1) ask the person to stop what their doing/ give the toy back to them
- 2) tell them how it made you feel if that doesn't work
- 3) come get mom. - we re route their brain to come up with a better solution. - building a better staircase. When they have the choice to go to overwhelm you've just created a link to a different option.

Kris' Tomato plant analogy - When we plant a tomato plant, lets start with the seed. What can you expect of the seed? nothing.. everything that little seed needs depends on you. You need to water it, provide good, fertile soil, and make sure its planted in the right location. So to link this analogy to our kids, When we get a little baby- toddler its our job, to do everything for them. Provide them with food, clothing, but also, a warm and loving home, a place where they can learn and grow. Then as we get a little seedling we need to protect it from animals, like rabbits that want to come and eat it so we put a cage around it. And we need to protect our little ones with boundaries, but still allow it to grow. Then as it out grows those boundaries and we remove the cage it produces fruit. but is the fruit red and ready to use? no. Its green. You can see the fruit but its not ready to be used yet. I think sometimes in parenting this can be the trickiest part. We can see our kids are producing fruit. For example, My five year old can clean up her room when I ask her to... bus she doesn't ALWAYS keep a clean room or WANT to clean it up. So I see the fruit. but she doesn't have the maturity to always do it on her own. And I need to be along side her still reminding her to keep going. As that green fruit ripens and turns red we get excited! Fruit of our labour! As you look at your child its important to note where they are and what you can actually expect of them.

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

grounded story.

(MY cousin thought grounded meant digging her in to the ground and was terrified)

- Telling your kid HOT... they don't actually know what Hot is until they REALIZE what hot is... we say HOT thinking they know that if they touch it they know they will be burned and that It will hurt for a long time.. but we just say HOT! We need to explain to them do they understand what you actually told them? have them repeat it back to you in their own words.

NATURAL CONSEQUENCES or RELATIVE CONSEQUENCES

- walks nicely holding my hand in the parking lot or I carry him.
- if he keeps throwing a toy he no longer gets to play with that toy
- if he cant sit at the table on a big boy chair he will have to sit in the high chair
- Myckenna walks nicely beside me in the store or she has to sit in the cart.
- they keep splashing in the bath the bath is over
- dont want to wear your mittens.. your

What we are doing when we can come up with a consequence that actually applies to the situation we are empowering our children with a choice. And a consequence that we can easily and publicly follow through on. They are also consequences that don't add guilt for me. They are a natural product of THEIR choice. and often we allow grace, enforce the consequence, have a conversation with them and then they are allowed for instance out of the highchair. or out of the cart.

The younger they are the more you need to

REDUCE YOUR WORDS

-With Cade my 2 year old his discipline needs to be less than a minute maybe even 30 seconds or he doesn't care.

“Cade you are not allowed to pull hair. It hurts Myckenna. She's sad now. do you think Can You to say sorry.?”

Long winded conversations loose their power if you are long winded.

TELL THE STORY

You can do this in times of not conflict or overwhelm in fact I encourage this like crazy. So a great time is the supper table which I've talked lots about. high/lows is in fact story telling. But we do it on the way home for things in the van. When we've been places. Asking questions like about what we ate? What did they play? what did they learn at church? If your kids are in deeper they even send you push notifications on the app for questions to ask. What a great tool to help to dig into your kids brains and find out what they think!

To Quote from “parenting from the inside out” -Communication is often about the external events of life rather than about the mental like of the family members”

We talk often about WHAT is going on, not HOW WE FEEL about whats going on. “drop this kid off there, pick this kid up there, I need to grab a birthday present for this.” instead of are you enjoying school? do you like taking dance lessons? Whats something you like about your sibling? what do you like about our family? What could you all find out by asking feeling questions?

Retelling a story from during the day about how we overcame a hard situation, to handled something well or not so well allows is 1) to be vulnerable with our kids, 2) helps them in future situations 3) helps them process

CHASE THE WHY.

Heres a real life example from our home.

So on a Thursday, everyone came home and dropped everything at the front door with out even putting their shoes away. So we do this thing called a five minute clean up where everyone does 1 or 2 jobs for 5 minutes and the house is livable again. So I asked Myck to do 1 small job “like pick up

your socks and bring them to the laundry and put away your back pack” Gray “please go clean up the shoes in the front entrance”

Gray Looses it... crying, sobbing, frustration, wailing, gnashing of teeth. “its so unfair!- blah” familiar to anyone else here?

I had two choices. “seriously, we’re all doing our jobs, we all live in this house, get going move it! I do so much around here I am asking you to do one thing.” or Chase the why? and embrace her emotions

“Gray why are you so sad”

“because myckenna has two little jobs and I have a big one”

“why do you feel yours is bigger?”

“because I have to take all the shoes out of the closet to reorganize it! its going to take me all evening”

-side note

Every saturday It is our eldest Job to take the shoes in the front closet and pull them out and organize them back into pairs and put them in there neatly. - she thought that was what I was asking her to do.

“No no no sweety just put those 3 pairs of shoes in the closet!”

- she wiped her tears and we had a giggle and she moved to do it.

- did your heart soften when you understood her emotions. It WOULD have been unfair if all of us had a 2 minute job and her job was 20 minutes! I could empathize with her. Understand her frustration and then help her return to joy!

BE WILLING TO DO A REPAIR

are you willing to say you were wrong or apologize to your kids? One of the most memorable experiences I remember at school was when a teacher had been teaching us something and a student told her she was teaching it wrong. Now she had two options, to blame something or someone else. (which I noticed I do often and its a sign of a prideful person when you cant take responsibility for your own actions) or realize she was wrong. She apologized to our whole class... “ I am so sorry, I got so confused and now you guys are all messed up. Lets restart this whole thing this was all my fault” I remember being floored that a person of authority with no real reason except remorse, needed to apologize and she did. She didn't HAVE to, but she did. Also, here is my take on forgiveness. We need to encourage our kids to forgive, but they don't have to feel like forgiving right away. Think of yourself. Has your husband ever disappointed you and you were just SOOOO MAD and but he asked for forgiveness? did you quickly say “oh! no big deal I forgive you. I love you so much! Lets hug” No you probably were mad for a bit... maybe you did extend forgiveness right away but your emotions had to catch up until you felt the forgiveness you knew you were supposed to extend. We expect this of our kids though. “say sorry and play nice now” Would you play nice with someone who deeply hurt you or had just hit you over the head? Allowing your child space to process those emotions is important in them learning that their emotions are of value and not to just be stuffed down.

STOP SAYING “STOP” WHEN IT COMES TO EMOTIONS

aaHave you ever been in deep emotional pain? What if someone came up to you and said “stop it. you need to stop crying and just get over it.” “ you are overreacting” would that help you to process your emotions or make another layer to your emotions? Now you're mad at the person who is supposed to help you! your other option is to

NAME IT TO TAME IT- EMBRACING EMOTIONS

Ohhh... tough one right. When you child lets out a big emotion, how comfortable are you to deal with it? If your child gets angry is your first response to meet that level of anger? Do you know how to quell it?

When you recognize an emotion on your child name it. You look sad, you look frustrated, you seem angry, are you having a tough day?

That really hurt you? Help them to recognize on their body where they feel the emotion. Does embarrassed make their ears hot? nervous make their stomach flip flop? anger make their head feel hot or tense all over their body? Do they clench their fist? point it out.. AWARENESS is what we want to create

and then retell the story with them.

I want you to think about a time when a friend/husband, family member may have angered you. Don't think to much about it. I'm an external processor and even if your an internal processor did you share that story with someone else? did just talking about it make you feel better? I know that sometimes I just need to talk about it in order to get the repetitive-ness out of my head. You know those thoughts that just keep repeating them selves?which we now know from bonnies talk is a sign of overwhelm, talking about it helps us process what we are feeling. This is why pschologists have jobs!!! Re-telling a story helps us process what happened and how we feel about it. Do you think the same is true for our kids?

And heres the thing for us as parents to remember... sometimes kids look at us as the safe place to "vent" their feelings and they actully don't want us to do anything. We need to use our discretion to know when to step in and when to let things go... this is where prayer comes in for those with older kids. I remember sometimes coming home and complaining about something to my mom that I didn't actually want her to get involved in. I just wanted someone to talk to about it.

MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

have you ever noticed how when we "do" things with our husbands or girlfriends. its easier to get conversation going? If you go for a walk your husband might open up about things. If you are outside working on the yard, does he start talking? because he's physically doing something and thats opening up his brain. Its like a key. Partly because "good hormones" are released when he do physical activity but also because it integrates his brain from upstairs and downstairs. and left and right. Our kids are the same way!! So engage the physical side of them. Sometimes with my 2 year old he can be a grumpy bear and if I pick him up and tickle him on our bed to chase him around the house he can "snap" out if it! Get outside with them... do 10 jumping jacks... have a dance party... these might be uncomfortable but their effective.

ALLOW THEM TO MAKE MISTAKES

When I was a teenager my parents told both me and my sister than no matter what we did they would love us. It was an actual conversation not just an inference. It gave us freedom, i believe, to come to them when life wasn't perfect. When we couldn't figure it out on our own. When I made a bad decision, I knew I could go to them and not be yelled at for not handling that properly. Because I was growing... just as they were... and you are... Grace. Making mistakes is part of growing in a skill..and it can be so hard to watch from the sidelines as they fall.

INCREASE THE FAMILY FUN FACTOR

Enjoy being together. If this is the one thing you take from today I will consider this a win. This might be so out of your comfort zone and it often takes me a second to change my attitude about playing a

game or going outside instead of getting something done. One of our fun things to do as a family is hide and go seek tag. Everyone hides and then we have to get back to home free before the counter gets there. I have literally peed my pants doing this. or playing a round of crazy 8's or, memory, or baking cookies WITH your kids... we call those our special "At home"cookies... ;) spend sometime while your doing it encouraging them, connecting to them.

Matthew 7:12

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the laws and the prophets.

This verse is found in the sermon on the mount. I believe this applies to parenting as well. In one little verse Jesus sums it all up. All of it. The laws and the prophets... thats a good chunk of the bible.

Do to others (including your kids) how you would want others to treat you.

Spend some time Thanking Jesus for His Grace and For His Patience with you.

Think of a time when you were in overwhelm or struggled with something and someone helped you out of it.

How did that feel? _____

Think of time when your Child/Husband is consistently in Overwhelm. Spend some time thinking about what it would be like in their position. Ask God for a strategy for you to use in the situation next time. Write it down

Is there anything else that God wants to say to you as a mom today?

Share in groups of 2 or 3

