

Emra Expressions



All The Answers

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I was sitting in the evening service at the camp we were at in Florida when Beth got up to give her testimony. She talked about how God was changing her and Tom's (her husband) view on ministry and as a result they were going to open an 'after school program' in Austin, Texas in a few months.

I went to the room we were using for the seminar and got a copy of my book, "*Cornerstones and Core Needs of Growing Kids*" to give her. I told her that it contains quite a few stories about how we worked with kids and it might be helpful as they were starting their program.

Later I was talking to leaders of the camp only to find out that Tom had led an after school program for 15 years before recently moving to Austin.

I said, "Well at least they might enjoy the book".

The next morning, I found out that Beth started reading the book and was so excited she had stayed up until after midnight reading and when Tom came home she told him he had to read it right then. She started telling him stories from the book and he kept getting more and more excited.

It seems that Tom quit the 'after school program' he had been running. He told me, "I didn't know how to effectively discipline the kids and so they were totally out of control." Eventually he had to choose between quitting or becoming abusive.

"I have been fearful of the new 'after school program' - that I would have the same problems with discipline I had before. Your book just lays out how to establish discipline and how to maintain it. Your book has all the answers to the questions I always had."

We met a few times and they have asked if we can meet again as they get closer to opening. He wants us to train their staff.

Just another example of the phrase "You came to Florida just for me".

In His grip,


John

Life Is Full Of Choices
PO Box 6179
Whittier CA 90609
www.LifeIsFullOfChoices.org

John and Sheryl Emra
1210 Marilyn Jayne Dr
Rockwall TX 75087
pj@lifoc.org (John)
semra@lifoc.org (Sheryl)
(855) 285-4362

Answered Prayer

We are finishing the last bit of editing on the new web site. Go to www.LifeIsFullOfChoices.org to see what we have done.

We continue to make progress on the new manuals for the teachers and the students for our 'Raising Responsible Adults' class.

Prayer Requests

We found out last week that my mother has liver cancer and has about three months to live.

We will be traveling to Portland to spend time with her in August.

Pray for us as this will leave a hole in our lives. She has been a great prayer warrior for our whole ministry.

She is ready to go and is even excited to be beating her sister to heaven.

For three weeks I have been walking with a 'boot' on my left leg.

I jumped into the pool and tore the calf muscle. Praise God no surgery but I have been doing therapy and enduring the laughing of people who hear how I ended up in a boot.

The Rest Of The Story

Discipline is a tough topic to discuss.

It brings back images from our childhoods that are difficult to deal with. Some images can be a parent with a belt, and on the other extreme are images of parents who don't care - so I feel unloved, and lots of images somewhere in between.

Most of us have a skewed view of what makes up effective discipline.

In our Seminar, "Raising Responsible Adults" we define discipline as:

"The actions that I take to instill in a child
the understanding of right and wrong
in order to shape their character
so they learn how to make healthy choices."

We further state that discipline is not about bigness (I'm bigger than you are so you have to do what I say), violence (if you do not do what I say I will spank you), or loudness (screaming or yelling is not effective).

The final point we make as part of the definition is that in order for discipline to be effective there must be pre-arranged consequences. Kids must know what will happen in advance so they will be choosing the consequence. The example is Adam and Eve knew what would happen if they ate the fruit - they would die. They just didn't believe God.

Much of the challenge surrounding the idea of discipline is that we have trained our kids not to believe us when we say something will happen. We have waffled too many times in the past and now they don't trust us to follow through with what we say we will do.

Sheryl and I used to count to three.

"Stop doing that. I am doing to count to three and you better stop. One, two, two and a half, two and three quarters, two and seven eighths ..."

My mother and father watched us struggle with this and finally said to us, "If they can mind at three, they can mind at one."

The difficulty Tom had in his prior 'after school program' was that that he hadn't set the boundaries and stuck to them.

As a result the kids were pushing trying to find out where the boundary really was (because it was not where he said it was because he didn't do anything when they crossed that line). Kids want boundaries and his kids were trying to find out where the boundaries were. They weren't bad kids, they just wanted the freedom that comes from having known boundaries.

Discipline is all about me earning the trust of my children.

Thank you for your part in our ministry as we teach adults how to raise responsible adults. Your prayers keep us going and your financial support allows us to travel and spend the time necessary to work with parents, grandparents, teachers, and others.

To make a donation go to www.LifeIsFullOfChoices.org and follow the directions on the donations tab.

Thank you!