

Parenting Tip

Ten Ways Fathers Model Healthy Relationships for Their Children

By Steven Stosny

Research shows consistently what children know intuitively: Fathers are important.

Children learn how men should behave in relationships by watching their fathers. Even if he does not live with their mother, they are keenly aware of the way he interacts with her.

Most divorce and domestic violence happens to men and women who grew up without a father who was modeling healthy relationship behavior.

Here are 10 tips to help fathers model behavior for the way they want their daughter to be treated in her adult relationships and also the way they want their son to treat the woman he loves.

- 1. Value their mother:** Children value themselves and others more when they feel that their mother and father value one another.
- 2. Perspective-taking:** (seeing things through someone else's eyes): Show your children the importance of respecting the perspectives of people they love, even when they disagree with them.
- 3. Cooperation:** Show how to participate willingly in work, problem-solving, or task-accomplishment.
- 4. Negotiation:** Show your children how to work out solutions to problems that respect one another's perspectives.
- 5. Motivation to improve:** Approach everything, including disagreements, with the attitude of making things better, not worse.
- 6. Compassion:** This gut-level reaction to their mother's pain, discomfort, or anxiety includes sympathy, protectiveness, and willingness to help but not control. It recognizes that their mother is different from you, with her own temperament, set of experiences, beliefs, values, and preferences.
- 7. Good will:** Learning a positive attitude toward the people they love will greatly improve your children's chances of having good relationships as adults.
- 8. Affection:** Showing affection toward their mother makes children feel more secure.
- 9. Relationship investment:** Successful relationships require that people care about - do good things for - one another.
- 10. Protection:** Loved ones support and protect one another.

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Dr. Steven Stosny is the author of **Love Without Hurt: Turn Your Resentful, Angry, or Emotionally Abusive Relationship into a Compassionate, Loving One**

Marriage Tip

Women's Attraction To Sweaty T-Shirts

Scientists like Victor Johnston study the human brain and human behaviors -- why we do the things we do. (*They believe it's evolution but we believe it's God design. -Ed.*)

The so-called "sweaty T-shirt" experiment showed that the sense of smell may have more to do with mate choice than previously thought. Females sniffing the T-shirts recently worn by males favored the scent of those whose immune response genes were different from their own.

Sweaty T-Shirts and Human Mate Choice

Maybe it's not similar interests, horoscope signs, looks, or proximity that make women and men fall in love.

According to evolutionary scientists, when people throw up their hands and say "it was just chemistry," they may be on to a fundamental factor in mate choice.

Subtle chemical signals, or pheromones, have long been known to draw pairs together within the same species, and for a specific reason. In mice, for example, experiments showed that pheromones acted as attractants between males and females who were genetically similar except that they differed in a certain type of immune system gene.

That difference is actually a survival benefit: The combination of two individuals' different MHC (major histocompatibility locus) genes gives their offspring an advantage in beating back disease organisms.

So the mice could smell a genetic difference. But could modern humans, who aren't known for a particularly good sense of smell, also make that distinction?

In the first "sweaty T-shirt" experiment, a Swiss zoologist, Claus Wedekind, set up a test of women's sensitivity to male odors. He assembled volunteers, 49 women and 44 men selected for their variety of MHC gene types. He gave the men clean T-shirts to wear for two nights and then return to the scientists.

In the laboratory, the researchers put each T-shirt in a box equipped with a smelling hole and invited the women volunteers to come in, one at a time, and sniff the boxes. Their task was to sample the odor of seven boxes and describe each odor as to intensity, pleasantness, and sexiness.

The results were striking. Overall, the women preferred the scents of T-shirts worn by men whose MHC genes were different from their own.

The experiment did not test men's perceptions of female scents, but the results certainly suggest that evolution has provided humans, not just mice, with a transmitter and receiver for genetic information that could influence mate choice. (*Again they falsely attribute it to evolution. Other research has been conducted that shows likewise, men can pick up the smells of women. - Ed.*)

Spiritual Tip

God Wants You To Take Care Of Your Body

By Rick Warren

I did a little research and discovered that nearly 7 in 10 Americans are overweight. Diabetes and heart disease have exploded as pandemic diseases in the last 5-10 years because of weight-related issues.

Not only that, we now have 80 million people in America who are diabetic or pre-diabetic. That's a phenomenally large number compared to even just 10 years ago.

Growing up in church, I never heard a single sermon on the body. Not one. I've heard sermons about the importance of your spirit, the importance of your soul, the importance of your mind, the importance of your character, and the importance of your values.

So I think it's safe to say most Christians don't have a good "theology of health."

Yet the Bible teaches us that our bodies are very important to God ... and that He wants us to take care of them.

The Bible also teaches that we're to be managers - or stewards - of our body.

Psalm 119:73 says this: "Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands" (NIV). God made us. And we need to let Him help us to take care of the bodies we've been given!

I've found that when we don't rely on God to help us take care of ourselves, three things tend to trip us up...

1. WE TRY TO CHANGE THROUGH WILLPOWER INSTEAD OF GOD-POWER.

For most people, willpower works for about three weeks. Then, we get tired and frustrated, and we go off the diet or go back to activities that harm our health.

Willpower is fantastic in the short-term, but it's not powerful enough to bring long-term change to your life. By its very nature, willpower means you're forcing yourself to do something your body doesn't want you to do.

So it won't be too long until you get tired and let go of the steering wheel - then, the autopilot takes over and you go back to eating what you want and exercising when you feel like it.

That's why most of our New Year's resolutions don't last. We

try to keep them by willpower instead of God-power.

2. WE TRY TO CHANGE USING WRONG MOTIVATIONS INSTEAD OF GOD MOTIVATIONS.

When the goal is all about me - the way I look or the way I feel - that's usually not enough to keep most people going.

There's nothing wrong with those as goals. In fact, looking healthy and feeling healthy are good goals.

You need something greater than yourself to help you stick it out, especially when things get tough. We need to understand that there is a spiritual significance to being healthy ... and that our health affects other people as well as our ability to fulfill the mission God has given us.

3. WE TRY TO CHANGE BY OURSELVES INSTEAD OF WITH OTHER PEOPLE.

You were made to grow and mature in community. It's nearly impossible to have lasting change in your life without support and encouragement from others.

This is why we encourage the people who attend Saddleback Church to get involved in a small group. Why? Because we know they're not going to grow and

mature on their own. We need others to grow spiritually, and we need others to help us make lasting changes toward better health.

New Book: The Daniel Plan

And so we wrote the biblically based book called **The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life** to help people like you understand what God says about your body ... and why it's important physically, mentally, and spiritually to maintain good health.

God placed you on the Earth for a purpose, and taking care of your body is an essential part of fulfilling your mission. It will give you more energy. It will increase your stamina. It will help you handle stress and maintain a positive attitude.

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