

Parenting Tip

18 Fatherhood Tips They Should've Handed Out at the Delivery Room – Part 1 (to be continued)

By Leo Babauta

Being a father can be a wonderful thing, once you get past all the gross stuff, all the stressful events, the loss of privacy, and the bewildering numbers of ways you can screw it up. But other than those few things, fatherhood is wonderful.

Every dad has fears that he won't be a great dad, that he'll mess up, that he'll be a failure. It comes with the job.

Unfortunately, what doesn't come with the job is a simple set of instructions. As guys, we often will skip the manual, figuring we can wing it ... but when things go wrong, it's nice to have that manual to go back to. Fatherhood needs that manual.

And while, as the father of six children, you might say that I'm qualified to write such a manual, it's not true — I'm winging it like everyone else. However, I've been a father for more than 15 years, and with six kids I've learned a lot about what works and what doesn't, what's important and what you can safely ignore (unlike that odd grating sound coming from your engine).

What follows are the fatherhood tips I wish they'd passed out to me upon the delivery of my first child. It would have helped a ton. I hope they'll help you become an even more awesome dad than you already are — feel free to refer back to them as a cheat sheet, anytime you need some help.

1. Cherish your time with them. One thing that will amaze you is how quickly the years will fly. My oldest daughter is 15, which means I have three short years with her before she leaves the nest. That's not enough time! The time you have with them is short and precious — make the most of it. Spend as much time as you can with them, and make it quality, loving time. Try to be present as much as possible while you're with them too — don't let your mind drift away, as they can sense that.

2. It gets easier. Others may have different experiences, but I've always found the first couple of months the most difficult, when the baby is brand new and wants to feed at all hours of the night and you often have sleepless nights and walk around all day like zombies. It gets easier, as they get a regular sleeping pattern. The first couple of years are also a lot more demanding than later years, and as they hit middle school they become almost functioning, independent adults. It gets easier, trust me.

3. Don't look at anything as "mom" duties — share responsibilities. While there are a lot of good things from our grandparents' day that we should bring back, the traditional dad/mom split of parenting duties isn't one of them. Some men still look at certain duties as "mom" duties, but don't be one of those dads. Get involved in everything, and share the load with your baby mama. Changing diapers, giving baths, getting them dressed, even feeding them (you can give them breast milk in a bottle).

4. Love conquers all. This one sounds corny, but it should be at the center of your dad operating philosophy: above all, show your children love. When you're upset, instead of yelling, show them love. When they are upset, show them love. When they least expect it, show them love. Everything else is just details.

Marriage Tip

No. 86

From: The 7 Secrets of Fixing Your Marriage

By Mort Fertel

SECRET 1: PUT YOUR PROBLEMS ASIDE

My wife and I started out deeply in love. I remember staying up all night talking, surprising each other with thoughtful gifts, and speaking to each other in code words. You know the feeling of really being connected? That was us.

But then something happened that destroys most marriages. We had a son who died when he was just one week old. And then we had twin daughters, who also died as newborns.

Understandably, my wife became depressed. I coped by immersing myself in work. We ran from each other emotionally.

Your situation probably was not so tragic, but something happened. What was it? How did you lose each other? Or maybe you can't put your finger on why things aren't the same anymore. That's common too.

For us, after losing 3 children, everything felt different. Instead of talking all night, it was a chore to talk for a few minutes. Instead of using our code words, we used curse words. Our relationship consisted of screaming matches and silent treatments.

Somewhere deep in our heart though, like you, we knew we didn't want to lose each other. So we made a commitment to work on our marriage. Sometimes I tried and my wife didn't. Sometimes my wife tried and I didn't. Sometimes we tried together. We went through different stages of "trying."

What did we try?

We tried the obligatory, "Honey, let me repeat what you said to make sure I understood you correctly." We applied conflict resolution strategies. My wife learned about Mars and I learned about Venus. We even went to counseling to wrestle with our problems. But guess what. Nothing changed. Nothing worked.

Because all the advice we got (books, counselors...whatever) asked us to confront our problems. But that just made us feel worse. And fight more.

As long as the "right" way wasn't working, why not be dysfunctional? So we tried to convince each other of our way. You tried that too, right? Obviously, that doesn't work.

Finally, we had a breakthrough.

We decided to SET ASIDE OUR PROBLEMS. We didn't talk about them at all. We didn't bring them up even once. Instead, we put our energy into trying to connect. We used certain relationship techniques that transformed our marriage. Not only did we resolve our differences; we fell in love again! And we did it not by dealing with our problems (as serious as they were), but by establishing new relationship habits that brought positive energy to our marriage

This is the solution to most marital situations - to STEP AWAY from your problems and spend your time and energy building your relationship through positive actions.

It's counter-intuitive, but if you do this RIGHT, your problems will dissipate, the threat of divorce will go away, and the other people invading your marriage will become irrelevant. Slowly but surely you will come closer together again.

Before you deal with your problems, you first have to build good will with your spouse. And this is doable even in the most difficult marital situations. If your marriage is stressed, do NOT tackle your problems. Stop talking about the affair, the attention you're not getting, or whatever. If your timing is off, trying to solve your problems will damage your marriage and make it LESS LIKELY that you'll ever find resolution. The key is NOT to fix what's wrong. The key is to make new things right.

From The Marriage Fitness Program

Spiritual Tip

101 Proofs for God: #31 The Second Law of Thermodynamics

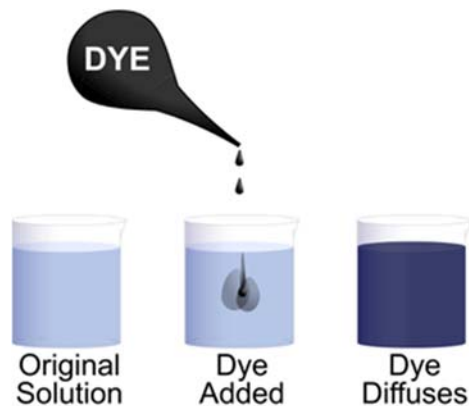
By Jim Stephens

From the website:
www.101ProofsForGod.Com

Most likely you have heard the term, The Second Law of Thermodynamics, but may not be able to give a definition. Note that this is a scientific LAW of nature. It's been around and verified again and again for a long, long time and there are no known violations. So it is called a LAW, unlike the THEORY of evolution, which has never been proven and has countless violations of its proposals.

Thermodynamics has to do with the study of energy. The meaning of the Second Law in simple terms is that everything tends toward disorder. Energy tends to disperse. Nothing becomes more complex on its own. Everything tends to break down over time as long as nothing new is added to the system from outside.

Hot things cool down as the heat (i.e. energy) disperses. Things tend to go downhill (not uphill) to a lower energy state. Everything wears out and eventually decays. Living things all eventually die. This is the natural order of the universe.



Isaac Asimov (a highly respected evolutionist, and ardent anti-creationist) has said: *"Another way of stating the second law then is: 'The universe is constantly getting more disorderly!' Viewed that way, we can see the second law all about us. We have to work hard to straighten a room, but left to itself it becomes a mess again very quickly and very easily. Even if we never enter it, it becomes dusty and musty. How difficult to maintain houses, and machinery, and our bodies in perfect working order: how easy to let them deteriorate. In fact, all we have to do is nothing, and everything deteriorates, collapses, breaks down, wears out, all by itself—and that is what the second law is all about."*[1]

Since everything in the universe tends toward disorder, it is a violation of the Second Law if they become more orderly and complex all by themselves.

If you leave your room one day and it's a mess, it will stay a mess for all eternity, gradually getting messier and messier until it one day disappears. If you go away for a while and come back and it is cleaner and more orderly, then you know your mother was there. Or at least some energy force was there with the distinctive quality of order. Energy itself would not be sufficient. There had to be the component of orderliness. Otherwise the random energy would have just added to the mess. Putting a wild bull in there would not have cleaned the room.

This is where evolutionists have a really hard time. They can say all day that there was energy coming down to the earth from the sun, but what about the orderliness which requires information and intelligent design?

If there were to exist some primordial soup of chemicals (disregarding where it came from), then for all those chemicals to somehow change into a living cell is a direct violation of the Second Law. They would not order themselves into a living organism that has gigantic numbers of

orderly properties like digestion of energy sources and reproduction.

People who deny the existence of God have a huge problem with the Second Law of Thermodynamics. They usually claim that the energy of the sun qualifies as the outside source that can cause life to form accidentally. That's a huge stretch because there is no order and information in the sun's energy. There are many examples of the sun's energy speeding up the process of disorder, not the other way around. It heats water to cause it to evaporate faster. It wears out the paint on your house.

They also try to claim that the earth is an open system and somewhere in the universe changes are going on that balance out the increased order on the earth. That's an extreme level of faith in a mystery greater than the mysteries in the Bible. That's on the order of saying that I'm sitting in my room watching my computer fall apart, so somewhere else on earth a computer is being built all by itself. Except the problem is multiplied millions of times over because living beings are millions of times more complicated than a computer.

Honest evolutionists will admit that they have a problem, but nonetheless go right on having faith. They have faith even though there must have been millions upon millions of violations of the Second Law of Thermodynamics necessary to get to every new stage up the evolutionary ladder from a single living cell, to multi-celled species, to plants, to animals, up to human beings. That would take an unfathomable number of increases in order, each one a violation of the Second Law. The only honest explanation is that an unseen intelligent designer is adding energy and information.

"If Evolution is true, there must be an extremely powerful force or mechanism at work in the cosmos that can steadily defeat the powerful, ultimate tendency toward "disarrangedness" brought by the 2nd Law. If such an important force or mechanism is in existence, it would seem it should be quite obvious to all scientists. Yet, the fact

is, no such force of nature has been found."[2] That's because they refuse to admit God into the discussion.

"Using natural processes alone, there's just no explaining how the complex, information-intense organization of even single-celled life and its uniquely inherent and complex processes could have emerged from non-life in the first place, and then could continue to fly in the face of natural law with untold increases in information, complexity and organization to yield all the flora and fauna varieties known to have existed."[3]

"Thus, unless we are willing to argue that the influx of solar energy into the Earth makes the appearance of spaceships, computers, and the Internet not extremely improbable, we have to conclude that the Second Law has in fact been violated here."[4]

There must be God!

[1] Isaac Asimov, Smithsonian Institute Journal, June 1970)
[Isaac Asimov, "In the Game of Energy and Thermodynamics You Can't Even Break Even", Smithsonian Institution Journal (June 1970), p. 6

[2] ChristianAnswers.Net <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-edn/edn-thermodynamics.html>

[3] T. Wallace Five Major Evolutionist Misconceptions about Evolution, <http://www.trueorigin.org/isakrblt.asp>

[4] Granville Sewell, "A second look at the second law", Mathematics Department, University of Texas, El Paso, Jan. 19, 2011 http://www.math.utep.edu/Faculty/sewell/AML_3497.pdf

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