

Life in the Middle Years

Summary Points - Visit 4 - Chapters 7 & 8

1. Correction for innocent mistakes and not-so-innocent deeds, will be most effective in a home environment where the greater emphasis is placed on preventing unwanted and unruly behaviors, rather than just attempting to correct when those behaviors pop up.
2. When you have toddlers, so much of your parenting is physical—chasing after your toddler, picking up, and putting down. In the middle years, parenting is more mental than physical. Mothers and fathers are required to think more and to get their children to think.
3. “Time” for a two-year-old really belongs to Mom and Dad, because a two-year-old has a very limited concept of time. With a toddler parents can rush in and invade their time and demand their attention. In contrast, “time” for a middle-years child has value, because he or she understands time. It is theirs, they own it and it should be treated with some level of respect.
4. The four laws of correction apply to middle-years children just as much as preschoolers. Embedded within the precepts is a protection that prevents mothers and fathers from over-correcting or under-correcting their children.
5. Childishness refers to the unintentional and non-malicious mistakes made in life. With children, it is often the result of a lack of knowledge or lack of understanding. This is referred to as a “head” issue.
6. Foolishness takes place when a child knowingly and intentionally chooses to act in defiance without regard to consequence or injury to self or others. The child knows that he is doing wrong and continues anyway. This is a heart issue.
7. If correction is to be meaningful, then it has to be fair, balanced, weighed against the child’s wrong.
8. To correct a child is to bring the child back from error, or to restore the child. It is returning the child to the pathway of safety, wisdom and prudence.
9. Punishment serves a specific purpose within the correction process. It is the means by which parents establish the value of an offence against another person or their property. It teaches a child how a particular action or behavior is viewed, whether it is a minor infraction or a serious offence.
10. An offence against a person or property requires an apology.
11. The statement, “I’m sorry” is associated with unintentional mistakes that caused injury to a person or damage to property. This form of apology expresses regret over an action while accepting responsibility for the actions.
12. “Will you forgive me?” is associated with wrong actions generated by foolish impulses and malicious intent that caused injury to a person or damage to property.
13. All correction must promote learning. Without the “why” of wrong, there is no correction, just a temporary random redirection of behavior.

14. Seven habits of successful middle-years parents:
 - a. Keep the life message in front of them.
 - b. Keep doing couch-time.
 - c. Date your children.
 - d. Make sure middle-years kids take ownership of their monkey.
 - e. Teach the mealtime civility code.
 - f. Never leave home without a love note.
 - g. Teach your children to look for the “door of escape.”