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Parenting Without Losing It:

7 Steps to a Calmer, Closer Home

Practical help for tired parents, from toddlers to teenagers.



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A word before you start

If you are reading this, you love your kids, and you are tired. Maybe the yelling has become normal. Maybe your teenager barely talks to you. Maybe you just feel like you are failing.

You are not alone, and it is not too late. Small changes made every day can change the feel of a home.

Read one step a day. Do the one action at the end. Give it a week.

If your child is in crisis: if your child talks about hurting themselves, call or text 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. In an emergency, call 911.

The foundation: prayer, Scripture and walking in the Spirit

Everything in this guide rests on three things: prayer, Scripture, and walking in the Spirit. The steps that follow are not ways to control your children. They are ways to let God change you as a parent.

Prayer. Bring your children to God every day, before you bring your words to them.

> *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*
>
> PHILIPPIANS 4:6

Scripture. Read the verses in each step slowly and ask what God is saying to you. Remember, Scripture is meant to affect you, not someone else. Scripture is not to be weaponized against your children or your spouse.

> *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."*
>
> JAMES 1:22

Walking in the Spirit. You cannot be patient and gentle with your children in your own strength. Ask the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit in you, one day at a time.

> *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*
>
> GALATIANS 5:16

> *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."*
>
> GALATIANS 5:22-23

Each day, pray first, read that step's Scripture for yourself, and then take the step.

STEP 1:

Get calm before you correct

When a child melts down or talks back, it is easy to meet their anger with our own. But anger rarely teaches what we want it to teach.

> *"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."*
>
> JAMES 1:19-20

Your calm is the thermostat of your home. Kids learn how to handle frustration by watching how you handle yours.

DO THIS TODAY:

When you feel anger rising, don't correct your child in that moment. Ask God for patience. If you need to, step away, then come back and speak calmly.

STEP 2:

Connect before you correct

Children listen best to parents they feel close to. When most of our words are corrections, kids stop hearing them.

> *"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."*
>
> COLOSSIANS 3:21

DO THIS TODAY:

Spend time with each child this week doing something they enjoy. With a teenager, be available when they want to talk, which is often in the car or late at night. Listen more than you lecture.

STEP 3:

Say it once, then follow through

Repeating a request five times teaches a child that the first four did not count. Clear words and steady follow-through bring more peace than louder words.

> *"But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay."*
>
> MATTHEW 5:37

DO THIS TODAY:

Pick one rule that matters most right now. Tell your child the rule and the consequence in one or two sentences. Then follow through calmly every time, without a lecture.

STEP 4:

Discipline to teach, not to vent

The goal of discipline is not to make a child pay. It is to help them grow. Discipline done in love is a gift, even when it does not feel like one at the time.

> *"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."*
>
> HEBREWS 12:11

> *"Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul."*
>
> PROVERBS 29:17

DO THIS TODAY:

After you correct your child, make sure they know you still love them. Correction and affection belong together.

STEP 5:

Own your mistakes

Every parent loses their temper sometimes. What matters is what you do next. When you apologize to your child, you show them how to make things right.

> *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."*
>
> JAMES 5:16

DO THIS TODAY:

If you have yelled or been unfair recently, go to your child and say, "I was wrong when I ___. I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?" Keep it short and do not add "but you..."

STEP 6:

Teach faith in everyday moments

Kids do not learn faith mostly from lectures. They learn it at the dinner table, in the car, and at bedtime.

> *"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."*
>
> DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7

DO THIS TODAY:

Read one verse at dinner and ask, "What do you think that means?" Pray with each child at bedtime, even if it is one sentence.

STEP 7:

Don’t parent alone

Parenting was never meant to be a solo job. Other families, grandparents, and a good church can help carry the load and give your kids other godly voices.

> *“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.”*
>
> ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10

DO THIS TODAY:

Ask God for wisdom about the struggle you are facing most. Then seek counsel from an older parent whose children you respect.

> *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”*
>
> JAMES 1:5

If your child has pulled away

Some parents reading this have a teen or adult child who has stopped talking to them or walked away from the faith. That is one of the deepest hurts a parent can carry.

Keep the door open. Keep praying. Keep loving without giving up your convictions. In the story of the prodigal son, the father was watching the road.

> *"But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."*
>
> **LUKE 15:20**

Send a short message that asks for nothing: "Thinking of you today. I love you."

Your 7-day plan

Start each day with prayer and that step's Scripture, read for yourself.

- [ ] **Day 1:** Ask God for patience before you correct (Step 1)
- [ ] **Day 2:** Spend time with each child doing something they enjoy (Step 2)
- [ ] **Day 3:** Pick one rule and state it clearly (Step 3)
- [ ] **Day 4:** Show your love after every correction (Step 4)
- [ ] **Day 5:** Apologize for one thing (Step 5)
- [ ] **Day 6:** One verse at dinner, one prayer at bedtime (Step 6)
- [ ] **Day 7:** Seek counsel from an older parent you respect (Step 7)

Where to go from here

If you would like someone to talk to, we would be glad to help you connect with a Bible-believing pastor near you. Reply to any of our emails or use the link at the bottom of this guide.

Connect with a pastor near you: thewayhelp.com/pastor/



thewayhelp.com

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