

Praise – Parenting Clip 3 - Transcript

Of all the things I talk about I suppose praise is probably my favourite one. Why is praise my favourite one? Because it is the easiest one to do. Well; one could argue with that because if it's so easy why aren't people praising all the time? So I'll come back to that, the value of praise. I'll talk about the benefits of praise. Praise is a fantastic way of building positivity. It shows we are in tune with them; we are validating them. And it's a real feel good feeling. Even if I know that someone is looking for something and they praise me I know that they are looking for something but it still gives me a feel good feeling in my stomach. So praise is magic. It's as I said before great for building relationships and also brilliant for a behaviour management strategy. So what we pay attention to, is what we get more of; so praise good behaviour and where safe, ignore the bad behaviour. What are we going to get? We are going to get more and more good behaviour. That is why I say praise is magic.

Now I did mention earlier there are barriers to giving praise, especially in good old British society. You know someone will say to you, "Oh I love your dress". "Oh it's just a cheap thing I got in the shop". God forbid I should say "Oh thank you very much for saying I've got a lovely dress". So we are very bad as human beings of accepting praise. So therefore if we are bad at accepting it, we are probably bad at giving it. As I said earlier, for the benefits of good relationships and for getting good behaviour, praise is so so useful. We need to start accepting praise and praising ourselves. There's no praise like self-praise. So we can give praise.

Sometimes we think, "Oh, my gosh; my child has just beenI can't find anything to praise them for". So OK maybe they're having a bad day. You cannot find anything to praise them for. So instead you can praise them for being. At the end of the night we call this 'power praise', 'praise power'. So at the end of the night you've had a dreadful day. You say "Thank you for being my lovely daughter; thank you for being my lovely son". Because they are lovely. You do love them to bits but sometimes there can be very challenging behaviour. "Don't mention the war" as they say. Praise them for being and praise them for doing.

Good steps for giving praise:

1. **Give your child all your attention.** It's no good if the child comes in and shows you a picture and you say, "Good". You've praised them but it's about stopping what you're doing and saying "Oh my god! Look at that picture; it's so good". You're giving them all your attention and you stop what you're doing. So give them all your attention.
2. **Move close to the child.** Look pleased and share your pleasure. They come home with this picture, thrilled to bits with the picture they've done. So it's about, "Oh I'm so proud of you. It looks like you've worked really hard at that picture. That is brilliant". So you look pleased and you share your pleasure.
3. **Be specific.** Describe what you like. "Thank you very much for being so good". Good is a very vague word. What does good mean? Thank you very much for behaving. What does that mean to the child? It's about being

specific. "Thank you so much for putting your toys in the toy box. Thank you so much for putting your laundry into the laundry basket. So we are going to get that behaviour again. What we pay attention to - this is what we get more of. So be specific with praise; name what we like doing. Then we get that again.

4. **What do they think?** Ask the child what he or she thinks. So I've given you the example of the child coming home with the picture. "So what do you think of this picture?" And then hear what they say. Then validate everything that they say.
5. **Eye contact** – a lot of communication is body language. We know that so look at their eyes. You know and be there with them.
6. **Mean it** – Be sincere and let it show with a warm tone of voice. So body language and tone of voice - they are all important.
7. **Gentle touch** – Touch the child gently.
8. **Give pride to the child.** "You deserve to be proud of yourself".

So there you are. Those are the steps for giving praise effectively. As human beings we do latch onto the negatives rather than the positives. And there are some theories behind that; for when we were out hunting and scavenging we had to be very mindful of the tiger and the lion going to kill us. So therefore we were tuned into negative thinking but now we have moved on. We can tune into the positives. There is an awful lot more of the good stuff than the bad stuff but we latch onto the bad stuff. So I'm going to end on a positive. Look for the positive and praise the positive. Praise is magic.