



Liberated Parents, Liberated Children: Your Guide to a Happier Family

Adele Faber , Elaine Mazlish

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The Companion Volume to *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk*

In this honest, illuminating book, internationally acclaimed parenting experts Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish bring to life the principles of famed child psychologist Dr. Haim Ginott, and show how his theories inspired the changes they made in their relationships with their own children.

By sharing their experiences, as well as those of other parents, Faber and Mazlish provide moving and convincing testimony to their new approach and lay the foundation for the parenting workshops they subsequently created that have been used by thousands of groups worldwide to bring out the best in both children and parents.

Wisdom, humor, and practical advice are the hallmarks of this indispensable book that demonstrates the kind of communication that builds self-esteem, inspires confidence, encourages responsibility, and makes a major contribution to the stability of today's family.

Liberated Parents, Liberated Children: Your Guide to a Happier Family Details

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Oriyah Nitkin says

There's a lot of hype surrounding this book and these authors - I got the impression years ago that they were part of the fabric of the wallpaper of education and parenting-minded western society...so much so that I almost took their existence for granted and never bothered to put it on my "to-read" list...until a friend lent my husband her copy.

Since it was lying around for a while, and since I read so much faster than my husband (no offense or criticism meant to him - it's kind of due to my fairly lonely childhood, books made good companions so I became extremely comfortable with them early on) I decided to snatch it and read it in between when he was plowing ahead.

Initially I was shocked as I was reminded of the cultural context against which the authors were trying to educate; Obviously (I think this is a function of my age, but perhaps also my social upbringing) I was aware that plenty of parents engaged in name-calling, criticism, labeling, etc. and all those 'parenting tactics' that have proven harmful and therefore mostly gone out of vogue among the self-aware and enlightened. It was kind of like reading about abusive polygamy...as my friend's husband says, "When I read stuff like this, I get to feel good about myself. I may be a jerk, but at least I know I don't have 19 wives." It's fun, especially in this day and age when parents are constantly being sent messages that they should question themselves and their parenting ability, to have that smug sort of "see how well I'm doing with my kids?" feeling...but as I read along I realized that, although I wasn't being a horrible mom, there is definitely lots of room for improvement.

What the authors write about threatening and punishment definitely hit home. So did their statements about how we praise, and the importance of being emotionally real with one's kids, versus sending mixed messages by pasting on a smile and acting patient when one is boiling inside. I don't agree with everything they said (for example, I think it is good practice to apologize when one makes a mistake, even to one's children - it's an extremely important example to set, and I do think parents should also practice extending themselves for their kids to a sustainable degree, something that builds character and also sets an example) but the idea that their should be stronger boundaries preventing the parents emotional and physical overexertion 'for the sake of their children' was super-important and a big wake-up call to me. The book also reminded me that these are healthy principles to introduce into ALL relationships. It's not Torah-mi-sinai (the Jewish version of "Gospel truth," le'havdil) but it definitely makes important points, and makes them well.

And now, onto How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk to learn the practical aspects of how to apply these valuable lessons.

Kirill says

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Sarah Whitney says

What is our major goal as parents?

Still another woman glibly said, "To produce children who are, among other things, brilliant, polite, charming, neat and well-adjusted, of course."

Dr. Ginott looked solemn. It was obvious that this last comment had not amused him. He leaned forward and said, "This is how I see it. It seems to me that our large goal is to find the ways to help our children become humane and strong.

"For what does it profit us if we have a neat, polite, charming youngster who could watch people suffer and not be moved to action?

"What have we accomplished if we have reared a child who is brilliant - at the top of his class - but who uses his intellect to manipulate others?

"And do we really want children so well-adjusted that they adjust to an unjust situation? Too many Germans adjusted only too well to the orders of the Nazis to exterminate millions of their fellow men.

"Understand me: I'm not opposed to a child being polite or neat or learned. The crucial question for me is What methods have been used to accomplish these ends? If the methods used are insults, attacks, and threats, then we can be very sure that we have also taught this child to insult, attack, to threaten, and to comply when threatened.

"If, on the other hand, we use methods that are humane, then we've taught something much more important than a series of isolated virtues. We've shown the child how to be a person - a mensch, a human being who can conduct his life with strength and dignity."

pages 14-15

"Helen," said Dr. Ginott, "as parents we won't be able to keep ourselves from having guilty feelings, but we can say to ourselves, 'I must not permit my child to know of them; it's too dangerous - for everyone.' When a child is given the power to activate our guilt, it's like handing him an atomic bomb. As Roslyn pointed out, the child who stirs up a parent's guilt, feels guilty about what he's done. And do you know the emotion we ultimately experience toward people who make us feel guilty? It's hatred. When we permit guilt, we invite hatred."

pages 164-5

Dr. Ginott raised his eyebrows. "When have we ever said that a parent should speak calmly when he's boiling

inside? The idea is not to hold back our anger, but to release it in short bursts, before it builds up into an explosion. Trying to be patient when you're angry is like applying the brake with one foot while the other foot presses the gas pedal. You wouldn't abuse your automobile that way. Be at least as good to yourself as you are to your car."

page 175

"Words can cut like knives. Some can even leave permanent scars. And that is why anger without insult remains our only civilized alternative to methods that dehumanize. And we still haven't got all the answers. The search to find new and more human ways to express the old and powerful emotion of anger is the work of a lifetime."

page 175

"... a parent's responsibility is not to his child's happiness; it's to his character. By focusing only upon a child's happiness, we do him no favor. ...Did you know that 'No' can be a loving response? Did you know that when we take action to stop a child's unacceptable behavior, we are doing him a service? What's more we are showing him how to be the kind of adult who can stand up for what he believes in."

page 189

"You notice, Mary, that my focus is not on obedience, but on the process of engagin a child's cooperation. It would be not great trick to keep Jody away from the walls. You could beat him, insult him, punish him and he'd never touch your walls. But what would happen to Jody inside? He'd hate himself, wish you dead, and on top of it all, feel guilty for wishing it. That's why my constant concern is the search for humane alternatives."

page 200

Allegra S says

This book has a lot of great tips and interesting ideas. Very similar to their other book How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and I think I'd recommend reading that one first. This one however has a lot more long written examples, so is a good companion book.

Katies_Faves says

I keep starting this book and cannot seem to get through it. Part of the problem is that I've read Haim Ginott's bestseller "Between Parent and Child." Ms. Faber studied with Dr. Ginott and basically is doing her own book on what he taught her. So I find it a bit repetitive for me. I also just read Dr. Wallace Goddard's book "Soft-Spoken Parenting" - he also worked with Dr. Ginott (Dr. Goddard helped update "Between Parent..." in 2003 actually) and I found that a bit repetitive too.

I don't know if I'll pick this book up and read it all the way through for awhile. I'm still very partial to Dr. Ginott's book and think that everyone should read it - whether you have children or not. It's a great book on communicating with others.

Libbydale says

Goes into more detail than *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen* with more examples of Haim Ginott's principles at work with real examples gleaned from the parents from a group he ran. Although written many years ago, the principles are good for any generation. I want to add this book to my library. These two books are the best books on discipline I've ever picked up and they make sense. Anything that gets into strong-arming, controlling, and spanking children makes me cringe. This book is about discipline without hurting or attacking a child's person emotionally or physically and keeping the lines of communication and respect intact. Now if only I can remember everything, and put it into practice. I like the way the authors shared their struggle in using his principles perfectly. They remind us that parenting isn't about being perfect, but it's about a fluid relationship, and we are allowed mistakes, as long as we don't dwell on them, and can learn from them and maybe even say "I was wrong." They remind us that parenting is also not about making our kids fit our "perfect" ideal either, but about raising responsible, caring, respectful humans who can be sensitive to others' feelings. If you need to read a parenting book that will work, read this, paired with *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen*.

Jenna says

I LOVE THIS BOOK! As parenting books go, I think this one is in the top 3. I have read it three times in the past 6 years. I think this should be an annual read for me. Just a nice little reminder that I am not alone in the big world of sometimes crazy Motherhood.

Labeling is disabling. Describe what has happened or what you are feeling. There are so many good quotes and suggestions I feel are so useful as a parent. I look forward to reading Dr. Ginott's book, *Between Parent and Child*, that this book is based on and based on his parenting class.

Gillie says

This book has shifted the way I think about my relationships with my kids...and, really, with everyone. The principles included in it seem like good principles for how we should all deal with each other -- to approach each other with empathy and understanding, to listen to each other's perspectives and feelings, to give feedback and make requests without insulting or belittling each other, to express our own emotions authentically (but, again, without demeaning other people). The authors give all sorts of examples of what this might look like in a typical home...and the challenges that attempting to treat our kids this way will bring up. I highly recommend it for any parents...and any people trying to interact in healthier ways with others!

Sue says

Unlike the other books I've read by these authors, this is in semi-fictional form. Each incident described is based on reality, but without any individual being identifiable. The style won't appeal to everyone, but I found it very appealing.

Jan is the name of the narrator. She has three children: two boys and a girl. One of her problems is that her sons fight a lot. Jan tends to sympathise with the younger one, but she comes to realise that this helps nobody. Instead she learns new ways of enabling her sons to find their own solutions.

Other situations covered include typical family problems such as mess, forgetfulness, neglect of pets, and general rudeness. Jan belongs to a group of women, who help each other by offering suggestions and feedback to problems that arise in their homes. Their mentor and the organiser of the group is a writer, who mirrors his philosophies in his responses.

What I particularly liked is that there are stories of setbacks and failures as well as some resounding successes. There are discussions about anger, about the dangers guilt, and about the importance of parents taking care of their own needs. It strikes an excellent balance between authoritarianism and permissiveness, and is the style I believe in... even if I don't often remember to use it.

Very highly recommended to all parents, grandparents and teachers - and to anyone interested in constructive ways of relating to others.

Rafa? Nam says

Authors are not educated psychologists, they only attend lectures of dr Ginnot. It is in my opinion not enough to write books. There is no difference noticed between upbringing girls and boys. Goal of upbringing is not a happy family, because in fact it means rather happy parents and children that don't misbehave, but how to bring up a child to become a happy and successful adult.

Rachel says

This was excellent. Very realistic, affirming, and full of insightful information. It worked well with my personality that is quite strict relating to a few matters and otherwise quite relaxed. The section on how mothers guilt actually creates major issues for our kids was very **RELEASING!**

Angela Stokes says

Really interesting read, very helpful.

Robin says

Raising humane human beings. I think that is what parents aim for but don't know how to achieve it. Not only is it good for parents but also for human beings in relationships. The parents in this book are not perfect they make huge mistakes, that frankly make me feel better. And there are solutions and ways to learn and have our kids learn. It took me a long time to read because I would put it down and really think about it. One of my favorite parts:

"Our work is raising children. Our bricks-our moment-by-moment responses. Our cathedral-the realization of

our children's full humanity."

Caitlin says

This book's recommended interactions with children felt really patronizing to me. For instance, when a child asks for help remembering to bring something to school they've repeatedly forgotten, the author suggests that you sympathize with the child, "Remembering stuff can be hard," but ultimately make the child remember it on their own. I think that's ridiculous. If my husband asked for help remembering, I'd try to help remind him. At a minimum I might make a suggestion to make remembering easier. "Why don't you set a timer?" If my child takes the initiative to ask for help, I'll give it. (This is different from always reminding a child who doesn't seem to care whether they've got everything they need for school.) The suggested methods for communication just didn't seem helpful or realistic.

Cheri says

Don't be put off by the 70's title. I've read tons of parenting books and I love this one because of the mistakes the parents make along the way. It is so real in the sense that it talks about parent anger and the explosions that occur when parents do not express their anger along the way. There is steady progress forward for the parents although the patterns are slow to change. That is reality. It is hard to change patterns. It gives hope that change is possible and that we can be imperfect, human and simply start again when we make mistakes. It is respectful to parents and to children. It is not permissive and has a wonderful chapter on the importance of setting limits and the importance of developing their resilience. I found it on half.com for a penny plus shipping. Great deal!
