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Parenting Starts Before Pregnancy

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

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While it may seem farfetched to some people, many of my clients remember what they felt and experienced while still in the womb. Comments such as these are not unusual:

"I knew even before I was born that my mother didn't want me."

"I could feel my mother's fear and anxiety even before I was born."

Parenting does not start once the child is born. Good parenting starts even before getting pregnant. It starts by caring about what you eat, how much exercise and sleep you get, and by making sure that you are taking responsibility for your feelings of anxiety and stress. Your baby will feel what you feel, so learning how to be in peace and joy before getting pregnant is part of good parenting.

I loved being pregnant. I had always wanted children so I was thrilled to be pregnant. I loved feeling the baby moving within me, awed by the very fact of creating new life. I loved feeling an elbow or a knee

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slide across my stomach. I loved that my body could be a receptacle for bringing through this soul, this angel from heaven. I could not think of anything more profound, more worth doing. Who was this unique little person growing in my body?

I read every book I could on parenting and thought endlessly how I wanted to be a different parent than my parents were.

The problem was that I have never thought about how much my relationship with myself and with my husband might affect this child.

My husband was angry, distant and withdrawn during my pregnancy and the first three months after giving birth to our son. He was a person who wanted control and he was not happy that I got pregnant

six months before we had planned. He didn't open his heart until our son smiled at him at three months of age.

Being young, I had no idea how to handle the loneliness I felt at not having my husband joyfully involved in the hugest event of my life. Had I known then what I know now, I would have done anything I could to get the help we needed to bring our relationship back into caring. We can't go back, but I'm sure that my son felt the lack of joy that existed between my husband and me. I'm sure he felt the depth of my loneliness. I wish I knew then what I know now about taking responsibility for my own feelings.

Being pregnant and giving birth are enormous events in a woman's life, especially the first child, which changes your life so dramatically. If you do not know how to take responsibility for your own feelings of anger, hurt, anxiety, depression and loneliness, things will only get worse after giving birth. A child does not solve problems for you.

It's hard to imagine before having a child what it is like to be responsible for another life 24/7. If you have not learned how to lovingly parent yourself before giving birth, you might find yourself getting lost as parent your baby. Good parenting starts before getting pregnant, with learning how to take loving care of yourself.

If you have a desire to be a good parent, here are steps you can take before getting pregnant:

1. **Physical health:** make sure that you are in good physical shape by eliminating sugar and artificial sweeteners. Start to shop in health food stores and buy only organic products. Eliminating pesticides and food additives is essential for good health. Also be sure to get enough exercise and sleep.
2. **Emotional health:** instead of having your eyes on your partner, turn your eyes inward and begin to compassionately notice your own feelings. Start to treat your own feelings in the same way you are planning on treating your future child's feelings – with caring and understanding. In addition, start to practice taking loving action in your own behalf – standing up for yourself, speaking your truth, taking time for yourself. Practice taking loving care of your own feelings instead of making your partner responsible for how you feel. Begin to notice what you think and do that may be causing you stress.

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Changing thoughts and behavior that cause your stress before getting pregnant is essential for good parenting.

3. Spiritual health: practice opening to a higher source of guidance, wisdom, strength and comfort. This can be your own highest, wisest self within you, or a Higher Power outside of you. You will find that being able to turn a source of wisdom and comfort within or without will go a long way in helping you stay loving and stress-free with yourself, your partner, and your baby. In addition, this will help you know what to do in different challenging situations with your baby.

If you are planning on having a baby, start today in becoming a good parent!

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best-selling author and co-author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?", "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By My Kids?", "Healing Your Aloneness", "Inner Bonding", and "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By God?" Visit her web site for a FREE Inner Bonding course: <http://www.innerbonding.com> or

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Parenting Is Tough – Make It Easy

By Nadia Alvino

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Raising children and being a good parent is tough, you need every bit of information that you can find to help you develop effective parenting techniques and to make parenting easier. You need a resource that contains parenting tips and advice that will help develop your parenting skills. I have produced a practical, high quality, professionally edited ebook titled " Parenting is Tough ! " that contains all the expert parenting advice that you will need to develop effective parenting skills. This ebook outlines many helpful parenting tips that will enable you to raise good, happy, confident and resilient kids. This easy to read ebook will teach you how to bond with your children and how together you can create a loving, happy relationship that will get stronger and stronger as your children become teenagers, young adults and then as they become parents themselves. More info on this ebook is available at: www.goodhappykids.com

I am an experienced child care professional, parenting consultant, author and pshychologist.



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