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**Parents – What Kind of Role Model Are You?**

**By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.**

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**PARENTS – WHAT KIND OF ROLE MODEL ARE YOU?**

**Margaret Paul, Ph.D.**

Are you being the person you want your children to be?

Many parents today really try to be better parents than their parents were. They attempt to be there for their children – to listen to them, support them, spend time with them, as well as hold and nurture them. Their children grow up feeling loved and valued by these loving parents, yet often these same children struggle as adults in many areas of their lives. I have numerous clients who tell me that they had wonderful parents who truly loved and nurtured them, yet these clients are struggling with their work, their relationships, or their lives in general. Why is this?

The common issue is that their parents did not role model for them personal responsibility for their own feelings, needs, and physical health. They did not teach them through their own behavior how to take good care of themselves physically or emotionally.

## Parents – What Kind of Role Model Are You?

So, what are you teaching your children through your own behavior? Do you role model following your passions, or do you spend your spare time watching TV? Do you role model taking good care of your health, or do you smoke cigarettes, eat badly and get little exercise? Do you have a spiritual practice that is meaningful to you and moves you into your heart, or do you stay mostly in your head? Do you have a process for managing your conflicts with others, or do you tend to withdraw, get angry, resist or comply as a way to control or avoid conflict? Do your children see you avoiding life's difficulties with alcohol, drugs, gambling, spending, TV or other addictive behavior, or learning from life's challenges? Are you boring because you just try to be safe and maintain the status quo, or do you extend yourself and take some risks that result in aliveness and vitality?

A client of mine was recently struggling with the lack of passion in her life. I asked her if her parents were passionate about anything. "No," she said. "The smoked constantly, drank beer, and watched TV.

They were nice to me, but they were both sick a lot and both died at young ages. I never saw either of them excited about anything." This woman in her late forties had no idea of how to discover her passions and her life felt dead to her. Her husband had expressed a lack of interest in her because he actually found her to be boring, and was no longer sexually interested in her. This is what brought her to work with me.

Let's take the role modeling a little further. Are you honest, or do you let your children think it's okay to withhold the truth or even lie outright. Do you role model integrity, or do you behave in ways that you would not want announced in a newspaper? Do you stand up for yourself, or do you let others walk all over you? Do you tolerate abusive situations or do your children see you take action in your own behalf?

It's very important to realize that, while being there for your children is vital, it is only half of good parenting. The other half is being there for yourself with honesty, courage and integrity. It's not enough to treat your children with love. You need to treat yourself with love as well if you want your children to grow up knowing how to take loving care of themselves.

If your parents did not role model treating themselves lovingly, the chances are you don't know how to do it for yourself. Treating yourself lovingly is something that is a learned skill. The six-step Inner Bonding process (see our FREE course at [www.innerbonding.com](http://www.innerbonding.com)) was developed specifically for this purpose. The best thing you can do for yourself and your children is learn these six powerful steps and practice them on a daily basis. Your children will naturally learn how to take responsibility for themselves – for their health and emotional well-being – as you learn to do this for yourself. Give yourself and your children the gift of the joy that comes from truly loving yourself!

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 <mailto:margaret@innerbonding.com>

## **Your Job as a Role Model**

**By Anthony Kane, MD**

A certain educator was once asked at what point should a parent begin to prepare for child raising.

"How old are you?" the educator inquired.

"Twenty-three."

"You should begin twenty-three years ago."

What is the message? The single most important thing a parent can do to educate a child is to provide the child with a good role model. A parent has to work a whole lifetime becoming the type of person that he wants his child to become.

The most important people in the world in the child's eyes are his parents. They are his first and most important teachers. The behavior of a child's parents leaves a permanent impression in the child's subconscious mind. Why is this so? The reason is that the most reliable source of priorities and values in a child's eyes is his parents. Children have an innate trust in their parents. They feel that everything their parents say and do is the true and proper way to behave.

We all wish our children would do what we say and not what we do. However, this is not how the mind of a child works. The intellect of a child is undeveloped. As a result, children function on an emotional level, absorbing more from what they see and hear around them than from what they are taught.

What is the take home message? The main thing for you to realize is that you have far more influence on your child than you probably realize. Your child is going to pattern himself after you. That is how nature set it up. Your job as a parent is to be the best role model that you can be. True, it is hard, but that is the way it is.

The following is a story I heard recently that brings out the extent to which your child learns from your actions.

A certain kindergarten teacher once warned a group of parents to be careful how they behave in front of their children.

"By the way your children play in school," she said. "I know which of you treat each other respectfully. I know which of you use foul language at home. I know everything about how you behave in your home by the way your child plays, talks, and behaves."

Remember, you might think that everything that goes on in your home behind closed doors is hidden from the world, but it is not. Your child sees everything. Your child is going to take your behavior and broadcast it to the world. Make sure that what he is transmitting is something that you want the world to see.

## Parents – What Kind of Role Model Are You?

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ADD ADHD Advances

Anthony Kane, MD is a physician, an international lecturer, and director of special education. He is the author of a book, numerous articles, and a number of online programs dealing with ADHD (

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