



## Welcome to The Parent Program™ Week 5 (15 weeks)

Welcome back.

I hope you enjoyed looking forward, working on building your relationships and being pro-active this last week. As I mentioned before, each of these attitudes are angles, different ways to look at parenting situations you may encounter. Some may work for you; some will work better for others. Some work in one, others in another situation.

Under it all is the desire not to react, but to act with a positive, constructive life and relationship building outcome in mind. The attitudes are tools for you to look at and practice with before you get into the thick of things. To pick up when you are feeling tensed, under pressure or are wondering what to do next. To use when you look back on how you did something with your child. The more you practice, the more they will just appear when you need them, as they have truly become part of your toolkit.

- 🌈 This week's parenting attitudes are "The Coaching Parent" and "The Win-Win Parent". The Coaching Parent helps you support your child in their learning in life, in achieving their dreams. The Win-Win Parent helps you in conflict situations, decision making and in working with others to create a home where everyone feels they gain by just being there.

### The Coaching Parent

- 🌈 ***I am my child's support***
- 🌈 ***I aim for their goals & dreams***
- 🌈 ***I guide, stimulate and show them the way***
- 🌈 ***I believe in them when they don't***
- 🌈 ***I enjoy their success***

When I change my perspective and look at my role as a support role, as a coach in my child's life, my focus shifts from wanting to be right, to wanting to make it right for my child. From my own ideas about how things should go to supporting my child in living their own dreams.

### **I am my child's support**

Supporting your child is a crucial role you play in your child's life. Supporting them in how they go about achieving their goals takes time, effort and patience, lots of patience. You know you can't cycle for your child, you have to help them learn it, do it. You could do their homework in a fraction of the time (at least until we get to the parts that we have no idea what it is about anymore!!) but that doesn't help them learn to do it themselves. Support is aimed at the other person. You put your energy, your knowledge, your skills to work for someone else, in this case your child. As a Coaching Parent you are in an easier and more difficult situation. You love your child, want them to succeed and to be happy. But, they are also around when you don't feel great yourself, or when you have



no patience, are busy with your own things and under pressure. And then the temptation might be to be short, do it yourself, to not see or hear how they need you right now. Support isn't always preventing them to fall.

**Example:**

*A child learns a lot from feeling the balance of the bike, how it shifts when they move too quickly. Support is not only holding them/the bike when they can't control the bike. It is also letting go when they are ready to try it and may fall. They will learn from falling, too. Support is to then help them get right back up and cheer them on for the great job they are doing learning, falling and getting better every try. Giving them a kiss and again helping them move forward in small steps. Saying stop when they are too tired.*

**Example:**

*Your teen is trying to find their way through the mazes of how to fit in, be themselves and answer the question "Do I want to be popular". Maybe they don't want to be seen with you. Supporting them is talking about it, recognizing their dilemma, not taking it personally and dropping them off at the corner, instead of right in front of their friends. Then your teen can be your child, love you, thank you and walk into the world further down, without the dilemma of "How do I say goodbye without embarrassing myself?"*

Support is also being fair, open and clear. Building a false sense of self-esteem, built on talents they don't have or successes that were minor, or by over-praising them is not support. Giving kind, clear feedback is more helpful because you will help your child face life in all kinds of area's with a notion of both what they can do well and aren't all that good at (yet).

Support is not always an in your face, glorifying role. Maybe they will give you credit someday, maybe they won't. But they will always feel it.

### **I aim for their goals & dreams**

As I have mentioned before, at times it can be difficult to separate out what our own desires and ambitions are from what our kids' own goals and dreams may be. This is not new, nor surprising.

**Example:**

*For generations sons in families have gone on to become a trades person, just like their fathers and grandfathers. It is almost a tradition and each generation of fathers looks forward to bringing their sons up and into this occupation. It has been hard for fathers to see their sons change directions. Sometimes it is felt as betraying the family heritage, as not valuing their father. At the same time fathers have come to see that the doors have opened for their children to be something else, without fear of losing a source of income.*

When you look at life as a coaching parent, you focus first on your child's talents and desires. You help them reach for their dreams, whether that is in line with the



generations before you or not, whether others agree or not. If your son or daughter then chooses to go in that direction great, if not, then you are there to help them be their best. We now have more choices than ever before and careers in the footsteps of others are just one option and, at times, not an option at all.

The shift means that you support your child's wishes. It is a lot easier to get them to do the hard work necessary in this way, than when you push them towards something they don't want. Something they do to keep you happy or for fear of losing your love and support, and resent later in life, when they realize they were living your dream, not yours.

Society is shifting. Jobs, careers change. There are many careers now that didn't even exist when I went to high school. And that is a while ago, but not that long! Internet marketing for one. Who would have known what that was, even 15 years ago! If we can find joy, pride in anything our kids will achieve, we can support them in a way they need.

### **I guide, stimulate and show them the way**

The Coaching Parent steps back, and looks at the steps needed for their child to achieve their goals and dreams. It can be that they guide them through the maze of schools to choose from or the training programs available. They can point out the money involved and help with how to get that together. The Coaching Parent stimulates them to keep going, work through the hard days, shows them the small steps you can take when nothing seems to work. The Coaching Parent starts as early in life as possible so their kids know they have their parent and their support with them, where ever they go.

*Whether it is becoming a doctor, actor, framer or farmer, entrepreneur or politician, there are many small steps involved. Going to school, trying things out, finding out if I have the skills, do I really like it, what does it cost, where can I learn this, where can I work. The Coaching Parent helps their kids to find information, try things out, fall and get up. And supports them whether they keep on this track or choose another altogether.*

### **I believe in them when they don't**

It is easy to be a Coaching Parent when successes pile up, when each small step is another little victory. It is not as easy to help, support, stimulate and help to see the path towards the goal, when things aren't working as your child wants. When they seem to keep falling and there doesn't seem a way to get through to the next level, as if their fingers keep reaching outside of their abilities, beyond their knowing, further than they can imagine. The Coaching Parent helps their child believe, seeing when they don't. We know everything is possible, when we believe, and try, step by step. Including the parts that don't seem to work.

No plane would have flown if we had stopped at the first try, when it came falling down. If we had stopped at the first accident, the first hurt. Because sometimes that is when we learn the most. From a loss in a game, from a trial that went wrong, from a puzzle we couldn't solve. Until we saw, reached around the corner and things started moving again. The Coaching Parent fills that gap, that moment in time when our child doesn't



see, is tempted to stop, to quit, because they can't see beyond the loss, the puzzle, the frustration of something outside of their grasp.

The Coaching Parent fills that gap with love, understanding and a never wavering belief in their child. Because each of us has come to deliver a special gift. And in the gap of not knowing, of feeling like they can't see anything anymore, your child needs you to lift them up, just a little, with your spirit, your love and belief, so they can step out of this feeling, this gap and get on to the next move, the next puzzle, the next step. The Coaching Parent does this without being attached to what the outcome will be, because the Coaching Parent loves without conditions, but full of belief in their child. It doesn't matter whether you coach them in math, in sports, in love or in a career. It does matter that you believe.

### **I enjoy their success**





And then, as The Coaching Parent, you enjoy their successes with love for them, for their steps little and big. You step into the shade and let them have their glory, without the need to be recognized yourself. Because The Coaching Parent knows that after every success the next step of learning is around the corner. And more work needs to be done. So you help your child celebrate, rejoice and feel the thrill. And help them land softly back on earth after!

### **The second attitude this week is**

#### **The Win-Win Parent**

***I aim to find solutions that work well for everyone***

***I focus on***

-  ***Intentions people have***
-  ***Serving the interests behind the issue***
-  ***Building relationships***
-  ***Being creative in finding solutions that work for all***

The Win-Win Parent aims at positive conflict resolution in and outside your family. The potential for conflict is around every corner when you are raising children. Whether between siblings, parents, ex-spouses, blended families, or with teachers, counselors, doctors, extended family; conflicts are bound to arise.

This week we will look at the underlying attitude you need to solve conflicts constructively, so they help build your family, your relationships and will help your child to have the tools to always solve issues in a positive way.

Just having this attitude of The Win-Win Parent alone will help you in many situations.

The step by step process we will work through in week 11 is a clear path to positive, win-win solutions. The steps you will work through are used in families, at work and in peace



negotiations. They might work, for you, for your partner/spouse, for your teenager, for your elementary aged child and with your parents and others.

### **The Win-Win Parent: I aim to find solutions that work well for everyone**

A family is not a place where one can have it all and the rest just doesn't. This will create a sense of favoritism and resentments that can last a lifetime. "It was always about you and nobody else." By seeing that we need to find solutions that work well for everyone, we shift to being creative in situations where the first answer might be easier, but would not serve us all.

#### **Example:**

*"My sister always had my mother wrapped around her little finger. Somehow it always turned out her way. Whether it was a TV show we'd watch, where we would go, what we would eat. After I left the house I didn't talk to my sister for years, fed up with all that being at the center of attention. It wasn't until much later that I talked about it with her. I was amazed to hear that she always was insecure about herself. "But you always got what you wanted" I said. "Yes" she answered "I did, but I always felt how you guys disliked me for it and I didn't know how to be liked by all of you. So I never learned how to really work things out until I left home and got into a place with roommates and they sure told me!"*

Family is the great experimentation playground for kids. What they learn at home will build patterns that can help or hinder them for a lifetime. What we have learned at home, or in a foster home, adoptive home, group home when we were young, stays with us. Because in the early years the imprints, the start of patterns begins and over time they become grooves, patterns we keep because they are easy, automatic or learned defenses in situations where we as adults might not need them anymore or could use different ones. By shifting now and (re-)learning to work towards win-win solutions, options that benefit us all, we will help our children create patterns that can help them for a life time. To live and work together harmoniously, with solutions that work for all.

### **I focus on intentions people have.**

Our relationships within families go a lot further than solving the issue at hand. When you look at the intention behind words and actions, you often will find that these are a lot more positive than the immediate action may show.

#### **Example**

*When I get angry because my mother "isn't listening" and not being fair and I go off shouting, I can certainly create a notion in which my mother is totally wrong and it is all about her not being fair etc.. I can also think about what my and her intention is. It is my intention to be heard, to have an equal relationship with her in which we both can say what we need to and receive an open ear. I know she wants that too, but somehow when I speak up she gets defensive. When I realize that her intention is not to upset me, and that her defensiveness has nothing to do with me, I can step back and stop myself from shouting (which doesn't get us anywhere anyway)*



Seeing the intention behind someone's words or behavior takes effort and practice. Asking "What is it you really want with me?" can help, because it goes beyond the immediate issue. If they don't get the question at first, repeat it saying "No, not just right now, I mean in general." Asking yourself helps, too, because then you know what you want to achieve in the long run and how the immediate issue fits into that.

### **I focus on serving the interests behind the issue**

The interests behind the issue, the question, the opportunity at hand, are "what is it you really want to achieve?". Most of the time it is not some deep secret or big issue.

#### **🗨️ Example**

*My wife asks me whether I am going into town today. I say "I am not sure, I have to get groceries and go to the bank, but I can do that tomorrow, too. Can I do something for you?" "Oh, that's ok" she says, "I don't want you to go when you don't need to". I can then walk away and think, "Ok, good", or I can realize that while she asked, maybe she wasn't direct enough. When I get into it a bit deeper, it turns out that she needs something delivered somewhere today, but doesn't really have the time herself, but she doesn't want me to disrupt my schedule/work etc.*

Because I looked behind the immediate issue/question and asked what it was (otherwise I keep guessing) she really needed to know, I can serve our interests, other than just answer her question. The same counts for discussions with our kids:

#### **🗨️ Example**

*You want your child/ youth to be home at a certain time. They want to stay out longer/ later. You can say no or negotiate about time 4PM, after supper for your child or about 10-12PM for the youth. Or you can talk about what it is you want: You want them to get enough rest/ to be safe and they want to stay for dinner because their friend's mom is making pancakes or the band starts at 10 and being home then doesn't help. Then you can talk about what it really is. Is it the pancakes or being there and having pancakes? How can you make sure you are safe when you are out? They can then better understand what it is you want when they are negotiating what they want. You both know the interest behind the immediate issue.*

### **I focus on building relationships.**

If we would focus on getting our way, getting the most, denying others opportunities for our own benefit, how would it affect our relationship? Whether it is with our kids, our spouse/partner or others, once we see that we want a relationship that goes beyond the immediate issue, it helps us to see that we need to help others to be happy, thrive, enjoy opportunities, windfalls etc, too. Because otherwise why would they want to be in a relationship with us in the long run?



As we talked about last week, things change once we see that we are building our relationships step by step and issue by issue. So keeping that in mind as you deal with issues, conflicts and day-to-day negotiations helps you and your child to see the longer term effects of how you deal with each step along the way. As there are no stand alone issues, one time decisions. They all string together into a relationship.

**Example**

*Your child and you are passing through that wonderful little check out space covered with candy and magazines at the grocery store. I don't know how they figured this out, but it is likely one of the most conflict-prone spaces you and your child can come through. Just as you are about to put your things on the counter, as everyone is around, your child will ask, demand, cry, barter, negotiate, throw a fit and more to get something they don't need and you don't want them to have. How you act will create the basis for the next time and the time after that. If you feel shame, embarrassment or guilt, if you are just too tired to bother, you will likely fall for the pressure and give in. And guess what will happen next time?*

**I focus on being creative in finding solutions that work for all**

Often when we get into negotiations with anyone, including our kids, it seems as if there are only a few options available. But there are always more options than we thought of at first.

**Example**

*When we negotiate when we buy a car the first thought is to get the price down and they will try to keep it as high as they can. 20,000- 15,000 and we'll see where end up. We don't immediately think about things like maintenance, gas, trade-in, spread out payments, seats, radio/CD player. The sales person knows, because he/she has done this many times. He/She will aim at finding a solution that will make you happy to buy the car with the least cost reduction, so both you and the dealer are happy.*

**Example**

*When we talk about going on vacation, we talk about what we all would like to do. What we want to get out of our vacation. We are very different people. I like to be lazy, catch some sun, read, play a game. My wife likes to be active, bike, walk swim, dive. Our daughter, as the years go by and she changes her preferences, wants kids around, water, and wants to bike, swim and play with the kids. So when we look at where we will camp (we're all ok with that!) we choose places where we all can get what we want. During the vacation we also make sure everyone gets to enjoy what they came for, both together and by themselves. So some days I get to be lazy, some days I go along for a bike ride, a walk etc.*

By looking as The Win-Win Parent, you will find that options will come to you and your kids easily. Because after a few decisions, choices, issues, everyone starts to look for options that serve others, too. And instead of an either/or choice, a fight for who will get what they want, you will be seeking for what works best for you as a family.



Following are the exercises for this week and two pages with “The Coaching Parent” and “The Win-Win Parent”. You can print them out and hang them up if you’d like.

## The Parent Program™ Week 5 Exercises

**Attitude:** Start the day and end the day with thinking about something you like about your child. Before you do the exercises think about how you like something today or in general about your child. Something they did, said, how they looked, a feeling you had. Anything positive will help you get into a mood that will help you embrace learning for and with your child.

**Learning:**

Your learning investment: Input = output.

The more you practice, the more you experience: the deeper your learning will be. When you speak/write about what you are learning and share experiences with others, you will retain more and increase your understanding. When you complete it with celebrating your successes on a daily basis, you will feed your brain the positive recognition it needs to truly change behavior.

1. The minimum: Once a week reading the email and listening to the audio file (together about 30 minutes), do the minimum daily exercises of 10-15 minutes.
2. The little extras: Take the time to reflect during the day on your thoughts and actions as related to the content and exercise you did today. Hang up the print out sheets and look at them. Answer your kids’ questions about them.
3. The sauce on top: Sharing: Find a buddy, create a learning community, by sharing with others, either your partners in parenting or others who are or want to learn. A supportive learning community increases your learning as we all need the little boost from time to time. Parents at the courses enjoyed sharing with others as much as the course itself.
4. The full meal deal: Creating positive memories by writing 3-5 successes everyday. Get a little notebook to enjoy, look back at when you feel less confident and as a memory of your learning, write down stories.

**Exercises:**

✿ **Every day:** Think of something you like about your child at the start of the day and at the end of the day so you embrace the whole day in positive thoughts about your child. Before you start the exercise, reflect on how you like something in your child.

✿ **Day 1. 10-15 minutes: The Coaching Parent: I am my child’s support and I aim for their goals & dreams.** First think about how you felt when you grew up. Did your parents support you and your dreams? If you can find an example that they did, silently thank them. Now think about how you support your child/youth. What things/actions/dreams do you actively support? How do you do that? Do you support them in (safe) actions/decisions that you don’t necessarily agree with or like? Ask your child/youth today how they want to be supported/helped by you and just listen and thank them for telling you.

*(Extras) As you go through today with your children, look at how you support them. Listen to your words, are they positive, reinforcing, stimulating, encouraging? Talk to your child about things you do to support them, is that working for them? Do they see what you’re trying to do? (Not to create recognition, but to create awareness, both in them and you, because sometimes you will think you are supporting them and they might not see it as support at all!)*



- ✂ **Day 2.** 10-15 minutes: **The Coaching Parent: I guide, stimulate and show them the way.** Think about some of the dreams, goals, desires your child has. Pick one and think about how you “guide, stimulate and show them the way”. How concrete is that? Do you do things for them, get information etc. or do you help them find, do? Do you talk about how what you do now relates to what will happen later, the steps in between? Take some time to talk about one goal/dream with your child today.

*(Extras) Today when you are with your children, look at how you support them. How consistent are you, do you get affected by your mood or theirs? Try to say encouraging things as much as possible while telling them what may be the next step. If you are not with them, think about how you normally do this, with them, with others?*

- ✂ **Day 3.** 10-15 minutes: **The Coaching Parent: I believe in them when they don't believe in themselves. I enjoy their success.** Think about situations in which your child felt depressed, frustrated, ready to throw in the hat. How did you encourage them? How did you talk about the situation? Can you see their ability to get there, when they don't? If it happens to come up today, try to talk about it and support them by believing they can.

*(Extras) Think about ways that lift your child's spirit. What has worked, what inspires them. How can you make their goals smaller and help them see the next little step?*

- ✂ **Day 4.** 10-15 minutes: **Today is for your dreams.** What is it you want to do, learn, achieve? Think about how you want to be supported. How can you support yourself? Have you looked ahead, seen the step by step path? How do you pick yourself up when you feel down, frustrated? How do you ask for help, for coaching, for support? Choose an activity that will help you move forward in reaching one of your goals today (and do it!).

*(Extras) Today just enjoy yourself, looking forward to doing the activity you chose, in doing it and in the afterglow. If needed, ask for support, for help, for coaching and allow yourself to receive what people want to give you. Accept it all, whether it is a compliment or a concrete tool.. Just say "thank you" and enjoy.*

- ✂ **Day 5.** 10-15 minutes: **The Win-Win Parent. I focus on the intentions people have.** Think about how you normally approach conflicts or issues, or decisions that need to be made that affect other people. Do you want to win, do you feel you lose if you don't get what you want? Think about what your intentions were in a big issue you had with your parents, partner or someone at work? (i.e. I wanted to have a good relationship with my child's teacher) Did you express your intentions at all, or were you focused on the issue? What are the issues you are dealing with right now? What are your intentions in one specific issue? Try to talk about your intentions with your child (i.e. I am asking you to make this decision with my help now, because I want you to be able to make good decisions later)



*(Extras) Today look at how you approach conversations about issues, opportunities, conflicts. Are you aware of your intentions? Do you express them? Practice with talking about your intentions.*

- ✦ **Day 6.** 10-15 minutes: **The Win-Win Parent. I focus on serving the interests behind the issues.** (Interests are what is driving an issue i.e. “I want you to learn how to do the dishes so that we will have more time to play games after I have cleaned up the kitchen at the same time”) Make a list of 3-5 issues/decisions that you had to deal with/make in your family. Now make a list of the interests of all participants. How did the solution you found serve the interests of all the participants? (i.e. I had less work, because you did the dishes, you had a game night because we were done cleaning up early)

*(Extras) Today think about the interests you and others have in situations throughout the day. Make lists for yourself. Try to talk about some of them with your child or others to practice bringing them to the forefront.*

- ✦ **Day 7.** 10-15 minutes: **The Win-Win Parent. I focus on being creative in finding solutions that work for all.** Think about an issue you had earlier with someone. Now take a piece of paper and write down 5-10 different solutions that you can come up with. Keep in mind the interest both of you have, if you can. Don't judge the options, just brainstorm, be creative and see where it goes. Try to do this in one situation you have with your child and see whether you can come up with more than one solution that would serve you both.

*(Extras) Today think about options you can come up with all day. Don't stop at the first, most obvious one but step beyond that and get creative. Make lists if you can, to refer back to and find new options, built on earlier ones, as you go.*

**End of week 5:** Take a few minutes to write down how you have applied the concepts this week. The Coaching Parent as well as The Win-Win Parent.



# The Coaching Parent



***I am my child's support***



***I aim for their goals & dreams***



***I guide, stimulate and show them the way***



***I believe in them when they don't***



***I enjoy their success***



# The Win-Win Parent

***I aim to find solutions that work well for everyone***



***I focus on***



***The intentions people have***



***Serving the interests behind the issue***



***Building relationships***



***Being creative in finding solutions that work for all***