



*“So why is self-compassion a more effective motivator than self-criticism? Because the driving force is LOVE, not FEAR.”*

~ Kristin Neff, PhD

# SELF LEADERSHIP PARENTING YOURSELF

## IDENTIFYING AND CREATING YOUR UNIQUE, BALANCED, IDEAL SELF-PARENT/LEADER

In order to discover how to best “parent” and “guide” yourself in a balanced way, now as an adult, it is essential to assess how you were parented. Like it or not, how you were parented, becomes part of your subconscious programming.

Bring this to light, into your consciousness, so you can observe and, thus, choose your new programming. Uncover what may have been missing and fill in the missing pieces. Self Leadership is about making small decisions such as choosing breakfast, or big stuff, such as inspiring yourself to quit an addiction, make healthier choices, connect lovingly in relationships rather than with reactivity, and attain long-term goals.



IF YOU ARE NOT “PARENTING” YOURSELF THE WAY YOU NEED, YOU ARE LIKELY NEGLECTING YOUR EMOTIONAL HEALTH NEEDS, AVOIDING, EVEN ABUSING YOURSELF, OR SEEKING A “PARENT” IN OTHERS NEEDING THEIR REASSURANCE, VALIDATION, MOTIVATION AND MORE. Identify how you were parented - and then decide if you want to parent yourself in the exact same way, or if you want to modify the way you guide and relate to yourself now as an adult. Awareness is key! Gain freedom to choose how you want to take care of yourself.



### EMPOWER YOURSELF BY CHOOSING HOW TO PARENT/LEAD YOURSELF IN LIFE

This is not meant to judge your parents’ imperfections. ***Nor is it to shame your parents or make you out to be a victim! In fact, it is the opposite, it’s empowering.*** Faulty parenting methods were passed down from generations - based off myths, unquestioned, generational conditioning, and even enforced by doctors and so-called “experts.”



### BE IN CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE INSTEAD OF A SHEEP TO YOUR CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING

Without understanding the way in which you were parented, you are left in the dark essentially; subconsciously following the traits, skills, methods, attitudes, behaviors, ways of relating, communicating, etc. of your parents. You end up being a sheep - meandering through life - stuck following the tug and pull of subconscious influences, rather than leading your life in-charge, like a lion. Wouldn’t you rather be empowered by seeing the reality of what you unconsciously agreed to as a child? And how you’re leading yourself now?

## COMMON UNHEALTHY PARENTING METHODS 'OLD SCHOOL' AND GENERATIONAL

THIS IS NOT TO SHAME OR NIT-PICK YOUR PARENTS. IT IS TO IDENTIFY REALITY AND YOUR "PROGRAMMING" IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU PARENT YOURSELF. MOST PARENTS ARE WELL-INTENTIONED YET WERE FED BAD TACTICS BY THEIR OWN CAREGIVERS AND EVEN "EXPERTS." It is not your fault, nor your parent's fault. In fact your parents were likely trying their best based on what they were told! Yet this does not discount the harmful effects of bad tactics. The power is in awareness and once you have clarity, you are less apt to repeat faulty parenting tactics in how you treat yourself and others. Break the cycle of damaging methods.

Here are a just a few methods parents were taught in recent decades, that have since been proven as damaging to individual's development and overall well-being:

- 1 Never sleep with your baby, even newborns (triggers abandonment fears)
- 2 Sleep training (put child in crib at allocated times and let it cry to sleep (triggers abandonment fears)
- 3 Self-sooth (leave baby to cry it out alone... was thought to train it to be "self-sufficient")
- 4 See but do not hear your children (this is actually emotionally neglectful and awful)
- 5 Do not spoil your kids (fear-based idea with no scientific clarity, thought to make children entitled; turns out entitlement stems from lack of emotional connection and manifests from experiencing prolonged disconnection and maltreatment or contempt by others and caregivers)
- 6 Yell at your kids to enforce punishment (this actually ignites Fight/Flight/Freeze response within the limbic system and the parent becomes a "threat to safety" which is literally the opposite of a parents' #1 job to create safety and belonging; yelling at kids can be abusive and has long-term effects (larger amygdala, core shame, and more, causing anxiety, low self-esteem, and more aggression).
- 7 Enforce cleaning entire plate of food (controlling and can cause emotional eating issues later in life)
- 8 Shame children for voicing their opinions and ideas (calling it arguing or disrespectful)
- 9 Shame children for sharing their feelings and emotions (calling feelings wimpy or dramatic)
- 10 Spare the rod (spanking and corporal punishment were considered acceptable in prior decades)
- 11 Compare your children with each other and others (was thought to motivate child)
- 12 Never hug or kiss your children (devastating example of how parents were instructed to parent)

### 'OLD SCHOOL' EXAMPLE: QUOTE FROM A GROUNDBREAKING, BEST-SELLING BOOKS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, BENJAMIN SPOCK'S THE COMMON SENSE BOOK OF BABY AND CHILD CARE (1946):



*"Never hug and kiss them, never let them sit in your lap. If you must, kiss them once on the forehead when they say good night. Shake hands with them in the morning. Give them a pat on the head if they have made an extra-ordinary good job of a difficult task." Dr. Spock*

## LEAD AND 'PARENT' YOURSELF THE WAY YOU NEED, CREATE YOUR OWN BALANCE

WE PURCHASE THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES AND MAKE DECISIONS FOR OUR PHYSICAL HEALTH BASED OFF RESEARCH. YET MOST OF US DO NOT STOP TO ASSESS HOW WE PARENT OURSELVES IN EACH AND EVERY MOMENT AND HOW MUCH THIS IMPACTS OUR LIVES. REALIZE HOW ANTIQUATED OUR OLD PROGRAMMING AND SELF-PARENTING METHODS ARE. You have the power to consciously choose how you parent yourself in-the-now with the most up-to-date, effective, emotionally attuning, competent parenting methods available today... to genuinely inspire and guide yourself with your own internal compass. There are old parenting methods that have stood the test of time as well. Explore and research what best fits.

### EXAMINE THE FOUR BASIC PARENT TYPES



- Kids should be seen and not heard; follow rules without exception
- Don't take child's feelings into consideration
- Not interested in negotiating; focus is on obedience and punishment
- Invested in making kids feel bad for their mistakes (shame-based)
- Higher risk of development self-esteem problems because their opinions, feelings, inherit value, and independence aren't valued
- Fuels anger suppression; berating towards self and others as an adult



- A lot of effort in creating and maintaining positive relationship with child
- Explain reasons behind rules; enforce rules and give consequences, yet take child's feelings into consideration and validate children's feelings
- Invest time and energy into preventing behavior problems before they start; positive discipline strategies to reinforce behavior, praise, rewards
- Children tend to end up happy and successful. They're also more likely to be good at making decisions and evaluating safety risks on their own.



- Set rules but rarely enforce them and don't give consequences often
- Lenient and often only step in when serious problem
- Might give privileges back if a child begs
- Take on more of a friend role; encourage children to talk about their problems, but not much effort into discouraging poor choices
- Kids more likely to struggle academically, have behavioral problems, low self-esteem, sadness, health problems, like obesity and cavities



- Uninvolved in asking about school or homework
- Don't spend much time with their children; overwhelmed with other problems, like work, paying bills, illnesses, and managing a household
- Few rules, lack of guidance, nurturing, and attention
- Neglectful but it's not always intentional; substance abuse problems, for example, may not be able to care for a child's physical or emotional needs
- Children likely to struggle with self-esteem issues; poorly in school, frequent behavior problems and rank low in happiness

## IS YOUR INTERNALIZED PARENT MORE AUTHORITARIAN, UNINVOLVED OR PERMISSIVE?

You can quickly assess what you internalized by observing your inner dialogue and past behavior. It is possible to have caregivers that were both extremes and thus you have BOTH internalized parent types.

Much of the pain and regrets in our society today is when people are acting out from their authoritarian and permissive internalized parental selves. With awareness, you can provide yourself with empowering balance, as you ensure you are parenting and leading yourself mindfully and consciously by choice.

Was I punished or disciplined (taught to learn lessons) as a child? Describe examples of either or both.

How was I rewarded as a child?

How do I harshly punish myself as an adult? Or how do I provide myself with healthy discipline as an adult?

What do I consider worthy of reward or in need of punishment, now as an adult?

How do I reward myself as an adult?

Do I set rigid limits or expectations on what I can and can't do or what I should do?

Do I push myself to extremes, such as over-exercising one week, and then burn out and not exercise at all?

What are the ways I set rigid limits on myself that are not necessarily in my highest good?

Do I over-indulge in behaviors that are not even good for me (such as drinking alcohol, over-shopping, over-eating junk food) as if it's a "reward?"

What specific ways am I indulging in behaviors that are not my highest good or aligned with my goals?

How could I provide myself with healthy discipline (teaching to do better next time) and loving rewards?

Describe other behaviors, ways of parenting yourself, or ways you treat yourself that are worth noting.

## CHILD'S BASIC NEEDS FROM PARENTS HEALTHY PARENTING IS "GOOD ENOUGH PARENTING"

Identify how well these basic, good enough parenting, needs were met in your childhood (you may include "M" for mom, "D" for dad; if you were raised by caregivers other than your parents, use names accordingly)

	Not Met	Somewhat	Just Right
<b>1 VERBAL NURTURANCE</b>			
Eager participation in multidimensional conversation			
Generous amounts of praise and positive feedback			
Willingness to entertain <b>all</b> questions			
Reading books together until age around age 10			
Providing resources for continued reading and learning			
<b>2 BASIC GOODNESS NURTURANCE</b>			
Seeing and helping child see their own essential worth, basic goodness and loving nature			
Engendering experiences of joy, fun, and love to maintain the child's innate sense that life is a given			
Guidance and clarity to help child integrate painful aspects of life			
Nurturing the child's creating self-expression			
Frequent experiences in nature and outdoor activities			
<b>3 EMOTIONAL NURTURANCE</b>			
Emotionally connected to the child, eye-contact and engaging			
Sees child as unique individual without comparing to others			
Meeting the child <b>consistently</b> with care and interest			
Welcoming and valuing the child's full emotional expression			
Modeling and teaching healthy expression of emotions and anger			
Teaching healthy boundaries and ways to cultivate trust			
Generous amounts of love, warmth, and compassion			
<b>4 PHYSICAL NURTURANCE</b>			
Affection and protection with warmth and safety			
Healthy diet and sleep schedule			
Teaching habits of grooming, discipline, and responsibility			
Helping the child develop interests, and sense of personal style			
Helping the child balance rest, play and work			
Home felt safe, comfortably clean and organized enough			
<b>5 ALLOWED IMPERFECTIONS, MISTAKES AND SUPPORTED PRACTICE</b>			
Parents provided realistic, uplifting guidance in terms of safety while supporting branching out into interests and passions			

## CHOOSING HOW TO PARENT AND LEAD YOURSELF NOW AS AN ADULT

*Remember no parents are perfect. This is not to shame your parents. This is to understand your internalized self-parent and programming so you may provide yourself with balanced Self Leadership today and from now on.*

Describe how specific basic needs, behaviors/actions were missing ("not met") in your childhood.

Are there specific nurturing needs not listed among the 5 basic needs, that you would like to include in parenting yourself? We are all unique. Incorporate these unique needs into the way you Parent Yourself.

## REALIZE HOW YOU NEED TO PARENT YOURSELF. VISUALIZE WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD OF ABOUT 8 YEARS OLD. RECALL YOUR HOME AND FAMILY OVERALL.

Did you often feel that you were good enough and unconditionally lovable?

If you lived with your parents how did they treat each other? Describe what you noticed

Open and respectful?

One angry, the other compliant?

Both angry?

Ignoring each other?

Nagging?

Was there violence?

Connected and loving?

Natural and comforting?

Rigid and distrusting?

How did your parent(s) treat themselves? Describe what you noticed

Abuse substances (alcohol, drugs, food)?

Were they playful?

Did they have to overwork?

Did either of them ask for what they wanted?

How did your parents deal with pain? Describe what you noticed

Did they see feelings as weak?

Did they see emotions and too much?

Did you ever see them cry?

Did they explain what tears meant and what sadness is?

Were they there for you when you felt sad or in pain? Was anyone ever there for your pain?

Looking back, what did you need when you were feeling pain? A hug, clarity, understanding, guidance?

How did you parents experience and show their anger?

How did your parents help you understand, validate, own, and process your anger?

How did your parents treat you when you were needy, lonely, angry, anxious, or overwhelmed?

Recall a time when you did something your parents didn't like (broke a toy, did poorly at school, cried, hit a sibling, etc.). How did they handle it? Were they angry, hard, silent, judgmental, shaming, cold, nagging, or loving, understanding, caring, open to learning about what happened and how to guide you appropriately?

How did the way they treated you make you feel? What judgment did you make of yourself from this?

Visualize a time when you were hurt, disappointed, or let down as a child from a parent. Or maybe you were completely ignored when you needed a parent. Describe this memory in detail.

Feel in that moment. Name your feelings. Name your emotions. Have you felt this way as an adult?

You were perhaps too scared, little, or helpless to state your needs. Visualize your Parent-self (now as you are today) towering over everyone and protecting yourself as a child. What would you say to provide comfort?

Visualize embracing and hugging your child-self and taking action to provide yourself with reassurance. Only you know what this entails. Describe the action you'd take to help your child-self. How does this feel?

Summarize how you want to parent yourself, using the information above and additional ideas as you wish.

## A FEW PRACTICES TO INCORPORATE AS YOU PARENT YOURSELF THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE CARED FOR

1. Self-Care **SELF-CARE IS BALANCED SELF-DISCIPLINE, NOT INDULGENCE**  
**Incorporate Daily Work and additional practices if you'd like**
2. Inner Connecting Journaling (attune to your feelings and intrinsic nature, Inner Child Work)
3. Standing up to your Inner Critic in each moment (Mindfulness and Inner Dialogue Work)
4. Empowering Emotions and Emotional Literacy Work (building emotional health skills)
5. Choosing your behaviors, by Experiencing Emotions and responding mindfully instead of reacting
6. Gaining Self-awareness, Self-trust, while Facing Fears (many of which stem from childhood)
7. Attachment Style Work, identify and build a foundation of secure attachment and boundaries
8. Books of value: Running on Empty by Jonice Webb, PhD and From Surviving to Thriving by Pete Walker
9. Guided Meditations and Inner Child Self-hypnosis: [www.CreatingYourBalance.com/Meditations](http://www.CreatingYourBalance.com/Meditations)