

Begin Anew Today

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A musician was approached by a fifty-year old man, asking him if he could teach him to play the trombone. The musician replied, "Sure." Then the man asked, "How long will it take?" and the musician replied that he could teach almost anyone to play in five years' time. Startled, the man replied that he would be fifty-five years old by then. The musician replied, "Yes, you will. And how old will you be in five years if you don't learn how to play the trombone?"

If we apply this to our role as parents, it can seem like a long journey to become the kind of parent that we want to be and that our children deserve. The reality is we cannot change what we haven't done or what we

regret about our parenting choices from yesterday or last year. We cannot change the past but we can take all that we have discovered and impact the future with our children and grandchildren.

During Covid, when I was writing my book, a friend sent me a link to a 21-day meditation with Oprah and Deepak Chopra entitled Hope in Uncertain Times. During one of the sessions, Deepak spoke of the secret of finding hope—it happens when we **shift our focus from the problem to the solution**. In parenting and in life, most of us focus our attention on the challenge that lies in front of us.

Deepak shared an analogy:

Imagine your problem is to find a book in a dark, cluttered basement. You cannot see clearly, and you keep banging your head. If you focus on the problem, you may try to protect your head and squint harder as you keep searching through every box. If you focus on the solution, you pause, find the light switch and turn on the light so that you can see everything clearly. And then you find the book.

As a parent, we need to begin by shining the light for ourselves. We often disengage from our story to protect ourselves from the many conflicts, disappointments, and failures we have experienced. But becoming a parent is an opportunity to be awakened to the areas that need our attention. We work on growth and healing so that we can learn to fully enjoy life and be present to our child.

I like the definition of parenthood that I read recently: A sacred relationship that can preserve the wholeness of the child and heal the childhood wounds of the parents. If we look at the emotions that children evoke in us as awakenings or uncovering things that I need to pay attention to, this gives me an opportunity to recognize and begin to address things that I probably already had a hint about. This allows me to see what is lurking in

the shadow part of me.

I have a choice. I can choose to let it overtake me and ruin my next patch of life, or I can choose to look at it straight on and see it with all its fear, untruths, and destabilizing qualities. I can let it remind me that I have work to do, we can reframe, rename, and redefine how we experience our own healing as we love and attend to our children.

Over the next weeks. I will be discussing the various stages of development that children grow through and what they need from us as their parents:

- Stage of Attachment--birth to 18 months
- Stage of Exploration--18 months to 3 years
- Stage of Identity--3-4 years
- Stage of Competence--4-7 years
- Stage of Concern--7-12 years
- Stage of Intimacy--12-18 years
- Stage of Independence--18 + years

Regardless of their age, the most important thing that our children and grandchildren need is a connection of heart and relationship with us as well as seeing that we are continuing to learn and grow in our relationship with them. I believe that the parent-child connection is the core relationship that rules the world. If it is strong and solid, we have healthy men and women. If it is broken and fragmented, we have a wounded world. No matter what mistakes we made in the past, **begin anew today.**

If you would like some support in your parenting, check out the next parenting small group online that I will be offering on Thursday evenings beginning March 2: www.coachmyrna.org/7gifts.html

To purchase my book on
Amazon: www.amazon.com/gp/product/B09L7KS5VH

If you would like to know more about what I offer as a coach, please visit my website: www.coachmyrna.org/ Find out more about Safe Conversations www.coachmyrna.org/safe-conversations.html.

