

## Sharing Control Through Choices

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Last week, I arrived at my Tuesday yoga class only to discover that it wasn't the regular instructor, Carla. As we settled into the practice, I felt myself getting stressed and annoyed thinking, "This isn't how Carla does it...the instructor is moving too quickly from position to position...and so on." I caught myself and did some extra cleansing breaths to calm down. After the class, I was thinking about my reaction and realized that the situation wasn't what I expected. As I contemplated why it bothered me, I realized the bigger picture of wanting to control things that I cannot at times and the need to be flexible.

In parenting, being flexible and sharing the control are valuable tools. Control is a basic human need for all of us and we can learn to give away some of it to empower our children. Control is like love -- the more we give away, the more we get back. Love and Logic Parenting uses the concept of sharing the control through choices.

The parent gives lots of choices. Every choice you give becomes a "deposit" into your child's sense of healthy control. Even when the choices seem small/a bit silly, they can be very powerful. The more choices parents give, the more chance of having cooperative kids. And when necessary, the parent can say, "Didn't I give you a lot of choices today? This time, it's my turn to decide. Thanks for understanding."

Below are the guidelines for sharing the control through choices. Think of it as an experiment and try it out with your children this week. To learn more about raising happy, responsible kids, sign up to attend the Real Love in Parenting free intro on Tuesday, August 28 here [Webinars](#)

### Love and Logic Rules for Choices

- Never give a choice on an issue that might cause a problem for you or for anyone else.
- For each choice, give only two options, each of which will be OK with you.
- If the child doesn't decide in ten seconds, decide for him or her.
- Only give choices that fit with your value system.

### Some Love and Logic Examples of Little Choices

- Would you like to wear your coat or carry it?
- Are you going to clean the garage or mow the lawn this week?
- Will you have these chores done tomorrow? Or do you need an extra day to get them finished?
- Are you having peas or carrots as your vegetable tonight?
- Are you going to bed now? Or would you like to wait 15 minutes?
- Can you stay with us and stop that, or do you need to leave for a while and come back when you are sweet?
- Are you going to put your pajamas on first or brush your teeth first?
- Will you be home at 10:00? Or do you need an extra half hour with your friends?
- Are you guys going to stop bickering? Or would you rather pay me for having to hear it?