

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for
***SIMPLE HABITS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING:
Specific Skills and Tools That Achieve Extraordinary Results in
RAISING A CHILD***

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SIMPLE HABITS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING provides specific meaningful words to guide a child, actions that show daily love for a child, and knowledge to lead a child in the seven major parenting areas. Through this essential commonsense wisdom, you will more effectively parent your child and be able to “Correct your habits and change your actions for the better” (Jeremiah 18:11).

With this beneficial practical wisdom, you will possess the skills and tools to effectively lead and guide your child by implementing simple yet effective verbal skills and actions for a stronger parent-child relationship that produces a good decision-making, responsible child. *SIMPLE HABITS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING* and this discussion guide will enable you to become a “parenting expert” so you can *show* your child how to have a fulfilling, Godly adult life.

HOW TO USE THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

General Thoughts

1. You can utilize this Discussion Guide in the following three ways.
 - A. As a *parent*, you can answer the questions on your own and reflect on the practical wisdom in each chapter.
 - B. Together as *mom and dad*, both of you can discuss together the questions in each chapter so you are even more united in leading and guiding your child toward becoming a confident, capable, and responsible child.

- C. In a small group may interact together to support, learn, and grow by sharing the *simple habits* that were most beneficial as well as how they are implementing those *simple habits* daily.
2. As you go through this Discussion Guide, identify, and write down at least one significant *simple habit* in each chapter that will make a difference in parenting your child. When both mom and dad identify a minimum of seven noteworthy *simple habits*, that will significantly increase *effectively parenting* your child.
 3. Change often takes time but understand that small changes can and will lead to greater improvement for more *effective parenting*. Do not wait until tomorrow but *act today* with these *simple habits* by learning, improving, and growing as a parent for the sake of your child.

Parents In A Small Group

4. To keep each person focused, take a moment, and select a leader who will facilitate wholesome discussions.
5. Your primary goal is to exchange ideas and reinforce beneficial *simple habits*, NOT try to solve every parenting challenge.
6. Your second goal is for every parent to end each meeting feeling encouraged and motivated that they will be more effective in leading and guiding their child.
7. Your third goal is to provide opportunities for each parent to practice the skills and tools learned from the chapter.
8. RELAX! I hope you enjoy this wonderful experience of growing as a parent, leading your child, and supporting other parents. Your group is not a classroom and there are no tests!
9. Please be assured that there are no “dumb” questions, and the emphasis is on learning skills and gaining knowledge to implement the *simple habits* for a stronger parent-child relationship and a more *effective parenting* approach.
10. Your leader must avoid letting anyone monopolize the meeting by trying to be the center of attention and not giving others a chance to share their thoughts. In addition, some members may want to just listen as a “spectator,” and simply learn through the comments of other parents. Certainly, that is fine.
11. Intentionally, there are more questions with each chapter discussion than can be covered in a single meeting. Structure the meeting to establish time limits for the various questions to make your time together most productive.
12. Lower your expectations. There are NO perfect parents or discussion gatherings. Placing expectations that are too high on your group meeting may lead to disenchantment and limit the positive benefits for becoming a more effective parental leader of your child.

13. This guide has questions to stimulate discussion about specific *simple habits*. However, it might also be helpful for the leader to ask two open-ended questions like:
 - A. What was the most significant idea you gained from this chapter? Please explain.
 - B. How do you plan to apply this valuable idea or another *simple yet effective habit* as a parent?
14. After the first meeting, perhaps begin subsequent discussions with a question like, “How did the *simple habit(s)* you emphasized during the last week make a positive difference in parenting your child?”
15. In the Bible, the number seven symbolizes completeness which is also why ***Simple Habits for Effective Parenting*** has seven chapters. Parents are more likely to be involved in a group when the discussion gatherings are completed in seven meetings.
16. At the end of the meeting if there is time, the leader may ask two general questions:
 - A. What *simple habits* from this chapter stand out in your mind? Please explain.
 - B. How will you apply the ideas discussed when parenting your child this next week?

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CHAPTER 1

HABITS THAT MAKE THE PARENTING FOUNDATION

1. Why did Dr. Schroeder open the book with *Habits That Make the Parenting Foundation*? Please explain how chapter one lays the foundation for understanding how to be an *effective parent*.
2. How did this chapter change my view of parenting my child?
3. Why is a “leadership” parent more effective in influencing a child’s heart than a “bossy” parent?
4. In terms of being an example, what are some of the significant areas where a parent needs to focus? Please explain.
5. How do the amazing “As” build a solid foundation for a parent-child relationship?
6. Why are morals based on the Bible so difficult to teach in society today? How can Biblical morals be taught daily?
7. Why is mutual respect an absolutely essential *simple habit* for every family?
8. Explain how obedient decision-making creates a self-confident, responsible child?
9. Why does a controlling or overprotective parenting extreme produce a child with a life of struggles as an adult?
10. Daily, how can a parent effectively plan to lead and influence a child’s heart?

MY SIMPLE YET EFFECTIVE HABIT ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY FOR THE WEEK IS

Write down one *simple habit* or skill from this chapter that will make a positive impact on your parenting, your child, or your parent-child relationship. Why do you believe that *simple habit* will make an encouraging definite difference for your child?

MY PLAN FOR IMPROVING AS A PARENT DURING THE NEXT WEEK IS

Your plan or goal does not necessarily need to be disclosed to the group but may be shared with each other as mom and dad.

A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Lord God, bless my parental leadership, actions, and attitude so that I honor You in all that I do with influencing my child’s heart. Give me strength to faithfully serve You every day by setting an example for my child.

Let my words, behaviors, and values, lead my child in a Godly direction. Fill my child’s mind with Biblical truths so they Godly values. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

HABITS THAT BUILD A STRONG RELATIONSHIP

1. How did your mother and father’s parenting approach both positively and negatively influence your understanding of building a strong parent-child relationship?

2. Why do many parents struggle with regularly implementing these *simple habits* from this chapter?
3. Why is it essential for a child to experience unconditional love?
4. Why does verbal and physical unconditional love so easily slip away as a child grows older?
5. How can both quantity and quality time with a child be enhanced?
6. Why is it so difficult to praise a child daily?
7. How can a parent overcome the challenge of having regular mealtimes together?
8. Why will regular one-on-one activities make an important difference in a parent-child relationship? How has this chapter made it easier for you to build a stronger parent-child relationship?
9. Why is it essential for each parent to have a monthly date with every child?
10. What lesson from this chapter is most challenging for you? Please explain.

**MY SIMPLE YET EFFECTIVE HABIT
ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY FOR THE WEEK IS**

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A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Loving God, through your Word, the Bible, we see your everlasting love and confidently believe that nothing can separate us from your love in Jesus. Give me heavenly wisdom and strength to build a strong relationship with my child. May I take every opportunity to show love in numerous ways for my child. Daily, may I become more like Jesus, so my child always trusts me, and more importantly trusts in You heavenly Father, so our parent-child bond grows stronger daily. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**CHAPTER 3
HABITS THAT HELP APPLY THE RULES**

1. How significant is it for a parent to know how to both lovingly and effectively apply the rules?
2. Why are using specific words and behaviors so important when applying discipline?
3. What are two *simple habits* from this chapter that will make a difference in your parenting approach? Please explain.
4. How did this chapter change your understanding of giving consequences or taking away privileges?

5. Why is never saying “I” and avoiding the word “punishment” a foundational component for a parent-child relationship?
6. Identify barriers that may prevent a parent from implementing some of the *simple habits* in this chapter. How can a parent overcome those barriers?
7. Why do “will you please” and “you decided/because” make a difference in leading a child to become a responsible decision-maker?
8. Why is it important to use “When you/Then you” with chores and responsibilities? How does “When you/Then you” improve a parent-child relationship?
9. How can a parent implement the “Five Fantastic Guidelines” when dealing with a sensitive issue?
10. Based on the *simple yet effective habits* in this chapter, how will you handle discipline differently in the future?

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A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Heavenly Father, give me wisdom to always respond to my child like Jesus. Help me to use the words and tone of voice that open my child’s heart to my guidance so he or she becomes a Godly responsible decision-maker.

May my Godly discipline always be evident to my child through my words, actions, and attitude. Bless me with wisdom so my loving discipline may lead my child down a Godly path. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**CHAPTER 4
HABITS THAT ESTABLISH AN ENCOURAGING ATMOSPHERE**

1. Why do you think Dr. Schroeder had one specific chapter that focuses on an encouraging family atmosphere?
2. How much does the home atmosphere help or harm a child’s perspective of life? How can a parent specifically guard against creating a discouraging atmosphere?
3. What sentence, paragraph, or lesson struck you as significant? Why did that stand out? Please explain.
4. Why do you think most parents become complacent when it comes to an encouraging atmosphere?
5. How did your family-of-origin impact your perception of smiles, humor, and laughter? Why do some families have difficulty with smiles, humor, and laughter?

6. Why is having a loving tone of voice and caring body language a major challenge for many individuals?
7. How does praising publicly and correcting privately make a significant difference in a child's well-being?
8. How can a parent overcome sarcasm and even eliminate it in the home?
9. Why do expectations play such a major role in determining how a child functions in life both now and as an adult?
10. How does a parent's personal life and relationships positively or negatively impact the emotional and physical well-being of a child? Why are goals so important for a parent's personal life and relationships?

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A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Loving God, let my words, behaviors, and example honor you in my home and in public. Open my eyes so I can bless my family with an encouraging home atmosphere. Help me to respond with words and actions that come from a heart like Jesus.

Daily, renew my focus and reenergize my efforts to be an encourager, like the apostle Paul. May God be exalted through the Christ-like family air in our home. Let me provide a home that brings lasting results of a Godly life now and for eternity. I pray in the precious and powerful name of Jesus, Amen.

**CHAPTER 5
HABITS FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHY LIFE**

1. Select a sentence(s) or paragraph from this chapter and describe why that idea was most meaningful for you.
2. Why is a child with a healthy mental and emotional well-being usually optimistic and possess a positive attitude?
3. Why do some parents fear setbacks and losses for their child? Explain how losses and successes are connected to providing a solid foundation for a child's life.
4. How do competent social skills and good manners positively impact a child's life in so many ways? Please explain.
5. How can caring for others create a sympathetic and empathetic spirit within a child?

6. How can a parent regularly to teach good grooming, time management, and organization skills?
7. Why do most responsible, competent children quickly learn personal and domestic skills as well as regularly do household chores?
8. How critically important is it for a child to learn money management? Why is a parent's example in terms of money so important?
9. Before high school graduation, why do some teenagers struggle with having a part-time job or driving a car? Why does not finding a part-time job and/or learning to drive a car often negatively impact a teen's future adult life?
10. Why will involvement in a sport create a competitive spirit within a child to continually improve personally as well as constantly give a good consistent effort in all areas of life?

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A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Almighty God, help my child to walk with you by serving others so that they can be who You created them to be. Help me to reflect your love for others so my child witnesses healthy, Godly living. Give me wisdom and insight to lead my child to wholeheartedly trust, obey, and serve You today.

May my leadership provide my child with the social skills and knowledge to transform their perspective of what a healthy, Godly life looks like. Loving God, bless me with commonsense wisdom in Jesus' name, Amen.

**CHAPTER 6
HABITS THAT PREPARE A CHILD FOR THE WORLD**

1. Why is it extremely difficult to prepare a child to live a Godly life in this sinful world? Please describe some obstacles and how they can be handled.
2. How did this chapter improve your knowledge and skills in preparing your child for the world?
3. Why is it so difficult to discuss sensitive subjects with your child?
4. What sentence, paragraph, or lesson was most significant for you? Please explain.
5. Why are morning and bedtime routines along with adequate sleep so essential for your child and every person?
6. Why is it important for a parent to continually evaluate a child's friendships?

7. How does this chapter change your view of encouraging your child academically?
8. How does a parent's teaching and example have an important influence on a child's modesty?
9. How did this chapter change your approach to these major life changing topics? Please explain.
10. Besides the *simple habits* described in this chapter, what other methods assist a parent in preparing a child for a world that is ever-changing and becoming more complicated daily?

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A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Lord God, open my child's ears to hear and heart to learn what it takes to live in the world but not be of the sinful world. Heavenly Father, turn my child away from temptation and direct my child toward the Godly life that matters to You. Fill my child with your Holy Spirit so they have the strength to live a life that loves God with all their heart and loves others.

Instill within my child Godly qualities that strengthen their character so they can live a life for Jesus in this complicated, ever-changing world. Draw my child close to you God and away from the fleeting things of this world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**CHAPTER 7 and CONCLUSION
HABITS THAT STRENGTHEN FAITH**

1. How did your parent's attitude toward faith in Jesus and worship shape your perspective of what it means to lead your child to grow in their faith?
2. How can faith in Jesus strengthen family relationships? How does a lack of faith in Jesus tear down family relationships?
3. How does an understanding of faith and heaven open the door for regular discussions of eternal life with a loving God and all believers?
4. How can apologizing and forgiving be implemented on a regular basis in a Christian home?
5. How has this chapter made it easier for you to pray with your child as well as have family devotions?
6. Why is planning a critical component for strengthening faith in Jesus? Please explain.
7. When establishing new *simple habits*, why is "feeling uncomfortable to become comfortable" an essential goal?

8. How has *Simple Habits for Effective Parenting* changed your understanding of what produces a capable, confident, and responsible child? Please explain.
9. Why will it be necessary to read and reread this book? Please explain.
10. How is *Simple Habits for Effective Parenting* different from almost every other parenting book?

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ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY FOR THE WEEK IS**

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A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD AND OUR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Heavenly Father, fill my child's heart with love for Your son Jesus. Thank you for the promise of eternity that all Christians have in Jesus our Redeemer and Savior. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may my child confidently believe that every day is Easter and a glorious resurrection to heaven awaits them and all believers.

Transform me as a parent as well as my child to have a heart of forgiveness like Jesus. Through my Christ-like example, may my child never possess a bitter spirit and a desire for revenge but always have a forgiving spirit like Jesus.

Lord God, help me to live for You alone every day. May I have a home that is built on Jesus our Redeemer and Savior. Give me heavenly wisdom and strength to constantly pray with my child and steadfastly have regular devotions. Let my actions and faith in Jesus be present as I lead my child in strengthening their faith. In Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

Dear friend,

Thank you so very much for taking time from your valuable schedule to read **SIMPLE HABITS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING: Practical Skills and Tools That Achieve Extraordinary Results In Raising A Child** as well as work through this **Discussion Guide**. I pray that this knowledge will enhance your parent-child relationship and strengthen every aspect of parenting your child!

As you incorporate **simple yet effective habits** in all parenting areas, you might also humbly share with others your newly discovered knowledge, skills, and tools that make a dramatic difference parenting your child. Through communicating your exciting new **simple yet effective habits**, you may enhance their parent-child relationship as well as build your personal confidence and optimism in leading and guiding your child toward a responsible, Godly adult life. Please also spread the word about **SIMPLE HABITS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING** with your family, friends, and contacts in ways that are most comfortable for you.

If you have not purchased a book or want additional books, I encourage you to buy a book from Crosslink Publishing or Amazon. Box sets of 25 books may also be purchased from Crosslink Publishing at a special pricing of 40% off retail with free shipping within the United States.

I really appreciate your strong desire to improve and grow as a parent through this comprehensive guidebook. My prayer is that our Loving God will bestow you with heavenly wisdom to retain what you learned and grant you strength to incorporate these simple yet effective habits in leading and guiding your child to be a responsible, Godly adult.

May our Heavenly Father richly bless your life, family, and relationships!

In gratitude,

Randy Schroeder