

My Complete Blueprint for Parenting Challenges

Introduction:

Hi! My name is Traci Williams and I help parents learn how to solve parenting challenges. My goal is to empower you with simple and effective parenting skills and tools.

The biggest thing I hope you learn from reading this Blueprint is that no parent is perfect. Parenting is an art. It's about having conversations, learning how to better listen to and understand your child, and then finding the solutions that work for your family.

After you read this and try a few things, if you need additional assistance, feel free to contact me for a complimentary phone consultation (traci@alovingway.com or 951-240-1407).

Thank you for taking action and investing your time into this Blueprint. I look forward to connecting with you soon!

Step 1: Identify Your Goal

To get started, what I do with clients is have them identify what is not working. Go ahead and write that on a piece of paper so you have the issue clearly in front of you. Then ask yourself, "Does this need to be handled now, or is it something that can wait?" How committed are you to getting to the bottom of the issue? If it is major, long-term or is getting worse, you want to address it immediately. I would choose an item for this exercise that you want to address immediately.

Step 2: Map Out Your Options

With any parenting challenge, you will have several options. To get started tackling the challenge, you will need to map out all of your options to see how you can go about resolving the issue.

Options we typically see include (but are not limited to):

- Reading books for helpful ideas
- Getting angry
- Keeping your child with you as much as possible

- Nagging your child to change
- Searching for information on the internet
- Bribing or manipulating
- Ignoring the issue
- Going to a counselor or coach
- Yelling
- Putting your child on restriction/grounding
- Taking things away (toys, devices or freedom usually)
- Talking to your child
- Forcing compliance (time-out's, threats, sending to room)
- Accessing devices and social accounts to check content
- Giving your child the silent treatment
- Continuing your current course because you don't know what else to do

Before you choose your options, notice the common mistakes below. While the options above are *typical* responses, they are *not all healthy responses*. You want to choose options that avoid these common mistakes.

Step 3: Common Mistakes Involving Parenting Challenges

In my experience, there are three tragic mistakes parents often make when attempting to resolve an issue:

- 1) **Not connecting with your child first on a heart level.** Your child needs to feel your caring. That's very different than "knowing" he/she is loved. This is done with the words you choose, and your tone and body language are extremely important.
- 2) **Not understanding your child before pressing for change.** It's important to ask questions before coming to conclusions. Resolve your anger/upset before you sit down to talk. Have an open mind. Listen to understand your child's perspective. Even if you don't change your mind on the outcome, your child will feel heard. That's huge!
- 3) **Not taking time to consider consequences and boundaries in advance.** Considering what is reasonable and what you will actually follow through with before you put it out there is important. Parents often look back and feel badly if they throw out a consequence that wasn't actually a good fit.

Step 4: Getting Started

Once you have been able to clearly identify your goal and have mapped out available options, it is time to get started on the path to bringing harmony back into your home.

Here is a step-by-step guide:

- ❑ Identify if you are part of the problem and/or who/what else may be impacting this issue. There may be several factors involved.
- ❑ Is this a continuing problem or a new one?
- ❑ Are there extenuating circumstances or physical limitations (fatigue, hunger, major life changes, learning disabilities, anger, disappointment, etc.) to consider? Write those down.
- ❑ When you are done evaluating these items yourself, you will have some clarity. Now it's time to speak with your child. (adjust the following steps to meet your child's age and ability)
- ❑ Sit down together (on the floor is a great place to do this).
- ❑ Remember to watch your tone (how you say things is super important).
- ❑ Remind your child of the issue at hand and let them know you are wanting to talk about it to find a good solution that works for everyone. (That tells them you are working with them, instead of being against them.)
- ❑ Ask your child to share their side of what happened. What are their thoughts, feelings and concerns? (Remember to consider age, and be patient. This is new for everyone.)
- ❑ Repeat back what you heard your child share. Make sure you understand their perspective correctly. This is not about "agreeing" with them; just understanding what they want you to know. It's okay if you don't agree. Keep going back and forth until they confirm that you understand correctly.
- ❑ Now it's your turn to express your feelings, concerns and thoughts. Stay away from blame, accusations or judgment. Stick to talking about how you feel or what you understand to be true.
- ❑ Let your child repeat back what they hear you saying. Go back and forth until you are sure they understand your side fully.
- ❑ Ask your child for ideas to solve the problem. Write those down on a blank sheet of paper. Any ideas are fair ideas. You want your child to feel like part of the solution and that their ideas are valued.
- ❑ Add ideas of your own for solving the problem. Write everything down together.
- ❑ Discuss all ideas. No judgment.
- ❑ Decide on which action(s) to take. Remember your goal. What are you trying to accomplish in the big picture and what would best make that happen? Work together. You are working as a team, not "punishing" a "bad" person. Your child's attitude should be considered. Their intent in whatever the problem was should also be considered. You are looking for their heart condition. Sometimes kids get into trouble accidentally and sometimes they are looking for trouble. What is the scenario you are dealing with?

- Ask your child if they think there is anything else that needs to be considered, addressed or talked about. Have you missed anything?
- Put the plan in place.
- Implement the plan.
- Hug your child and thank them for taking the time to do this with you. You are not only resolving this issue, but you are also teaching them how to resolve issues in the future. You are building your relationship with depth and understanding. That will bless you both for years to come!

Resolving parenting challenges can be difficult. Sometimes there are layers involved and it takes time to get through those. It can also be hard to put aside your anger and disappointment, as well as coming up with new solutions.

If you end up not succeeding in working through a challenge or feel a bit stuck, please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or to schedule your complimentary 15-minute phone consultation. It would be a pleasure to support your family.

Thank you for everything you do to be the best parent you can be!

Blessings,
Traci

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