

A woman and a young child are walking away from the camera on a wooden boardwalk in a forest. The boardwalk has wooden railings on both sides. The ground is covered with fallen autumn leaves. The trees are tall and have vibrant orange, yellow, and red foliage. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

My Complete Blueprint for Parenting Challenges

Traci L. Carman

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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 and you play with the pieces as they arise. 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 reach out to me for a free consultation.

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. Ask yourself, "Does this need to be handled now, or is it something that can wait?" You need to know how committed you are to getting to the bottom of the issue. If it is major or long-term, or if allowed to continue it will most likely get worse, you will want to address it immediately. I would choose an item for this exercise that you want to address immediately.

You will then want to determine how your child sees the situation and share your intention to create a win/win solution for everyone. This begins a powerful conversation and starts the resolution process. How you go about this process will depend on the age of your child.

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: (checkmark the items you have already tried; circle those you are willing to try; write in the open space other options you can think of)

- Reading books for helpful ideas
- Searching for information on the internet
- Going to a counselor or coach
- Taking things away
- Forcing compliance
- Getting angry
- Bribing or manipulating
- Ignoring the issue
- Giving the silent treatment
- Nagging the child to change
- Continuing the current course because you don't know what else to do

Step 3: Common Mistakes Involving Parenting Challenges

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

- 1) They do not connect with their child first on a heart level. Your child needs to feel your caring. That's very different than "knowing" you've loved. This is done with the words you choose, and your tone and body language are extremely important.
- 2) They do not seek to understand their 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) They do not take time to consider what consequences or boundaries would be reasonable and what they will actually follow through with before announcing it. Later they often feel it may not have been the appropriate consequence and wish they had taken some time first.

Make sure you do these three things before trying to solve a challenge.

Step 4: Getting Started

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

Here is a step-by-step guide for what to do once you have clarified what is not working:

- Identify if it is you that is the problem or something/someone else (this requires honesty and self-reflection). There may be several factors. Write down everything you believe is impacting this issue.
- Is this a regular problem or something new?
- 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.
- 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?
- Repeat back what you heard your child share. Make sure they agree that 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 say you understand correctly.
- Now it's your turn to express your feelings, concerns and thoughts.
- 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. Add those to the sheet as well.
- Discuss all ideas together. 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?

- Put a plan in place.
- Implement the plan.
- Ask if there is anything else that needs to be considered, addressed or talked about.
- 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 for years to come!

Resolving parenting challenges can be difficult. Sometimes there are layers involved and it takes time to get through those. Sometimes it's hard for us to put aside your anger or disappointment. And, coming up with new solutions that you haven't thought of before can be confusing.

So, if you end up not succeeding in working through a challenge or feel a bit stuck, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions and to schedule your complimentary 15-minute phone consultation. It would be a pleasure to support your family.

Thank you!

Blessings,

Traci L. Williams
A Loving Way to Parent
Parenting Coach, Speaker and Author

Email: traci@alovingway.com
Phone: 951-240-1407

