

Raising adults

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Becoming a parent is a reality that many individuals will see realized within their own lifetimes. Although this is a common aspect of the human experience, it must be noted that there is no broad consensus with regards to the best approach that should be engaged within this vital process. Although there continues to be a raging debate between psychologist with regards to whether nurture or nature is the most profound approach for impacting upon the future decision-making and personality structure of the individual, the aspect of parenthood and the decisions that are employed therein, touch upon both of these formative aspects. As such, in his book, *Raising Adults*, Jim Hancock helps to illustrate six of the main negative approaches that parenting oftentimes exhibits. However, resident merely mentioning these and discussing that they should be stopped entirely, Hancock provides six distinct means by which each of these negative actions to be translated to positive ones. For purposes of this analysis, the following essay will seek to provide an illustration and discussion of six of these negative aspects as well as six of these positive aspects. These are as follows: hijacking, fixing, bossing, demanding, shaming, and taming help to define the negative responses that parents oftentimes choose to take whereas exploring, collaborating, partnering, affirming, respecting, and encouraging make up the positive outgrowth that can be exhibited with forethought, planning and a willingness to learn on the part of the parent as well as the child. With regards to the first couplet that Hancock explores, that of hijacking – exploring, the author makes it clear that hijacking is ultimately a process that conveys a singular meaning to the child. Instead of affirming the child’s personhood, hijacking of firms the belief that the parent knows the child better than the child knows himself/herself. In such a

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manner, this negative aspect of parenting often helps to weaken the self identity and respect that a child may have for himself/herself. As a function of this a far better means of approaching the situation that requires attention would be to explore the determinants behind the behavior; thereby providing a possible means of growth and development on the part of the child (Hancock, 1999). Another powerful negative aspect of how many parents engage with their children is with regards to what can be called "fixing". This "fixing" is defined by Hancock to be a situation in which the parent, unwilling for the child to experience pain or displeasure as a result of their actions, steps in to "fix" the situation so that this does not occur. Although it is reasonable to assume that the parent would like to minimize the risk and/or danger that a child is faced with during their life, this is not specifically what is being referred to. Rather, hovering parents, even those that are sometimes disengaged, attempt to do this as a means of providing a more suitable and healthy environment. However, rather than effecting such an end, this approach only serves to weaken the preparedness level that the child is able to integrate with as they mature. As a result of this breakdown in communication and action, Hancock poses that the parent should more appropriately seek to focus upon collaborating with the child as a means of affecting many of the same goals. Although it is necessary for the child to learn, and by extension to experience, it is also necessary for the parent to integrate with the child as a means of providing them with advice and experience. In the case that the child is not seeking to listen to this advice, they are more likely to experience the discomfort and/or displeasure that goes along with ignoring the collaboration of the parent/guardian that has been provided. Similarly, the author makes the distinction

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between bossing and partnering. Whereas it is tempting to promote a particular behavior merely by bossing the child around, seeking to partner with him/her to acquire more effective long-term means of achieving a particular goal. In much the same way, the author also notes the profitability of affirming rather than demand. Whereas demanding can have an immediate impact upon receiving and elicited response from a child, affirming, over time, yields a far greater return than does the diminishing returns the child experienced via incessantly demanding. It does not take a degree in child psychology to realize that shaming a child for a particular action and/or behavior is something that can have far-reaching and long-lasting impacts. As a function of this, the author puts forth the understanding that respecting the decisions and choices of the child is a far more effective means of affecting a particular goal. In such a way, respect for a decision does not have to equate to respect for the outcome or respect for the compliment choices that led to the particular decision. In very much the same way, the author frowns upon obtaining all of the same time praising encouragement. The mind of the child is forever evolving in seeking to integrate with new information and new knowledge within the current environment. In such a way, rather than seeking to tame this, the more appropriate approach, according to the article, is to encourage and direct the development as the parent/guardian sees that. Reference Hancock, J. (1999). Raising adults : getting kids ready for the real world. Colorado Springs, Colo: Pin? on Press.