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[Family](#), [Father](#)



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PARENT'S WISHES

People have dreams to get married and start a family. My father once implied that life is hard and sometimes sad, but all the harshness of life dissipates when you have children. He says having children should make me happier. My parents set goals for me to achieve in order to make them proud of me. Also, their expectations on what I should do did not stop when I graduated high school. Parents usually develop expectations once their child is born, and many develop their expectations for what their children's goals should be. In my family, parenting continues past childhood and through adult life. The book *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, by Jamie Ford, discusses the parents' role in raising children, and their expectations. It is about a Chinese boy called Henry, who lives in the United States, and tries to merge into society as his parents wish. Parents around the world usually develop expectations on what their children should do in life and these expectations sometimes go on to ignite conflict between the parents and their offspring.

Parent requests and expectations are many, including choosing a field of work, adopting cultures, and choosing a spouse: these expectations have an impact on their children, such as failing classes, communication problems, brewing resentment and love/hate issues. Many parents choose a field of study for their kids, or even which subject they should major in. There are many reasons why parents do this: one of them is to boast that they raised a successful adult. Parents choose a certain major for their son/daughter

because they have life experience, and want the best for their children in every possible way. From my observations, parental decisions aim to help their son or daughter get a good job that leads to a successful and happy life.

My parents wanted me to become an Engineer. The profession gave my father a good living. Therefore, he picked this major for me, wanting the same standard of living for me. At what point did my father stop to consider whether I wanted to become an Engineer? Obviously, this creates conflict and I had many debates with my parents. These arguments went on, until eventually I had to reluctantly accept the voice of common sense. This acceptance comes with resentment, discontent and arguments. Anything I don't agree with regarding my studies is automatically blamed on my parents. It is one thing to try and teach your offspring about fundamental life aspects, but to choose an entire life path for someone, who may not have the slightest interest in that particular career, is bound to cause unrest. I find myself making my parents feel guilty for choosing this path for me, even though deep down I know, in many ways, they are right.

It is true that parents want the best for their young, but there are side effects for such actions. My parents choosing my major, indirectly causes me problems in class. Perhaps my subject is not the most suitable. Therefore, my parents' expectations are leading me to failure, due to my inability to perform as well as I would be able to in a subject that I had a genuine interest in, or a natural aptitude for. Moreover, I cannot pass certain classes because I am not satisfied with my subject. Because of this, I lack sleep and I am stressed. On top of this, it affects my social life. In turn, I get angry and

intolerant with my parents, as naturally I blame them for me feeling this way. Often we will argue. I will point out to them, that they didn't choose the best option for me to be happy, but they chose it because they want success for me, which will reflect a positive light on them. I accuse them of not caring if I am happy in life, to which they reply " success breeds happiness".

Another issue that leads to conflict is parents wanting their kids to adopt a new culture when moving to a different country. Many immigrants want to merge themselves into a certain culture when settling in another country, to make life easier. However, it is hard for the parents to adopt a new culture due to their age, so they try and live this out through their children, who are naturally more adaptable and keen to learn.

In *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, Henry's parents want him to merge into American society. Their son becoming a true American is one of their dreams. They promote this transition by banning him from speaking his mother tongue. " Young Henry Lee stopped talking to his parents when he was twelve years old, not because of some childhood tantrum, but because they asked him to" (Ford 3). This technique is not necessarily wrong, and it will certainly accelerate the process of merging into a new society. Their reasoning is to make his life easier. However, they fail to notice the conflict this creates in their son, and a brewing resentment he harbors towards them. Henry is only allowed to speak in English, but his parents do not know or understand English. The result builds a conflict in communication between them.

Moreover, the conflict of Americanizing Henry did not stop with communication. Not only did Henry's father ask him to speak only English,

but he also requested him to wear a button that says, “ I am Chinese” (Ford 60). The button, in his father’s opinion, would make things easier for Henry, but what he did not know, is that this built conflict inside the child. Since Henry is a young boy, his ideas about the world are not clear. Wearing a button that says, “ I am Chinese,” makes Henry confused, without knowing the reasons why. Henry explains his confusion about the button when he says, “ If I am not supposed to speak Chinese, then why do I need to wear this button?” (Ford 60).

Henry’s thoughts are that he is an American; he speaks their language and his parents want him to become one. The button is only confusing Henry, because it is useless in his opinion. Henry differs between people by the language they speak in. If some people speak the same they are the same. Therefore, having a button on Henry’s shirt that implies he is Chinese makes him scared, because he feels he is an American, yet the button is highlighting to others he is not.

Parents expect their children to be different then they are in order to have a better life. Many parents and others like them, choose their child’s path the day they are born or adopted. The chosen path leads to success most of the time, but in the future, conflicts can develop and cause problems in life for their sons and daughters.

Works Cited

Ford, Henry. *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*. Ballantine Books, 2009. Paperback.