

HAPPY PARENTING

Raising Positive and Empowered Kids

**From
Frustrated to
Fantastic in
Seven Weeks!**

**A practical
guide for busy
parents**

IVAN HONEY

**International Human Behaviour
Specialist, Psychologist and
#1 Amazon Bestselling Author**

**Relaxation Downloads,
Posters & Planning Sheets!**



Happy Parenting: Raising Positive and Empowered Kids

*This book is dedicated to Dr William Glasser
(1925-2013) and Carleen Glasser.*

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Where notated you may print posters for your personal use.

This book is not intended to provide specific advice or replace professional intervention. It will give a general set of guidelines for Getting Happier.

Welcome to Happy Parenting: Raising Positive and Empowered Kids!

**Listen to a welcome message from the author Ivan
Honey**

*'It doesn't matter how clever or gifted you
are.*

*If you don't know the skills for getting
happier, it's like expecting yourself to play a
game without knowing the rules.*

*So don't wait on the sidelines.
It's time to learn the rules for creating a
happier family and living your own
inspired life NOW! '*

Ivan Honey

[Click here to discover what it means to 'Get Happier'](#)

Imagine yourself...

...as a happy, relaxed and effective parent, with the skills, knowledge and strategies to manage your children without having to yell, fight or threaten.

...understanding the underlying purpose behind all behaviour.

...working smarter, not harder in your family.

...having a genuine and positive connection with your children and helping them achieve their potential.

...confidently helping your children learn the skills to live a happy, positive and empowered life.

...being your best self, not perfect but real and positive, and living your own inspirational life!

This simple, easy to read book has been written to help you achieve all this and more!

‘Happy Parenting’ is packed with stories, strategies and the best resources that I have created in nearly 40 years of working with parents and families. You will get free access to some of the unique downloads and posters that I have created for the thousands of people I have counselled and trained.

This book contains the best of what I have discovered as a₄

psychologist, international trainer, best-selling author, parent and grandparent. What I learnt transformed my approach to being a parent. It will do the same for you too, and you can start today.

A fresh start for everybody!

Like you, your parents were doing the best they could with what they knew. Thousands of my clients and friends have demonstrated the ability to ‘get over’ childhoods that were cruel, abusive or very difficult. They learnt to let go of excuses and blame, and then take action to create their own inspired lives.

A mistake is not a problem. It only becomes a problem when you keep making the same mistake over and over again. Remember that new strategies do not always work immediately due to ingrained habits, so I encourage you to keep trying and view change as a process, not an event!

How this book works...

This is not a parenting book where I pretend to know what is best for your life, your children or you. But you will be able to choose from a range of empowering strategies to create great relationships, solve problems, manage feelings and get the best out of life!

These strategies will work for you too, and help you improve your effectiveness at work and in your relationships. You will feel more confident and empowered. In this book, there will be no labeling, blaming, shaming or criticising. We are all on the same journey, doing the best we can. You have your own unique style and you will discover ways to parent that fit best with your style.

Don't be overwhelmed. Read one chapter at a time, at your own pace. At the conclusion of each chapter choose one of the practical strategies and take action. These are tried and proven strategies not just quick-fix ideas, which often create more problems because they don't deal with the real issue.

The Happy Parenting Framework

We are all on a journey of learning how to get the best out of life. We all want to create a deeply satisfying, meaningful and inspiring life and family.

To help you on your journey, I have created a roadmap called '*The Get Happier Framework*'. It has seven easy to remember themes, each representing a part of a car. Each chapter of this book is built around one of the seven themes in the next illustration.

This fun and simple framework is also the basis for the stories and resources I have created for children to help them

become happy, independent and responsible.

I am grateful for the inspiration and support of my mentor, Dr William Glasser, the founder of Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and the '*Behaviour Car*'. What he taught me changed my life forever, and continues to help me choose happiness every single day!

***So smile, relax and get ready to
create a happier family today!***

[Click to print The Get Happier Project Framework](#)

The *Get Happier* Project Framework

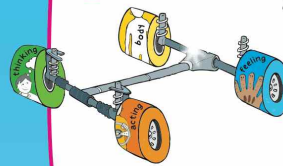
1.

**OPEN ROADS
OR
DEAD END
ROADS**



*How do I create
great relationships
and feel good about
myself?*
**The Open and
Dead End Roads**

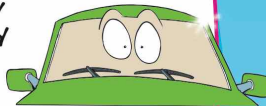
5.



*How do I
understand and
manage my
feelings?*
**The Four
Wheels**

2.

*How do I see new
opportunities and
transform my
reality?*

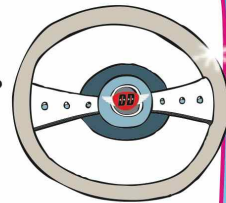


The Windscreen

6.

*Where do I
really
want to go?*

**The
Steering
Wheel**



3.



*How can I be in
charge of my
life?*
**The Driver's
Seat**

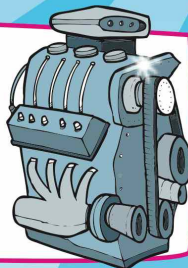
7.



*How do I solve
problems and get
the best out of
life?*
**The Magic
Questions**

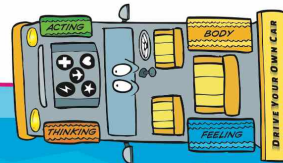
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*What is my
source of
energy and
power?*
The Engine



Putting it all together!

*A framework for personal
wellbeing, mental health,
counselling, leadership and
achieving purpose and meaning
in life.*



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Chapter 1

Connect or Disconnect

The Open Roads: The 7 Most Effective Ways to Connect with Your Kids

The Dead End Roads: The 7 Habits Guaranteed to Destroy Your Relationships.

“If everyone could learn that what is right for me does not make it right for anyone else, the world would be a much happier place.”

Dr William Glasser



DOUG DRAGSTER

Which road will you choose?

OPEN ROADS

- **ACCEPTING**
- **NEGOTIATING**
- **LISTENING**
- **ENCOURAGING**
- **RESPECTING**
- **SUPPORTING**
- **TRUSTING**

DEAD END ROADS

- ☒ **BLAMING**
- ☒ **CRITICISING**
- ☒ **PUNISHING**
- ☒ **BRIBING**
- ☒ **COMPLAINING**
- ☒ **NAGGING**
- ☒ **THREATENING**

www.gethappier.net

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[Click here to print this image!](#)

Think back over the past week to when someone tried to make you do something you didn't want to do. What strategies did they use?

Chances are that they used one of the following behaviours that reflect the destructive mindset of reward and punishment. I call them the ***'Dead End Roads'*** in my children's books. Here they are;

Blaming
Criticising
Complaining
Bribing
Threatening
Punishing
Nagging

How do you feel when someone treats you like this? ***The Dead End Roads*** are part of a primitive and common psychology, which says;

- *'I can control others'*
- *'I am right and you are wrong'*
- *'I always know what is best for you'*
- *'If you don't do things my way, I will make you'*

- *'I have the right to make you do what I want'*

This type of thinking is seen at every level of society and between countries. It is the source of much of the misery and conflict in the world today, for as we will discover in Chapter 3, we are psychologically and genetically programmed to resist being controlled by others. All tyrants and dictators know this, and they keep up an unrelenting campaign of terror to discourage dissent.

Forcing others to do what we want may bring temporary compliance, but the price we pay for these Dead End Road behaviours is unhappiness and disconnection. Much of our emotional pain is the result of our reactions to these harmful and destructive habits. Children constantly threatened or punished may decide to withdraw (*'I can never win so why bother!'*) or fight back defiantly. (*'You can't make me!'*) They may blame and criticise themselves and may then be diagnosed as being depressed or as having a behavioural disorder!

Do you use the Dead End Roads on yourself?

Let's take this one step further. When you travel ***The Dead End Roads*** and use them on yourself, you are in danger of destroying your own life!

Do you ever find yourself thinking;

'It's all my fault' (blaming),

'Poor me. Why me?' (complaining),

'I'm no good.' (criticising),

'I've got to stop eating or I'll put on weight!' ie. telling yourself the same thing over and over (nagging)?

Most of us have learnt to say these types of things to ourselves from a very early age, repeating in our own minds the words of those well-meaning people who criticised, blamed, complained and nagged at us. As a result of developing these beliefs, our confidence and self-esteem is damaged and we constantly feel inadequate when under pressure. We then use the same controlling behaviour on our children, keeping alive these *Dead End Road* behaviours.

The Open Roads

Fortunately, there is another choice!

Once we recognise that we can only control ourselves, we can begin to practice the Open Road behaviours and start to break the Dead End Road Habits.

When you are willing to give up controlling others or allowing others to control you, you will find yourself choosing ***The Open Roads***;

The Open Roads:

**Listening
Supporting
Encouraging
Respecting
Accepting
Trusting,
and when things don't work out...
Negotiate!**

The Open Roads are based on a mindset that focuses on controlling ourselves rather than controlling others.

We all mean well and know that *The Open Roads* work best, but simply use *The Dead End Roads* out of habit.

Check the two posters on the next page that compare the behaviours of The Open and Dead End Roads and ask yourself which approach will work best. Remember that a Dead End Road may seem to work initially, but it will only be a short-term solution and will eventually destroy your connection with your children.

Recently, some parents I know had placed *The Open and Dead End Roads* poster, on their refrigerator and were teaching their children about the meaning of each word.

Some days later they found themselves involved in a loud and angry argument with each other. Their seven year old son stood between them and said,

‘Mum and Dad, I don’t like it when you drive on the Dead End Roads!’

His parents quickly stopped and apologised!

We love our children and want the best for them, but because we believe we can control them, we use *The Dead End Roads*. As a result, we harm our relationships, and our children will use *The Dead End Roads* on us!

The following two Public Notice Fact Sheets are from *‘Doug Dragster’s Magic Book’* written by Ivan Honey and Rebekah Honey. They will help you and your family to clearly understand the meaning of each word.

[Click here to print out the posters on the next page.](#)

 **Love that says “I cannot control others”**

We accept we cannot control anyone but ourselves and we learn to use the Open Road habits. We use the Open Road habits to teach and model responsibility and self-evaluation.

Encourage you to make the most effective choices.

Trust you to do the best you can at the time.

Listen to you so that you feel heard and are more willing to listen to us.

Provide plenty of **support** to enable you to become **independent, resilient and happy.**

Respect and nurture your unique gifts and your rights.

Create lots of opportunities to learn how to make the most effective choices and to evaluate.

Accept you unconditionally, but not necessarily accept every behaviour you choose. We will teach responsibility but do not interfere with reasonable consequences.

Always work out differences constructively, and negotiate within parameters of safety and respect.

Because we love you we...

“The best way to love someone would be to leave them alone or empower them to help themselves or wake them up to whom they could become or hold out a hand to higher consciousness” Erik Erickson

As parents, we do things TOGETHER or LEAVE children alone to problem solve.

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 **Love that says “I need to control”**

Because we know we are responsible for our children's safety and wellbeing, we come to believe we are responsible for every behaviour they choose. We spend our lives using the Dead End Road habits to try to control others.

Criticise to show you the error of your ways.

Threaten you to frighten you into doing what we want.

Nag and give constant reminders of what you 'should' do.

Complain to remind you of how your behaviour hurts us.

Reward and praise you when you do what we want.

Blame you to make you realise you must do better.

Punish because we think this may stop unhelpful behaviour.

Over-Protect, so you never experience simple consequences. Children do not have choice or responsibility. Creates weakness and dependency.

Because we love you we...

As parents, we do TO children and FOR children.

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The Open and Dead End Roads

THE

OPEN ROADS



ACCEPTING

NEGOTIATING

NEGOTIATING

TRUSTING

TRUSTING

LISTENING

LISTENING

ENCOURAGING

ENCOURAGING

RESPECTING

RESPECTING

SUPPORTING

SUPPORTING

From
Doug
Dragster's
Magic
Book

THE

DEAD END ROADS



CRITICISING

CRITICISING

BLAMING

BLAMING

COMPLAINING

COMPLAINING

NAGGING

NAGGING

THREATENING

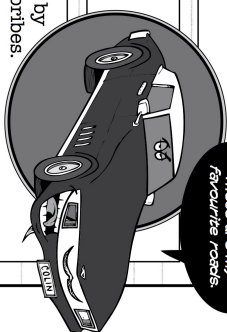
THREATENING

PUNISHING

PUNISHING

BRIBING

BRIBING



Don't
listen to Sam.
These are my
favourite roads

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Strategies for Chapter 1

1

Now that you have seen the habits of ***The Dead End Roads and Open Roads***, you have a simple choice; to travel ***The Dead End Roads*** or ***The Open Roads***.

Changing to more regularly travel on the Open Roads will take time, but research tells us that 21 days of focussed effort will begin to alter the neural pathways in your brain and you will develop a new set of habits. Of course, like all of us, you will at times slip back to the old habits, so be gentle with yourself and others.

2

When you find yourself on a ***Dead End Road***, apologize quickly and move back to an ***Open Road***. Your kids and friends will appreciate the fact that you are real, not perfect. You will start to catch yourself when you begin to blame, criticize or punish yourself, and immediately use one of the affirmations of ***The Open Roads*** (*illustration 1.2 Fact Sheet 2*). An affirmation is a thought that you regularly repeat to yourself. Take action to move to an ***Open Road***, and at the same time affirm what you are doing by saying to your self, '*I always do what it takes to get happier!*' Get a copy of '***Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox***' for great affirmations, visuals and strategies for using the Open Roads. www.gethappier.net

3

Do something immediately to distract yourself to bounce out of a bad mood. It has been said, “*For one minute of anger, you lose 60 seconds of happiness*”. Have a glass of cool water, go for a walk, take some deep breaths and stretch your body.

4

Learn to meditate. Check out the simplest way to begin to switch off from all those things that you cannot control. Here is one to get you started.

[Progressive Muscle Relaxation Audio Track – Click Here to listen.](#)

5

If you are serious about taking this first step, you will post up the list of ***The Open and Dead End Roads*** (illustration 1.2) in your house. Begin by practicing them yourself, and as your family become curious and interested, encourage them to join you. Ask them, ‘*What sort of family guidelines will work best, Open or Dead End Roads?*’ Encourage and notice each attempt they make to travel ***The Open Road*** with statements like...

‘Hey, did you notice you were just driving on The Open Roads?’, ‘When you helped your sister just then, you were driving on an Open Road!’,

At the dinner table ask ‘Who can think of a time today when they drove on an Open Road?’

Did you notice anyone at school driving on an Open Road today? Tell me about it?

6

The more you practice using these **Open Road** habits on yourself, the more natural and easy it will become to use them with your children. Start by **encouraging** yourself. Notice the effort and improvement you make; *I'm actually reading this book and practicing the ideas*'. Practice being **accepting** of yourself; *'I accept myself and my own special gifts'*, and **supporting**; *'I care for myself'*.

7

The Dead End Road mindset is quite powerful so be aware that it will not disappear overnight. Expect some resistance from your children. Things often get worse before they get better, as children test your resolve. Never allow your children (or anyone) to 'push your buttons' or 'trigger you'. Do this by reminding yourself that you can always choose how to respond. Remind yourself that no one *'makes'* you angry (except yourself), and you can usually make a more effective choice. Encourage yourself each time you recognize that you are on a **Dead End Road**, take a deep breath and make a decision to move onto an **Open Road**.

How can you do all this?

In the next chapter, I will share some simple strategies to help you move into more effective control.

AFFIRMATIONS

Today, I give up the urge to be 'perfect'.

*I'm doing the best I can, and I create a peaceful
and successful life by travelling on The Open
Roads.*

Chapter 2

Take Control, or Let Everyone Else Run Your Life

Get in the Driver's Seat!

*“You create
your life
with
each choice
you make.”*

Stephen R Covey

Now you have chosen The Open Roads, ask yourself this;

Am I in the driver's seat of my life, or am I allowing others to drive my car?

Am I trying to drive other people's cars? (especially my kids!).

Jane's Story

'Having children has been the best therapy I have ever had', said Jane, a participant in one of my training workshops. 'What do you mean?' I asked. Jane explained. "I had made up my mind to be the very best parent I could. I started off totally child focused, doing all I could for them, but as they grew up, I found them becoming dependent, controlling and taking me for granted. Eventually, I became exhausted and resentful from trying to parent three demanding children, do my job and try to keep connected with my husband.' She looked at me, 'I felt like a victim and I was beginning to hate my own kids'.

'What did you do?' I asked?

'Well, I set up a system of rules, rewards and punishments. But I had to keep increasing the punishments and all the extra supervision I needed to do was even more exhausting. The kids told me they hated me. She shuddered. 'I got so controlling, I felt like a bully and nearly ended up hating myself!' 'So what happened then?', I asked.

‘Well, for a while I went back to letting the kids do as they liked. I just went from being permissive to controlling and back again. I felt I was on a pendulum swinging from one extreme to the other. Then one day, I realized that my picture of being a loving, responsible parent was in tatters.’ She smiled, ‘I realized I needed to stop blaming the kids and start looking at myself. I realized that this was not working. I had to discover a new way. In the process, my kids have become responsible, happy and well adjusted. Not to say they don’t have their problems, but now they acknowledge them, and deal with them in better ways. So do I.’

‘How has it helped you?’

‘When I stopped trying to control the kids and refused to let them control me, it gave me the space to do things for myself and create my own life independent of what others said or did. I allowed myself to be who I really am. It’s simple, but it’s helped me get rid of so much stress and become more peaceful and relaxed. It has also allowed the children to take responsibility for themselves.’

The Beliefs that Created Jane’s Misery

Jane’s description of the pain she felt as a parent reflected the three major beliefs around the idea that we can control others or that others control us. We are in the Drama Triangle.

Persecuting

Criticising
 Blaming
 Opinion Giving
 Name Calling
 Aggressing
 Picking On Others
 Other Focussed

EXTERNAL CONTROL
TRIANGLE
 OF
PAIN

Rescuing

Fixing
 Telling
 Giving Solutions
 Acting as Go-Between
 Agreeing
 Self-Denying
 Other Focussed

Victimizing

Sighing Placating Poor-Meing Why-Bothering
 Self-Focussed Complaining Withdrawing

Steven Karpman

The Rescuer

The common belief of the rescuer or expert is, *'I can fix, control and take responsibility for you. I know what is best for you.'* I am not talking about real emergencies, but a situation like Jane's where she took responsibility for many things the children were capable of doing for themselves. She was always fixing, telling, giving solutions and denying her own needs. She believed that this made her a 'good' parent.

The Victim

When her children predictably become dependent and controlling, Jane felt like a victim, believing that she was controlled by the children and had no choice. Jane complained, blamed, placated and eventually withdrew from her children. She had allowed them to take over the driver's seat of her car.

The Persecutor

Eventually, worn down, angry and stressed, she swung to the other extreme; a position of over control or persecuting. Her belief now became, *'I can and will control you. I will make you do what I want!'* She used punishment, reward, threat, criticism and blame to control the children. Jane's life was lived in the triangle of pain, she became the victim of her own soap opera, and nothing could be solved while she remained on it. And of course, everyone in the family joined in this

destructive game.

Step Out of the Triangle!

We can step out of the triangle of pain if we are willing to get in the driver's seat of our own car.

Use the Open Roads Instead of Rescuing

Instead of fixing and rescuing, we use **The Open Road Behaviours**. We listen, encourage and support. Look at the poster on the following page. It describes the effective actions you can take that teach children the skills of problem solving and taking responsibility for themselves. You can learn how to stop doing things **TO** children (punishing, rewarding) and **FOR** children (taking responsibility for them).

Instead, you will either do things **WITH** them (listen, have fun, discuss and negotiate) or simply **LEAVE THEM ALONE** to work out how to use their creativity to solve their own problems.



Love that says “I cannot control others”

We accept we cannot control anyone but ourselves and we learn to use the Open Road habits. We use the Open Road habits to teach and model responsibility and self-evaluation.

Encourage you to make the most effective choices.

Listen to you so that you feel heard and are more willing to listen to us.

Respect and **nurture** your unique gifts and your rights.

Accept you unconditionally, but not necessarily accept every behaviour you choose. We will teach responsibility but do not interfere with reasonable consequences.



Trust you to do the best you can at the time.

Provide plenty of **support** to enable you to become **independent, resilient** and **happy**.

Create lots of opportunities to learn how to make the most effective choices and to evaluate.

Always work out differences constructively, and **negotiate** within parameters of safety and respect.

“The best way to love someone would be to leave them alone or empower them to help themselves or wake them up to whom they could become or hold out a hand to higher consciousness” Erik Erickson

As parents, we do things TOGETHER or LEAVE children alone to problem solve.

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Become a Leader Not a Boss

Instead of persecuting and over control, you can take a position of leadership. A leader helps create a safe and an effective environment, and negotiates a simple set of rules that provide a sense of safety for all. The leader has a clear vision for themselves and their family.

If possible, talk through issues with your partner in order to have some clear agreements about how you work together. You don't have to agree on everything, but you will be happier and more effective when you maintain a positive and respectful connection.

As a leader, you create opportunities for children to become successful and powerful. It has been said; *'Never do for a child what a child can do for themselves.'* This creates true power within the child. We have all seen amazing outcomes when we allow children to learn, struggle and grow. Such children become powerful, resilient, problem solving human beings.

Watch Kyle Maynard's story, an inspiring real life account of a young man who has overcome extreme adversity. Give your children the opportunity to take risks and potentially fail.

When Kyle Maynard was 14 years old, he put his own socks on for the first time - not an easy thing to do for a young man with virtually no arms and no legs.

The first sock took him 30 minutes. The second one took him 15 minutes. Facing challenges and succeeding has been the hallmark of Kyle's life.

[Watch Kyle's Video Here](#)

You Don't Have to Do it all Yourself!

Finally, rather than being a victim, we can practice being more open and work together with others to get the best outcomes. It makes sense to get more information, ask for help, co-operate and work together with your family and other professionals if required. You no longer have the stress of pretending to be the expert, and you can enjoy sharing some responsibility with others. Being real and connecting genuinely to others will give you a deep sense of joy and satisfaction. Importantly, you will be modeling to your children the skill of being in the driver's seat of your own life.

Strategies for Chapter 2

1

Slow Down. This may be challenging at first, as we are all creatures of habit. The most important action you can take is to avoid reacting.

Instead of allowing the children to *'press your buttons'*, take a deep breath, physically and mentally step out of the triangle of pain and get yourself centred. Otherwise you will spend the rest of your life reacting to others, instead of being in charge of your own life.

It is only in this space of awareness that you can create a thoughtful and powerful response.

Be a Leader NOT a Boss.

"A boss drives. A leader leads.

A boss relies on authority. A leader relies on cooperation.

A boss says 'I'. A leader says 'We'.

A boss creates fear. A leader creates confidence.

A boss knows how. A leader shows how.

A boss creates resentment. A leader breeds enthusiasm.

A boss fixes blame. A leader fixes mistakes.

A boss makes work drudgery. A leader makes work interesting.

Dr William Glasser, 'The Quality School'

2

Be a Leader NOT a Boss.

Involve all family members in setting up a small number of simple rules for the family. Write the rules in positive language, by using the words of the Open Roads list. When there are challenges, we can ask the children to self evaluate by asking questions such as:

Is this a respectful action?

How can we be supportive here?

Remember, as the leader, you have the power to say 'No' to ideas that are not in the interest of safety, health and well being, and you do not negotiate on these important issues.

Remind them of the Open and Dead End Roads posters, and use Fact Sheet #2 and #3 to explain what each one means.

Have regular family meetings to make decisions about simple everyday matters.

[Click here for family meeting guidelines.](#)

You can avoid many negative reactions by expressing your requests in positive language. Instead of 'be good' or 'shut up', you could say 'Hey guys, it's quiet time for the next 10 minutes, then we will go out for a game'.

3

Discover Inspiring Real Life Stories. Look for and share inspiring stories and examples of people who take control and overcome adversity. Recognise that being in the 'Driver's Seat' will help you and your children become successful and effective people who do not simply follow the crowd. They always make decisions based on their values, dreams and expectations.

4

Encourage Curiosity and Wonder. To help your children become independent and clear thinkers, ask questions rather than tell them what to do.

For example, a child has set the dinner table with the knives and forks on the wrong side. Instead of telling them what is wrong, say,

'I think there is one important change we need to make. What is it?' Or 'Sit on a chair, pick up your knife and fork and see how it feels.'

Teaching children to think for themselves and solve problems is one of the most wonderful gifts you can give them. You can simply ask *'I wonder what would happen if...?'* and see what interesting answers you get!

5

Avoid Reward and Punishment, as children can learn to fear us, or feel dependent on our approval.

This sets the scene for excessive rebellion as they grow older.

Excessive praise can also be harmful, as the child learns to become a people pleaser and learns to fear making any decision that is not approved by others. Children do not learn to evaluate themselves, and come to fear disapproval and dread failure. They will not be in the driver's seat but will spend their lives reacting to others.

In contrast, encouragement focuses on improvement, progress and effort, rather than being perfect or the best. This develops the willingness to stick at a task and enjoy the process, not just the outcome. Instead of praise, try asking, 'What do you like about what you have done?' This helps the child learn to focus on their strengths and successes, and how to evaluate themselves.

At school, we relied on the reports of our teachers. But there is no-one following you through your life to give you a mark out of one hundred for everything you do. To be in the driver's seat of your life, you need to evaluate yourself every day. Just ask yourself these three questions:

- *How am I doing today?*
- *What is working well for me?*
- *What do I need to improve?*

Remain as calm as possible when you are following through with a consequence. Punishments are negative and hurtful reactions to our children's behaviour, but consequences are a natural or logical result of the child's actions. Consequences can be an effective way of learning, when not accompanied by blame, criticism or punishment.

For example, when a child is out of control or is hurting others, removing them or others from the situation may be necessary. Before or after the event, when the child is calm and relaxed, let them know that you will not nag, but that when something dangerous is happening, you will ask them to stop. You will remind them once if necessary, and then you will take action to ensure everyone is safe. You will teach them the new behaviours they need to deal with challenges.

When you mean what you say and say what you mean, your children will know where you stand, and you will not set yourself up to constantly nag at them.

7

When you experience a challenge, write down ten potential benefits to yourself and your children in this situation. For example, if you have a child who argues with you a lot, remind yourself:

1. The research tells us that children who stand up for themselves and think outside the box tend to be more successful in life.
2. My child is becoming independent and learning to think for themselves.
3. This is a chance for me to practice staying out of the 'Triangle Of Pain'

AFFIRMATIONS

***I choose to be in control of
my own life.***

***When I am relaxed, centered and grateful, I am
able to more
effectively manage the challenges
that come my way.***

***I do not do things for my children
that they can do for themselves.***

Chapter 3

The 5 Most Powerful Ways to Motivate, Manage and Inspire.

The Engine: knowing how your brain works.

“When you know the real cause of your children’s behaviour, you don’t waste time reacting to the symptoms.”

Ivan Honey

When you know how your brain works, you have a fantastic tool to effectively manage behaviour.

Ancient Greek philosophers, scientists and more recently writers such as Dr William Glasser, Dr Abraham Maslow, and modern researchers have proposed and demonstrated the existence of 'Basic Needs'.

We are born with these needs and we are constantly seeking to satisfy them.

It is easy to work out which of the five Basic Needs is not being met, and help your child find ways to meet it more effectively. The five Basic Needs are '*The Engine*' of our lives and are the number one reason we behave as we do. This knowledge helps take much of the mystery and guess work out of understanding ourselves and others.

Let's check out these five needs, and you can become your own behavioural detective. You will learn the unique five clues that will tell you when each need is not being met.

The Need for Survival

Five year old James was becoming difficult to manage. He developed regular tantrums and fought with his sister, his mum and his dad. He seemed to take pleasure in hurting others. He became angry easily. His parents tried everything and nothing worked. In desperation, a visit to the doctor showed that James had massively enlarged tonsils, and he

was breathing through a hole the size of a straw. His attempt to cope with reduced levels of oxygen was the source of his difficult behaviour. After the tonsils were removed, his behaviour returned to normal.

Ten year old Annie became secretive and withdrawn. She was anxious about all sorts of things and slept fitfully at night. Her grandmother thought it was just a stage she was going through. Two years later, following an attempted suicide, her parents discovered that Annie had been a victim of regular bullying at school, but had been afraid to tell anyone because of the threats that had been made against her mum.

The most basic need of all, so basic that we often forget it, is our need for **SURVIVAL** and **SAFETY**. I have not been surprised that many children referred to me have either been not getting enough:

Sleep,

Nutrition,

Water,

Exercise,

OR have an underlying physical or safety issue.

I also notice that I tend to be grumpy when any of these factors are affecting me!

The stories you have just read remind us that we always need to look below the surface behaviour to understand and deal

with the real cause.

We are internally driven to keep ourselves physically safe and healthy.

How do you know when the Survival need is not being met?

***If you or your children are feeling unhealthy or unsafe,
it is important to check the SURVIVAL need and
do something about it.***

The Need for Love

Andrea, an intelligent five year old was brought to see me. She was unhappy at school. 'Why are you unhappy?' I asked. Without hesitation she replied, 'My teacher doesn't love me!'

The need for Love and a sense of Belonging is obvious. As social animals, we feel pain when rejected, grief when someone we love leaves us, and a wonderful sense of belonging when we feel loved and accepted. It affects our happiness, productivity, sense of meaning and purpose, and even our survival. We are all biologically programmed to seek connection and attachment. Children need this to feel secure and develop emotionally. Research shows that happily married people live longer, and that cancer sufferers live longer and more satisfying lives when they are part of a support group.

Watch this excellent talk by Dr Robert Waldinger. This 75 year study on happiness shows that the key factor for getting happier is having the skills to connect well with other people.

[TED X Talk Dr Robert Waldinger Click Here to Watch!](#)

We know that when we feel disconnected we feel unhappy, and will almost certainly experience additional symptoms if it persists. This is the main reason that most people suicide, (the greatest cause of death among under twenty-five year olds in Australia.)

When we feel lonely, we are not meeting our need for love and belonging effectively. And guess who is responsible for meeting it? We are.

Teaching and modeling to our children the skills to connect well with others, is absolutely vital to their wellbeing. When we feel loved it has a positive impact on every part of our lives. Feeling accepted for who we are, not what we do, provides the security we need to take risks with our learning and will enable us to persist through difficult times.

What does love 'really' mean?

The love of a parent for a child is one of the most powerful forces in the world. It is the glue that keeps us connected through challenges, disasters, poverty, poor health, mental illness and those times when we make mistakes. 2000 years ago, in the Bible, St Paul described love like this:

“Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, its is not proud.

It does not dishonour others, it is not self seeking.

It is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

*It always protects, it always trusts, always hopes and
never gives up.”*

1 Corinthians, 13

Love is essential for us to develop a mentally healthy life. But as we have already seen, it is not a loving behaviour to be possessive or overprotective. When we overprotect our children, they do not learn to deal with the challenges that they will have to face in life. We are setting them up for unhappiness and possibly even mental ill health. Allowing our children to face and learn to overcome challenges enables them to develop and grow into resilient and happy adults.

How do you know when the Love and Belonging need is not being met?

If you feel disconnected, lonely or rejected, you will need to find some more effective ways of caring for yourself and getting more love in your life.

When you hear your children express these feelings, you know they need to learn more about how to get love in their lives. Show them the love, but also teach them how to love themselves and connect positively with others.

The Need for Power

When our daughter turned twelve, I found myself locked in a power struggle with her. She had always been strong willed, competitive and independent, but now she fought with me over trivial issues, and our usually relaxed household had become tense and stressful. Neither of us would give in.

As I tried to work out what to do, I finally realized what I always knew. She would never give in! I began to understand I was fighting against a normal healthy urge for independence and power. So should I just walk away and allow her to do whatever she wished, or was there another way?

So I began to identify the activities she used to meet her need for power constructively.

She was a top student, and she loved sport and adventure. We increased opportunities for her to feel good by doing what she loved. So she swam, ran, cycled and trained in martial arts. As a result we no longer fought (or not very often!) and continued to build a good connection. When at fourteen she asked for permission to travel interstate alone to a martial arts competition, I agreed; but it was her job to organize money, travel and safety. She got a part time job and cycled to and from work 25 kilometres per day, and eventually attended the competition safely and independently.

Later, as a Captain in the Australian Army, she continued to

use her Power Need in an inclusive and positive way. Now, as a co-author with me and presenter in the area of social and emotional intelligence for kids, and as a mother, she continues to meet her Power Need constructively. I wonder if any of this would have happened if I had not realized the futility of fighting against the need for power.

Dr Glasser uses the word 'Power' to represent our need to achieve, be significant and feel a sense of importance. So helping our children find their gifts and develop them is a great way to reduce stress, boredom, negativity and conflict. And there is always a bonus. When you meet one need effectively you are also likely to satisfy other needs at the same time. For example, when your child plays tennis to meet their power need, they are also likely to make friends (love and belonging need) at the club!

We know that the misuse of this need is a major source of conflict in families, organizations and in politics. Now and again, we are privileged to see people like Nelson Mandela who used his power in an inclusive and positive way to change the world. We don't need to fear or fight power. We simply need to recognize it and use it in a positive and constructive way.

Darren's mum was asked by his teacher to attend the school for a meeting. Although he could be difficult at home, she was shocked when the teacher told her that Darren had been caught several times bullying younger children. The school

had talked to him and restricted his access to areas where younger children played. It had not helped as Darren had turned to standing over and getting money from some of his classmates.

After learning about the needs, his mother recognized that Darren's need for power was not being well met. He was big for his age, poorly co-ordinated and not doing well with his school work. He had no friends (love and belonging need) and his mother knew he was being teased by his older brother. She realized she needed to help him find some more effective ways of meeting his power need. Darren was interested in construction, and she encouraged relatives to buy him Lego for his birthdays and Christmas. He began to enjoy constructing Lego with friends, reading catalogues and following instructions. He was given a BMX bike for Christmas, and although he struggled at first, he joined a local BMX club and quickly improved, and made new friends at the track. As he began to enjoy new and effective ways to achieve, he no longer felt any desire to bully other children.

How do you know when the Power need is not being met?

If you feel a lack of confidence, competence and power, you will need to find some more effective ways to empower yourself.

The Need for Freedom

This need is all about being able to be uniquely ourselves, and to recognise that we always have a choice. We have all experienced the feeling of being trapped, and we find it challenging because of this basic need for freedom.

Many years ago, I was teaching the Basic Needs to a group of people trying to quit smoking. I always help people identify which need is being met when they smoke. For example, some people use cigarettes in a social setting, associating smoking with meeting the love and belonging need when they join with friends.

A busy, full-time mother of three children told us she went outside for a cigarette to get some head space away from the children. Her need for freedom was telling her that she needed a break. So a big part of her plan to stop smoking involved getting freedom in ways other than smoking cigarettes. She organized her mother to care for the children regularly while she went to the gym with her friends, followed by coffee, where at the same time she satisfied her survival and love and belonging needs! She learnt to relax, meditate, and take time out for herself. And as a bonus, she gave up smoking easily!

The visualisation at the end of this chapter ‘*Tuning Your Engine*’ will give you simple meditation technique to help you balance your needs. You can use it at any time, even at

times where you can't change anything else in your life. It will reduce stress, give you mental space and help you solve problems.

Many people are concerned that too much freedom allows children choices, which may be harmful to themselves and others. So we need to remember that choices are always given within limits of health, safety and wellbeing. Remember the boundaries of the Open Roads. Respect is all about meeting your needs without preventing others from meeting their needs, and will ensure that people will still enjoy being with you! (love and belonging need!).

How do you know when the Freedom need is not being met?

When you feel stuck or trapped, you will need to find some creative ways to get a sense of freedom.

The Need for Fun

Fun is all about learning. Small children love to learn, whether it's creating a Lego construction, playing a game, or learning to climb on a chair. When learning is fun and meaningful to them they show amazing capacity to concentrate and learn. Before the age of five, the brain develops most rapidly, and we know that the exceptional learning that takes place is driven by fun and curiosity.

The teacher or parent who can tap into the internal motivation of this need has no trouble engaging children. We are designed to learn and as a result experience satisfaction and fun. I visit schools where teachers make learning fun, and there are never problems with truancy, and very few problems with behaviour. One of my sons is also a psychologist and has a great sense of fun. He loves working with children who come to his practice for counselling. I remember a mother asking the receptionist about making an appointment for her child, and asking which psychologist was most suitable. When she heard the laughter coming from my son's adjacent office, she exclaimed. *'That's the person I want to see!'* We are drawn naturally to energy and fun. It's how our brain works.

Fun and laughter are also healing emotions, where we can put the troubles of our lives behind us, and live in the present.

Sharing experiences, cartoons, movies, books and jokes around the meal table also helps create good connections! (Love and Belonging need)

More broadly, fun is also a deep sense of satisfaction, meaning and purpose. You know your values and your strengths, and build your life or career around them. People who experience this sense of fun in their work say that they never work a day in their lives, because work is so much fun!

Plato once wrote,

‘Do not train a child to learn by force or harshness but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.’

How do you know when the Fun need is not being met?

When you feel bored, you will need to discover some new ways of getting more fun in your life.

Strategies for Chapter 3

1

Get your own life back in balance.

Is there one need in your life that seems to miss out all the time in the busyness of your life?

Identify the need not being met and do something small to address that need today and every day!

You can be sure that any stress you feel comes from unmet or unbalanced needs.

- If you are feeling bored, you may not be making enough fun in your life.
- If you feel disconnected or lonely, you may need to make some better connections to meet your love and belonging need.
- If you feel unsafe and unhealthy, find some new ways to meet your survival need.
- If you feel powerless, identify something you can do well or a new skill you can learn, and do it.
- If you feel stuck or trapped, choose some actions that will give you some freedom!

Tuning Your Engine Visualisation (this is a great tool to use with your children! You can do it together)

[Click here to listen!](#)

2

When your children are unhappy, one or more of these needs is not being effectively met.

Teach them about their needs with the poster at the end of this chapter, and help them learn that they are responsible for meeting them. Teach them the behavioural clues they can use to know which need is not being met. This is very empowering and sets them up to become resilient problem solvers. They will know what is driving them, and make the adjustments to their engine to improve performance.

3

Identify which Basic Need is not being met.

Consider one of your present challenges with your children.

- Which is the main need your child is trying to meet?
- What are some other satisfying, but effective ways of meeting that need?

Set up some encouraging ways for your child to begin to spend more time in that activity.

Find out about activities and opportunities in your school or community for your child to be involved constructively in meeting their needs.

4

Print out the Engine Poster (Factsheet No 9) from the next page, to help explain the ideas to your children.

When you know what drives behaviour, you will be able to work smarter, not harder with your children. You will go to the source of the problem rather than get stuck on the symptoms. You will be less stressed and more effective than you have ever been because you are working with the brain, not against it. In years to come, your children will thank you for it!

Teaching children to understand and control themselves is far more effective than trying to control them.

Always remember:

Model rather than manipulate

Lead rather than intimidate

Support rather than threaten

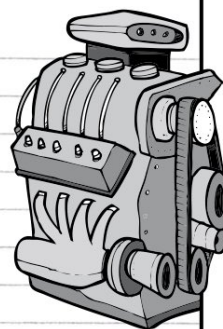
Encourage rather than punish

Listen rather than lecture

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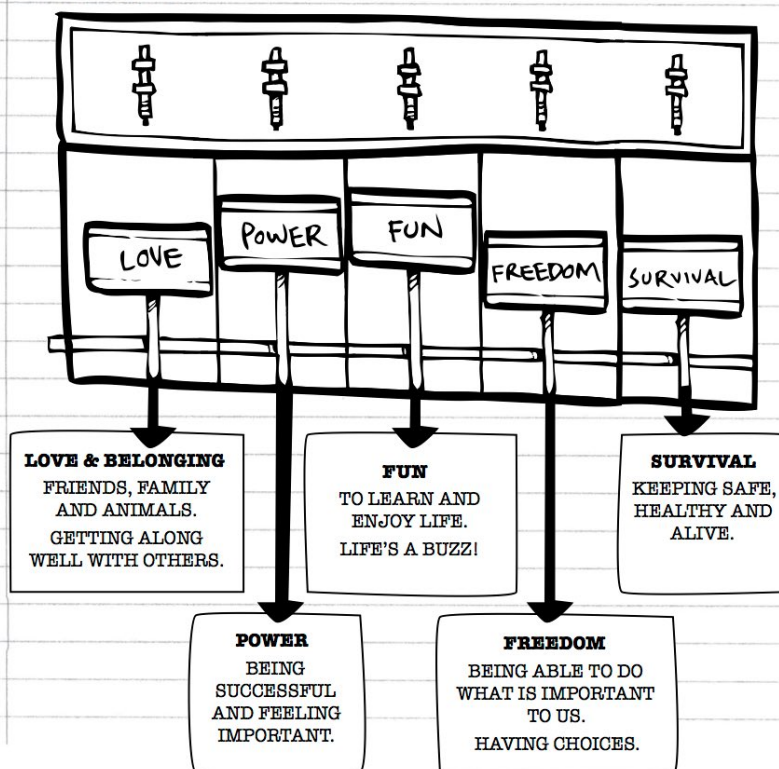
THE ENGINE CONNECTION



A body without a brain never moves. A car without an engine never moves.

Our engine has five pistons. They all need to be working well.

For people, these pistons are their five Basic Needs which drive everything they do. People are trying to satisfy these needs all the time. People's lives run well when they meet all their needs.



AFFIRMATION

*I create a wonderful life by
choosing to be loving, powerful,
free, playful and as
healthy as I can be.*

Chapter 4

Become the Best You. Work out What You Really Want!

**The Steering Wheel: The direction
you take in your life.**

What is MOST important to you?

“Always begin with the end in mind.”

Stephen R Covey

Imagine this... I'm driving my car and suddenly realize that I'm lost. I stop and ask a stranger for help. He asks me *'Where are you going?'*

I say, *'I haven't worked that out yet'.*

This sounds crazy, right?

Yet how many of us have really worked out where we are going with our family?

What do we really want for ourselves and our children?

This was Ed's dilemma when he visited my office to get some help to assist his daughter who was in all sorts of trouble at school. She had been to see a psychiatrist and had been labelled with a mental disorder and medicated. In answer to my questions, he told me that with five children including twins, it was often chaotic at home and every one was in survival mode. They just survived day to day and collapsed in exhaustion at night, or did something to switch off such as watching television.

Ed was a company director and C.E.O. I asked him *'What if you ran your company like this?'* He laughed. *'I'd only give it a few months before it crashed'.* There was a long silence before he spoke. *'I'm just realizing that what we are doing is not working as a family. No wonder my daughter is in trouble. There are no guidelines and I don't even have time to take her swimming which she loves'.* He went on. *'In our company*

we have a clear vision statement. We have plans to achieve our goals which are reviewed monthly. And because of this we are very successful!’

‘So how important is your family to you?’ I asked quietly. Tears came to Ed’s eyes. ‘My family is the most important thing in my life,’ he replied.

‘So let me ask you some questions that will help you work out what this really means. I call these the steering wheel questions because they give us the direction for our lives’.

Anyway, the first question is;

‘What do you really want for your family?’

Ed thought long and hard.

‘I really want things to be more organized. It needs to be more peaceful with less fighting, complaining and blaming’.

‘What would be the best part of an organized and peaceful family?’

‘Well my partner and I would be less stressed to begin with. I’d be worrying less about what’s happening’.

‘Why is less stress important to you?’

‘I’m realizing that we can never be effective parents when we are so stressed. Our decisions are all about just making it to

the next day in one piece!’

‘So if you were less stressed, how would it be?’

‘It’s really about us all being happy and effective. I know we will all have our ups and downs, just like our company at work, but at home it is all down and stressed most of the time!’

‘So when you and your partner are happy and effective, what sort of people are you?’

Ed chuckled. *‘We are more loving and caring towards each other. We have more energy and we have more time for sex. We don’t let little things get to us, and we focus on what is positive, enjoying each moment.’* Ed was excited. *‘I can already see some different things I can make the kids do!’*

I interrupted.

‘Make the kids do? If you could make them do things you wouldn’t need to be talking to me. Who can you control?’

Ed took a deep breath and frowned at me. *‘I see what you’re saying. I can only control myself of course’.*

There was a long silence, then he said, *‘I see that I have to start with myself, being that person I want to be. But how do I do it?’*

I smiled.

‘You can be that person at work. What do you do at work to be so effective?’

There was another long silence. Then Ed smiled.

‘These steering wheel questions are tough! But I think I’m getting it. I always have a plan for my day. I start a bit early. I work on the most important things for the day. I’m flexible and make time to talk to staff members. And I always take a lunch break to wind down’. He stopped again. ‘If I can do this at work I can start to do it at home. If I treated my family as well as my staff, it could change everything!’

Time was up for the session. Ed left with a card which said.

‘Start small. Start with yourself. Start today.’

We will meet Ed again in chapter seven.

What if there are things we can’t change?

The Steering Wheel Questions ask us to think about the person we want to be. Even in the most difficult situations where we cannot change anything, we can still choose to be the best person we can be.

I have seen many parents confronted by very challenging situations they cannot change such as drug taking children, children with extreme disabilities and issues of trauma. In spite of this, they continue to live positive and happy lives. They focus on the only things they can control; their own

thoughts and actions, and who they choose to be. I will always remember a young mother facing a slow painful death. Her friends were worried because she seemed to be happy and normal. When they asked her, she told them that she chose to be happy and positive because it felt better, and that was how she wanted her children to remember her.

While you may not be able to change what is happening, you can always work out powerful ways to deal with it by working out who you want to be and taking positive action.

Strategies for Chapter 4

1

Always begin with the end in mind!

Write up your own vision of the parent and person you want to be. Work out what you really want for your family and each child. Use the questions I asked Ed. Then, make a simple plan to identify three things you will focus on daily.

Keep adding to it. [Click here for some great questions to ask yourself](#)

Many people create a vision board of words, pictures, mind maps and ideas that represent their future dreams and goals. Having the big picture gives us the motivation to maintain the daily routines required to achieve it. This is also fun for your children to do.

2

You can have the best quality picture for how you want your family to be, but you will never achieve it if you are too stressed, anxious or depressed.

I was talking to a mother about this recently. She became angry and exclaimed. *‘This is the most selfish approach I have ever heard!’ It’s all about me, me me!’*

I asked her. *‘How could you rescue your child from drowning in the sea if you couldn’t swim yourself?’*

2

Continued.. I am reminded of the safety advice when travelling on a plane. *'Put your own oxygen mask on first. Then assist your child'*. This is not an invitation to neglect your children and become self centred. It is not suggesting you have to be perfect before you can be effective as a parent. It is suggesting that you will not be effective and happy as a parent if you don't look after yourself.

3

Start small, Start with yourself, Start today!

Do you have a positive personal vision of the person you want to be? Could you sum it up in one sentence?

Dewitt Jones, a photographer with National Geographic Magazine has a vision statement in six words;

'Celebrate What's Right with the World!'

If we don't have a strong vision, we are at the mercy of newspapers, magazines and the T.V. news, which will tell us that the world is a terrible place, we are constantly at risk and that we are victims of the past. We passively absorb these ideas (like passive smoking!), and before long, this becomes the filter through which we view the world, ourselves and our children.

We then create a world of fear, scarcity and unhappiness. We then attract to ourselves what we spend time thinking about.

4

Visit the website of Dr John Demartini

www.DrDemartini.com

You can identify your highest values and purpose in life with his free 'Values Assessment' Tool. This tool will also help you to understand the highest values of other family members. Knowing their highest values enables you to connect at a deeply positive level, as you share together the most important things in your lives.

5

What we Focus on Expands.

So give yourself a few minutes each day to remind yourself of your personal and family vision.

Fill your home with positive, encouraging symbols, books, posters, paintings, DVD's etc.

Some years ago I purchased a simple mosaic from a homeless person selling their wares on the streets of Soweto, South Africa, a city of extreme poverty and suffering. The mosaic simply says 'Enjoy every moment'. It hangs in our kitchen and I see it several times a day. It is a great reminder to me to get the best out of life, and is often enough to jolt me out of a bad mood!

AFFIRMATION

*By understanding who I am,
I can create a satisfying life by
choosing actions that fit my highest
values.*

Chapter 5

How Does this Work in the Real World?

Jacqui's Secret

“Your children will see what you are all about by the way you live, rather than by what you say.”

Wayne Dyer

***You are now more than half way through this book!
Congratulations, and I hope you are already using many
of the ideas effectively to reduce your stress and help
your children become more responsible.***

In my work, I often come across inspiring ideas and stories. I have been given permission to reproduce the following story which was given to me last year, as Jacqui used the ideas in the first four chapters to make huge changes in her family. I am sure you will get a lot out of her story.

Morning in the Williams House.

by Jacqueline Williams

Mum: *'Wake up Sweetie, its morning.'*

'Time to get up'.

'Matilda, get up NOW!'

'Hurry up and get up, it's a school day!!'

'Eat your breakfast'.

'Hurry up and eat'.

*'Time to get dressed'. 'Stop playing! It's time to get dressed!
What you haven't eaten your breakfast yet – HURRY UP!!'*

'Quickly get dressed – don't be silly, put your clothes on'.

'Hurry up and get dressed, we still have to do your hair!'

‘Stop crying! If you hadn’t wasted time I could brush more gently’.

‘Don’t run away, you need to have your hair done!’

‘Right, Sophie, now it’s your turn, let’s get you dressed’

‘Quick! Quick! Quick!!!’ And on and on – I’m sure you get the picture ...

Matilda our eldest child has just started school. Mornings in our house are stressful. I never gave any thought to how her beginning school was going to affect me physically – I did think I would find it a little difficult letting go emotionally, but the practicality of actually getting her to school every day never really crossed my mind.

We have been extremely fortunate that she hadn’t needed to go to child care before, she had been looked after by family, so quite regularly she would be scooped out of bed – still sound asleep and dropped off in her PJ’s without breakfast, brushing hair, or packing bags. My mum (Matilda’s Nannie) loves looking after her grandkids and always made sure she had enough food, toys, nappies, spare clothes etc at her house, so I didn’t have to pack anything with her when she was being looked after by Nannie – Boy was I lucky ... spoiled Blessed.

Anyway, back to my mornings. So after a way many ‘quick and hurry ups’ we are finally in the car, ten minutes later

than ideal, catching three out of three red lights and a train crossing, which of course had to be a freight train! So when we get to school all the car parks are full, the bell has already gone, and we have to walk into a very busy full classroom where Matilda tries to give me a great big cuddle and I, in fine form say, 'Quick, in you go'. Her little face drops, and tears well in her eyes – it is in this moment that I realise that this is not the kind of mother I want to be and something has to change.

The problem wasn't just getting Matilda up and dressed in the morning, it was the fact that I too had to be dressed and somehow presentable in order to take her to school, Sophie had to be changed and fed, lunch had to be made, bags packed, the correct uniform cleaned and dried, library books packed, show and share practiced etc etcIn Matilda's Pre-school days, my husband dropped the girl's to Nannie's on my work days and on my days at home, we did things in our own time, rarely rushed. When she started kindergarten, Adrian would drop Matilda at kindergarten in the morning so I had much more time to dress and organise Sophie for the day.

Ahh... those were the days If only we could go back I'd really appreciate the morning calm But yes, I know, I can't go back, only forward. So what can I do to help me be the mother I want to be, what can I change, what new behaviours can I learn....?

A few weeks later

Matilda in the morning ‘ *Buzz. buzz, buzz, buzz.* ‘ (alarm clock ringing)

‘Mummy, it’s time to get up now, my alarm just went off’.

‘Can I have toast for breakfast please this morning?’

‘I’ve put my uniform on, I’d like pigtails in my hair today’.

‘Mummy I’m ready! I’ve done all the things on the chart.’

‘How much time is left to play before the ducks quack?’
(alarm that goes off at the time we need to leave the house).

So what changed? Or should I say ‘Who changed?’ When reflecting on our mornings previously I knew that I wanted things to be different so I began to make some changes, mostly on an organisational level. I began making lunches the night before, I bought both the kids a standing clothes rack so we could lay out their clothes (including shoes) the night before – this also give me time to ensure any part of the uniform that is missing is washed and dry, instead of discovering something was still in the wash or wet in the morning. Sophie is at the age of being quite fussy with what she wears, so allowing her time to choose clothes the night before is preventing a lot of her tantrums, whilst helping her develop independence and meet her freedom need.

My husband and I are waking up 30 minutes before the children so we can get ourselves showered, dressed and fed before the girls wake up. I am using an alarm clock with Matilda (she has just begun to tell the time). So instead of me telling her to get up in the morning, she gets out of bed and tells me it's time for her to get up. Together we developed a chart in words and pictures of all the things she is responsible for in the mornings – getting up, eating breakfast, getting dressed (into the clothes we had chosen the night before), washing her face and brushing her teeth. She knows what she needs to do in the mornings and in what order, I ensure I praise her when she has completed her jobs, and I can see a real sense of satisfaction on her face when she completes her jobs independently. (Her power need is met) When and if she gets distracted all I need to say is, *'Matilda, where are you up to on your chart?'* and she quickly focuses on what she is up to, knowing that there will be time for playing after she has ticked all the boxes.

I have set an alarm for 8.30 am which is the time we need to leave the house in order to get to school on time (even slightly early). The alarm sounds like ducks quacking, so Matilda knows that the quicker she does her jobs, the more time she will have to play (Fun need), before the ducks quack. I am not the 'mean' one who makes them leave in the middle of a game, but rather an impartial group of ducks good at telling the time. While Sophie isn't able to dress herself yet, she has been much quicker to organise in the mornings as we

haven't had the fights/tantrums over what she wears because she has chosen the clothes the night before to hang on her chair. We are also not spending 5 precious morning minutes looking for shoes because again we found them the night before and put them on our person.

We have also developed a weekly chart for Matilda showing what she has on each different day. The night before and in the morning before we leave we check the pin board to see what's going on during the day. Things on the pin board include; which days are sport uniform days, Italian lessons, library borrowing, tuck shop, swimming lessons etc. Matilda drew pictures for each event so she could 'read' the timetable.

Now at the school drop off I hear mothers saying things like, *'I'm so stressed, Lucy drove me crazy this morning. She wouldn't do anything I asked.'* Or *'Thomas is foul this morning, good luck to the teacher, I need a break'*. I smile to myself and think 'Thank God for the things I have learnt about understanding behaviours and that the only behaviour I can control is my own!' While not all our mornings are perfect, most of the time I can happily give Matilda a long cuddle before I have to leave her at school and she smiles and happily sits down with her class turning to give me a wave with a great big smile across her face.

***Special thanks to Jacqui for giving me permission to
include her story in this e-book!***

Chapter 6

The Secret to Managing Your Feelings

**The Four Wheels: The Science of
Feeling Good. What we all want to
know!**

*“Everything we do is our best attempt to feel good.
When we understand where our feelings come
from, we can consciously create our own
happiness.”*

Ivan Honey

Everything you do is made up of four parts. Those four parts are your actions, thoughts, feelings and your body (physiology).

Imagine you are selling your house and today everyone is coming to the auction. You have worked your fingers to the bone to clean, polish and scrub till the house is gleaming. You wake after a restless night due to a sore back and enter the living room. It looks like a bomb has gone off. The children have been busy constructing 'things' from the cardboard and rubbish you threw out yesterday, and there is something that looks suspiciously like glue on the new carpet. They are having a wonderful creative time.

- In one second you feel, disbelief, panic, anger and rage.
(feelings)
- At the same time, your head begins to pound and your stomach turns over. Your painful back suddenly gets worse.
(body)
- Your first thought is something like: *'I'm going to kill those kids!'* *(thoughts)*
- You feel so overwhelmed, that at this moment, your only action is to stand there with your mouth wide open. *(actions)*

Fortunately, you have read this book and you know that any impulsive action in a situation like this will only make things worse. Deep down you know that you want to be happy,

effective and positive, but you also desperately want a clean house.

So wisely, you step out of the room and take some deep breaths (*action*).

You remind yourself that you love your kids and their creativity, but you need to work out an efficient way of cleaning up in the next half hour (*thinking*).

As a result, your heart rate drops a little, your stomach settles and your breathing begins to return to normal (*body*).

Your feelings have reduced in intensity as you remind yourself that you love your children, but you are still on edge (*feelings*).

So, instead of losing control you take two deep breaths (you'd almost forgotten to breathe!), and step into the room and say to the kids:

"Guys, the auction starts in 2 hours and we need to clean this room up quickly! Let's clean up together and when the auction is over, you can rebuild it and tell me all about it." You give the kids a quick cuddle as together you begin the process of cleaning up (*action*).

The Secret to Changing Your Feelings

This story shows how by changing your actions and thoughts, you automatically change your feelings and your body

response.

Even in tense situations, you can train yourself to step back (*action*) and remind yourself that you can create a disastrous drama, or just do what needs to be done (*thinking*). It only takes a few seconds. In this case, we are also reminded of the importance of having a well known and clear picture of who we want to be as parents. This picture gives us the space to step back and avoid an impulsive and disastrous reaction!

I am always amazed that when children make a mistake with their maths homework, we simply teach them the right way to do it, but if a mistake is made in behaviour, we seem to want to hurt them to make them learn!

The four parts of behaviour are like the 4 wheels on a car, the front wheels are our thoughts and actions. The back wheels are our feelings and body sensations. I talk about getting on our front wheels to get the best out of life, because we can almost immediately change our actions and thoughts.

The back wheels take longer.

Show yourself how this works by following these instructions.

1. Raise your right hand.
2. Think of a pink elephant.

3. Make yourself angry.
4. Raise your blood pressure.

Which was easiest? Most people find that (1) *(actions)* and (2) *(thoughts)* are easiest. To make ourselves angry *(feelings)* or raise our blood pressure *(body)*, we need to think of something that creates that feeling or do something physical to raise our blood pressure. So, if you want to change any behaviour, first change your actions and thoughts.

This is not to say that our feelings are unimportant. In fact, they are crucial to the good life. We all want to feel happy and healthy. Our feelings and body sensations are also feedback; a set of symptoms which give us information, so we can modify our actions and thoughts to help us feel better. For example, if you find yourself experiencing extended feelings of depression, look at what you are doing and telling yourself.

Are you dwelling on miserable and unhappy thoughts?
(thinking)

Are you sitting around watching the evening news and the misery and fear in other people's lives? *(actions)*

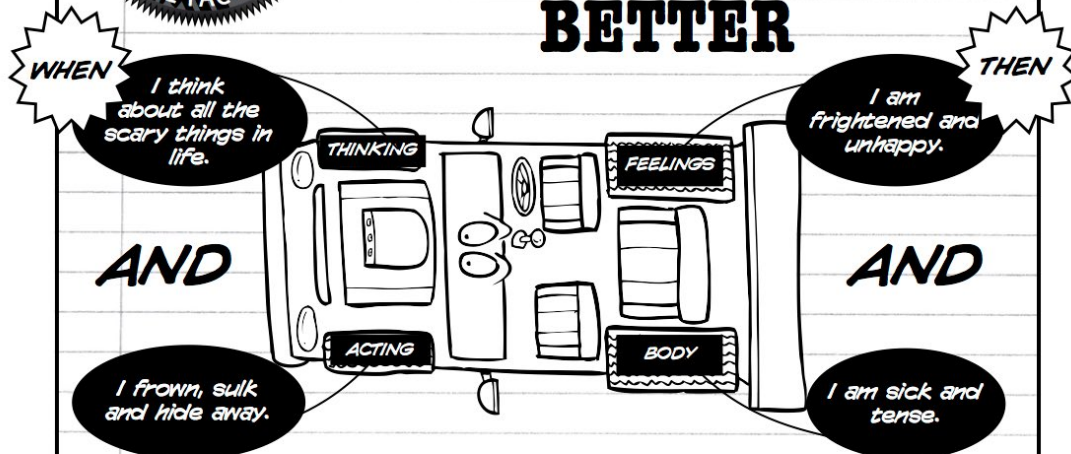
Are you mixing with depressing and unhappy people? Are you taking harmful substances? *(actions)*

In summary, this is how it works:

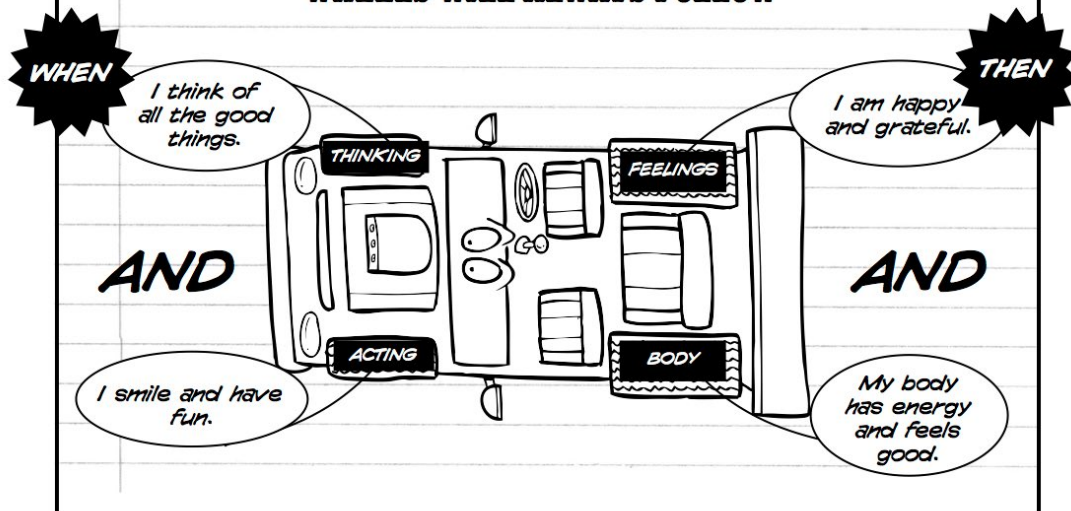
PUBLIC NOTICE - FACT SHEET 6



GET ON YOUR FRONT WHEELS TO FEEL BETTER



**IF YOU WANT TO FEEL BETTER
CHANGE YOUR FRONT WHEELS FIRST. YOUR BACK
WHEELS WILL ALWAYS FOLLOW**



You must change your actions and your thoughts if you want to feel better. ([Click Here for a printable version](#))

Did you know that exercise is just as effective in treating depression as a pill? Check out my simple fact sheet for children to explain this. Your challenge is to get all wheels moving in the same direction, towards happiness and wellbeing. It is always your choice.

You Choose All You Do

Many people scoff when I tell them that they choose all they do. They pretend to be victims and insist that other people and things make them behave. Many of us are uncomfortable when we realise that we can be in control of our actions and thoughts. We say '*I can't change how I feel!*' But, we can change what we do and what we think, and as a result change our feelings.

Imagine you are in the middle of an angry disagreement with your partner. Many people say that they cannot change how they feel at this time. But what if at that very moment, there was a knock at your door and you looked out to see your best friend was visiting you? Your anger would disappear; you would put a smile on your face and have a great day together.

We all know people who in spite of suffering adversity have chosen to remain positive and focused. Victor Frankl, the author of '*Man's Search for Meaning*', and a world-renowned psychiatrist, was interned in a concentration camp in World War Two. In spite of fear, pain, brutality and starvation, Dr

Frankl chose to focus on what he could control, not what he couldn't control. For example, he found a piece of glass which he used to shave himself and make his face look red and healthy, so he was always sent on work gangs rather than be sent to the gas chambers to be killed. He maintained a positive sense of identity by caring for himself and his fellow captives, and chose not to waste his time feeling anger and resentment towards his captors. After the war he developed a whole new approach to therapy and wrote books that have been an inspiration to many. His description of his experiences also created an awareness of the evils and dangers of fascism and fundamentalism of all kinds.

Choosing to be in control of your actions is vital to your effectiveness and happiness as a parent. But often our actions are the result of harmful beliefs and patterns of thinking that we may not be aware of. What often prevents effective action is our ingrained thoughts and beliefs.

Question what you have been taught to believe, and don't always believe the things you say to yourself!

A Real Life Story

Dianne gave birth to her first child, Adam, when she was quite young. Even under the best conditions, this is a tough time and as a lone parent Dianne was challenged. It was check up time for Adam, and Dianne was struggling to hold him down and dress him under the eagle eye of the maternal health

nurse. In frustration, she burst out, *'Adam, you are hopeless!'*

'What do you mean hopeless?' asked the nurse.

'He won't stay still for me!' replied Dianne.

'Does that make him hopeless?' asked the nurse.

Dianne stopped, thought for a few moments. *'Of course not'*, she said, *'I'm probably thinking that I'm hopeless! I can't even dress a child!'* Later on, she thought about this, and remembered that her own mother had not coped well with her as a child. Every day, her mother in her own frustration had told her, *'Dianne, you are hopeless!'*

That was the day that Dianne decided that she would no longer say this to herself. The next time her mother said to her, *'Dianne, you are hopeless!'* she replied, *'Mum, I am not hopeless and I ask you never to say these words to me again!'* As Dianne began to change the way she talked to herself, in more positive terms, she began to make different choices. She sought out more encouraging people who affirmed her as a capable and intelligent person. She rejected the old script, *'I'm hopeless,'* and consciously replaced it with more affirming thoughts.

Not surprisingly, Dianne began to spend time with positive, hopeful people. She re-partnered and had more children, at the same time completing a number of university degrees. She now works as a well paid professional and is highly

respected in her field.

This is the power of changing your beliefs!

Think Your Way to Confidence and Wellbeing!

Psychologists have identified a wide range of irrational thinking and mistaken beliefs that will lead to ineffective action. Check to see if you recognize any of these common irrational beliefs or ways of thinking.

Some Common Irrational Beliefs

We must never make mistakes and be a 'perfect' parent
(whatever that is!)

It is other people, (our partners and children) who make us
unhappy and hurt our feelings

Other people should always like us

We should worry about anything that might be dangerous or
harmful

Our problems are the result of events that happened in the
past

Our life must always be exactly how we want it to be

Other people must consider me to be a 'good' parent.

The opinions of others are more important than what I think of
myself.

***If these beliefs are creating unhappiness for you or your
children, you might consider changing them.***

Helpful Alternative Beliefs and Affirmations

I do the best I can and just keep learning.

I make myself unhappy by what I tell myself about what I think others are thinking!

I have no control over what others think of me. I have total control over what I think of myself.

I take sensible precautions, and get on with living and enjoying life.

My problems may have begun in the past but my present thoughts and actions are what keeps them going, and I am in control of them!

I'm in control of my present choices, but I cannot control the future or change the past.

I focus on being a responsible parent, doing what I believe to be right for me and my family.

I choose to be a responsible parent, not a perfect parent.

I do not subordinate to the opinions of others.

Just repeating these affirmations every day will gradually help create a healthier and more effective belief system and more relaxed and peaceful parenting.

You may also wish to check your thinking regularly for some typical mistakes. There are a huge number of these, but here are some of the most common.

Be Aware of Mistakes in Thinking

Exaggerating the importance of mistakes we have made
(usually at 3 in the morning!)

Thinking about only the negative parts of things.

Seeing everything as our personal responsibility by blaming
ourselves for things that are not our fault.

Seeing the world only as black and white, good or evil, happy
or sad. (This pattern of thinking ignores the reality that none
of us is really good or really bad!)

Imagining the worst by predicting a negative future.

We become what we repeatedly tell ourselves. Low self-
esteem is nothing more than a constant negative stream of
thoughts that undermine our self worth and confidence.

It includes statements such as;

*'I'm no good'. 'This is too hard.' 'Everyone else is better than
me.'*

If you want to become confident, change your self talk to;

*'I'm great and getting better everyday'. 'I can work this out,'
'I'm unique and special.'*

Act and Think your Way to Confidence and Wellbeing

Get your front wheels going in the same direction by co-ordinating your thoughts and actions. If you have trouble switching off an anxious thought, take a walk, run or swim, read a book, listen to music or visit a friend.

When you are feeling more balanced, check out your beliefs and thinking patterns, and begin the process of replacing them with more effective ones. Our willingness to evaluate and change what we do and think is the task of a lifetime, but remember that with each of the limitations you remove, you move towards achieving your potential. For example, I had been thinking of writing this book for a long time, but it is only when I took action, met with my editors and coaches and committed to sitting down and doing it that it actually happened! There is a balance needed here. I am someone who tends to over think before I act. Others may tend to act without thinking. I need to be careful that I do not delude myself by spending a lot of time thinking powerful thoughts and then do nothing about it. Over thinking can immobilize us as we reflect on the potential risks, what could go wrong and one hundred other ideas. We can talk ourselves out of doing anything!

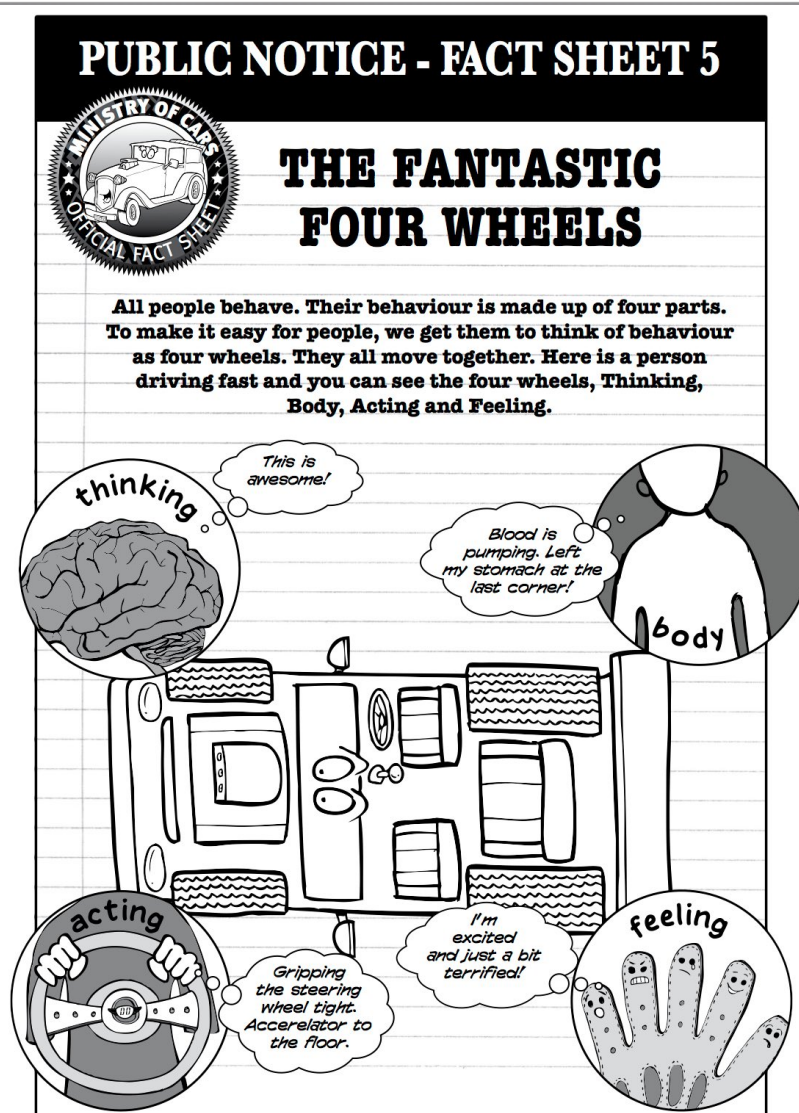
So have those front wheels aligned, going in the same direction or you will become frustrated as you burn yourself out.

Strategies for Chapter 6

1

Factsheet 5 - The Fantastic Four Wheels

[Download fact sheet 5](#), print it out and place it somewhere you can see it. Ask your children to colour and decorate it for you, and talk to them about how the 4 wheels work together. You can play games where you identify the four parts of behaviour, and work out some more effective actions or thoughts (there are a lot of fun games and activities in Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox).



3**Reflection.**

Every day, do a simple 5 minute reflection of your learnings. Write up and repeat empowering thought patterns until that thought becomes automatic.

4**Become Your Own Cheerleader!**

Encourage yourself daily, reminding yourself that you are involved in an empowering process to get the best out of your life. Avoid the Dead End Roads and quickly forgive yourself and others when you make mistakes. Create a daily diary where you write down what you are grateful for, and your achievements. Keep adding to it and review regularly to boost your self-esteem.

5**Create a Visual Reminder of the Four Wheels.**

To remind yourself, get hold of a small car and label the wheels. This is a reminder that you know the science of well being and happiness, and you can refocus quickly on your front wheels.

AFFIRMATION

I know I can choose my feelings by choosing the actions and thoughts that create those feelings.

Chapter 7

The Magic Questions to Solve any Problem

The Manual for Your Car

*'I have noticed that unhappy people are often
evaluating others: Happy people are often
evaluating themselves'.*

Dr William Glasser

Problem solving is all about evaluation.

In this chapter I share a simple set of questions used by problem solvers, coaches and counsellors around the world. It is an approach, which requires us to take responsibility for ourselves without blaming. You will use it to solve your problems. You will ask your children these questions to help them solve their problems. At the same time you will be teaching them the questions and the habits required for them to take responsibility for themselves.

Children often give in to peer pressure because they are not taught the skills of asking questions and self-reflection. As they learn to ask themselves these powerful questions, they become confident problem solvers.

Let's go back to my questioning with Ed.... remember, the first part of solving any problem is to be clear on what you WANT. Ed told me that he wanted to be more effective, and to have peaceful and happy children.

'So Ed, I'm hearing about how you want to be more effective and have a peaceful family and happy children, but tell me, 'What actions have you been choosing to achieve that?'

Ed grimaced.

'To be honest, I have just been letting the children do their own thing, and snapping at them when it gets too much for me'.

‘So has that worked? or have you been successful in doing this?’ I asked.

‘No’, he replied.

‘So what is your plan?’

I gave Ed a notebook and a pen.

He wrote. *‘I need to change everything!’*

‘OK’, I said. ‘Imagine you gave that plan to your team at work. What would they think?’

Ed laughed. *‘They’d be overwhelmed and frustrated. Where would they start? What could they do? I really need to make this plan simple and do-able today.’*

He took the pen and began to write.

1. *‘Tonight I’ll switch off the T.V. After my partner and I have cleaned up and the kids are in bed, I’ll share with her what I have learned today. I need to get her onside.’*

Ed corrected himself quickly.

‘I mean she has great ideas too. We sometimes talk about them but we don’t do anything.’

‘I’ll read her Jacqui’s story that you gave me.’

2. *‘Then we will brainstorm all of our ideas to improve our familyand make sure we get some time to ourselves. I*

think a lot of our reactivity comes from being too busy and trying to do too much.'

Ed was quiet for a while.

Then he smiled and wrote.

3. *'This is so big that we need to make a mind map! It's so easy and helps us break it down into small bits we can work on.'*

I finished our session by explaining a simple acronym ,
WASP.

This is an easy way to remember the questions to ask when you want to solve any problem.

What do you **WANT**?

What have been your **ACTIONS**?

Have you been **SUCCESSFUL**? (give yourself a score out of 10)

If you have not been successful, what is your new **PLAN**?

Next week, Ed and Sandra came to our session with the following plan:

I was amazed at the content and details in Sandra and Ed's plan. It was a great reminder to me that we need an overall,
big picture

ED AND SANDRA'S PLAN

What do we want?

We want to be happy, relaxed, have better relationships and to be better organized.

We want our kids to be happy, well adjusted and responsible. We want them to have a successful and meaningful life.

What have we been doing? (our Actions)

Rushing, yelling, punishing, bribing, threatening, nagging, blaming, criticizing.

Has this been successful? No

So what is our PLAN?

1. As parents, be responsible for meeting our own needs.

Stay on the Open Roads.

Adequate sleep. To bed by 10.30pm

Exercise – 3 times each week.

Eat healthier food

Make time to have fun together as a couple each week.

2. Help our children learn to be responsible.

During the next few weeks spend some special focused time with each child. Listen to their ideas about what they want in

the family. Negotiate if what they want is not realistic.

Help create a unique picture with each child that represents their gifts, strengths and what they want in their life and family. Draw pictures and cut and paste pictures from magazines. This will represent their personal vision of what they want.

Then ask the children; What will you need to do to achieve all of this? Get their ideas and help create a chart to make life easier in the family, and improve the skills they need to get what they want.

3. What will we do to help the children achieve this?

Encourage children daily - notice improvement and effort.

When plans don't work, keep off the Dead End Roads.

Talk to the kids, help them improve their plans.

Keep asking the WASP questions, especially,

Is what you are doing helping you get what you want?

4. To get buy-in from the children, have a short Family Meeting weekly.

Make sure we have drinks and some good food.

Start by telling the children that we want to work on ways to make our family happier. Ask for their ideas.

Introduce the Open and Dead End Roads charts and post them in a prominent place. Tell them that we will be trying to use the Open Roads and suggest that everyone will be happier if they use these roads.

Talk about one Open Road each week. Lead a discussion about what each word means. Give examples of each road and tell stories that demonstrate how using the open roads lead to happier relationships.

Each week, ask for suggestions for fun things to do as a family, and each child takes a turn to choose.

5. Boundaries

As parents, we will always explain if finances, time or circumstances prevent certain activities. Although children make suggestions, as parents we always have the final say. The main guide for the family will be the Open Roads. Our family motto is; Everyone will be safe and loved in our family, and take responsibility for meeting their own needs without stopping others from meeting their needs.

6. How to Deal with Dead End Road Behaviours

1. Keep on the Open Roads ourselves, and keep connecting with each child.
2. Give one reminder, if our child's behaviour is likely to hurt them or someone else.

3. There is a very clear understanding in our family:

- If there is conflict or disagreement, we always work it out using WASP or the Open Roads.
- Always allow our emotions and the children's emotions to settle before we discuss the W.A.S.P. process
- Sometimes, we just need some space. Allow everyone to find a relaxed space to work things out for themselves before they work it out with family members.
- Use the strategies from Doug Dragster's Magic Book and Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox. Watch a video of problem solving with Ivan.

Remember we support each other. We are a parenting team.

Take time out if needed.

Ask each other for help!

Strategies for Chapter 7

1

Create your own mind map to write down your vision for you and your family.

Then write down and act on your plan.

Remember to keep your plans small and do not try to do everything at once.

Many parents say they do not have the time to do this.

If so, you are committing to spending many years of family life just drifting, and leaving the happiness of your family to chance.

If you take a little extra time now, you will actually save time in the future by reducing negativity, conflicts and stress. At the same time you will be teaching your children how to be happy.

[Download the planning sheet here!](#)

2

[Download Fact Sheet 12, The Magic Questions](#) . Ask the children to color it in and place it in a position where it can be seen by everyone as a reminder.

PUBLIC NOTICE - FACT SHEET 12



THE MAGIC QUESTIONS

From the very first automobiles, cars have used a set of magic questions. The questions were developed by the S.S.C. (Secret Society of Cars) and were compiled by Dizzy Dragster in his Magic Book. The questions always help cars solve their problems.

The Ministry of Cars has granted special permission to share the original Magic Questions with people. This will help them solve their problems, and make the world safer for all cars.



3

Powerful Problem Solving Meditation.

This is a powerful technique that will cut every problem in half!
Try it out for yourself!

[Powerful Problem Solving Visualisation Listen here!](#)

AFFIRMATION

***When I ask myself the right
questions,
I am always able to discover the
best answers.***

Chapter 8

What to Do When Nothing Seems to Be Working

The Car Windscreen (Windshield)

‘There are known knowns; There are things that we know that we know.

There are known unknowns; There are things we know that we don’t know.

But there are also unknown unknowns; There are things that we do not know that we don’t know.’

Donald Rumsfeld

Parenting is the most rewarding and the most challenging job you will ever have!

In spite of all our best actions and efforts, we cannot guarantee the outcomes as we cannot control others. But we can dramatically improve our chances of helping our children to become happy and resilient by using the approaches I have described in this book.

Susan gave birth to a beautiful daughter who had Down Syndrome. She called her Sarah. Susan grieved for a few days, but very quickly learnt to love her beautiful baby who lay in her arms and looked up trustingly at her.

Susan did not focus on the disability but always on the uniqueness and possibilities of this beautiful child. Many professionals told her about Sarah's limitations, what she could not do and would never be able to achieve.

Susan focused on her love for her child, and noticed and encouraged every sign of growth, development, learning and independence. Sarah played with her older brothers and sisters and learned from them. Susan's policy, 'Never do for a child what a child can do for themselves', resulted in amazing levels of independence.

It began with Sarah dressing herself, preparing food, and learning to recognize signs. In her early teens, she worked with her father on the farm, helping out by learning to drive

the old pick-up truck. Sarah achieved a level of literacy which enabled her to travel independently and by bus in the city.

Later, Sarah got a job in a supported work environment and became a productive, happy and competent worker, earning enough money to purchase a car and obtain a driving license. Sarah moved into her own small unit, later moving in with a friend whom she subsequently married.

Change Your Windscreen

If nothing else is working, you can always choose to look at any situation differently. Instead of focusing on her initial feelings of grief and limitation, Susan chose to focus on simply enjoying the uniqueness of her child, and how to provide her with opportunities to discover her potential. As a result, the entire family regarded Sarah as a blessing and an inspiration, and a unique and special family member.

You Create Your Own Reality

In the busyness of life, we are likely to view reality through the windscreen of what we have been taught to value and what we have been conditioned to believe. If Susan had taken on the windscreen of some of her friends and neighbours, she would have seen Sarah in terms of what she could not do. This would in turn have created a self-fulfilling prophecy, as she would not have been exposed to positive expectations, or be given the opportunities to develop to her potential.

There is much research in Psychology, which demonstrates how a label we place on ourselves or others becomes a self fulfilling prophecy. Robert Rosenthal's experiment in the 1960's was described in a book titled, '*Pygmalion in the Classroom*'. Students selected at random throughout the school were allocated to classes where the teachers were informed that these students were academically gifted. Sure enough, these students out performed their peers simply because the teachers expected them to do well and treated them as if they were capable!

So watch out for judgments and labels!

The same thing happens when we place a limiting label on ourselves or others. Label someone as 'bad', and you will be drawn to notice any behaviour that fits the 'bad' description. You will not notice the 'good' because you look through the windscreen that says 'bad'. Remember, the label says more about the person giving the label than the object of our labeling.

For example, depending on my background I will label you differently.

As a hairdresser, I may see you as someone who needs a hair cut.

As a life artist, I may describe you as an excellent model.

As a psychologist, I may define you as neurotic, depressed,

or one of 1,000 descriptions of mental disorder!

As a banker, I look on you as a potential customer.

As a fitness fanatic, I may look on you as a slob.

As a stressed and busy parent, I may see your normal activity level as a threat, and will seek to find a doctor to label you with Attention Deficit Disorder.

Labels represent our own attempts to control others, and put them in a box which fits with how we see ourselves, and how we have learnt to experience the world. For example,

I am normal, therefore you must be abnormal.

I am fast, therefore you are slow.

I am slow, therefore you are fast!

This story which I recently found on Facebook is a stark reminder that we do not see the world as it is, but as we are.

‘A young couple moved into a new neighborhood. The next morning while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor hanging the wash outside. She remarked, “That laundry is not very clean; she doesn't know how to wash correctly” . Perhaps she needs better laundry soap. Her husband looked on, remaining silent. Every time her neighbour hung her wash to dry, the young woman made the same comments. A month later, the woman was surprised to

see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband: “Look, she's finally learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this?” The husband replied, “I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows.’

And so it is with life... What we see when watching others depends on the clarity of the window through which we look.

Create Your own Reality!

You don't have to limit yourself to how others define you. You can deliberately create your own windscreen. Change the words you use. As a teacher and trainer, I never talk about 'difficult' people, I talk about 'interesting' people. As a result, I never have difficult people in my groups! This allows everyone to be themselves, and it enables me to avoid the stress of having to deal with 'difficult' people. 'Difficult' only means that I have not developed the skills to manage situations where people think differently to me!

Adjust Your Windscreen

If you must label, make it a habit to always notice and comment on aspects of your children and yourself which you see as positive and interesting. Never focus on limitations. Always focus on possibilities. What you focus on expands. So if you want to be happy, focus on thoughts, pictures, ideas and people that you have discovered help you feel happy.

Instead of negatively labeling others, look at yourself and ask, *'What is it about me that makes me want to label this person?'*, *'Do I want to feel powerful?'*, *'Do I need to label others to feel important?'*, *'Do I want to label this person in order to cope with my own fears?'*

When I studied at University in the 1960's it was believed that damage to the brain was irreversible. More recently, we have been told that we are victims of our brain chemistry and the only answer is to take the latest drug that is produced by a pharmaceutical company. Now we know through the new science of Neuroplasticity that we can create new neural pathways in our brains and compensate in amazing ways. As a result of creating new positive habits, we change the neural pathways in our brains and we move into greater control of our lives.

To do this, we need to develop a positive mindset that looks at possibilities, not problems. A mind set that focuses on opportunities, not difficulties and helps us see ourselves as successful, powerful human beings.

And how do you define success?A fulfilled, happy, and meaningful life based on positive relationships will always be more sustainable than trying to live up to the expectations of others.

You may say, *'That is just one way of looking at it.'* That is true, but ask yourself. *'Would you rather look at the world*

through a windscreen that improves your connection with others, increases options and makes you happier, or a windscreen that reduces options and produces unhappiness?’

It’s your choice.

Here are two quotes from one of my favorite authors Wayne Dyer about the Windscreen:

“When you judge another, you do not define them, you define yourself.”

“When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

Strategies for Chapter 8

1

Encourage Positive Actions

This week, notice, write down and encourage all the positive aspects of yourself and your children.

Catch yourself and refocus when you judge yourself or others negatively.

2

Remind yourself constantly of these wise statements:

‘What I focus on expands’

‘My beliefs select the reality I see’

‘My world is a reflection of my state of consciousness’

‘Whether I believe that something is possible or impossible, either way I’ll be right’

‘In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity’ (Albert Einstein)

‘I choose to focus on possibilities, not problems!’

3

Never Judge Yourself or Others.

We are all doing the best we can and we rarely know the painful story or the unhappiness that is always behind the behaviours that we are judging.

I am always amazed at how well most people seem to manage the traumatic events in their lives.

“Always be kind and compassionate...but not responsible for others.” Anon

Try to eliminate these words from your vocabulary:

- Should..
- Ought...
- Must...
- Have to...

Replace them with:

- Could..
- Will...
- Choose...
- Want to...

Chapter 9

Putting It All Together: *‘The Get Happier Mindset’*

*“The way we talk to ourselves becomes our
inner voice.*

*The way we talk to our children becomes their
inner voice.”*

The Project **Get Happier Mindset!**

1. **OPEN ROADS OR DEAD END ROADS**

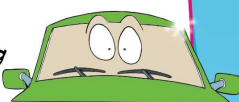
My happiness reflects how I think about myself. I choose & develop habits that are empowering.

The Open and Dead End Roads



2. *My knowledge and awareness is limited. I am always discovering new opportunities & learning.*

The Windscreen



3.

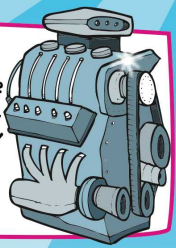
I'm choosing all I do. I'm responsible for my life.

The Driver's Seat



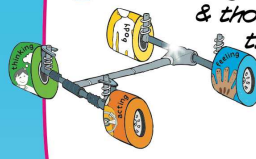
4. *I create a positive life by choosing to be loving, powerful, free, playful and as healthy as I can be.*

The Engine



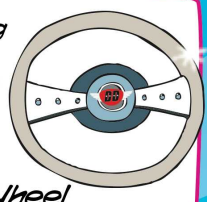
5. *I know I can choose my feelings by choosing actions & thoughts that create those feelings.*

The Four Wheels



6. *By understanding who I am, I can create a satisfying life by choosing actions that fit my highest values.*

The Steering Wheel

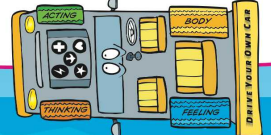


7. *Problems are opportunities to discover more about myself, and I have the tools to solve them effectively!*

The Magic Questions



I design my mindset for mental health, high performance and wellbeing!





www.gethappier.net

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The car performs best when all of the parts of the system are working together. Now you understand the psychology of wellbeing and high performance, you can put it all together. You can check each part regularly to make sure it is working well and in harmony with the other parts. If you ever feel out of balance, you can be sure that one or more of the seven parts needs adjustment. Now you have the information and tools to make the appropriate adjustments.

Psychologists have clearly demonstrated how developing a positive “*growth*” mindset improves our happiness and success. A “*fixed*”, negative and restrictive mindset results in reduced happiness and limited outcomes.

‘*The Get Happier Mindset*’ is a positive mindset for personal wellbeing and success as a parent, based on the seven parts of the car we have explored in this book. The more effective and accurate our beliefs and mindsets, the more effective our lives will be.

To master this new mindset, it is helpful to have an easy self evaluation checklist to identify your successes and learnings. If you are prepared to spend 5 minutes daily to do this, your chances of success increase dramatically. After all, successful athletes and fit people don’t just exercise once, then complain that it hasn’t worked. They develop their routines and practice everyday!

I have prepared a simple checklist for you to use every day to celebrate your success in getting happier and helping your family improve their well being. [Creating The Happiness Habit Checklist click here.](#)

Strategies for Chapter 9

1

Practice 'The Get Happier Mindset'

Print off '*The Get Happier Project Mindset*' sheet on the previous page and the '*Creating The Happiness Habit Checklist*' above and place them where you can review them every day!

2

Write up your favorite mindset statements.

Use them to remind you of what is really important, and never compromise your personal well being.

This week I talked to a young man with terminal cancer who has only a few weeks to live. He reminded me that when life is stripped back to its basics, all that really matters are the loving relationships in your life.

I was inspired by him and his wonderful family, and realised that unless we keep reminding ourselves of this, we are inclined to let ourselves become involved in trivial and unimportant conflicts.

Some of my favorite mindsets include:

'Life is part support and part challenge. When I am challenged, I remind myself that this is an opportunity to learn and grow, rather than try to avoid or escape what is inevitable.'

'The behaviour of others is their own choice, and I do not take responsibility for them. I will act in order to ensure safety as best I can, and check that my own choices are not interfering with the rights of others.'

AFFIRMATIONS

From Wayne Dyer

"I have everything I need for complete peace and total happiness right now."

"I cannot always control what goes on outside. But I can always control what goes on inside"

"Be miserable or motivate myself, it is always my choice."

Conclusion

The 'Get Happier Parenting' chart compares the key styles of parenting. You will notice that everything we have covered in this book aligns with the Psychology of Choice, The Connecting/Open Road Behaviours and a 'Lead Parenting' style. While you may find yourself slipping into either 'Boss Parenting' or 'Permissive Parenting' behaviours from time to time, you know that you can best empower yourself and your family by developing the mindsets and behaviours of 'The Psychology of Choice'.

When you use these ideas every day, you will be surprised how quickly your life will be transformed! Don't worry about mis-takes, always be kind to yourself, and remember that mis-takes are a fantastic opportunity for the whole family to learn and grow!

My mentor, Dr William Glasser once wrote,

***"It is almost impossible to continue to choose misery
after becoming aware that it is a choice."***

***I encourage you to choose happiness and live your
inspired life as you adapt the ideas to your own unique
circumstances and family.***

Get Happier Parenting

Psychology



External Control Psychology

Behaviour is caused by things and people outside of us.

Reward and Punishment.

A quick fix.

Dead End Road Behaviours

Blaming

Criticising

Complaining

Rewarding to Control

Threatening

Punishing

Nagging

BOSS Parenting

"I'm in charge, so do what I say."

Focuses on compliance, motivation and control.

Wants to get the job done at any cost.

Driven by short term gains.

Chosen Behaviours



Parenting Style



The Psychology of Choice

Behaviour is an internal choice.

All behaviour is chosen.

Relationship and influence.

Understanding the Basic Needs.

Open Road Behaviours

Listening

Supporting

Encouraging

Negotiating

Respecting

Accepting

Trusting

LEAD Parenting

"Helping children learn the skills for a happy and responsible life."

Focuses on quality outcomes, inspiration, creating a need satisfying environment, removing barriers to quality and shared responsibility.

Do Nothing Psychology

No clear understanding about behaviour.

Lacking in awareness.

Uncaring.

Road to Nowhere Behaviours

Ignore

Avoid Responsibility

Avoid Accountability

Limited Vision

Avoid Conflict

Avoid Ownership

She'll be right mate!

PERMISSIVE Parenting

"Just do whatever you like."

Anything goes, no clear focus, no boundaries, avoids making decisions, head in the sand, not my problem!



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[Download this chart here](#)

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Parent Workshops and Facilitator Training

Ivan and Rebekah conduct regular inspiring workshops around the world to teach this empowering framework.

The Get Happier Experience

Doug Dragster's Get Happier Toolbox Workshop

In 2016 'Happy Parenting: Raising Positive and Empowered Kids' will be released as a Workshop Series. If you are interested in becoming a facilitator please contact The Get Happier Team. Email: pitcrew@dougdragster.com or Ph: +61 03 5439 5551.

Other Get Happier Project Resources

Visit www.gethappier.net to view our online store for a complete catalogue of resources designed specifically for children.

You've just completed reading a 'Get Happier Project' Resource.