

Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood: Practical Parenting Tips from Birth to Six Years

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The following is a summary of the above book. For more information and examples, please refer to the full text.  
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The 4 Principles of Love and Logic:

Principle #1: Build the Self-concept

- Everything kids learn and do affects how they see themselves, which, in turn, determines what they choose to do with their lives
- Building high or low self concept happens over time based on small “deposits” made on a daily basis, one piece of information at a time
- How parents determine a child’s self-concept
 - Formula for low self-concept is parents who:
 - Find faults and criticize
 - Insist on doing everything for their children
 - Don’t allow their children to experience the joy of independent success
 - Formula for a high self-concept is parents who:
 - Offer empathy, understanding, and unconditional love
 - Allow their children to struggle and solve problems on their own
 - Encourage children to learn to succeed through personal thinking and learning
- Children must know they can handle situations that appear without warning, that require them to think for themselves.
- Every time we rescue our children we erode their self-concept. Each time they solve a problem instead, we help them strengthen it.

Principle #2: Share the Control

- Control is like love-the more we give away, the more we get in return
- When children feel a lack of control, sad things can happen
- Battles of control do not benefit anyone.
- The art of control for parents is to give control away when you don’t need it so you can get some back when you do.
- Share control by giving the types of choices that do not cause a problem for you-make a list of choices you can give your child, and see how many choices you can give her during the day
- Frame choices will firm limits
- A child’s ability to make choices, within the safety of limits, is the foundation of responsibility and wisdom
- Love and Logic parents give their children as much freedom and control as possible in areas where they don’t need it. True authority figures consider this question on a daily basis “How would I want my child to treat me if the roles were reversed?”-and they very well could be one day

Principle #3: Provide a Strong Dose of Empathy Before Delivering Consequences

- The pain of poor choices helps children learn to avoid mistakes
- Empathy allows children to learn from their mistakes instead of learning to resent adults
- Parents must allow this to happen in a loving way

- The price of young children making small mistakes is much smaller than teenagers and adults who make large mistakes
- Mistakes are the opportunity for kids to think
- Do not destroy the learning value of mistakes by lecturing or responding with anger
- When we deliver consequences in anger, children's brains go into survival mode, and they think more about getting away or getting revenge than learning how to make smarter choices
- If we offer empathy before delivering consequences, the child is less likely to respond with fear
- Kids whose parents respond with empathy develop a voice in their head that asks "How will my next decision going to affect my life? Which choice will be the wisest?"
- Empathy can make the child's mistake be the "bad guy"
- Remember that sincere empathy works wonders, and sarcastic empathy backfires

Principle #4: Share the Thinking

- Give your kids a lifelong gift when they cause a problem or make a mistake by allowing them to think more about the solution than you do
- 4 Powerful actions to allow children to develop stronger thinking skills:
 - Raise a child who feels good about himself
 - Develop a strong bond of love and trust with your child
 - Allow your child to make plenty of mistakes and learn from them at an early age-turn every mistake or misbehavior into a learning opportunity
 - Give your child plenty of practice thinking and solving problems

3 Common Myths About Discipline

- Discipline and learning require language
 - Use actions, not words
 - For instance, if your child won't sit in the highchair, use the lap belt to strap him in
- A little child cannot remember and learn
 - Does your child remember when you break a promise to go to the park or to McDonalds? You bet! This means he can remember and learn!
- Setting limits will break a young child's spirit
 - Setting limits early will make a happy child, waiting to set limits until the child is older creates unhappy, demanding children who grow into unhappy, demanding adults
 - Children cannot learn autonomy without learning how to respond properly to authority
- Every child is born with their own temperament and time clock of development, but they are ready for Love and Logic as soon as they are crawling. Start when they're cute so they'll stay that way!
- At the age of 3 and above, kids are able to do more thinking for themselves and parents have many more opportunities to help build their child's self-concept by asking questions and allowing them to make decisions

A child's ability to love and respect oneself and others is primarily based on how well the child's basic needs were met during the first 2 years of life.

The Trust Cycle

- The infant has a basic need
- The infant cries with rage
- The need is fulfilled
- Trust is achieved

The Broken Trust Cycle

- The infant has a basic need
- The infant cries with rage
- The need is NOT fulfilled
- Trust is NOT fulfilled

Consequences of the Broken Trust Cycle

- Excessive anger and rage
- Destructiveness
- Chronic lying
- Lack of remorse
- Poor problem solving skills
- Cruelty to animals
- Lots of pain for everyone

Meeting Needs and Limiting Wants

- Consistently meet basic needs-this completes the trust cycle
- Distinguish between kids' needs and wants
- Set limits-meet basic needs while setting limits on "wants". Setting limits says to your child: "I love you enough to keep you safe.", "I love you enough to help you feel secure.", "I care enough about you to teach you the difference between your needs and wants." and "I care enough to prepare you for the real world."

Two rules of Love and Logic:

Rule #1: Take care of yourself by setting limits in a loving way

Rule #2: Turn every mistake or misbehavior into a learning opportunity

Rule #1: Take care of yourself by setting limits in a loving way

- Replace anger and frustration with empathy
- Replace threats and warnings with simple actions
- Set limits you can enforce
- Give away the control you don't need

When we make a child aware of our limits in a caring way, we take care of ourselves and model healthy behavior

The Misbehavior Cycle

1. The child experiments with misbehavior-this is healthy but includes behavior we don't like
2. The parent gets frustrated and angry-this FEEDS misbehavior
3. The child develops disrespect for authority figures-the child believes that the most powerful people in their life cannot make them behave and that it's really entertaining to see big people get mad
4. The child begins to feel hopeless-the child feels that he must be really really bad and hopeless if the most powerful people in his life cannot make him behave

- To break the misbehavior cycle, show the child you can handle them without breaking a sweat
- When we discipline without showing frustration, the odds for success increase in a very big way
- Wise parents take simple actions early on so they can avoid having to take painful ones later

Steps for the "Uh-oh" Song

- Instead of making threats or giving warnings, sing "Oh-oh" and take action
- Gently carry or guide your child to his bedroom or take the item away; by singing "Uh-oh" tells the child he is such a good child and you are such a good parent that you can discipline without yelling, or stressing yourself out
- Give your child a choice about the door-open or closed-if the child comes out before she's ready, the door gets shut
- Say "feel free to come out when you're acting sweet"-the time periods may be long at first but will decrease if you are consistent-remember not to use too many words

- Do not lecture or remind when your child is ready to come out-give a hug, and repeat the “Uh-oh” song and bedroom time if misbehavior continues
- Have fun with your kids when they’re behaving-they’ll miss you when they have to go to their room-if you have fun when they are good, all the fun shuts down when they miss behave
- Once the “Uh-oh” song is locked in at home, you can use it in public as well. Wise parents know that the first step to good behavior in public is good behavior at home. Find a boring or uninteresting place for your child to stand or wait for you.

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- Our children are better prepared for the real world when they understand that the consequences of poor choices often happen without warning
 - We want our children to learn the make wise decisions the first time. They can do this by thinking two major thoughts about the decisions they make:
 - “Life’s pretty good. People are kind to me and meet my needs. But if I make a poor decision, something bad could happen, and I’d have no warning.”
 - “Every decision I make is important. I wonder how this one will affect the rest of my life?”
 - If we can teach our children that sad things can happen if wise decisions are not made the first time, they will be happier and safer in the long run.

Set limits once and follow through with loving actions rather than words:

- Instead of saying “Pick up your toys” and then “Oh, didn’t I tell you to pick up your toys?”
 - Say “Feel free to keep the toys you pick up” and then when you pick up the toys that are still lying around say “How sad”. The child will learn quickly how to pick up her toys.
 - How do you set the limit once?
 - With children who don’t understand language:
 - Move them:
 - Say, “Uh-oh. You’re throwing your carrots instead of eating them? You must be done eating. Let’s got out of you high chair right now. Up we go.”
 - Or, take the offending object away:
 - Say, “Uh-oh. You hit the dog with the truck? All gone!” and hide the truck.
 - With an older child:
 - Sing the “Uh-oh” song
 - “Uh-oh! That is so sad. Looks like a little bedroom time”
 - Take the child to his room.
 - Tell him he can come out of the room when he is acting sweet. You can keep the door shut by removing the handle, turning the lock around, or jamming the door with a towel, as long as you are carefully monitoring.
 - You can go in when the child is calm, give the child a hug, and say “I love you sweetie. That was so sad.”
 - The reason to use the room rather than a chair or a corner is so that the child doesn’t act out and receive more attention from the parents.
 - Anger and frustration feed misbehavior, so don’t give too much attention while the child is misbehaving. You can stay outside of the room and avoid a power struggle. Remember not to say anything to your child through the door.
 - Wise parents give their children lots of attention when they are acting sweet.
 - This sends the message that “Sweetheart, the way you get lots of attention in this house is by behaving and by being nice. The way you get no attention in this house is by throwing fits and acting nasty”.
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Turning Your Words to Gold

- Enforceable statements describe limits we can enforce 100% of the time
- Instead of saying “Quit fighting” when your kids are fighting in the car, say “I charge \$2 a minute to listen to fighting in the car. Will you be paying with chores, cash, or some of your toys?”

Provide a healthy sense of control

- Limits are easier to set and enforce when children feel a healthy sense of control
- If you let your child make lots of choices on small issues, your children will be more cooperative when you to have control on bigger issues by saying something like “Sweetie, I know you don’t want to do this, but who has been getting to make most of the choices around here? You have. This time it’s my turn. Thank you.”

Know when to give choices

- Give 99% of choices when things are going smoothly
- Only provide choices on issues that are not dangerous and don’t create a problem for anyone else
- Always offer two options, each of which makes you happy
- Choose for the child if the child doesn’t choose in 10 seconds

Rule #2: Turn every mistake or misbehavior into a learning opportunity

- Always give a strong dose of sincere sadness or empathy before the consequence
- This simple action can make the difference between a child who learns wisdom from the consequence and one who merely has a meltdown of anger, frustration, and resentment
- Loving sadness opens a child’s heart and mind for learning; Anger creates a child who blames others for his mistakes
- Replace punishment with logical consequences
- When possible, guide your child to solve her own problem
- What empathy accomplishes
 - Preserves the adult-child relationship because no one has to shout
 - Prevents resentment and the chances of payback behavior
 - Models, and therefore teaches respect
 - Helps the child stay focused on what can be learned from a mistake, not on the adults

- Empathy allows your child to think more about her mistake and less about being angry with you
- Empathy forces children to own the pain of their mistakes, rather than blaming the pain on you
- Consequences + Anger = More anger
- Empathy + Consequences = Learning

Quick Empathetic Responses

- “Uh-oh”
- “This is so sad”
- “Bummer”
- “Oh...that’s never good”
- “How sad”
- Make up your own that suits your personality

The “Energy Drain”

- When you find a behavior exhausting say “What an energy drain. This is so sad. When you ____,

- it drains my energy. How are you going to put it back?"
- Then you can say "Do you want some ideas?"
 - Then "Well, some kids decide to clean the toilet, and that puts energy back in mom. Some kids rake the yard, and that puts energy back. Some kids decide to vacuum. That's an energy builder. How would one of those work for you?"
 - If your child says he doesn't know how to do those things, say "I'll show you how to get started. Which would you like to do?"

The Babysitter Routine

- Say, "Oh, how sad. I am so tired from your behavior at the conference today-having to ask you not to run around the whole time. Your daddy and I need to go out tonight. How are you going to pay the babysitter?"
- Or, "This is your sitter, Mabel. She charges \$3/hr for sweet kids, and \$6/hr if your not. Oh, and she's going to ask you how you can pay her." You can pay her and have the child pay you with chores, toys, etc.

3 Steps to Empathy + Consequences-Kids Younger Than 3

- Respond with empathy
- Change your child's location or remove the "offending" object-or both
- Don't warn, lecture, or remind-let actions speak louder than words

5 Steps for Helping Kids Own and Solve Their problems

- Lock in the empathy
- Ask your child "What are you going to do?"
- When your child says "I don't know" ask "Would you like to hear some ideas?"
- Offer no more than three possible solutions. After each one ask "How would that work?"
- Allow your child to choose-and learn from the choice and your empathy

3 Steps in Delaying Consequences-this gives you time to think

- Say "I'll have to do something about this, but not now. Try not to worry about it."
- Put together a plan that fits the misbehavior. Make sure the consequence is appropriate.
- Deliver the consequence with lots of empathy

Appropriate consequences

- Fit the misbehavior
- Focus on bad choices, not bad children
- Addresses the present, not the past
- Are not accompanied by lectures, reminder or guilt trips
- Can be enforced consistently
- Teach your child wisdom

Good News for Parents of 2 Year Olds

- Your child's desire to be independent and test authority is healthy and normal
- Practical Love and Logic tools can make this age more fun for parents
- If you parent really well during the first two years of life, chances are that your child will become a responsible teenager who is fun to be around

What Love and Logic Authority Figures Give Kids

- Unconditional love and respect
- High expectations and firm limits
- Some freedom within those limits
- Time and encouragement to struggle through difficult problems
- Guidance in solving problems within those challenges
- An understanding of the difference between needs and wants
- Positive, self-confidant role models

What Kids Learn from Gentle Roughhousing

- Their parents love them
- Their parents are strong people and can control them
- Their parents won't control them unless it's necessary
- Parents are people who are powerful, kind, and gentle at the same time
- They love their parents and want to be like them
- Roughhousing helps them bond while learning about authority. It teaches them that they can have fun and declare their independence, but there is someone who is in charge

Common Parenting Traps

1. "He's just going through a phase."
 - When your toddler is "going through a phase" *now* is the only time to do something about it
2. "Since we're together so much, he doesn't listen to a thing I say."
 - Use the "Uh-oh" song, have an "Energy drain", or try the "babysitter" routine
3. "Other people let her do what she wants."
 - She is doing the behavior because of the reaction it gets from you-remember that anger and frustration feed poor behavior- don't break a sweat, and use Love and Logic
4. "What can you expect? She's only 3!"
 - Young children can learn and remember how to act nice, or act nasty-the choice is ours
5. "She's a handful, but she's so creative-so intelligent!"
 - Even the brightest and most creative people find it hard to get by in society unless they can be responsible and get along with others
6. "I tell him and I tell him but he just won't listen!"
 - These parents are relying on words rather than actions

Neutralizing Family Arguments

- Go brain dead, smile, and pause-look at your child without speaking, until he asks "What?"
- Choose an empathetic one-liner
- Keep repeating the same one-liner over and over, such as "I love you too much to argue"
- If the child continues, walk away-if they follow, resort to an "energy drain"

Some Love and Logic One-liners

The child says:

- "But why?"
- "I hate you" or "You hate me"
- "Dad lets me"
- "Not fair!"

You say softly:

- "Why do you think?"
 - "I am sorry you feel that way."
 - "I know."
 - "I'll listen to you you're your voice sounds like mine."
 - "I love you too much to argue."
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Getting Your Child to do Chores

1. As soon as your child can walk, start working together
 - Play, work, and have fun together
 - Say “please” and “thank you” so your kids are encouraged to say them, too
 - Do your best to help your child associate chores with good feelings rather than bad ones
 - Do not criticize quality. Instead, focus mostly on the amount of effort your child expends. “Wow! You’re really working hard!”
2. Model doing your own chores in front of your children
 - Make sure the kids see you doing chores, working hard, and struggling, and how good you feel once the chores are done-your sense of completion and accomplishment
 - Think out loud as you work-say things like “This is hard. Alright, I’ve got to do it. It has to get done. Okay, I’m doing it now. Wow, I’m almost finished. It’s done. Boy, do I feel great now!”
 - It’s important for children to know that we sometimes have to work hard at tasks we don’t necessarily like. Lying and saying all chores are fun only creates resentment from your child later on. Be positive, but honest.
3. Develop a “Toy Bermuda Triangle”
 - When your child leaves toys lying around and doesn’t put them away, where do they go?
The toy Bermuda Triangle!
 - When your child asks where the toys are, respond with “When you pick up your toys, you get to keep them. When I pick up your toys, they go in my closet. How are you going to get them back?”
4. Give choices about age-appropriate chores
 - Offer your child a choice between two chores, each of which is okay with you
 - Give choices about deadlines to have the chores done by
 - Giving your child time to complete the chore gives you time to plan what to do if she doesn’t
5. Do not pay your child for doing chores
 - Chores are a contribution to the family, so no one gets paid for them
 - Explain that chores are a part of being a family, and no one gets paid for them
 - If the child wants to earn money, help her find an extra chore
6. Hope that while your kids are still young, they forget or refuse to do their chores
 - Do not remind your kids to do their chores so they can learn how to get tasks done without constant reminders
 - Do the chore for your child, or pay someone to do it, then say to your child “How sad. Remember when I asked you to pick up your clothes and you didn’t. I love you too much to remind you. I took care of it. How are you going to repay me?”
When your child says “I don’t know” lock in empathy, ask what he’s going to do, provide options, then allow your child to choose, and learn from, the choice.