

Contentment: Learning to be okay with what you have.

PARENTING WITH CONTENTMENT

As adults, we may think that we have some of these values under control - or at least in process! Contentment, however, might be one that we all need to put some thought to.

Our demonstration of what it looks like to be content means a lot in the formation of our kids' view of contentment. It can be hard to balance - we want them to work hard and succeed, so how do we balance both?

Instead of thinking of the opposite of contentment as hard work, consider these scenarios. How can you reframe contentment in your home?

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CONTENTMENT:

For parent reflection:

- Who are some adults that your child could learn contentment from?
- What peers does your child have that helps them be grateful?
- How can you help your child be content, but still work hard for their future?

- Instead of complaining about what restaurant another family member chose, choose to acknowledge how nice it is to eat outside of the home
- Instead of wishing for the newest video game, recognize that the ones you already have are pretty fun
- Instead of feeling like you missed out when someone posts on social media, engage with your family or friends and create your own memories

With your child:

- When is it easy to be content?
- When do you have trouble being content?
- What could help you find contentment in your daily life?
- Have you ever had a relationship damaged because you were jealous or couldn't be content?
- When you think about "what you have," what are some things that you are grateful for?

CONTENTMENT

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WEEK ONE:

What is contentment?

Looking around at what others have (compared to what we don't have) can make for a lifetime of disappointment. How can we choose to be okay with what we've got, when the world tells us we should always want more?

WEEK TWO:

How to be content when you don't have a lot

Taking time to look at yourself instead of others will build this skill of "choosing" happiness. Choosing to look toward your future or to build on your own strengths instead of being jealous of the strengths of others will build confidence, peace, and contentment in your life now and in the years to come.

WEEK THREE:

Why should I be content? Shouldn't I work hard?

This really feels like a mixed message — on one hand, adults tell you to be content and stop complaining. On the other hand, everyone wants you to work hard — for a better future, to get into a college, to win the game, to play the part. Can I be content and a hard worker, and should I be both?

WEEK FOUR:

CHALLENGE: Chain of gratitude

Seeing what we all have to be grateful for helps keep at bay the feelings of jealousy or entitlement. As you work together to build a chain of things to be grateful for, keep your eyes open for opportunities to be thankful and let the contentment spread!