

# Parent Pathways

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FAMILY LIFE AND  
TECHNOLOGY



Office of Faith Formation  
2024-2025

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A Healthy Family:

Identifying Current Priorities and Practices

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*What factors contribute to your mental health? How is your health?*

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Setting Boundaries and Living in our Bodies

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Accountability

*How will you remain accountable to your priorities?*

# SESSION ONE

## *A Healthy Family: Identifying Current Priorities and Practices*

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### **Session Focus**

What do you want for your family, and do your habits point to those hopes?

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The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.  
Galatians 5:22-23

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What character traits or behaviors do you value as a family?

Example

*I want to cultivate a family ethos of generosity.*

How does this show up in your family's life?

Example

*As a family, we travel with care packages to share with our unhoused neighbors. When we donate money, we make the decisions about those organizations as a family.*

Reflect on how technology is a barrier or a benefit to this desired family identity.

Example

*It is difficult to be generous if we are not aware of the needs around us. Since my children are younger, it is important to me to begin to instill within them the idea that they are able to contribute in meaningful ways. For me, this means I want them to be aware of their local community.*

What boundary is important to keep in order for your family identity to be possible?

Example

*I want to cultivate a habit of observation and presence in my children, so the car is a tech free zone. While we drive, my children can look around them and notice our neighbors, especially those who are unhoused.*

## PRAYER

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Holy God, you are a God of freedom.

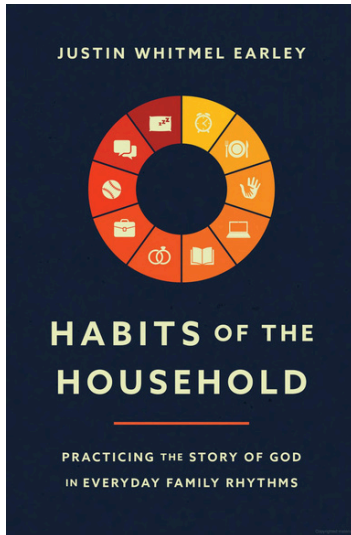
May we avoid a self-centered life, enslaved to the tools or temptations that isolate us from your good Creation and Community.

Instead, may we abide in your love; by Your mercy guide us that we may we exhibit the fruit of Your Spirit in our lives.

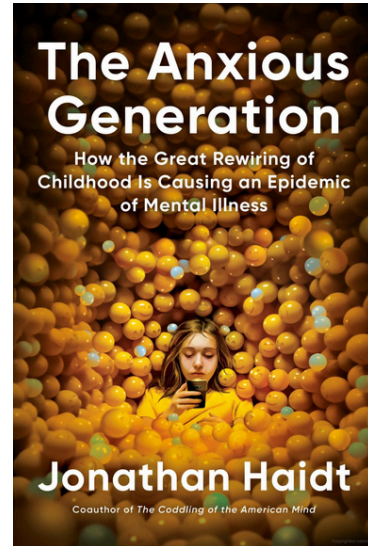
Amen.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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## Introduction



## Ch 8 “Spiritual Elevation and Degradation” from The Anxious Generation” by Jonathan Haidt

# DARE TO LEAD

## LIST OF VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY	FUN	PERSONAL FULFILLMENT
ACHIEVEMENT	FUTURE GENERATIONS	POWER
ADAPTABILITY	GENEROSITY	PRIDE
ADVENTURE	GIVING BACK	RECOGNITION
ALTRUISM	GRACE	RELIABILITY
AMBITION	GRATITUDE	RESOURCEFULNESS
AUTHENTICITY	GROWTH	RESPECT
BALANCE	HARMONY	RESPONSIBILITY
BEAUTY	HEALTH	RISK-TAKING
BEING THE BEST	HOME	SAFETY
BELONGING	HONESTY	SECURITY
CAREER	HOPE	SELF-DISCIPLINE
CARING	HUMILITY	SELF-EXPRESSION
COLLABORATION	HUMOR	SELF-RESPECT
COMMITMENT	INCLUSION	SERENITY
COMMUNITY	INDEPENDENCE	SERVICE
COMPASSION	INITIATIVE	SIMPLICITY
COMPETENCE	INTEGRITY	SPIRITUALITY
CONFIDENCE	INTUITION	SPORTSMANSHIP
CONNECTION	JOB SECURITY	STEWARDSHIP
CONTENTMENT	JOY	SUCCESS
CONTRIBUTION	JUSTICE	TEAMWORK
COOPERATION	KINDNESS	THRIFT
COURAGE	KNOWLEDGE	TIME
CREATIVITY	LEADERSHIP	TRADITION
CURIOSITY	LEARNING	TRAVEL
DIGNITY	LEGACY	TRUST
DIVERSITY	LEISURE	TRUTH
ENVIRONMENT	LOVE	UNDERSTANDING
EFFICIENCY	LOYALTY	UNIQUENESS
EQUALITY	MAKING A DIFFERENCE	USEFULNESS
ETHICS	NATURE	VISION
EXCELLENCE	OPENNESS	VULNERABILITY
FAIRNESS	OPTIMISM	WEALTH
FAITH	ORDER	WELL-BEING
FAMILY	PARENTING	WHOLEHEARTEDNESS
FINANCIAL STABILITY	PATIENCE	WISDOM
FORGIVENESS	PATRIOTISM	
FREEDOM	PEACE	
FRIENDSHIP	PERSEVERANCE	



## NOTES AND WONDERINGS

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**Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
with your one wild and precious life?  
— Mary Oliver, "Poem 133: The Summer Day"**

## SESSION TWO

### *Mental Health*

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#### **Session Focus**

How is your mental well being, and how does technology play a role in supporting or hindering you?

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Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will

Romans 12:1–2.

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## CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO MENTAL WELL BEING

1. *Identity*

2. *Healthy Relationships*

3. *Harmful Content*

a. *Hate speech*

b. *Bullying*

c. *Pornography*

d. *Depictions of violence*

4. *Impulse Control*

5. *Sleep*

a. *6–12 year olds need 9–12 hours/day*

b. *13–18 year olds need 8–10 hours/day*

6. *Physical Activity*

**Identity:** Who contributes to your child's sense of self, and what messages are they internalizing about themselves and their place in your family?

**Healthy Relationship:** Is your child spending time with others? Do those relationships contribute to a healthy sense of self? Does your child have unstructured free play with their friends?

**Harmful Content:** Do you have age appropriate conversations with your children about the type of content they may find online?

**Impulse Control:** What clear and enforceable boundaries does your family currently have around tech use?

**Sleep:** How much is your child sleeping? What are the current behaviors around technology and bedtime?

**Physical Activity:** Is your child physically active? How much time per day is spent moving their body? How much of their active time is unstructured play?

## **Reflect on your mental health**

**Identity:** Who contributes to your sense of self, and what messages are you internalizing about yourself and your place in the family?

**Healthy Relationship:** Are you spending time with others? Do those relationships contribute to a healthy sense of self? Do you have unstructured free play and free time?

**Harmful Content:** Do you have an understanding of the content accessible to you and a plan in place for preventing unhealthy engagement?

**Impulse Control:** What are the clear and enforceable boundaries you hold yourself to concerning tech use?



**Sleep:** Are you sleeping enough? Are you waking rested?

**Physical Activity:** Are you physically active? How much time per day is spent moving your body?

## PRAYER

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Holy God, your creation is good.

May we set our minds on all that is holy and be present to the beauty of the natural world we are to steward and the people you have placed in our lives to love.

Guide us as we live into the fullness of your promises; right relationship with creation, others, ourselves, and You.

Amen.

## NOTES AND WONDERINGS

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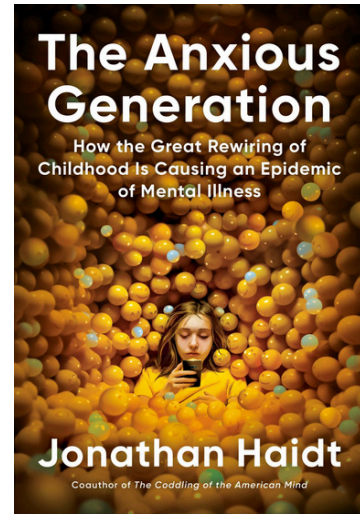
**We have access to wonderful things.  
But they require effort, so we settle for  
the junky things that provide the quick  
dopamine hits. David Brooks, "The  
Junkification of American Life"**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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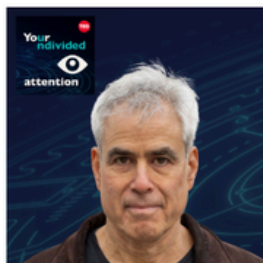
**“Potential Risks of Content, Features, and Functions: A closer look at the science behind how social media affects youth.”** American Psychological Association, 2024, <https://www.apa.org/topics/social-media-internet/psychological-science-behind-youth-social-media.pdf>. Accessed 13 September 2024.



### **Chapter 5 “Four Basic Harms” from The Anxious Generation by Jonathan Haidt**

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[← See All Episodes](#)



#### **Jonathan Haidt On How to Solve the Teen Mental Health Crisis**

April 11, 2024

Suicides. Self-harm. Depression and anxiety. The toll of a social media-addicted, phone-based childhood has never been more stark. It can be easy for teens, parents, and schools to feel like they're trapped by it all. But in this conversation with Tristan Harris, author and social psychologist Jonathan Haidt makes the case that the conditions that led to today's teenage mental health crisis can be turned around – with specific, achievable actions we all can take starting today.

This episode was recorded live at the San Francisco Commonwealth Club.

### **Interview with author of The Anxious Generation**



## **Health Advisory: Child Sleep Duration**

The nightly duration of healthy sleep needed by children varies by age and individual biology. In general the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that children get the following amounts of sleep on a regular basis to promote optimal health, daytime alertness and school performance:

- Infants 4 months to 12 months should sleep 12 to 16 hours per 24 hours (including naps).
- Children 1 to 2 years of age should sleep 11 to 14 hours per 24 hours (including naps).
- Children 3 to 5 years of age should sleep 10 to 13 hours per 24 hours (including naps).
- Children 6 to 12 years of age should sleep 9 to 12 hours per 24 hours.

Sleeping the number of recommended hours on a regular basis is associated with better health outcomes including: improved attention, behavior, learning, memory, emotional regulation, quality of life, and mental and physical health. *Adopted by the AASM Board of*

*Directors: Feb. 17, 2014*

*Updated by the AASM Board of Directors: April 3, 2016*

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) is a professional membership society that improves sleep health and promotes high quality, patient-centered care through advocacy, education, strategic research, and practice standards ([aasm.org](http://aasm.org)).

A searchable directory of AASM-accredited member sleep centers is available at [sleepeducation.org](http://sleepeducation.org).

## SESSION THREE

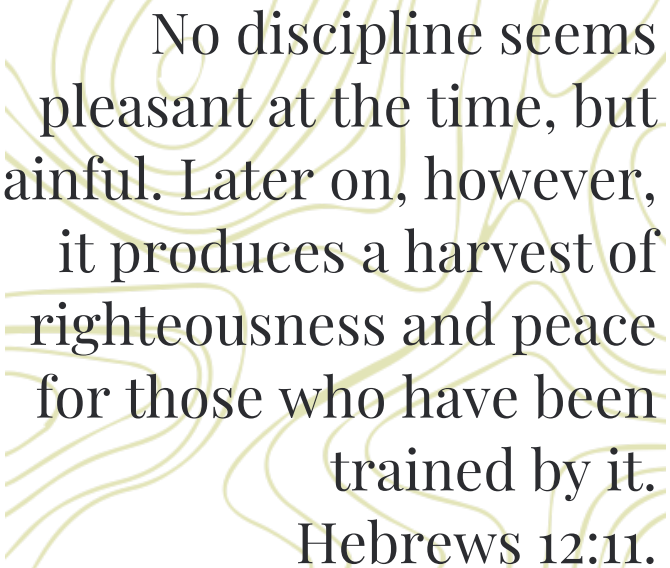
### *Setting Boundaries and Living in our Body*

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#### **Session Focus**

How do we spend our time  
individually and as a family?

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No discipline seems  
pleasant at the time, but  
painful. Later on, however,  
it produces a harvest of  
righteousness and peace  
for those who have been  
trained by it.  
Hebrews 12:11.

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**Family Priorities: Revisit your family's priorities and think about your mental health reflections. What boundary do you need to establish in order to get there?**

What do you want more of for your family?

Example

*We don't get a lot of physical activity as a family. We would like to spend more time in active play together.*

What boundary do you need to establish to enjoy more of...

Example

*We are going to try a "phone free 45" after dinner. For 45 minutes after dinner we will put away our screens and play. Maybe it will be a walk or biking or a dance party in the kitchen. We'll all have an opportunity to plan this time together.*

## PRAYER

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Holy God, you have not left us alone.

With Jesus as our example, the Holy Spirit as our encourager, and our community as coworkers, may we continue to move toward the realization of your good and perfect Kingdom.

Amen.



## NOTES AND WONDERINGS

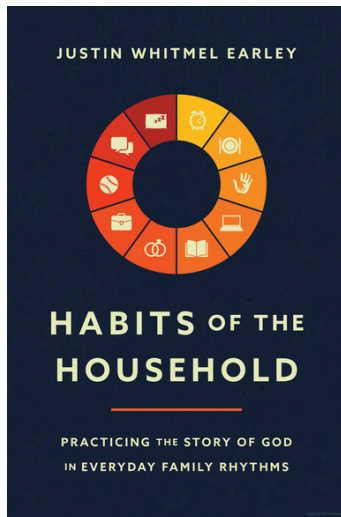
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How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives. What we do with this hour, and that one, is what we are doing. A schedule defends from chaos and whim. It is a net for catching days. It is a scaffolding on which a worker can stand and labor with both hands at sections of time. A schedule is a mock-up of reason and order — willed, faked, and so brought into being; it is a peace and a haven set into the wreck of time; it is a lifeboat on which you find yourself, decades later, still living. Each day is the same, so you remember the series afterward as a blurred and powerful pattern.

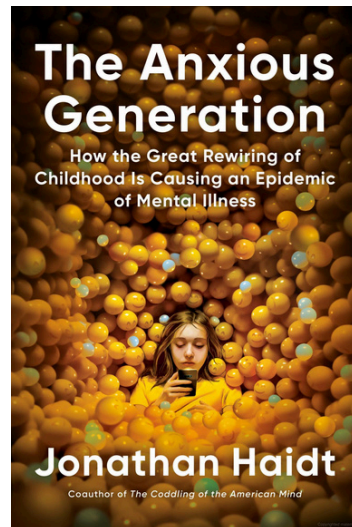
Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life*

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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## **Chapter 4 Screentime**



## **Ch 8 “Spiritual Elevation and Degradation” from The Anxious Generation” by Jonathan Haidt Ch 12 “What Parents Can Do” Ch 13 “Bringing Childhood back to Earth”**

## SESSION FOUR

### *Accountability*

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#### **Session Focus**

How will you remain  
accountable to your priorities?

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Now you are the body of  
Christ, and each one of you  
is a part of it.  
1 Corinthians 12:27

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What will be your family's new routine?

Example

*Leave tech in box, eat dinner distraction free, put on shoes for a family walk*

What is the reward of this new behavior?

Example

*Time together, undivided attention, physical activity*

According to author James Clear, creating a new habit involves

- Making cues obvious
- Making it attractive
- Making it easy
- Making it satisfying

Example  
What will be your family's new cue?

*Drop box for tech as you enter the house and  
walking shoes by the door*

Old habits hard to break because

- Old habits are familiar
- Old habits require less time and effort.
- Old habits feel safe.
- Old habits are tied to our identity.

What are the hurdles you have or anticipate encountering?

How or who will hold you and/or your child accountable?

Habits are social!

## PRAYER

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Holy God, you created us for community.

We praise you that in your divine wisdom you created us whole and holy and in need of one another. May we see the divine mark in one another and work alongside each other celebrating and encouraging our labor toward living a full life in your Kingdom.

Amen.

# NOTES AND WONDERINGS

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**...whatever we “abide” in will determine the “fruit” of our lives, for good or ill.**

**John Mark Comer, Practicing the Way**

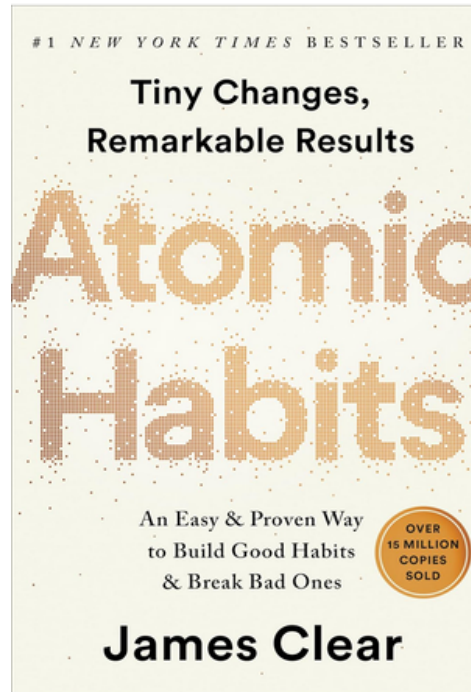
**But I think the real reason, the true reason that habits matter, is that they reinforce your desired identity. Every action you take is like a vote for the type of person you wish to become.**

**James Clear, author of Atomic Habits**



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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How to develop the habits you want – and get rid of the ones you don't (w/ James Clear)

437,204 views | How to Be a Better Human | A TED Original Podcast • April 2024