

Mindful Parenting

Parenting although rewarding is often a challenging endeavor. The demanding role of parent may feel at times like navigating stormy waters without a map. When faced with a tantruming two year old or a boundary testing teen, an already stressed parent may struggle to respond with understanding. Mindful parenting is accepting that you can not control the sea but you can develop the skills necessary to ride the waves. “Surfing” is all about learning to respond to challenging situations rather than react. The following tips will assist you in dealing with difficult situations;

- **Pause**- In stressful situations, both parents and children can benefit from a breather. Stop before reacting and be present. It may be helpful to take a few deep breaths to calm your emotions.
- **Observe**- Being quiet and present allows you to take a closer look at what is really happening and gain a better understanding of what you and your child may be thinking and feeling.
- **Accept**– Many times our negative reactions stem from failed expectations. When things don't go the way we had planned we feel frustrated or disappointed. Accepting things as they are is like learning to bend with the wind. It allows space to choose a more compassionate and caring response.

“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.” -Victor Frankl

Adapted from “Sitting Still Like a Frog; Mindfulness Exercises for Kids (and their Parents)” Eline Snel 2013.

Related Resources;

<http://cmhanb.ca/mindfulness/>

<http://www.mindfulschools.org/>

Everyday Blessings: The Inner Work of Mindful Parenting Paperback – May 1 1998by Jon Kabat-Zinn (Author), Myla Kabat-Zinn (Author)