

Life is a Bold Adventure



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Dare to Rise Higher

Encouraging Good Sportsmanship

What is sportsmanship? One dictionary defines it as "abiding by the rules of a contest and accepting victory or defeat gracefully." How does a child learn this quality of gracious acceptance? It starts at an early age.

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Worklife Balance

Everyday Creativity

When asked if they are creative, many will say they are not - because they're not artists, musicians, or writers - jobs often recognized as creative. But did you know creativity is a critical part of working as a mathematician, scientist, engineer, teacher, and more?

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Mind Matters

Quips on Fatherhood

Enjoy some memorable quotes on fatherhood and receive an invaluable diaper changing tip for dads.

"Fatherhood is pretending that the present you love most is soap-on-a-rope."

-- Bill Cosby

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All in a Dad's Day



Life is a Bold Adventure

Victory and adversity: these two present themselves to us in various measures throughout our lives. But obstacles and challenges are often the spark for stretching ourselves in unimaginable ways, and using creative capabilities we never even knew existed. Consider the story of Helen Keller, whose birthday was June 27, 1880. Helen suffered a near-fatal illness at the age of 19 months. She survived, but was deaf and blind for the rest of her life.

ATTENDING TO INSPIRATION

In 1886 Helen's mother, inspired by an account in Charles Dickens' *American Notes* of the successful education of another deaf and blind child, sent Helen and her father to an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist in another city. By way of Alexander Graham Bell, who worked with hearing-impaired children at the time, Helen was referred to a school for the blind. The school's director asked a former student to become Helen's instructor. That teacher was Anne Sullivan, partially blind herself. She came into Helen's life and changed it forever.

With utmost patience and a gritty determination, Anne worked with Helen to help her tap the intelligence and creativity she knew was there. She began by trying to teach Helen letters and words, spelling them into the palm of her hand, and relating them to objects in her world. After a triumphant breakthrough at a water pump – when Helen grasped that the word Anne was spelling into her hand represented the water – Helen began to learn at an amazing pace. She communicated with others by palm spelling or placing her hand on their lips or throats as they spoke.



TAPPING OTHER TALENTS

Helen attended Radcliffe College and went on to become a world-famous speaker and writer. She was also a fierce advocate for people with disabilities as well as women's rights and other causes. She co-founded the Helen Keller International organization, which is devoted to research in vision, health, and nutrition. She traveled to over 39 countries and met every U.S. President from Grover Cleveland to Lyndon B. Johnson.

Helen Keller's story is an amazing example of what one can accomplish against significant odds. Her journey proves determination, hard work, and creative innovation can change the course of one's life. It's a good basis for considering: what challenges do you face that could be overcome with persistence, strength, and support? What obstacles can you defeat by using your creative energies?

GETTING HELP

The professional counselors at Work & Family Benefits can provide information and resources for all of your WorkLife challenges. Contact us for free, prompt, and confidential assistance. We're always here to help.



Encouraging Good Sportsmanship

What is sportsmanship? One dictionary defines it as “abiding by the rules of a contest and accepting victory or defeat graciously.” How does a child learn this quality of gracious acceptance? It starts at an early age.

Small children, when playing together informally, develop some rules of fair play. They learn to “play by the rules” or suffer the consequences of the other children’s displeasure.

At age five or six, many children join organized youth sports, such as soccer, swimming or T-ball. There they gradually learn both the skills and the rules of the sport. From the start, they can also learn the rules of sportsmanship. That starts with coaches, parents and referees all setting a good example - at practice, at home, and at the game.

REINFORCE SPORTSMANSHIP

Reinforce your child’s sportsmanship. Praise not only your child’s efforts but also her or his behavior. “We were really proud of the way you played today. But you know what made us even prouder? How you shook everyone’s hands at the end. That’s the kind of behavior that champions are known for.”

APPRECIATE OTHERS’ ABILITIES

Help your child appreciate that everyone has different abilities. If you observe that your child is not being a good sport or is being critical of other children, privately warn your child that his or her behavior is not “okay.” If the behavior continues, ask the coach to intervene by taking the child out of the game. Most children’s motivation for being in sports is simply to play. Being benched for being “out of line” usually brings home the point.



If your child is frustrated from not playing well or from losing a game, don’t minimize the frustration or disappointment. Acknowledge it. Let your child have some breathing time. Then, help your child to focus on the next activity of the day. Learning to cope with losing is an important skill to develop.

BEING A GOOD SPORT

Healthy competition in youth sports provides an opportunity for children to learn good sportsmanship and simply to have fun. Helping your children learn to be gracious winners and good losers are qualities that will serve them well throughout life.

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Everyday Creativity

When asked if they are creative, many will say they are not - because they're not artists, musicians, or writers - careers most often associated with creativity. But did you know creativity is a critical part of working as a mathematician, scientist, engineer, teacher, and more? And parenting children is perhaps the most creative "job" of all!

Creativity is less a part of the job description, and more of what you do to get your job done. The fact is, wherever there is a problem or task, there is the possibility of a creative approach. Creative solutions are everywhere - just waiting to be tapped. How can you begin to think more creatively? Here are some tips:

- **Ask questions.** Never underestimate the power of inquiry. Asking is the only way to learn, clarify, and fully understand the details of the challenge or task before you.
- **Develop your curiosity.** Find out how similar challenges have been handled in the past or in other areas. Older solutions may just need to be "shined up" a bit - or other resources or professions may offer insights that can be adapted to your task.
- **Be willing to be unique.** Effective problem-solvers are often people who stand out in a crowd because they think for themselves. Try brainstorming or letting your imagination run free to create new possibilities.
- **Have the courage to fail.** Many of today's creative leaders are no strangers to failure. Thomas Edison tested over 1000 materials as filament for the light bulb before finding the right substance.



When asked about all those failures, he replied that each attempt taught him something new, moving him one step closer to the answer. Thus he didn't consider a single attempt a failure.

- **Try working backward!** Here's a fresh, new way to look at things: when faced with a problem or challenge, try starting with a picture of what the problem will look like when it is solved. Then think backward to each step that will be needed to achieve the step before it. This approach is creative and it works!

Each of us is endowed with creative capacities. Begin to unleash yours by departing from your usual ways of thinking, and trying out some new techniques. And prepare to be amazed at what you find!

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Quips on Fatherhood

"Fatherhood is pretending that the present you love most is soap-on-a rope." -- Bill Cosby

"Fathers carry their children's pictures in their wallets where their money used to be."
--Unknown

"I talk and talk and talk, yet I haven't taught people in 50 years what my father taught me by example in one week." -- Mario Cuomo

"Dad is someone to look up to no matter how tall you grow." -- Unknown

"Sometimes the poorest man leaves his children the richest inheritance." -- Ruth E. Renkel

"My father always told me, 'Find a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life.' "
-- Jim Fox

"Any man can be a Father but it takes someone special to be a Dad." -- Anne Geddes

"By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he's wrong." -- Charles Wadsworth

"The father of a daughter is nothing but a high-class hostage." -- Garrison Keillor



And finally, a practical tip:

Instructions for Dad on Changing a Cloth Diaper:

"Spread the diaper in the position of the diamond with you at bat. Then fold second base down to home and set the baby on the pitcher's mound. Put first base and third together, bring up home plate, and pin the three together. Of course, in case of rain, you gotta call the game and start all over again." -- Jimmy Piersall, former major-league centerfielder