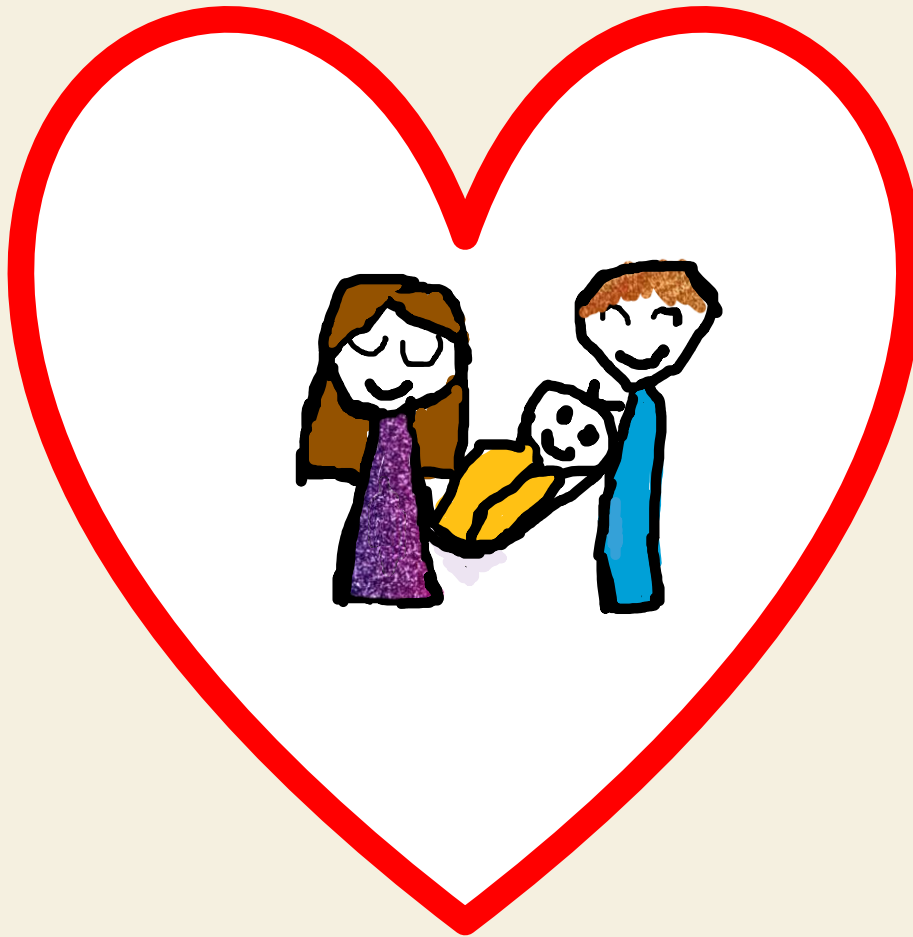


Peaceful Parenting: A Respectful Way of Life



BY Jolene Burkinshaw

<https://www.teachinggumbootkids.xyz>

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*Let's raise children who won't have to recover from
their childhood!*

(Pam Leo)

DEDICATION

This, my first eBook, is dedicated to my out-of-this-world, incredible husband. He walks this challenging journey of being a parent with me, in such an amazingly patient, imaginative, and sensitive way. I have learnt so much from him and would not be able to accomplish anywhere near half of what I do without him.

Thank you for your awesome support and love, Clive!



Heaps of thanks also go to my four gorgeous children who helped me to put this eBook together: with such enthusiasm, fantastic ideas, and lots (and lots) of encouragement. They drew all the beautiful pictures in this eBook. Love you guys tons!

My wonderful mother suggested (a long time ago) that I put a book of my experiences together for parents, to help and guide them... so, thanks stacks to you mom for gently pushing me into this rewarding task, and for believing in me!

Finally, I owe so much to my diligent mentor, Shellaine Foggin. She has (in her loving way) guided me, given me tons of advice, and has always been there for me when I needed her. Thank you, Shel!!

Kids don't need adults who sit around and complain about them. They need adults who will stand up and inspire them.

(Rebecca Eanes)

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Maybe parenting does not have to be about making it to the next bedtime. Maybe instead we can stop, savor, and appreciate all that our children bring into the world, and how lucky we are to have them living with us.

(OurMuddyBoots.com Living! With Kids)

INTRODUCTION

This eBook will not be long-winded, and I will try my absolute best to not waffle, because I know how extremely little (precious) spare time you have as a parent/guardian. I will put everything in as clear and concise manner as I can, making it quick and easy for you to read, understand, and remember.

Just so that you know, I did not grow up in a house where Peaceful Parenting was practiced. My mother and father disciplined and raised us just as their parents (and most others) had brought them up:

>> Spanking (smacks) as punishment; being sent to a room to “think about what had been done;” grounded for not obeying; treats being withheld for not listening; being shouted at loudly and angrily; the silent treatment used to show disapproval; etc. etc. This is how my parents were taught to raise their children, as they followed their parents’ example.

Please note:

This book was not written to condemn those that do the above. It is not meant to bring about guilt either. The ways mentioned have been taught for hundreds of years and are engrained in so many families. This book is rather a gentle, sensitive way to open parent’s/guardian’s eyes to the fact that there is another way to raise a family; one that is easier on both the parents/guardians, and the children.

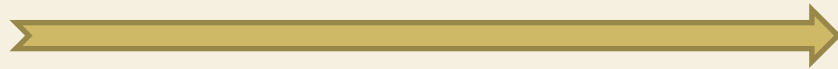
If you would like to know how I discovered this amazing way of bringing up children, then read on... or you can skip to Chapter 1 to find out exactly what Peaceful Parenting is all about...

Many things we need can wait. The child cannot. Now is the time: his bones are formed, his mind developed. To him we cannot say tomorrow, his name is today. (Gabriela Mistral)

My Journey to Peaceful Parenting:

When I had my first son, I was used to copying the learned behavior of raising my voice and showing authority in my look, so that my son could understand that he had overstepped his boundary and was doing something wrong. Then when this was no longer working, a smack on the bottom would follow. This worked for a bit until the smack was not scary enough for him, compared to the need to have or do the thing that he wanted. Then a harder smack along with tough consequences followed. And more punishments and stronger consequences...

Then one day...



I was watching my tired husband trying to dress my very young son who was innocently trying to get away and play a game with his dad. My exhausted husband got upset and smacked him to try and get him to lie still. I suddenly saw a confused look cross my son's face, and then he lay still out of shock and the fear of feeling that pain again. I will never forget the look on his face that day: not anger, but rather confusion.

I had two children by this stage and started noticing the look on their faces whenever I shouted, smacked, and punished them. It was always a confused look at first! I spoke to my husband about this, and we realized that we were doing something incredibly wrong to our children. We were punishing them before they even understood what they were doing wrong.

They did not understand what consequences even were, and all they were doing was having fun and enjoying life, the only way that they knew how.

I also realized that by smacking my children I was being a hypocrite and not "practicing what I preach" (teach)! I was constantly telling them to stop hitting each other and to not be rough etc. But there I was hitting them and being rough with them, all in the name of discipline.

It was a form of violence and abuse!

I then decided to find out if there were other parents/guardians who agreed with this observation and came upon **Peaceful Parenting**. I am so (so very) glad that I discovered this way of raising children. It has left me feeling more at **peace within** myself, and my four children are growing up to be less violent, less drawn to violence, more loving, understanding, and confident little beings.

I hope that by the end of this eBook that you will have this incredible realization as well, and that you can then enjoy your **Peaceful Parenting journey** to the absolute fullest.

The world is hurting in so very many ways!!



We are all hurting. Stress and anxiety are going through the roof in so many lives, and not just because of Covid-19 or the aftereffects of it. An immense variety of political, emotional, social, racial, and other issues are all negatively affecting our overall lack of well-being.

Peaceful parenting can be a part of the healing that we all seek.

We all desperately need it, more now than ever before! It can offer us a sure way to raise our children to **not be internally wounded**, and to then not inflict their wounds upon others.

It helps us to build up children and give them a solid foundation, so that they are more likely to thrive despite the world's adversities.



I practice that new, extreme parenting... I call it treating my children like human beings. (Anonymous)

Chapter 1:

What is Peaceful Parenting?

Here are a few definitions of Peaceful Parenting (so that you know that I am not making this Peaceful Parenting thing up ☺) >>>

⇒ “If parents hope to raise **peaceful children**..., should they not also engage in peaceful parenting? This is the core of the peaceful parenting philosophy and demonstrates the basic position that **children and parents** should be **considerate of one another**, rather than operating based on an uncomfortable or dominating **power dynamic**. Using this **healthy parenting** method, you can stop yelling and start **connecting** with your kids on a **deeper level**.”
(www.betterhelp.com/advice/parenting/what-is-peaceful-parenting/)

⇒ “Peaceful Parenting is a philosophy developed by Dr. **Laura Markham**, PhD, clinical psychologist and author of the popular blog Aha! Parenting. You may have even heard of her book “Peaceful Parent, Happy Kid: How to Stop Yelling and Start Connecting”. In brief, her concept of peaceful parenting is broken into three main ideas:

1. **Regulating emotions as parents.**
2. **Connecting with your children.**
3. **Coaching instead of controlling.**

... the goal is to **improve behavior from the inside out** and build a **strong parent-child bond**. Its object is to give children the tools they need **to recognize their own emotions** – and, as a result, **make wise choices** as they grow.”
(www.healthline.com/healthy/parenting/peaceful-parenting)

⇒ “Peaceful parenting is **parenting with the good of the relationship in mind**. In short, it’s what helps connect us emotionally to our family. It’s **the healer of wounds**; the sage advice-giver in our minds that prompts us to **choose being close more than being right**. It enforces **healthy boundaries** in ways that help children feel seen and heard – and helps parents **feel seen and heard**, as well.”
(www.jaiinstituteforparenting.com/what-is-peaceful-parenting)

Chapter 2:

Where to Start? - - Shift YOUR Mind

The first important thing that I learnt is to let go of the reigns of control!

Shouting does not actually change the behavior of children in the long run. It just stresses you out (big time) and (in the early days) puts fear into them. Fear does not lead to them understanding or wanting to “obey,” but only instills **confusion, hate, and a deep anger** in them that **will then always be there.**

Rather promote good behavior from within your child.

It helps to have a **clear idea** in your own head, of what your interaction with your children really means to them, from their point of view. Parents/Guardians often send their children to a room to, “*Think it over,*” or “*Think about what you did.*” But the child is more than likely actually thinking, “She/He does not care. She/He is unfair and so mean! I hate her/him....”

When we **see things through our children’s eyes**, we are more able to work out what we can do that will really help the situation. **The choices WE make** makes a massive difference to the situation. Believe me, I have experienced this.

Authoritarian parenting is far more isolating and frightening for a child than it is nurturing.

Children desperately need the **support of unconditional love**, as well as **understanding, empathy, and effective communication** from us.

We parents/guardians are especially important guides in our children’s lives.

We should be **guiding** (note this important word) our children to:

>> **navigate their own feelings, their relationships, and THEIR world.**

Strong-willed children often grow into strong-willed adults who become world leaders, world shapers, & world changers. Parenting them peacefully is not only possible, it is imperative, because sowing peace in their hearts now while they’re in our care will grow a future of peace later when the world is in their care.

(L.R. Knost)

Teach your child that:

Their feelings are very normal.

Then:

How to identify their feelings (find out what they are feeling).

And then:

How to put their feelings into words, & the words into action.

*The above will instill **strong emotional intelligence** in your children* (You should be aware of how to do the above as well. It's no good teaching something that you do not know how to do yourself.)

Limits should only be put in place with the intention of protecting instead of **controlling**. (Read that again... and again... and again...)

Peaceful parenting on a **consistent basis** has much more to do with **OUR work on ourselves**, rather than working on our children. We will then end up seeing positive results in **our children**, in **our lives**, and in the life of **our family**.



For the above to happen successfully, it takes focusing (in a positive way) with an open mind on a few “mind shifts”: >>>

Mindshift # 1 **Regulating Emotions**

This means that when your child is acting up, before you even approach them...

- Take a (very) deep breath (this tells your brain and body that it does not have to be in ‘fight-or-flight mode’) ...
- Then, think about the situation carefully and deconstruct it in your mind (“to deconstruct” is to break something down into its separate parts to understand its meaning (Cambridge Dictionary)) ...
- Take a “step back,” look at their eyes (you can see so much in their eyes!!) and ask yourself:
 - *Why is my child doing that to begin with?* Remember that “misbehavior” is an external expression of an underlying need in a child.
 - *Are they hungry / tired / bored?* Often just a handful of nuts will calm them down almost immediately / a banana will boost their energy and distract them / a suggestion to do something creative will help with boredom.
 - *Am I reacting to my emotions instead of my child’s?* Check your own inner feelings as well as the environment before yelling. Try to never take their behavior personally (a big one!). Ask yourself this particularly important question: “*What am I afraid of?*” **Anger is always a secondary emotion to fear**, so you need to work out what YOU are fearful of happening in that moment. This also sets a great example for your children in **how to control their emotions and how to model positive self-talk**. Instead of immediately reacting in a negative way, you are
 - taking a moment to gather YOURSELF,
 - being **mindful** (aware) of the entire situation,
 - and then expressing how YOU feel with **empathy** and in **calm** words. This prevents shouting in anger, and frustration which

(believe me) leads to resentment, and then later becomes a source of great guilt or regret.

Something especially important that I learnt is to: **Limit your child's behavior but not their emotions.** Emotions ARE real, and your child IS feeling them. Their emotions are just as important as your emotions!

Consequences and accountability absolutely do exist and are important. My husband and I do use and follow through with **discipline**, but always remembering that discipline means **"to teach"** rather than "to punish"!!!!!!

Oh, and in case you did not know: **Play** (the natural language of people of all ages 😊) is the best form of "discipline." Play is a way of processing information, experiencing great relief from stress, and is how we can bond beautifully with others. A child playing with you as their parent/guardian, using **playful parenting strategies**, can help the child to learn in a much more effective way than any punishment could ever teach them!

Here are some ways to include **Playful Parenting** into your daily routine:

1. *Clean up time* can be a **"beat the clock"** game or **"freeze to the music"** challenge as you are tidying up.
2. *Brushing teeth time* is a lot of fun when the toothbrush is a **bird cleaning the crocodile's teeth** or a germ eating creature...
3. **Fly your little one** into their bedroom from their bath, as a superhero about *to dress* into their superhero outfit...
4. Use a **puppet** to give *instructions*.
5. Get your children to *follow you* to the lunch table or to the bedroom etc. by **walking like a crab, a penguin, or a hopping frog**...
6. Have them **wash toy cars** in the bath at *bath time*.
7. **Dance to music** while they are *packing their clothes away* in their cupboard.
8. Be **waiters or chefs** at a restaurant while *laying the table* for a meal.

When you take on a **mundane task in a playful way** with your child, they will be more inclined to happily join in and cooperate. There will also be fewer power struggles and moans if you encourage them playfully, and with a smile or a wink.

Another important note:

We need to also **research and understand** what appropriate behavior for our child's developmental stage is. **Every age deals with different internal issues at various times and in different ways.** It is vital to be aware of this!

At the same time, we must honor their **feelings and individuality** (every child has their own unique character) and we must accept that **no book by any expert will ever know better** who our child is than we (their parents/guardians) do.

>>> **Please always remember** that it is **normal for everyone** (including peaceful parents/guardians), **to get angry sometimes.** Anger tells us when boundaries (personal limits and limitations) have been crossed. **But we must remember to not react from a place of anger.**

Listen to the message that your children are sending you, and proactively choose non-violent ways to respond to them

Empowering a child is not overpowering them!

Side-step power struggles by not giving in but giving them choices.

Coaching your child on how to connect with their own feelings will be greatly beneficial for better behavior in the future.

Help them by:

- giving them the right **vocabulary** to describe how they are feeling
- supplying them with ideas as to how to live in the world with **enhanced emotional intelligence** and to make good choices.

This will lead to a calmer child which will lead to a calmer household. We all want this, right.

I read the following and made a note of it a long time ago (I cannot remember where I saw it), but it has always stuck with me:

“ALL human beings are only trying to honor their universal values and needs, every minute, of every day. The best way to encourage our children to behave in gentle, loving, respectful ways, is to model those ways ourselves. Children grow up to do what we have done, not necessarily what we have said, if our actions do not reinforce the message.”



*Disobedience is not an issue if obedience is not the goal.
(Racheous.com)*

Mindshift # 2 Active listening

This involves the ability to truly listen to your child, and to have them listen to you.

- ♦ **Listen** by looking at them directly in their eyes (and going down to their level helps as well): this shows them that you are truly listening to them, and it forces you to concentrate on what they are saying.
- ♦ **Think carefully** about what you have just heard.
- ♦ **Repeat** what you feel they said to you back to them.

This prevents any misunderstandings and miscommunication from occurring. It also shows the child that you respect them and love them so much that you will give them your undivided attention and time.

Ultimately it helps children to be able to manage their big emotions and develops a greater sense of empathy within them (and you).

Connecting is what makes Peaceful Parenting possible

When there is a connection, the child feels more secure in their little life. It is through close connection to you, their parent/guardian, that children want to cooperate and listen. This security and connection leads to RESPECT, which leads to the child opening up, being honest, and trusting you because they feel safe with you.

Here are a few ways to connect with your children, that I find really work to strengthen that intimate bond between you:

- Engage in one-on-one special time doing what your child loves to do, as often as you can, even if for only 15 minutes.
- Touch your child on their shoulder or arm when talking to them.
- Turn off all technology when interacting with your child.
- Physically connect through hugs, snuggles, and signs of affection whenever you can.

- Read to or with your child sitting close together in a quiet comfortable place.
- Cook/bake with your children when the meal is not a hurried one, and you have the time to go slowly, calmly, and patiently.

Create a relationship with your child that is based on a sense of **peace, trust, and understanding**.

So...

Live in the moment of whatever is going on in your home and with your children, actively being a part of it all by listening carefully to what is really being said.

As the saying goes, "Read between the lines..."



*One of the greatest gifts we can give our children is time:
that unstructured,
unhurried,
lose-yourself-in-imagination kind of time.*

(Ginny Yurich)

Mindshift # 3 Collaboration

The definition of collaboration is “to work with another or others on a joint project” (Collins Dictionary).

This is a particularly valuable tool which helps children to:

1. learn how to exert positive control over their own lives
2. and to think about the wisdom of good advice offered to them by others.

A child is far more likely to respond positively to guidelines, and ideas when they can feel a sort of ownership of the boundaries, rather than only being demanded to make them.

They are more likely to listen when they feel that they also have a say and that they have some form of control over their own lives.

Remember: **collaborate rather than dictate!**

Parent with empathy and a calm nature, rather than a reactive one, which just leads to negative reactions from everyone involved. This shows that we are on our child's side and not against them.

We should function as a unit, a family working together, and not a hierarchy with us as the boss looking down on our “staff/employees/people” below us.

NB: A way to do this is to exchange ideas with your child and to give them choices. This invites them to take part, and stimulates their interest, leading to shared thinking, decision making, and action.

****A better outcome is always the result when we use stronger collaboration, rather than control. ****

Chapter 3:

What to Look Forward to – The Outcome

*It is always a good idea to think of the future, or your goal, in the beginning before you start to do anything. This helps to **encourage** you, to keep you going when things seem too tough. Just keep focusing on your goal and you will be able to **flow** through each day with **positive strength** and a **loving nature**.*

Here are just a few of the positives that you can keep reminding yourself of:

- 🌈 **Goal #1 is less stress:** The first goal to aim for is for there to be **less stress** in the whole family, right. Well **Peaceful Parenting** your children now, will limit stress, which will change the entire atmosphere of your home to a calmer, peaceful, healthier one. Stress results in many (many) physical problems, as well as family members not wanting to be at home.
- 🌈 **Goal #2 is trust:** When children learn that their parent/guardian will **consistently** respond with empathy, set limits to protect them, and **put practical consequences** in place (rather than harsh punishment), they understand that they can trust the parent/guardian to act in their best interest and accept them as an individual. Trust is a wonderful goal to have, as it leads to less resistance and a better flow in your day.
- 🌈 **Goal #3 is respect and Goal #4 is confidence:** This way of life teaches children to **think for themselves** and to speak up in confidence and with respect to show their preferences, hopes and wants. We all want to be able to do this in a place where we feel safe, and children then feel **safe, secure, and heard** at home. The goal here is then to have confident, respectful, positive children.
- 🌈 **Goal #5 is strength:** A healthy peaceful home life allows children to feel **stronger and more confident** when they are out in the world and among their peers. It sets a strong stable foundation for them to not be swayed negatively by others.

***All the above comes from the delight we take in one another; living in a way that gives us joy with our children, and them, with us. ***

This is a **forever way** (not a trend or fad) to grow healthy families.

This positive parenting method IS scientifically proven to be most effective **for both** the parent/guardian and the child. It is linked with the **best outcomes** for children, including **healthier boundaries** for themselves and others, and **happier, more balanced lives**.

The effects for all involved are both **short-term and long-term**.

This is a **win-win** way to live, for everyone, whether you are a working parent/guardian or a stay-at-home parent/guardian. We can all find ways to include **Peaceful Parenting** in our life.

I hope that you find incredible joy in living this way, so very soon.



If you have any questions or comments about the Peaceful Parenting lifestyle, please email me at jolene@teachinggumbootkids.xyz and I will reply as soon as I can.

Daily Reminders Worksheet

	Tips to read, think about, and remember every day:	Tick or make notes here:
1.	Take <u>little steps</u> in the right direction every day. Release yourself from the expectation that you need to be perfect or get it right every time. Moving forward slowly, slowly >> leads to success in the long run. <u>Be gentle on yourself!</u>	
2.	Are you ALL (including yourself) getting <u>enough sleep</u> ? This is especially important, as tired bodies and minds cannot function properly.	
3.	Are you ALL (yes, and yourself) <u>eating healthy</u> body and mind empowering meals? They do not have to be cooked meals that take hours to prepare; quick, simple, 'grab it and go' meals are perfectly fine (think nuts, seeds, protein powders, millet, fruit, oats, cut up raw veggies...). Your body is your vehicle that carries you through the day, and so you need to fuel it correctly. Your mind cannot focus when it is running on empty calories (I say this from lots of experience).	
4.	Are you drinking <u>enough water</u> to flush your system, and to revitalize your body and mind? You do not have to have two litres a day, but you must have enough to not feel thirsty constantly, then your body will be able to do what it needs to do to keep you going.	
5.	Remember: <u>touch your children</u> in a loving manner as often as you can. <u>Physically connecting</u> breaks the ice between you, and reconnects you in warm, wonderful ways.	
6.	Remember to <u>go down to your child's level</u> when you speak to them if you can, or at least <u>look them in their eyes</u> when you talk to them. This prevents distractions, makes sure that they heard you, and shows respect.	

7.	Practice speaking in a calm, quieter voice , as this makes the atmosphere calmer and less stressful for all.	
8.	Keep practicing Playful Parenting as much as possible in your daily routine. You will end up enjoying it just as much as your children. (Page 12)	
9.	Focus on protecting your child rather than controlling them. You are their guardian, and not their boss. (Page 10)	
10.	Give your child choices whenever possible. This teaches responsibility and helps them to learn the skill of making quick decisions from a young age. (Page 13)	
11.	Remember to have special one-on-one time with your child. (Page 15)	
12.	Always put your children before technology!	
13.	Read to your children every day in a calm comfy environment if possible. Physical books with pages that you can touch, and turn are much better than eBooks. The sensory experience is vital for all of you, and much better for your eyes.	
14.	Multi-tasking is not possible! No matter what anyone says, you cannot focus on your children properly if you are trying to do other things. Keep your focus on one thing at a time when you can, and it will lead to more things being achieved eventually anyway. There will also be fewer accidents and/or misunderstandings.	
15.	“Please,” “thank you,” and “sorry,” really are magic words that can change the atmosphere fast! Try them... and encourage them to be used in your home.	
16.	You are not a superhero! You do not have to be the perfect mother / father / granny / grandad, wife / husband, and housekeeper. There is no such thing. Do not kill yourself trying to do it all and then end up neglecting your family and your	

	health in the process.	
17.	Delegate , delegate, delegate! A family is a unit and not a bunch of people centered around a lone ranger. There are fun ways to do this; use your imagination. Children actually love to help.	
18.	Stop and take a deep (deep) breath whenever things get too tough. This works incredibly well: like hitting the reset button on your mind.	
19.	As my husband reminds me constantly: “if the children are healthy, happy, safe and feel loved , then it was a successful day!” Try tackling the dishes, washing and meal planning tomorrow again.	
20.	Put yourself “ in your children’s shoes ” all the time. How would you feel if someone spoke to you like that, did that to you, told you to do that...?	
21.	I try to constantly remember the following: rushing hurts! When you rush yourself or others, it ends up hurting them or you in some way or another, either physically or emotionally.	
22.	Sometimes it is better to take temptation away from children, rather than to keep reprimanding them for things that they are doing wrong. Such as: do not leave scissors easily in reach to avoid items being cut; keep crayons/stationary away from little ones that could draw on the walls; if you do not want an item broken, then do not give it to a child to play with...	

And finally, as Dory says in Finding Nemo:

“Just keep swimming!”

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook paper. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.