

# Wise Roots Parenting

## INTRODUCTION

### Key Principle #1

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#### **We are no longer raising kids but growing adults.**

- Young adults have specific developmental needs that need to be met.
- There is a paradigm shift in which we cannot employ the same tactics that we have previously used when they were children.
- You can raise a child, but not an adult.
- Adolescence is a transitional period where kids progressively learn the skills and knowledge they need to take care of themselves.
- Adolescent learning requires developing skills to learn from their own experience.
- As parents, our job now is to recognize and provide the opportunities that promote the skills acquisition and development our kids will need when they leave our care.

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### Key Principle #2

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#### **Steer Less. Fuel More.**

- When kids are younger, they need us to steer them wherever they will go.
- As kids grow towards adulthood, they develop more autonomy, agency and independence. As parents, we need to recognize and nurture their independence and shift our role from steering them in a desired direction to fueling them on the journey of discovery that is their nascent mature life.
- Once your kid reaches the later stages of adolescence, steering becomes an outdated process.
- Adolescents no longer thrive under direct intervention or coercion. Instead, allow them to learn from their own actions and behaviors.
- By carefully providing guidance and mentoring, you can fuel your kid to develop the skills needed to function as an adult.

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### Key Principle #3

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#### **Focus on the road ahead.**

- If you keep looking in the rearview mirror, you lose touch with what you're trying to accomplish.
- If you're taking things too personally or arguing about things that happened in the past, this is backwards looking.
- When you find yourself fixated on the past, remind yourself what you are trying to accomplish in terms of nurturing your kid's skills as a young adult.
- Help them to develop a growth mindset instead of a fixed mindset.

**Fixed Mindset:** an attitude in which one believes that their qualities and abilities are innate and cannot be changed

"I can't do this, and I will never be able to do this."

**Growth Mindset:** an attitude in which one believes that their qualities and abilities can grow with time and experience

"I may not be able to do this now, but I can learn and eventually accomplish this."

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### Key Principle #4

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#### **Be a farmer, not a carpenter.**

##### **Farmer**

Farmers provide the best environment for their crops to flourish. However, they cannot control how the crops grow; they can only support the seeds throughout the growth process.

- Process-oriented
- Fueling
- Role of the parent when growing an adult

##### **Carpenter**

Carpenters operate similarly to engineers in that they plan for a very specific outcome, and work to control every step of the process in order to create their intended result.

- Results-oriented
- Steering
- Role of the parent when raising a child

- Work to cultivate your influence, and accept the real limits and costs of your attempts to control.
- We cannot engineer our kids into our own version of what we want them to be. In doing so, we would be denying them of their own proclivities and innate personality.

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### Key Principle #5

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#### **Check in before you dig in.**

- Perform a self-assessment of your emotional resources at the moment because that will inform your intervention approach.
- Know your game:
  - Are you on your A-Game/On-Game?
  - Are you on your B-Game/Off-Game?
- There are different options available to you depending on where you find yourself.

#### **A-Game**

- Emotionally regulated
- Connected with your values
- Flexible and creative in ability to respond
- PACE - Playful, Accepting, Curious, Empathic

#### **B-Game**

- Emotionally dysregulated
- Reactive and impulsive
- Rigid response pattern driven by emotional charge
- Habitual

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### Key Principle #6

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#### **Put on your own mask first.**

- Just as flight attendants instruct you to put on your own oxygen mask first before you help someone else with their mask, you should apply the same concept in your approach with your kid.
- When things get bumpy take a moment to do some self-care to center and regulate yourself. Doing so will maximize your effectiveness as a parent.
- By nourishing yourself first, you can better nourish your kid.
- You are the model for your child's emotional regulation skills - show her that it's okay to get triggered because you can show her there's a path back to calm.

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### Key Principle #7

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#### **Be the bigger container.**

- As a young adult, your kid is taking in a lot of new experiences, some of which may be quite emotionally activating. They may not be able to contain all of their thoughts and emotions. As their parent you must act as the bigger container so that you have the capacity to handle this without becoming (or staying) dysregulated yourself.
- By increasing your capacity to tolerate the intensity of scary emotions, you can absorb the difficult situations that your kid cannot, all while staying in your A-Game.