



## What are Your Parenting Goals?

People often set business or personal goals but how about considering what you would like your goal as a parent to be? What do you want to achieve in your relationship with your child in the next few months? What would you like to be doing more of with your child? What would you like to be doing less?

As our children grow and develop it is never too late to reassess our way of being with them and to make changes towards having an even more loving and fulfilling relationship, while letting go of control and allowing them to develop responsibility and independence.

So here are some coaching questions to ask yourself to help you stay closely connected to your children, be they a youngster or a teenager. These may help you formulate some parenting goals for the coming months.

How would you like your relationship with your children to be? What changes do you need to make (if any) to get there?

How can you show your children or teens more respect? When we respect our children we are modelling what we want to see from them. Think about the ways you show them respect now. What else could you try or do more of so that they really know that you value them for who they are rather than what they do?

How well do you listen to your children? How well do you understand their point of view? Depending on their ages do you include them in conversations where their points of view are taken into account? This is a wonderful way to raise a child's self esteem and encourage their decision making. Questions like "What do you think about that?" "What would you recommend?" allow us to hear our children's voice and give them opportunity to share their opinions.

How do you show your children that you appreciate what they do? Do you tell them, give them the occasional treat, hug them, do them a favour or spend meaningful time with them? There are many ways we can show our appreciation to our children - what are your children's favourites?

How do you support your children? In our busy world it is very easy for parents to rescue their children rather than support them. How often do you think "It is just easier if I do it myself!"? It is true that supporting our children to achieve something can possibly be more time consuming in the short term, but are we doing them a favour in the long run if we jump in and do things for them -

things that they could be mastering themselves? Supporting our children to try new things and succeed at them is also another terrific way to boost self esteem!

What do you do to encourage your children's responsibility and independence? What chores do your children do now to contribute to family functioning? What can be added to their list of responsibilities? How will you support them to succeed at these new chores? Will you need to teach them some new skills - such as how to use the washing machine if you are going to ask your teen to do their own washing, or how to sort socks if that is going to be one of your three year old's new tasks?

The questions posed here may start you on your way to consider your parenting goals and what you may try to strengthen your connection with your children. Whatever parenting goal you choose, may you have a close and loving bond as your children grow and change.

If you would like to learn more about the Seven Ways method touched on in this article you may wish to come along to a one of our **Need2Connect** workshops about connection or one of our 4 week courses.