



## OPPORTUNITY 101

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One day two weeks ago, my high school son was talking about a field trip they will be having in lieu of a Christmas party this year. Being a mother to a large brood, I grimaced. The grimace grew even bigger when he told me they were supposed to pay P1300 for the school trip (that's approximately \$31, based on today's currency exchange rate). I told him not to give a definite answer to his class adviser yet, so I could think about how to cough up the amount. In a world where opportunities are sometimes hard to come by, promising something to a child when you are not entirely sure you will be able to keep it is never wise.

But seeing my son's eyes all lit up excitedly about the school trip, I told myself, my son deserves this opportunity. This is his opportunity to see the world of Science first hand. They're to go to Subic, Olongapo, with its Ocean Adventure Park and Zoobic Park, among other attractions. I personally have not been to any of those attractions, so why deprive my son of the opportunity to visit them? So I have taken it upon myself to make sure my son joins that trip, and he has never been happier.

Sometimes, the opportunity for our children to see the world with their own eyes, explore the world we have brought them into, is irrecoverably lost due to our own problems and overwhelming responsibilities. We take our opportunities as they come, and sometimes forget that our children deserve the same thing. This is a bitter reality in such a cruel world where opportunities are few and far between, and the really good ones slip away.

As parents, one of our primary responsibilities is to open the world to our children. Let us not promise them roses strewn along their path. Rather, let us hold their trusting hands in ours as they face life's bitter realities and experience success as well as defeat. Let us shield them whenever we can, protect them from all harm. But let us not be too suffocating nor restrictive in our desire to be protective. Let us teach them to choose their opportunities, their battles, wisely. But let us not fight their battles for them.

Let us help them carve their niches in this world, for in doing so they will see that they do have their worth. Let us make them aware of the difficulties that they are bound to face along the way, so that when they encounter those difficulties, they won't blame us for training them insufficiently.

Finally, let us teach them that an opportunity to be better is always a good one. Then perhaps, they may be better- equipped to judge the appropriateness of that opportunity for them.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Why is it not advisable for a parent to be the one to find opportunities for her child?
2. What would you do to open doors for your child?
3. How have your parents helped you in finding opportunities?
4. When can you tell that parents are interfering? When can you tell that they're just helping out?
5. Do you believe you are wise enough to know better than your own parents when it comes to taking opportunities?