



THE ART OF DISCIPLINE

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Discipline, in its broadest sense, is the concept of training by which a follower is taught to act or behave in a manner acceptable by the organization he belongs to. In this sense, discipline is often taken in the context of punishment, given in times when an infraction is committed. In another sense, the punishment is used before any violation is even committed, such as those we often see in martial arts training. This system teaches behavioral orientation and other modifications to enable the follower to act, think, or react in an expected manner.

We all have undergone discipline even in infancy. If we consider how our mothers trained us to feed at specific times of the day, that alone constitutes the earliest form of discipline we have ever had. Once we begin our schooling, we already have a domestic framework of discipline which is further enhanced by the rules and regulations we are taught to obey in our learning institutions. The role that parents play in the system is so essential that the context of a child's social behavior is often equated with the kind of discipline he has received at home. What a child exhibits at school is a clear picture of how he has been taught at home.

During my elementary years, my teachers often reminded us to leave the undesirable traits we had at home and act as we were expected in school. The funny thing about the whole set-up was, could we perhaps take up those bad traits once we got home and then take them off like clothes once we left for school the next day? With all due respect to our great teachers of yesteryears, they always had our interests at heart. This is why I often tell my own kids about how different we all were when we were younger. And then they'd laughingly remind me that they sprang from me, and the fruit never falls far from the tree. Evil laughter all around.

It can be difficult to enforce discipline in the home. The fact that our kids possess diverse personalities, with very few common points between them, is a considerable factor altogether. They are not miniature versions of us, no matter how people say they look like us when we were the same age. Such is the beauty and wonder of discipline in the home---you never quite do it the same, identical way with all your kids. There will always be something different in how they grow up to be.

The only common thing we can give to our kids is the kind of love we have for them. Love them equally but fairly and differently. Now that takes a certain kind of discipline in itself, don't you think?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How has parental discipline affected your present life?
2. What is your own concept of discipline in the home?
3. Explain what is meant by "Love your children equally but fairly and differently."
4. How do you think children in today's times differ from children of earlier times? Do you think the difference/s is/are significant?
5. Discuss how discipline is enforced in your school. Be able to evaluate how effective the guidelines are.