



## DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

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The minute an infant utters its very first word or is able to turn from prone to supine and vice versa, a first-time parent also starts monitoring and recording its many developmental milestones. That holds true with the very first baby, but eventually wanes with the later ones. I guess that sometimes, watching for the most significant milestones can get to be a bit overwhelming or immunizing. We parents can often get bewildered by the numerous responsibilities we have that we overlook the way our (many) children get from one milestone to another relatively without assistance from us.

Each of our children, whether we are aware of it or not, has their own abilities that make them unique in their own way. Where one child may have the ability to perform mathematical operations with ease, another may have the ability to pen impressive poems or stories. Where one child has the ability to observe and do exactly as he has seen, another may have the ability to learn more from experience and perception. Where one child has the ability to sing and dance along with a program on TV, another might have the ability to conceptualize a whole choreographed dance.

As parents, we are called to a noble purpose: to recognize our children's patent and latent abilities and help them to optimize their gifts. Our children, like us, have been blessed differently. But that doesn't mean they are to be left alone to discover their abilities. It is our inherent duty to encourage them with whatever needs to be done in order for them to shine as they should and become what they are meant to be. Our children's abilities might very well prove to be a conglomeration of our and our spouse's abilities. Those abilities might serve to be mirrors of our own, only magnified and made perfect by an Omnipotent power at work.

Unfortunately, there are parents who feel relatively "threatened" by their children's budding abilities. They feel that encouraging their child to explore those abilities might make them 'inadequate' in the future. On the other hand, some might see their child's ability as a way to get personal enrichment and fulfillment. How many movies have we seen about child prodigies constantly pressured and pushed to the limits of their abilities so their parents could stand to reap the praises and accolades for their 'exceptional parenting skills' and their 'remarkable guidance and supervision'?

Our children are not miniatures of ourselves. They are unique in and by themselves. Whatever abilities they possess are entirely their own. Our genes may have helped in their general composition, but they were not born to become what we endlessly plan for them to become, but as they were ultimately designed to be.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What abilities do you inherently possess? Have your parents been instrumental in discovering those abilities?
2. Give your opinions on how talented children should be brought up.
3. Discuss in class why pushing children to develop their abilities can both be beneficial and destructive.
4. What ability/ies would you like your own child to possess? Why do you consider such as special?
5. Do you believe it is relatively easy to have a gifted child? Why or why not?