



WISENING UP AS A PARENT

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Becoming a parent can bring wonderful lessons along the way that enable someone to become much wiser. However, more often than not, very few among us are able to gain adequate wisdom from the many years we spend as parents. Much like marriage, parenthood is a lifelong process. There are instances when we are able to get on quickly with the lessons that we get taught about. And then there are the bad days when we ask ourselves, "What have I done wrong? Why does everything seem to turn out the opposite of what I expect?"

We should learn not to despair for our shortcomings. There's no manual for parents like us, and our children do not come with a list of instructions that we should follow. They all turn out differently, no matter how alike they may seem. It takes a lot of patience to "grow" as our children do. But we should be determined to learn as much as we can in the little time that we are still able to interact with our children. When the time comes for them to fly from the roost, we might not have the opportunity again.

Thankfully children, especially nowadays, seem to have faster pick-up times than us before. They learn quickly, probably because there's a lot more learning to be done than ever before. They easily pick up cues and clues from our own behavior, and learn to use their knowledge to gain greater wisdom. Their learning curves might have become steeper, but they are able to quickly overcome their challenges and become good. But many of us seem not to be able to adjust to this rapid pace. We fail to comprehend that their rate is not the same as ours.

On the other hand, many of us fail to understand why children are as they are now. We fail to understand that our children are simply not miniatures of us. They're unique, one from the other. No two children are ever alike. And yet, many of us prefer to be steeped in stubbornness and expect our children to turn out the same way: successful, intelligent, and uncomplicated.

I myself am guilty of this, and have thankfully gained wisdom from many, many others around me. Those others include my own children, who, in their innocence and youth, have managed to squeeze out semblances of wisdom from me. During the many times I have shown stupidity, they have thankfully stood by me and made me feel I'm still perfect. They have assured me that I am only acting in their own best interests and that I have acted wisely. They believe within themselves that I am still the wiser one.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are the qualities of a wise parent?
2. Do you believe you have been able to contribute to your parents' wisdom? How?
3. How does today's generation derive wisdom, in your opinion?
4. Are there valuable lessons in life that have made you wiser? Cite specific ones, as needed.
5. Be able to talk about how your parents have been able to teach you wisdom.