



## THE IMMENSITY OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE

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Our character is directly influenced by the decisions we make everyday. I have consistently reminded my kids that they are shaped by the choices they make in life. Influence comes from different sources but the outcome remains: those influences eventually become what we are. We are a reflection of those very influences that shape us.

You and I get our earliest influence from our own parents. The way we are raised and the values we are taught to adhere to are what make us what we are now. The young among us may still be in the process of being formed or patterned. They may end up carrying half or all of what influenced them, or they may end up carrying nothing at all. But still, the factors they have been exposed to play a huge role in how they become as adults.

If a child grows up influenced by exemplary values and concepts in life, s/he grows up to be a person who recognizes the beauty of life lived with proper and good perspectives. As parents, we must realize that our children see us as their primary influence on how they are to live their lives. If all our children see are hatred, enmity and bitterness, there's a pretty enormous chance that they'll grow up hating the world and everyone in it and thinking that there's absolutely nothing on earth worth loving or valuing at all.

As a single parent, it's been a really huge challenge to teach all seven of my children about how it is to survive in this world and still have your sanity intact. The world is often insane and not everything goes as planned. Oftentimes, I have found my chances railroaded because of the choices I have had to make. I want to send all of my children to good schools like my late husband would have wanted if he were alive. But as it is, I have had to make the most of the blessings that public school education has to offer to children whose parents are as financially challenged as I am. I have encouraged my children to do their best always because that is the only way they can optimize their education. Not all of them have succeeded at the struggle. One or two of my children could do better if they were able to attend a private school. But trudge on I must with what little I have. I can only pray that my children who've been having problems at this point can somehow find their groove and be encouraged by what their siblings are doing.

I have prayed hard that we will all make it together, influenced by a life of prayer and the readiness to survive no matter what.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Who is/are your greatest influence/s in life? Why is this so?
2. How have your own parents or guardians influenced you?
3. How are you influenced by people other than your own parents?
4. How will you strive to influence your own children?
5. How would you want to be remembered by people around you in terms of your influence on them?