

# *Raising a Child with a Disability*

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Thank you, I might also add that I am a parent of a child with a disability and so what I say to you today will be not so much from the book as from the heart having had this experience myself.

I'd like to start by reading a brief letter from a man who is the father of a handicap child. "I'll never forget the night you were born, it was more than incredible. Indeed it was magical. It had been a long labor, over 24 hours. You came out of your mother's belly; you seemed to look all around the delivery room. Even before your body was completely out. Without thinking about it I jumped from my position behind the delivery table and wound up right there beside the doctor - my knees wobbling, my heart pounding with excitement! The doctor, an older man who had delivered many babies, commented on how alert you looked. From the moment that I saw you, I viewed the world differently . . . I wished that you could read this letter. I wished that you could know what you have meant to me. If anyone had told me when you were born that you would never read, never write, never carry on a normal conversation, I wouldn't have been able to handle it. In truth I was crushed for a long, long time after I found out that you were autistic. The weight of my broken dreams was so heavy. It was as if a house had collapsed on me but I stayed alive at the bottom of the heap of the rubble . . . I have fought through it and over time the weight has lessened. I want you to know that you have never lost your place in my heart. Some of my

greatest joys and some of my deepest sorrows have been in the moments that you and I have shared. In many respects your life is limited. But your life is priceless to me and even to the world beyond us (Naseef, 1997).”

Adjusting to having a child with a disability is a process. It is not an event. Ten percent of all children have a disability or a long-term chronic illness. Every year there are over 250,000 children born with birth defects. And although this is a reasonably common experience most parents, including myself, were not at all prepared to be told - “Your child has a serious disability.” Very few of us start out with the kind of skills necessary for raising a child who’s different from the norm. It takes some time to learn how to deal with the confusion, the physical demands, the behavioral challenges, the special expenses, feelings of embarrassment and feelings of loneliness when others don’t always understand. This takes time and practice. Having a child with a disability brings challenges and adjustments that impact the whole family, not just the mother and the father. Having some help and understanding with this process can make it less painful and more rewarding. How many of you are parents of a child with a disability? How many of you work with children with disabilities? How many are grandparents or extended family members? OK. So we’ve got a variety in here. If you’ve ever had to go through this process or are still going through this process of adjustment, it’s important for you to know that many of your responses and reactions are very normal. I’d like to talk about some of those normal responses that are part of the process of adjustment.

First, there may be an experience of shock. It may be very difficult at first to assimilate the information that your child has a disability. If it comes suddenly or unexpectedly, it may take some time to understand what the diagnosis means. We all have images and stereotypes in our mind of what a child is like that has ADD, or what a child is like that is mentally retarded, or what mental illness means. When we hear these diagnoses, it may not match what we see in our child, particularly if the child has no physical abnormalities or looks normal. So you begin to become aware that you’re in uncharted territory and it can feel very overwhelming, like fighting in the dark. One of the best ways of dealing with this is to start to learn about the disability. Try to read as much as you can. Find out as much as you can about your child’s diagnosis. Seek out information about that particular disability.

Second, denial is part of the process. Often feelings of being unprepared or feeling out of control can lead to denial. Denial is a defense mechanism that I’ve come to understand as a gift. We use defense mechanisms whenever we’re in a situation where we feel we are over our head and we know we don’t have the ability to cope. Defense mechanisms can be a gift that allows people to accept the truth just a little at a time and make it more bearable. Fear is often what leads to denial - fear due to uncertainty about the future, feelings of being out of control, concern about the impact this child will have on the family and other relationships in the family. Denial can often lead to a frantic search for a cure. We start to believe that if we could only find the right doctor, the right medicine, the right program, or the right learning approach, then the child could be made normal and whole and overcome the disability. This process of searching is very useful in the sense that it can help you locate resources and programs that might be helpful and best suited for your child. But, sooner or later, you have to confront the reality of the child’s limitations as well as accept your own limitations in being able to undo the impact of the disability. You must also learn to release other people from the responsibility of having to undo the disability.

A third part of the process is anxiety. When we begin to acknowledge the reality of the disability this may lead to feelings of being very anxious. Anxiety is the body’s way of

responding to fear and mobilizing resources. If a big bear were to come into this room right now, most of us would have an anxiety response. Our body would get loaded up with a big shot of adrenaline and we would be prepared to either fight or flee or freeze. This is the way we respond when we become aware that we are threatened in some way. As you begin to realize that this child needs special care and protection, you get that anxious energy so that you can mobilize your resources and get out and do something. Getting information, talking with other parents, seeking out help from professionals, anything that reduces the sense of powerlessness is a good way to use that anxious energy. Feeling powerless and immobilized will only increase the anxiety. Self-care is also an important component in managing anxiety. Getting adequate sleep, eating right and taking time to engage in activities that help you to relax and enjoy yourself are important in helping you to cope with the challenge. Parents need occasional respite from the heavy responsibility of caring for a child with a disability.

A fourth common feeling is guilt. Guilt is often a part of that working-through process. Unfortunately, guilt is facilitated by a belief that psychologists call “Just World Theory.” There has been a lot of research on “Just World Theory.” We want to believe that our world is predictable, controllable and manageable. This belief protects us from our fears. We set it up in our mind that “bad things happen to bad people” and “good things happen to good people.” This seems just. We tell ourselves that if we’re always good, then nothing bad will ever happen to us. Well, when something does happen that is unpleasant or that we don’t like, then that believing in the “Just World Theory” leads us to believe that we are somehow being punished and that we must have done something wrong or this would not have happened. Sometimes there are comments by well meaning but insensitive people. Some comments are poorly timed. Comments, like, “Well, you must have needed this particular experience for your salvation,” or “God picked out this experience especially for you because you needed it.” These kinds of comments can lead parents to have painful and unwarranted guilt as they start asking, “Why me? Am I so bad that I needed something this severe to shape me up? I just wanted to be like other parents. I want to be a good parent. Why did this have to happen to me?” You may also get comments from people who want to know what you did wrong to have this happen in your family. They may believe they can protect themselves from the same experience if they can only discover what you did “wrong.”

The reality is, this is a telestial world. We live in a mortal world where sometimes bad things happen to good people. “Just World Theory” does not correctly describe the way things work in this mortal, temporary world. Sometimes it is best to let people find their own spiritual meaning rather than in try to impose answers as to why things happen. The answer to “Why me?” may not be readily available. Sometimes it takes years or even beyond a lifetime to fully understand “Why me?” Often the answer to that question falls in the “yet to be revealed” category. In finding answers, sometimes you must go on faith that God is a God of love and does not delight in punishment. There may be reasons for our mortal experiences that are not yet understood and that may not be understood for a long time. We can rest-assured, however, that it is not a sign of being punished.

A fifth part of the process is depression and grief. Grief and depression come when we have losses. When we have a child with a disability, often there is a sense of loss, loss of hopes and dreams that we had for that child. There is the loss of the child we thought that we were being given. There is also grief over the loss of the goal of having what we envisioned as an ideal family. As I’ve watched young people grow up and marry, I’ve often heard them say, “We won’t have any problems with our kids, because we’ll raise them right.” Anyone who’s a little

further down the journey knows that problems are a part of having a family. Sometimes you have to reframe the meaning of an ideal family. When I was much younger, I was a young mother with four children. My husband was serving as an LDS bishop and it felt wonderful to feel like part of an ideal family. My husband died of cancer and I was left as a single mother with four children. I then had to return to school, finish a degree, and work. I had to reframe what it meant to be an ideal family. I then remarried a man with six children and we became a blended family with ten children. This brought new challenges and I had to again reframe what I thought it meant to be an ideal family. In speaking with one of my friends who is also in a blended family with ten children, she told me that when she and her husband married and they blended this large family, their goal was to have every one of their children graduate from BYU, go on to graduate school, serve LDS missions and marry in the temple. They said now having been married for several years, their goal is to keep their children alive long enough to repent. They are faithful, conscientious parents who work hard at raising good kids. So – they are ideal parents.

Recognizing the need to grieve can be helpful. Allowing yourself to cry and express those feelings of grief can be cleansing. Being able to acknowledge and work through painful feelings can build emotional, spiritual and psychological skills that can help you cope in many other areas of your life. Recognizing that some of those feelings are a normal part of the process can reduce the guilt of having them.

Sixth, another concern is feelings of anger. We need to make sense of what may feel like an injustice and raising a child with a disability can give you a ring-side seat to the cruel side of life. Resolving that anger sometimes depends on coming up with a new definition of what is fair and just. Let me give you an example. When my daughter was about ten years old, we sent her to a Sunday school party. She came home about half an hour later with her hands bleeding and full of rocks. When she was able to pull herself together enough to communicate what had happened, she shared with me that one of the boys in the Sunday school class had called her a ‘stupid retard’ and pushed her down on the ground. I began to feel a well of anger in the pit of my stomach. Angry feelings can be a message that something is happening in your environment that is not right. Because I felt that anger, I knew that teasing a retarded child is wrong and that the anger was a message that something needed to be done. Anger, in itself, is not a bad emotion. It can alert us to dangers, to problems and to things that may need some correcting. We can make decisions, however, about how that anger will be expressed. We can use the anger in a constructive way.

My husband and I thought about and discussed the problem. We decided on a solution to go over and visit the boy’s family. We sat down together with the boy and his parents and calmly talked with them about what that word ‘retarded’ meant. We asked the boy what it would be like for him to not be able to do the things he enjoyed doing. How would he feel if that were so? This young boy became one of our daughter’s strongest defenders and allies. That experience of knowing that it was wrong to tease a retarded child and the accompanying anger became a means whereby another person was able to grow and progress in their ability to have compassion and understanding. This seemed ‘fair.’ Retaliation would not have produced justice. Although anger may come from experiences with injustice – we can turn those experiences to good for ourselves and others. I know that the answers are different for different people and different families. The solution to problems may vary. But I do believe that we can come to a place of peace as we go throughout this process.

I spoke with an older mother who is approaching her sixties, she has an adult mentally handicapped child who is now around thirty years old. She has another child with a chronic, disabling mental illness. She has another child who is blind in one eye and has some other physical disabilities. She stated that as she has gone through this process, she has finally been able to come to a place where she can say, "God gave me these children because He knew I would never forsake them nor abandon them. Although I didn't know this about myself when I was younger, He knew that I would continue to love them through losses, embarrassments, sorrows and hurts. I have learned from my own experience, for myself, the depth of my own capacity to love. God knows He can trust me. I know that in the eternities God will heal my children of all their disabilities. They will be whole and they will be perfect. But more importantly, they will be mine." That process of adjustment is not an event. It took her many years. But she has found peace and meaning and growth through these challenges

What do you do while you're going through that process? How do you hang on? How do you keep going? I'd like to talk a little bit about some coping strategies for dealing with the daily struggles of raising a child with a disability.

Disabled children are going to have a harder time learning emotional and behavioral skills. Disabilities will make it harder to master routine behaviors and activities. Disabled children will experience more frustration than other children. If it is a disability that impacts brain functioning, it will be harder for the child to think through problems. This all results in more behavior problems. One of the things that can help in dealing with those behavior problems is to understand what I call "The Law of the Universe." And this applies not only to disabled people, but probably to all of us. The Law of the Universe is, "If you can't talk it out, you are going to act it out." What cannot be verbally expressed will be acted out in some way, even if it's just through having a stomachache. It's got to get out somehow. Often, the child's misbehavior will be in response to coping with some other problem. Learning to understand the child's message – what does this behavior mean? – Can help you in dealing with the child's misbehavior.

For example, my daughter, when she was around the age of eighteen or nineteen, began to have a behavior problem. She would not go to bed at night and she wanted to leave her light on in her room. She was very resistant to going to bed when we all wanted to shut down the house and go to sleep. She would get very angry and say, "I don't want to go to bed because there are missionaries hiding in my underwear drawer." As a psychologist, I recognized this as clearly delusional, because I was pretty sure there were no missionaries hiding in her underwear drawer. Rather than being angry at her for being delusional, I tried to understand, "What is happening in her world that she is so frightened that there are missionaries in her underwear drawer and she won't go to bed at night? What would create this fear?" As I thought about it, I realized that many of her friends were getting married. She had attended wedding showers for them where they had received beautiful things for their honeymoon - lovely things that they would put in their underwear drawer. They were getting married, leaving her and were no longer available as her friends. She was also at a point in life where she longed to have those same experiences and was worried about, "Will I ever marry? Will anyone ever love me? Will anyone ever give me a wedding shower and give me beautiful things?" Her friends had married returned missionaries. She could see that returned missionaries were great husbands. Somehow, all of this went together. She was also very poignantly and painfully aware that she lacked the skills and the ability to have the kind of relationships she saw many of the young women in our ward creating in marriage. She knew on some level that she could not do this. So, she

experienced what you would call both a wish and a fear – a wish and a longing for marriage and a missionary of her own and a fear and a terror because she knew she couldn't handle that kind of a challenge. With the inability to express those conflicts, to understand them in herself and to verbalize them, all we heard was a delusion about missionaries hiding in the underwear drawer. Once I began to understand what was happening to her and what her own inner experience was like, I was able to talk it through with her; help her verbalize her conflicts; help her grieve some of the sorrow that she was experiencing about not having a boyfriend and being able to marry. The problem went away.

How do you manage misbehaviors? What do you do besides lash out at the child or lash out and turn the anger on yourself? When do you say yes? When do you say no? How do you enforce rules? How do you know when you're right? What is safe for the child? Well, much of that is going to have to be sorted out by your own experience in working with your individual child. It will be different for each family and you cannot compare either process or outcome of a child because disabilities differ. When you can look at the meaning of the misbehavior, then you know what's driving that misbehavior and you know what problem to solve. That way you can discover more useful solutions to the problem than just becoming angry and frustrated with the child. Some common meanings behind misbehavior include: seeking attention - the child may be trying to get your attention because he is hungry, sleepy, scared, over stimulated, under stimulated, bored, frustrated, trying to avoid something, having an allergic response to food or the environment, feeling sick. And if a child doesn't have the ability to verbalize that distress he will just start acting out. It is particularly true with children who have any kind of a brain disorder that compromises brain functioning such as attention deficit disorder, mental retardation, or schizophrenia. Becoming over-stimulated or under-stimulated is going to overwhelm the child. It can be helpful to be alert to what's going on that may be causing the child to seek your attention. Power is another reason for misbehavior. The child may feel very helpless and disempowered and will seek to have some power by acting out. Another reason is to display inadequacy. The child may be frustrated and unable to perform tasks that are demanded of her and then get frustrated. Being able to step back and break tasks into small pieces, as well as look at whether the activity is really on an appropriate level for the child can be helpful. Another reason is getting revenge. Children look to their parents for safety. They see their parents as all-powerful. They may not understand the adult world well enough to understand that their parents cannot protect them from all their frustrations and problems. They may blame their parents for their uncomfortable situation. So when a child gets frustrated he may lash out and say 'I hate you! I hate you! You're a bad mommy!' Realizing that this is about the child's frustration and not an expression of your failure as a parent can reduce some of your own hurt and anger. You can respond in a more calm way rather than lashing back at the child or getting into a power struggle. Often when the child is upset and cannot contain her own feelings it is easier to withdraw from the conflict rather than get in a power struggle. So you can say something like, "I see you are hurt and angry. I still love you and I know you are upset. I wish I could help you but I can't change that situation so maybe you need to go into time out until you cool off a little bit." If you don't take it personally, you are less likely to get drawn into a power struggle.

What are some other strategies that you can do to change behavior? I won't have time to go into detail in all of these but I've put some more material in your packet about strategies for managing misbehavior in disabled children. Some things that don't work are (1) making threats and not carrying them out, (2) yelling - the child learns to not listen unless somebody yells, (3) insults or name calling which only shame the child, (4) withdrawing privileges when they have

no relationship to the misbehavior or (5) physically abusing the child. These will usually increase misbehavior rather than help the child learn to manage behavior. I've put some further handouts in the pack to help explain strategies for managing behavior. (See Attached Handouts)

In dealing with a person who is handicapped, it is important to realize that there is a whole spirit who is not disabled. That spirit is just trapped inside an imperfect body. Sometimes if you listen with a spiritual ear and watch with a spiritual eye, you are able to see that spiritual person and you are able to experience their distress in a very different way. I'd like to show you just a brief video clip called "The Boys Next Door" that I think beautifully illustrates this concept. This movie is about a group of handicapped young men who live in a sheltered home with a caretaker. At one point, one of the handicapped men is summoned before a senate committee to testify about the value of programs such as sheltered workshops and sheltered homes. This young man has an IQ of around fifty. He goes to speak before the committee and becomes very, very frightened and unable to perform. Then, in a very brilliant way, the director of the film switches and you see this man as if you are seeing his spiritual self, his real self, and he is able to communicate how he really thinks and feels. He's able to get beyond the disability of his body and communicate who he is. I'd like you to watch this clip.

If you watch with that spiritual eye and listen with that spiritual ear you will have many moments when you will see that the spirit is not disabled. There is a whole person who has the same needs and feelings and longings as all other people.

Learning how to ignore uninformed advice is another way of coping with the child's misbehaviors. You are going to get advice from people about how to raise this child and much of that advice will be uninformed. For example, I talked to a mother whose child had a neurological disability and was unable to walk and talk at a normal age. She told of carrying her four year old child on her hip at the grocery store when she was approached by two women who insisted she was "babying" a four year old by carrying her. You will hear comments that are based on an imperfect knowledge of your child and your experience. Sometimes the best thing to do with unsolicited advice is just tune it out. The more normal the child looks, the more unsolicited advice you'll get about how to take care of your child. People, who, when they see no visible explanation for the child's behavior, assume that somehow the child hasn't been brought up correctly and they may not understand that the child's behaving the best they can given the limitations of their disability.

Having a disabled child in the family impacts not only the parents as caretakers, but all of the siblings and extended family as well. Often siblings have a difficult time talking about their concerns. Parents can help by setting a norm of openness. It is permissible to talk about feelings. No one is going to get shamed or made to feel guilty because of their struggle with this process. Siblings want a fair distribution of time, love and nurturance. It can be easy to overprotect the handicapped child, until they consume the whole family at the expense of other family members. It can be important to try to strike a balance between the needs of the other children and the needs of the disabled child. For example, if you have children in the family who love to hike and the handicapped child cannot hike, rotating family activities so that the needs of both groups are met is helpful. It is important to understand empathically and listen to children. What they are experiencing may very different for each child.

There is intergenerational grief when there is a handicapped child in the family. Grandparents must also go through this process. They had their own hopes and desires for their grandchildren. They also need to go through the process of dealing with the sorrow of the losses. People in the family may be in very different places in going through the process of adjustment.

One member may have worked it through where another may still be in denial. It is important to not take comments personally that may originate from being at a very different stage. Grandparents and extended family members may be responding to their own grief and struggle to adjust.

What are the benefits from the journey? As I have spoken with other parents who have gone through this experience and as I reflect on my own experience in raising a disabled child, I have realized there are many benefits from the journey. Some of those benefits include:

- 1) Having felt sorrow, one can experience greater joy.
- 2) Learning how to both give and receive help and comfort in relationships
- 3) Learning to be more real and honest with others.
- 4) Learning to trust your own heart; to have faith in yourself
- 5) Learning to have a deeper and more accurate understanding of the purposes of mortal struggles.
- 6) Having an increased capacity for compassion and empathy
- 7) Understanding the differences between good and evil.
- 8) Learning to reach beyond the limits of your own needs and desires and discover that you can love another with a pure Christ-like love.
  
- 9) Learning to trust in an ultimate restoration of all things through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.
- 10) Experiencing God's personal love for you.

My daughter is almost 28. Our family has been going through this process for 28 years. I speak these things from my heart and from my own experience. But I bear my witness to you that it can be one of the most beautiful and peaceable experiences of your life. I am grateful for all that my daughter has had the courage to teach me. As I struggle to find answers to the questions "why me?" and "why her,?" I don't have all of those answers but I have an increased understanding of many things that I would not have were it not for her courage to teach me. When she received her patriarchal blessing she was told that she had been given this experience in mortality because of the greatness of her soul. Her mission in mortality was to teach and instruct others in compassion and understanding. I am very grateful that she had the courage to accept that assignment. I am grateful for all the good that she has done for our family as well as for many others. Her brothers have learned that having a good mind is not an entitlement to having other people serve them. They have learned that having a good mind is an opportunity for them to serve others. As a family we have learned that love and kindness and charity are not just for the swift nor for the strong, but are also for those who struggle. I am deeply grateful for my daughter and for her courage in accepting the assignment to come into this world with a disability and teach these lessons to the rest of us. I say this in the name of Jesus Christ Amen.

Naseef, Robert A. (1997). *Special Children, Challenged Parents*. Carol Publishing Group. New Jersey.





**Families Under Fire**  
**Raising a Child with a Disability**  
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**Typical Responses in the Process of Adjusting to Learning One's Child has Disability**

- Shock
  1. Difficulty assimilating information
  2. Feeling overwhelmed in uncharted territory

▶ Adaptation - Learning about the disability
- Denial
  1. Difficulty accepting the truth because of fear of the unknowable and uncontrollable
  2. Shopping for a "cure"

▶ Adaptation - Learning to accept limits of own and others power and responsibility
- Anxiety
  1. Experiencing the body's response to fear
  2. Becoming aware that the child will need special care

▶ Adaptation - Using anxiety as an "alert" system to mobilize energy and resources
- Guilt
  1. Believing that bad things only happen to bad people
  2. Looking for answers through a "just world" theory and condemning oneself

▶ Adaptation - Learning to believe that God is a God of Love
- Depression and Grief
  1. Mourning losses
  2. Letting go of fantasy of "perfect" child and "perfect" family

▶ Adaptation - Learning empathy, compassion and love
- Anger
  1. Needing to make sense of what seems an injustice
  2. Desiring to blame someone so that someone must make it right in order to have a fair and orderly world

▶ Adaptation - Learning a new definition of fairness
- Hope and Meaning
  1. Redefining the purpose of life and the meaning of adversity
  2. Discovering one's own strengths
  3. Recognizing benefits derived from "the journey"
  4. Hope for long-term ultimate positive outcome

## Understanding Your Child's Needs

- ❖ The “law of the universe” = what cannot be verbalized and spoken will be acted out.
- ❖ Learn to understand the child's messages - “What does this behavior mean?”
- ❖ Get to know the Spirit that is trapped inside the imperfect body. “Seeing” beyond the disability
- ❖ Ignore “uninformed” advice. The more normal the child looks the more unsolicited advice you will get. People may see no visible explanation for the child's behavior. Visible disabilities usually evoke more compassion.
- ❖ Consider the whole family's response. The disabled child's special needs will impact the entire family. Siblings, spouses and extended family all will experience their own adjustment process to the child's disability. The pace and concerns in that process vary with different family members.

## Managing Misbehavior in a Child with a Disability

### Common Meanings of Misbehaviors

- ⊕ Seek attention
- ⊕ Power
- ⊕ Display inadequacy – seek help
- ⊕ Revenge

### Strategies for Change

- Stress the positive
- Set limits
- Distract and redirect the child
- Ignore inappropriate behavior when behavior is not destructive nor dangerous
- Structure the environment
- Give choices
- Use natural and logical consequences
- Use “time-out”

Adapted from “Special Children, Challenged Parents: The Struggles and Rewards of Raising a Child with a Disability” by Robert A. Naseef, PhD. Birch Lane Press.

**Stress the Positive** – positive reinforcement of desirable behavior is the best prevention. Responding to the positive also builds a positive self-image and confidence

**Set Limits** – Realistically evaluate the child’s skills and abilities. Use positive language such as “You can play for a few more minutes before you must come inside.”

**Distracting and Redirecting the Child** – Use an interesting object of activity to divert the child’s attention away from an undesirable behavior

**Ignoring Inappropriate Behavior When Behavior is not Destructive nor Dangerous** – ignoring behaviors such as whining, sulking, and interrupting reduces payoff for such behaviors. At first there may be an increase in rate, duration and intensity of the unwanted behavior but if it is consistently ignored the behavior should eventually decrease.

**Structure the Environment** – Young children need to explore in order to learn. Reducing or eliminating dangers or breakable objects the need to consistently say “no.” Adapting the environment to the child’s ability reduces frustration for both parents and child.

**Give Choices** – giving choices helps the child to learn to be responsible. If allowed to have control over appropriate decisions for their developmental level, children are more likely to cooperate when they are not allowed to do something.

**Natural and Logical Consequences** – Allowing the child to experience the natural consequence of their choice and behaviors helps them to understand cause and effect. For example, if the child spends all of his allowance on one item, he cannot buy anything else until the next allowance. Logical consequences are when the outcome is tied to the behavior such as “If you play in the street you will have to come in.”

**Use “Time-Out”** – isolating a child whose behavior is out of control helps the child to regain self-control. A good estimate is one minute for each year of age. The child may also be told “You can come out and play with others when you feel ready to obey the rules.” This helps the child to learn internal control.

### **“Benefits from the Journey”**

- ✚ Having felt sorrow, can experience greater joy
- ✚ Learning how to both give and receive help and comfort in relationships with other people
- ✚ Deeper relationships with others
- ✚ Being able to trust your own heart
- ✚ Having faith in your own judgment and abilities
- ✚ Capacity for compassion and empathy
- ✚ Understanding both the good and the cruel elements of human nature
- ✚ Growing beyond the limits of your own needs and desires
- ✚ Developing Christ-like love

- ✚ Trust in an ultimate restoration of all things
- ✚ Personal knowledge of God's love