

Time: The One Thing Needful

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Everything in life teaches us that we cannot cheat time. Be it career, or schooling or vocation or relationships. We reap what we sow. It is no different when it comes to raising children.

We all want good children, but good children don't just happen, good children are raised. What does time mean when it comes to raising children? It means being available to instruct, to train, to discipline, to manage and to draw near to our children. We cannot do any of these things by remote control, we have to be available.

Children interpret intimacy with time. As parents, we do a lot for our children, but the one thing needful is time – being there. We cannot substitute time with anything else. We cannot substitute presence with presents.

Let's do a little exercise. Calculate the number of hours a week you spend with your children. How many hours a month does that translate to? And how many days a month, how many days a year? Do the math.

Time does not lie. It is not about the activities you are doing, it is about being there. Although children don't know anything about quality time, they just want time with us; sometimes we have a lot of quantity time, but we need to go for quality time too.

Why is time the one thing needful? What is it about time that makes it the one thing needful? If children see you around, and know you are here to stay, it eliminates inhibitions. You won't be a stranger to them.

Time says I know you are here now, and you will be here tomorrow, so you will be here to follow it up. Time says you belong here, therefore what I commit to you will be retained here. Time with our children means that we will walk with them, carry their burdens.

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Your children want to become like you and beyond. Sometimes they know you have made mistakes, but because you are here, you are their hero. Our children are not looking for the perfect us, they are looking for the present us.

Time is so important such that if you bring in a relative to your home and he or she is more available, your children's loyalty shifts to him or her. A majority of child abusers are people who are always present.

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