**GCCHM Leadership Certification**

**Level VIII, Course #4**

**POSITIVE DISCIPLINE**

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**(Presenter’s Notes)**

The words discipline, and punishment are often used interchangeably by many people but in principle they refer to different things.

Discipline is proactive while punishment is reactive. Usually, punishment is administered after something wrong has happened.

Many times, even if our intentions are to discipline, we find ourselves reverting to punishment.

A mother once told us her experience. Her daughter did something which really annoyed her. She told herself that she would not do anything negative. But because she was extremely annoyed, she ended in slapping her daughter because she failed to control herself. She felt bad afterwards.

The intention of this presentation is to discuss ten principles which can help leaders and parents to discipline positively.

**1. WHEN A CHILD MISBEHAVES, FIND OUT WHAT CAUSES THE MISBEHAVIOR**

Naomi Aldort states that children want to behave well. If they fail to do so, usually there is a valid reason for their missing the mark.

It’s a parent’s duty to find out what makes the child behave that way. Aldort explains that many times, once the cause is identified and removed, the child behaves differently. For example, sometimes the child will keep slapping his sibling in order to get your attention because you may have been busy with other things for a long time. The tendency is to scream, “Stop hitting your sister.” But Aldort says, if you “correct your own behavior, that will satisfy the child’s need” and the behavior will disappear.

**2. GIVE THEM OPTIONS**

Let’s say your child likes watching TV more than doing his/her home work. Experts advise not to say to your child, “Do your homework. Don’t just watch TV.” Kersey writes that to discipline positively is to say something like this; “When you have finished your homework, then you may watch TV.” She observes that this approach has three advantages. It teaches children to be: -

* Responsible
* Accountable
* Obedient

**3. DON’T BRIBE**

Some parents when a child is misbehaving, they bribe the child. The bribing may be like this; “If you stop running around, I will buy you ice cream.” This approach sends a wrong message to the child. The message you send to the child is that if you are good, you get nothing, but if you trouble mom a little, you are offered a reward.

**4. INCOMPATIBLE ALTERNATIVE PRINCIPLE – THE PRINCIPLE OF REDIRECTING**

A child is redirected to do something that he can’t do while misbehaving. For example, you are shopping in a grocery shop and your child keeps running all over. The thing many parents do naturally is to shout something like this; “Stop. You are going to hurt yourself.”  
Redirect: - “Can you help me pick apples or carrots?” The suggested behavior is not compatible to running around.

**5. TALK ABOUT THEM POSITIVELY TO OTHERS**

Let’s say you had taken your child to a dentist, when you return home report to the family how positively the child behaved.

**6. THERE ARE TIMES YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON CONTROLLING YOURSELF AND NOT YOUR CHILD**

Dr. Katherine explains that it is advisable not to do anything in front of children that you don’t want them to imitate. Children are copy cats. You will sometimes notice when they are playing, one will say, “I will be daddy and the other will say I will be mommy.” To your shock, you will hear the child who is imitating you scream, “Stop it or else…” Parents should remember that screaming at the child will beget a screaming child. It is important to model the behavior you want in your child. If you want your child to be patient, model patience. And be a consistent model. Inconsistency confuses a child. CONTROL YOURSELF SO THAT YOU DON’T MODEL WRONG BEHAVIOUR.

**7. GIVE ATTENTION TO THE BEHAVIOR YOU LIKE - NOT THE BEHAVIOR YOU DON’T LIKE**

Giving a cold shoulder is what Kersey refers to as *“Rain on the grass, not on the weeds”* principle. If your child likes to throw tantrums and whine, ignore the behavior. You could even walk away. Your child will soon learn that this style of communicating is not acceptable.

**8. PRIVACY PRINCIPLE**

When your child misbehaves in public, take him/her aside and talk to her privately. Don’t embarrass him/her in public. When one is humiliated, will not listen to whatever you are saying.

**9. Talk With them, Not to Them Principle**

Don’t preach to children. Focus on two-way communication. Listen to your child as well as talk. Don’t confuse your child by saying, “Answer me when I talk. Don’t just stand there looking at me as if I am an alien from space.” Then when your child talks back, you end up shouting, “Don’t answer me when I am talking.” This will totally confuse your child.

**10.**  **Positive Closure Principle**

As you put your child to bed, tell her that she is special and very much loved. Remind her the good things she did during the day and that you are looking forward to another good day tomorrow. And with your face smiling, give her a ‘good-night-and-sleep-tight’ kiss.