

Helping our kids to figure it out.

What forms our kids personality, their outlook on life, their view on relationships, people, society, our country. Do you ever wonder, who are they developing into? What experiences are sticking in them in terms of forming them?

For our kids as well as us, the varied experiences we encounter have significance. This fits for the good and the bad experiences. For the difficult encounters; moment by moment, one by one, day by day, try as we may to forget trials and tribulations, they still stick within us, leaving their mark and thus our perception of the world...

Each significant experience (and not necessarily only those that are traumatic), should be processed to discover the after effects within us.

Establishing a way to process life experiences is important and necessary to healthy living. Some ideas to do this would be to agree on a time that family members or parent & child would check in with each other as what transpired. What were the feelings and thoughts connected to what happened in the moments it occurred? What are the left over feelings that still exist?

The varied options to deal with the after effects of thoughts and emotions could be from just letting it go and moving on to spending time processing it more either through discussion, journaling or getting more support. Another option might be to revisit the people that were involved and seek to find resolution from the incident or experience that is hard to let go of.

Our task as parents is to track what our kids are going through daily and weekly. Our goal is to help them learn how to understand their heart and mind and ultimately pull some good from the difficult experiences. In time we will find consistent themes that seem to trip them up or you might say understanding their vulnerabilities. This might be how peers treat them or what bothers them the most when it happens. How could they respond differently next time a similar situation occurs?

Ultimately, we all have to learn to eventually let go of something that is bothersome or difficult that we went through. It doesn't mean that we don't care or that we will allow it to happen again. But, sometimes we can only examine something so much and then it needs to surrender.

Stepping back like this will also allow us to see a different perspective on what happened.

The ultimate goal for us and our kids to see what we learned from this experience. What can we apply positively to our future as we go forward. Potentially, we have an opportunity to learn some meaningful understandings from going through a hard time.

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Process life with your kids. Allow for open ended discussion along with time to think and reflect.

We must be patient when processing difficult experiences. Take time to process, including days, weeks or months. Meaningful conclusions don't come quickly but are gathered over time and often after considerable time has passed.

We learn more from going through hard times. Although, we'd like to protect our kids from all of life's struggles and even tragedies. This isn't reality, life will have good and bad experiences. A better goal would be to allow them the mental, emotional and physical space to reflect, express and ultimately learn from going through a difficult experience. This will develop in them positive character qualities and a healthier outlook on the future.

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