

In the immortal words of George Carlin, “You want to know how to help your kids? Leave them the fuck alone.” In the event that I do have children (which is uncertain), I plan on having either just one or greater (inclusive) than four, and will take what is best described as a laissez-faire approach to parenting. Now, obviously this is not completely appropriate for all stages of development, especially the younger formative years (Freud’s sexual development stages, Erikson’s first three psychosocial development stages, 0-5ish), and that time will be spent cultivating the child’s trust, curiosity, and health. We shall take care not to overindulge em, whilst still ensuring ey pass through the appropriate psychosocial and psychosexual development stages with the necessary skills and without extreme fixations, which is necessary to ensure ey starts off on a positive life path.

Basic values of logical skepticism, industry, and autonomy will be instilled in em whilst trying to create an intellectual environment for em to develop into, placing learning and logic as the foremost important factors in eir life, enabling em to think for eirself. Ideally, this will become ingrained in eir life and will be eir first reaction to new situations and feel comfortable; ey will be used to thinking and analysing, avoiding this growing aversion to thinking that today’s youth seems to have adopted. My wife and I shall attempt to challenge the child within their skill level, and encourage em to work towards understanding complex things without pandering to ignorance or laziness. This means no insulting children’s television or ridiculously simple books; rather, ey will be strongly encouraged to learn a variety of skills and subjects to determine what interests em, and subsequently pursue those fields of interest. This is an attempt to meet esteem and self-actualisation needs in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, as well as their belongingness and love needs (since we intend to always be there for em when needed and offering plenty of interaction when desired, thus creating a loving environment).

Now, this may seem not very laissez-faire at all, but keep in mind that a portion of this is during early childhood when parental interaction is a huge necessity, and that it’s nothing more than sincere encouragement, sticking to positive reinforcement. If ey decides ey doesn’t want to perform any of these actions, ey won’t be forced and eir decision will be supported; this is indicative of our intended, “do it yourself, but we’re here if you need us” attitude which will remain until eir late teenage years where independence will be stressed. There will be a strong absence of authoritarian principles and “do it because we told you to”, instead we shall favour logically explaining out our reasons for why ey should do what we suggest. If ey disagrees, in most cases we should allow em to go eir separate way and discover the truth for eirself, or logically argue for eir case with the distinct possibility of swaying us. Ey will be brought up in a household where rationality is stressed and highly valued. A humanist approach to dealing with issues will be encouraged, telling em that ey can overcome whatever issues ey may have and become a better individual.

We plan on creating a highly tolerant environment in which ey should feel comfortable no matter what their personality type, sexual preference, or favourite flavour of ice cream. Intellectual prowess will be valued most, but any

reasonable life-plan will be met with our support and insight. Delusion, however, such as superstitions or plausible misinformation, whether intentional or otherwise, will be met with enlightenment as soon as possible. We shall not lie to em, which means no Santa Claus or Easter Bunny in earnest. The sooner ey copes with reality the better, and this way ey learns to trust our intentions, although it will be explained that we, like everyone, are not infallible and should be questioned as well; one of the worst things we could do is utter the phrase, “do not question your {fa,mo}ther”. In the words of Richard Feynman, “The first principle is that you must not fool yourself - and you are the easiest person to fool.”

As is readily apparent, the strongest emphasis is placed on creating a logical, rational, independent human. Perhaps some of my goals can be best summed up in two quotes:

*“The Great Man . . . is colder, harder, less hesitating, and without respect and without the fear of 'opinion'; he lacks the virtues that accompany respect and 'respectability', and altogether everything that is the 'virtue of the herd'.”*

– Friedrich Nietzsche

*“Logic is the beginning of wisdom, not the end.”*

– Leonard Nimoy