

# What We Are Is More Important Than What We Have



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*Upbringing: A good example is worth more than 1,000 words.*

Upbringing is a difficult and sometimes tedious task. It requires perseverance, knowledge and strict objectivity. It also raises the following questions: What kind of people do we want to be? Will our children and students grow up to lead a happy and provident life? Will they contribute to the well-being of the community? Will they live up to their principles and values?

The shining examples we inherited from the past were people who put inner values, knowledge and honesty ahead of the acquisition of wealth. Those who only strove for wealth were soon forgotten. Our principles accompany us through the depths and high points of our life. They are durable values. On the other hand, material wealth can swiftly be taken from us. We have experienced that many times throughout our history.

One country that had suffered consummate destruction during the past war has elevated itself to great power status through the inborn ability of its people. This was achieved because of the good upbringing of the majority and their dedication to the common good. Their ethics and know-how also helped them achieve well-being. Only the enduring values of its people, their culture, as well as their moral and ethnic guidelines, together with diligence and toil made the reconstruction of their country possible. We should encourage our children to adopt these principles for a better life in the future.

However, we should not influence them to renounce the better things in life. On the contrary, a good lifestyle is important, but it should not be the only aim in their endeavors.

When a group of teachers once asked Albert Schweitzer what the most important aspect of a child's upbringing is, he replied "The most important thing is the

good example set by their parents and teachers."

Words prompt action, but examples give direction. For instance, it doesn't make sense for parents to tell their children not to smoke because it is bad for their health when they are smokers themselves.

When we do not address people properly we cannot expect our children to do so. Politeness, independent of social status, emphasizes good breeding and respect. These principles apply throughout the world. Those who do not adhere to the ground rules of good behavior stand out as boorish persons. Children should learn at an early age to address older people with Mr. or Mrs. if they are not close friends. Only among close friends or in the immediate family should this form of address be waived. If children do not learn this at an early age they will become conspicuous for their bad manners.

It should also be pointed out that people with good social manners do not habitually use cuss words. It is a shame that certain TV personalities think it is modern to use language that tends to shock us in our homes. These people are often social deviates, drug addicts or immoral. Unfortunately, our young people are too easily influenced by these social outcasts and uncritically accept such language because they think it is the "in" thing to do.

It is incumbent upon parents to negate these influences and set a positive example by their own exemplary behavior. There are no magic charms to facilitate a proper upbringing. Only our values, principles and examples can guide our siblings on the right road to a good and decent life. ✿

1) *The trouble with bucket seats is that not everybody has the same size bucket.*

2) *To err is human, to forgive - highly unlikely.*

3) *Drinking makes some husbands see double and feel single.*



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