

7 Rules of Thumb

1. I will not find fault with others
2. I will use my power to discriminate between right and wrong
3. Do not look for the fruit of your action
4. Be single pointed
5. Think something good
6. Say something good
7. Do something good

NEW ERA 39

NOV. 16, 1982

VOL. 10 NO. 15

**Total Love Parenting at Agnihotra University
Agnihotra Effect
From Vasant's Correspondence**

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Publisher

Fivefold Path, Inc.
Parama Dham (House of Almighty Father)
RFD #1, Box 121-C
Madison, Virginia 22727, U.S.A.

Published on the first and third Thursdays of each month.
All *Satsang* correspondence should be directed to Editor.

Printed by

Agnihotra Press, Inc.
Post Office Box 13
Randallstown, Maryland 21133, U.S.A.

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ISSN 0735-1321

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Cover

The Seven Rules of Thumb as presented
by Total Love Parenting.

Total Love Parenting at Agnihotra University



Reflective listening is a skill which enables a parent to show understanding. It enables the child, simultaneously, to clarify. A child says, "I don't like my doll anymore." Reflective listening enables the parent to hear the child and reflect. The parent says, "Oh, you don't like your doll anymore." The child then says, "Well, I like her, but she's broken now." Reflective listening allowed the child to clarify what she really wanted to say – her real concern.

Look at other, less-effective responses below:

Child: "I don't like my doll anymore."
Parent: "Oh, you don't mean that. How could you say that?"
or
"It is not nice to say that about your doll."
or
"Mommy won't buy you another doll if you do not appreciate it."

So begins Total Love Parenting (TLP), a series of training sessions conducted at Agnihotra University. TLP is a parenting model which offers a set of practices and skills which combine to help improve communication within families. TLP helps families to create and maintain an atmosphere of total love, encouragement and acceptance.

TLP was developed by Ross Ford, Clinical Director and Psychotherapist at Baltimore Family Life Center, a family counseling agency which he founded in 1977. The model reflects extensive experience in the areas of enriched structural family therapy, parenting and Homa therapy. The enriched structural model and parenting skills offer a systematic way of assisting families in the resolution of difficulties, problems and concerns. Homa, a Sanskrit word which describes a process of removing tension from the atmosphere and from the mind through the use of fire, provides an aid which families can use in establishing an atmosphere of total love and tranquility.

Training Session for Homa Therapists

As counselors, teachers, therapists and ordinary members of ordinary families, we collect, daily, evidence that people are experiencing difficulties in family living. Reports of conflicts within the family unit rapidly escalate. Well-intentioned parents are feeling incapable of resolving problems and conflicts with their children. Parenting and communication within the family are desperately needed. Parenting, for many people, seems difficult. This is because parents often wait until the family is in crisis before they get involved in the conscious act of parenting.

In response to this scenario, Agnihotra University prepared a training session for Homa therapists in TLP. Instruction was provided by Ross Ford and certificates were awarded for successful completion of the training. At the end of the instruction, trainees were prepared to organize and conduct TLP Study Groups. Homa therapists from the Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Charlottesville and Madison, Virginia areas received certification in TLP. These people are now in the process of forming their TLP Study Groups, parents who meet on a scheduled basis to study and practice TLP skills which enhance communication in their families.

The TLP model was received enthusiastically, primarily because of its clarity, simplicity and focus on love. Unlike some parenting models which allow parents to be negative, to find fault, to show anger and to place blame, TLP focuses on establishing an atmosphere of total love, encouragement and acceptance. It teaches parents to create and maintain an atmosphere which is affirmative, supportive, receptive and unconditionally positive. The atmosphere is as essential as the parenting skills and practices which TLP offers.

Components of TLP: A Paradigm Shift

TLP is composed of three basic parts, a paradigm shift about families, seven rules of thumb and a set of parenting skills. A word or an understanding about families is included because parenting is conducted in families; therefore, a common understanding or view of families is essential to the acceptance and use of the TLP model. The seven

rules of thumb are an adaptation of principles such as non-faultfinding, discrimination between right and wrong, non-attachment to the fruit of your action and other principles outlined in *Satsang: Volume One*.¹ Parenting skills, including reflective listening, reframing, joining, structuring, shaping and others provide practical, sequential steps which parents can take in addressing family problems and concerns. Each component of TLP is described, in turn.

A paradigm is defined in the *Aquarian Conspiracy* as a "framework of thought or a scheme for understanding and explaining certain aspects of reality."² A paradigm shift, then, is a new rendering of the old. It includes the old as a partial truth and adds the now known truth. Ferguson says that the paradigm shift is a distinctly new way of thinking about old problems. The TLP view of family and parenting constitutes a paradigm shift.

The family is the ideal unit for the direct expression of love.

Families can address their problems and concerns by close examination of family order (family members, the hierarchy and roles they play), family love (direct expression of deep positive feelings) and family communication (vehicle through which order and love get articulated).

Families should look for the positive, for the success in each event. If a parent cannot find success in a given instance, the parent can create it. At any point, a parent can say to a child, "I see what you are trying to do and I like it."

The TLP view of families and parenting is ever-positive. It enables families to focus on the good in which they are already involved in order to correct or address family related problems and concerns.

TLP says that family order depends upon love. Deep, positive feelings of love enable members of the family to achieve happiness and harmony within the family. Families can learn to express love – parent to parent, parent to child, child to parent, child to child and in any number of family configurations. Parents, from the very beginning, give messages to their children. All gestures from parents are messages. All messages are potentially received. Parents have a choice of messages which they can give to their children. Every parent has the opportunity to transmit messages of love.

Think about a parent holding a one-month-old baby. Add to the list below messages which the parent may be transmitting:

1. *I am glad you are here.*

2. *You are free.*

3. *We love you.*

4. *Be good.*

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

TLP uses the example above to convey the importance of the expression of love in



the family. Parents can learn and practice direct expression of love. Parents can create and maintain an atmosphere filled with love, encouragement and acceptance.



Components of TLP: Seven Rules of Thumb

The seven basic rules which follow are offered by TLP as an aid in the development of attitudes which enable family members to live together peacefully and harmoniously. Each rule is described, in turn.

Seven Rules of Thumb

I will not find fault with others

I will use my power to discriminate between right and wrong

Do not look for the fruit of your own action

Be single-pointed

Think something good

Say something good

Do something good

To find fault with others is to see, highlight and to point out imperfections, weaknesses and flaws in the circumstances of someone's life. Faultfinding weakens the ability of a family to live harmoniously. Faultfinding weakens family relationships.

Vasant Paranjpe, editor of *Satsang: Volume One* has given the classic example of faultfinding and the effect which it has on the person who finds fault.

Example

A parent goes to visit a friend. She finds the friend's house in total disorder. There are clothes and trash and food everywhere. She can hardly believe that her friend lives in such a disorderly and untidy way.

After chatting with the friend for a moment, she is preparing to leave. She stoops down and gathers up a big pile of trash from the floor. She goes to her own house, takes the armful of trash and throws it on her own floor.

This is the effect of finding fault with others. Eliminating faultfinding seems difficult because faults are apparent, visible and, in fact, easy to see. It is problematic because people are so predisposed to find fault that not to do so can be considered as non-discriminative and irresponsible. The dilemma is resolved, though, when one can look externally and still not find fault.

Faultfinding can be eliminated. It is a matter of looking at what people are doing and refusing to cast their actions in a negative light. When the practice of faultfinding is eliminated, there will be a noticeable change in attitude. An attitude of acceptance and encouragement dominates and family happiness and harmony dawn.

Example

A young person is truant. She won't go to school. She leaves the house in the morning and roams the streets all day. If you don't find fault with her, you may find that she is trying to learn something. She may be trying to express her independence or something else that she thinks is important. Once you have looked beyond the faults, then your work with her can begin.

Consider what happens when parents discontinue the habit of faultfinding. Consider what happens when teachers and therapists abandon the faultfinding modality. Family members can stop feeling like something about them is wrong or negative. They can feel the good, the positive. Consider how the household can become full of love and trust simply by eliminating the threat of faultfinding.

TLP Training Continues

Each of the seven rules of thumb will be described in detail as the article continues. In the next issues of *Satsang*, examples of how families can use the seven rules of thumb and the set of parenting skills offered by TLP will be given.

Persons interested in instruction and training in TLP should contact Agnihotra University, Post Office Box 43288, Washington, D.C. 20010-9288. Telephone number (202) 797-0877. Skills from the TLP training and Homa therapy will likely combine to impact on families for years to come.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Paranjpe, Vasant, *Satsang: Volume One* (Baltimore: Agnihotra Press, 1976).
- ² Ferguson, Marilyn, *The Aquarian Conspiracy* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1980).

From Vasant's Correspondence

Your child needs love and affection always. Do not deprive him of this when you are disciplining him. Give him total love all the time, not only when he is good. If he does something you don't like you can tell him but do not raise your voice if possible. It is neither necessary nor effective. It will do more damage than silence. He is having a difficult time now because of all the changes in his life. So just bear with him when he is difficult. Normally he will outgrow this. Be loving. Take time for him everyday. He should come before everything. You can include him in meditation if he likes. Teach him Fivefold Path.

Take care not to shout at your child. When you want to discipline him, do it in a quiet voice. He will see that you are firm but he will not have sharp reaction to a quiet manner of speaking. If you yell at him, he will yell back at you.

What happens in the world directly affects everyone of us. No one is exempt from it. So it is also in relationships. How we relate to others directly affects all around us. Just as you see if you and your husband or wife argue your children begin to be weary. Sometimes a child will sleep more or lose interest in eating or become easily angered or sullen and withdrawn. That is on a smaller scale. On a larger scale, all that is thought. All actions taken directly result in reactions all around the world. So let us take care always to have pure thoughts as well as positive actions.

It is always better not to fight. If someone disagrees with us, simply let them disagree. They don't have to agree with everything we are saying. Why argue the point? Be an example of your beliefs and state them in your actions. It isn't necessary to speak about them.

This is a time of great intensity. There is little time to sit and dream. Go ahead with your lives. Make use of your talents and abilities. It is important now to utilize all "free time" for this work. Of course, if you go out to a movie or sometimes watch TV, it is okay if it is not a habitual thing. Work on your gifts; develop them.

Music and meditation are beautiful together. Yajnya only enhances the music sound.

To rise much higher with single effort, do all actions out of love. Discipline your child out of love. He will feel that and he will adhere to the disciplines much quicker because he senses love is behind that. You can be firm but still be gentle.

Agnihotra Effect

[Anya Foos-Graber of Middlefield, Connecticut had arranged a group at her house to hear Vasant talk on *Homa* Therapy beginning with Agnihotra. Mr. Brad Calrowe did the recording at the meeting and had some suggestions for research of Homa Therapy.]

It was stated by someone that the earth's electromagnetic field that we all are encircled in can carry our thoughts and all vibrations. The optimal rate is given at 7 cycles/second. Then it becomes interesting to note that when we come into a contemplative or meditative state the brain waves slow down to 7 cycles/sec. Thus we then vibrate with the planet at the same pulsing and when everyone does this it is harmony. Perhaps this is what Agnihotra does by harmonizing the energies.

Agnihotra is based on one special biorhythm of sunrise/sunset. The biorhythm ef-

fect is now well acknowledged. The Japanese have cut down their accident rates in public transportation. Most airlines will not allow their pilots to fly on a critical day.

Om Tryambakam Homa is done 24 hours on full moon and new moon days to intensify the healing effect created by Agnihotra. In the biorhythm cycles the emotional curve is 28 days which is the same as the moon cycle. What happens when the moon is closest to the earth? The moon has, let's say, a negative charge and the earth has a negative charge but the ionosphere which is above the earth is bipolar. This means it is positively charged facing the earth and negatively charged facing the moon. When the moon is close to earth the two negative charges of the moon and the top of the ionosphere push each other away and thus the ionosphere is



pushed closer to earth and we get more positive ions which has a deleterious effect on the people. The murder rate, lunacy goes up. Statistically they found in Dade County in Florida that the murder rate went up tremendously during this period. In most of Europe it is now acknowledged that doctors at hospitals should not operate on people at these times because people bleed badly. They are getting more and more aware of this.

The healing radiations of copper mentioned in Vasant's talk fascinated me. I was recently discussing with someone an instrument called a "rainbow toner." It has a 6" circular piece of copper mounted five feet above the earth. It absorbs the cosmic vibrations. You take one piece of insulated wire running off of it, put it into water or have it on a small plate and you put it on your body and it will transmit these healing energies into the body. They use small spark coils to amplify the current from one coil to the next one to your body. With water they had interesting results in treating animal diseases. Chickens which had streptococcus cleared up very quickly. Their manure no longer attracted flies. The water became soft for bathing or for washing clothes. However, they said the unit does not work unless you keep it at least five feet off the ground to absorb the energy because of the magnetic field. Secondly it has to be copper only.

In Agnihotra perhaps you are using energy from the sun and you are amplifying the growth hormones in clarified butter (ghee) to make things grow and also for health.

One doctor I was talking to said that in a normal life we sleep at night and get up

in the morning. The stomach shuts down around 9 p.m. and starts up again around 5 a.m. If you eat during this period the food just sits and does not digest properly. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. For Agnihotra you have to get up before sunrise.

Vasant stated that *Yajnya (Homa)* acts as a catalyst for chlorophyll in plants. It will be interesting to see the effect on hemoglobin in our body.