

The Growing Child Dealing With a Child Who Has Become Difficult

Nothing is more unsettling to a parent than dealing with a child who has become difficult, defiant, even rebellious. The parent is angered and saddened simultaneously, and this often results in inappropriate measures that only worsen the situation. We even have a term for this at the age it first appears: we call it "the terrible twos." While this is often thought to be a phase, it is in fact a warning of more serious problems ahead which can become acute in the teenage years. The parents are often asking themselves, "What has happened?" They are perplexed, unhappy and often uncertain as to what to do when they see what they perceive as negative behavior in their child. This is really an opportunity, a time to reflect upon ourselves as parents. Is it possible that we are being overly critical of our child's perceived faults and seeing him or her as defiant when in fact an emerging personality is awkwardly expressing itself or even arguing its own case? Dr. Taniguchi teaches that we should be careful about nipping our child's natural gifts in the bud by applying our own standards too strictly.

When you start with the Seicho-No-Ie premise that a child is a mirror reflecting the mind of the parents, then the child's behavior becomes more understandable. As Dr. Taniguchi explains:

Parents and their children are alike. When you see a child, you will know his parents. The child is reflecting his parents' moral values and character. By observing their children, the parents must reflect on their own mental image.

A child inherits the parents' moral values and beliefs. However, when the parents are oppressive and forceful and are cold-hearted, the child often takes an opposite view and rebels against the parents. Since a child loves his parents, he wants his parents to love him, but when the parents treat him with oppression, coercion and indifference, he thinks that his parents do not love him and he takes an opposite stand in retaliation. Since the child has inherited the parents' life and mind that have become the framework for forming the character of his personality, when he opposes his parents in defiance, he has difficulty in dealing with the inner anguish of his soul. This anguish that he has difficulty in coping with drives him to rebel against his parents. It is so important that the parents love the child unconditionally.

Because as parents we are upset by this behavior that we find unacceptable, we are apt to apply punishment. However, if we understood that the behavior we are seeing is really a symptom of a perceived lack of love in the relationship, our response would be entirely different. We would, instead, apply what is missing. This is what Dr. Taniguchi is teaching us to do.

Since a child is a wonderful child of God and has infinite potential no matter how imperfect he may appear to be, his true form is sure to unfold when you envision, revere, praise and believe by perceiving his true nature. As you reflect on this afterward, you will learn that a child truly is the Goddess of Mercy appearing before the parents to polish their souls.

How much easier it is to blame than to learn. Whenever a difficulty arises, we are so quick to see it as the fault of the other party, even our own child. However, there is a terrible penalty to be paid when we choose to blame rather than to see the opportunity for growth. When we choose to blame, with it come hurt feelings, pain and suffering and a worsening situation which will unerringly lead to further blame and more suffering.

There is a way to look at life that sees it as naturally filled with joy and harmony. When we see it in this way, we recognize pain and suffering as a warning alarm, telling us that we have taken a wrong turn on the path of life and are going in the wrong direction. Seen in this light, we can be grateful even for the pain and suffering because they are pointing out a mistake we have made. Once corrected, we will return to our normally happy self and live in harmony with all people, things and circumstances.

This is why Dr. Taniguchi is asking us to see beyond the effects that have appeared to us. Indeed, we must look for the cause. In every case, it is that the child of God in ourselves and in our children has not appeared. When we pierce the veil of delusion that we see as these effects and the love of God appears, the effects vanish and joy and harmony are restored.

Since a child loves his parents, he most of all wants his parents to love him. If he is secure in the knowledge that his parents love him no matter what, then he will be understanding and accepting when he learns that some actions cause his parents discomfort. This is the magic of envisioning, revering, praising and believing in the child's true nature first and allowing the imperfections to disappear.