

Win the Whining War!



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There is a full-fledged war happening at home and the more capable team is losing! Yes, I am referring to war between the whining child and the weak parent. It surprises me how many parents raise their hand when asked – “Do you have a strong-willed child?” In reality, there is no such thing as a strong-willed child; there is only the weak-willed parent.

A certain “scientific” parenting book proclaimed that it is not healthy to let the child to cry too often because it will trigger certain neuro-disorders (or some other high-sounding psycho label). Hence, this has prevented parents from taking firm action when the child kicks into a demanding mode by crying incessantly in order for her demands to be met! It is amazing that a three year old has the backing of the scientific community while the parent is paralyzed from training the child’s basic selfish indulgence.

There is something here that just doesn’t click.

The child is born with full-fledged passions and lust that needs to be restrained at all cost – the whining and the crying is their way of trumpeting their right to ascend the throne of control at home. Armed with a pitiful demeanor, and puffed up eyes, their goal is to have the adults continue in a daily routine of servitude and submission to their royal wishes. It is sad to see an adult who is CEO to a corporation of thousands, fall into a complete state of disarray when facing the tyranny of the three year old!

Here are three weapons for you to win this war of the whines :

Weapon 1 : Choose to disengage

Whining and tantrum requires an audience for continuous display. Your strategy as a parent is to make this into a “non-event”. For example, create a special whining room where all displays of whining is confined. Put the child into the room and say with all the calmness in the world – *“From henceforth, this is now the whining room (make sure the room is as bare as possible) and I will come back 15 minutes later (you can even use a kitchen timer). If you have stopped crying by then, I will let you out. Or else, it is another 15 minutes.”* Do not attempt to reason. Then, you have to be “thick-skinned” and ignore the pleas because you know that every whine attended to is a battle lost.

Weapon 2 : Destroy the target!

If the child whines for an extra piece of cake, do not give it – in fact, eat it yourself right before his eyes! The way to eliminate negative behavior is to make the child experience a greater “negative return” than he had hoped for. In this way, you are creating an indelible experience that you mean business. When you are consistent, he will get the message. Else, he is still training you to meet his demands.

Weapon 3 : Administer Vitamin “N”

The whining child is someone who needs to be educated on the most effective character-building word ever – “NO”. A child (or maybe even an adult!) who throws regular tantrum is a child who has had too many “YES” catered to him and the very word “NO” is a foreign phrase. For every “YES”, take effort to administer three “NO”s. It is to your child’s long-term benefit that he finds out sooner than later that the world does not revolve around his wishes. Teach your child early that he is not the only fish in the pond. The ability to say “NO” when faced with temptation is mark of maturity and the training starts right at home.

There is only one parenting rule – that is to WIN. You are not winning for your own sake but for your child’s sake. Exercise leadership now and the you will enjoy the friendship of a matured person later on, reverse the process and you would have raised a spoilt brat.

Think about it.

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