

Making New Patterns in Our Relationships

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Coach Myrna--April 26, 2022

www.coachmyrna.org

7 Week Series Starts in May

Based on 7 Gifts to Give Your Child--Parenting That Will Touch Their Future

Discover how to change the patterns of your relationships!

More Info Here: www.coachmyrna.org/7gifts.html

Making New Patterns in Our Relationships

In her book, *Radical Acceptance—Embracing Your Life With The Heart of a Buddha*, author Tara Brach tells a tale of a tiger who lived for years in the old lion house—a typical twelve-by-twelve-foot cage with iron bars and a cement floor. The tiger spent her days pacing restlessly back and forth in her cramped quarters.

Eventually, biologists and staff at the zoo worked together to create a natural habitat for her. Covering several acres, it had hills, trees, a pond,

and a variety of vegetation. With excitement and anticipation, they released her into her new and expansive environment.

But sadly, it was too late. The tiger immediately sought refuge in a corner of the compound, where she lived for the remainder of her life. The tiger paced back and forth in that corner until an area twelve by twelve feet became worn bare of any grass.

If we take an honest look at how we live our lives, most of us will find that we have developed unhealthy patterns in our relationships. Entangled in feelings of self-doubt, anxiety, self-judgement, and unworthiness, we have difficulty expressing our appreciation and love for those that we care about the most—parents, children, siblings, spouse, and friends.

Like the tiger, we cage ourselves in and do not achieve the love, joy, and satisfaction that we were created to have. The way out of our cage begins with two important steps:

- Becoming aware and beginning to accept our day-to-day experiences. This includes things that are difficult and painful as well as pleasurable and enjoyable.
- Allowing ourselves to feel compassion and kindness towards whatever is happening. We begin to allow ourselves to feel without judging ourselves or others; instead, replace judgment with tenderness, understanding and empathy. Doing this for ourselves allows us to begin to feel this towards others.

This is not an easy journey as we often live our lives from the neck up, not wanting to acknowledge the pain, turmoil and wounds that is going on within. It might seem counter-intuitive to focus on the things that are causing us pain, but we cannot heal or change those things of which we are not aware or do not acknowledge.

As parents, we are given an amazing experience to grow and heal because

we are choosing to be in an intimate parent-child relationship but this time our role is different. Dr. Daniel J. Siegel and Mary Hartzell state in ***Parenting from the Inside Out***, "How you make sense of your childhood experiences has a profound effect on how you parent your own children...your children give you the opportunity to grow and challenge you to examine issues left over from your own childhood."

Negative emotions are not pleasant, but they are useful in order to understand what we need to address. When we pay attention to what we feel and experience in the relationship with our child, we can be awakened to those things that need our attention. We have a choice how we see the challenges that arise in our relationship with our child:

- As a burden which can make parenting a difficult chore **or**
- As learning opportunities which enables us to grow, develop and approach parenting as journey of discovery

There is a misconception that others have the power to make us angry, sad, upset, or depressed. When we have unprocessed wounds and pain, we are reactive and respond unconsciously. But we can learn to think, feel, and act mindfully instead of repeating learned patterns of behavior. This takes time and patience and may involve collaborating with a coach, a counselor, working together with others in a parenting group, and/or reading books to support you on this journey.

If you would like support on your journey, consider joining the 7 week series described below.

Parenting is one of the most rewarding and yet challenging roles that one can have. And it is a responsibility that we take on with very little preparation. Using my recently published book, ***7 Gifts to Give Your Child--Parenting That Will Touch Their Future***, as the foundation for discussion, I will be holding a 7 week series where you can find tools and support for you on your parenting journey. The target audience for this 7-week series is for parents of all age children although the discussion groups will be assigned by stages in life (new parents, parents of elementary age, parents of teens,

parents of adult children.)

Each weekly session will focus on one chapter: The Gifts of **Belonging, Connection, Resilience, Wisdom, Accountability, Experience** and **Being the Best Parent You Can Be**. The weekly session will include **Education, Small Group Discussion, and Application**. For more information and to register: www.coachmyrna.org/7gifts.html

If you would like to know more about what I offer as a coach, please visit my website: www.coachmyrna.org/ Find out more about Safe Conversations www.coachmyrna.org/safe-conversations.html.

