

## Chapter 12 Let's get practical

Here are a few exercises in natural and logical consequences. Because lollipops react most favourably to this form of discipline, it is necessary to practise thinking logically and choosing "punishments" or consequences which naturally follow the wrong behaviour, rather than choosing a method of torture to force them into obedience.

This kind of consistent discipline is obviously best for all tree types! When people say we have to be "consistent" we often interpret it as follows: We have to act the same way in the same situation each time. If we have sent the child to his room for back-chatting once we have to send him to his room for back-chatting every time, right? Not true! Consistency doesn't necessarily require the same action on our part but rather requires having consistent expectations that result in predictable consequences. These consequences must be logical and instructive.

Consistent discipline therefore means that our actions in reaction to our child's misbehaviour must be a predictable result or outcome of his behaviour. When I eat too much, I expect consistent results: the scale will show it! I don't expect that my hair will start curling. A child who takes something that doesn't belong to him should therefore lose something that was his – that is consistency. To make him sit in the bathroom and think about his sins each time is not consistent because it has nothing to do with his transgression. It doesn't teach him anything about the impact of his behaviour, and it also doesn't give him a guideline for correct behaviour in future!

**Mark the punishments or consequences in each statement below with one of the following letters, and compare your answers to another adult's answers or mine, which I provide at the end of the exercise.**

**C** for **cruel** punishment or revenge which will needlessly hurt the child.

**L** for **logical, consistent** consequences from which your child will learn.

**U** for **unfair** punishment that has nothing to do with the offence.

**A** for punishments or consequences which are too **advanced** for your child's age. These overrate his abilities, reasoning skills or moral development.

**F** for **fair** punishment, but the punishment will not teach the child much about consequences for his behaviour nor will it correct future behaviour.

**P** for punishment which actually **protects** your child from the consequences of her behaviour instead of teaching her something.

**D** for a **dumb** idea which, according to you, will lead to the same behaviour being repeated, continued or worsened.

Write down in each instance how you would have acted and discuss it with another adult.

1. The six-year-old lollipop has knocked a glass from the table. It shatters into pieces and milk is spilled on the carpet. This is the third time this week it has happened!
  - a) Make a new rule that she will not get something to drink at the table again

until she is old enough not to knock over glasses. When she is thirsty she has to get a drink and finish it in the kitchen.

- b) Give her rubber gloves, a dustpan and brush, and a floor cloth and let her clean as well as she can. Put a coaster in front of her plate and make a rule that she has to put her glass on it from now on. If her glass is placed on the edge of the table you will remove it. Then she will only be allowed to finish drinking in the kitchen after dinner.
  - c) Give her a spanking, because she has not learnt from her previous two accidents. You warned her not to put her glass near the edge of the table, and therefore she has had enough chances now.
  - d) Let her do chores in the house to earn money to replace the glass.
  - e) I would have ...
2. The four-year-old lollipop promised to tidy up his room before you read him a story at bedtime. When you ask him whether he did it, he answers: "Yes, Dad!" but upon further investigation you find that everything was just swept under the bed.
- a) You take out the toys from under the bed and lock them away for a month so that he can learn to take better care of his toys.
  - b) You forbid him to play with those toys the next day and you make him pack away all his other toys neatly the next evening.
  - c) You give him a spanking because he lied to you and lies are a serious matter.
  - d) You let him take everything out and make him put it in the right places, and because it took extra time there will be no story at bedtime.
  - e) I would have ...
3. The twelve-year-old lollipop went to visit a friend and when you arrived early to pick him up you saw that there were no adults at the house and the children were watching a DVD with an age restriction of sixteen.
- a) You wait for the parents to come home and confront them because it is actually their fault that there was no supervision, therefore your child should not be punished. However, you do give a lecture on age restrictions on the way home.
  - b) You make a rule that your child will not be allowed to visit that friend's home in future and only invite the friend to your house under your supervision.
  - c) You use some of your child's pocket money to take out the same DVD and expect your child to watch it with you and discuss the content critically. He must also suggest a satisfactory plan of what he will do if adults leave the house when he is there and what to do when friends suggest unhealthy or illegal entertainment.
  - d) Your child is not allowed to watch any television, videos, DVDs or movies for a month so that he can realise that it is a privilege that should not be abused.
  - e) I would have ...

4. Your two-year-old lollipop nags incessantly for ice cream after the ice cream truck drove past your home.
  - a) You give him a spanking because you have said "no" three times and he refuses to stop crying.
  - b) You say "no" clearly and take him to his room in a firm, but friendly manner, to finish crying there. If you suspect he is really hungry, you give him something healthy to eat instead of the ice cream as soon as he has calmed down.
  - c) You tell him he must stop crying and then you buy him an ice cream so that he can learn that he gets nothing when he cries, but that he gets what he wants when he stops crying.
  - d) Explain to him why he is not allowed to have it – it is almost dinnertime, he is sensitive to dairy, he has eaten too much sugar already today and it makes him hyperactive, etc. Then stick to your guns, and refuse to buy it.
  - e) I would have ...
  
5. Your eleven-year-old fails his Business Economics test. After a while it turns out that he lost the paper from which he was supposed to learn and he was afraid to ask for another one. Then he learned the wrong work.
  - a) You expect him to go and tell the teacher what happened and ask him whether he may retake the test or do an assignment to supplement his marks.
  - b) You ground him for a week because he didn't look after his important papers.
  - c) You do nothing because you feel he has learnt his lesson – the poor marks are punishment enough.
  - d) You let him spend extra hours studying Business Economics because he needs 80% to make up for the poor marks. If he doesn't manage to do that he will be punished more severely.
  - e) I would have ...
  
6. Your fifteen-year-old lollipop leaves a trail of dirty dishes, school books, and clothes everywhere in the house and backchats when you reprimand her.
  - a) You take away her cell phone and the television set in her room so that she can realise how many privileges she has.
  - b) You force her to stay home every Saturday to do some washing, clean the kitchen, and tidy up all her school things, unless she doesn't let anything lie around for the whole week.
  - c) You explain that you, the domestic worker, and siblings will clean up after her, but as payment for your trouble, you will deduct R2 from her pocket money for each item you find out of place.
  - d) You dish up her food in the dirty plate, pour her cold drink in the dirty glass, and give the clothes that lie around to charity, wash none of her laundry,

- and hide her books that lie around until she can learn to be neat.
- e) I would have ...
7. Your three-year-old lollipop bursts into tears when the loops of his shoe laces aren't exactly the same size. Sometimes you have to do it four or five times before he is happy. It even causes you to be late some mornings.
- You tell him that it is difficult to do it the way he wants it. He must see if he can manage to do it himself. When he realises that he can't, you say: "I will help you every day, but only ONCE. If you moan I will not listen – we will go to the car, because after tying shoe laces we have to go to school." You follow through with this.
  - You take away the shoes and buy shoes without laces.
  - You send him to school without shoes so that he can understand that it doesn't really matter how big the loops of his shoe laces are.
  - You say that he is not allowed to moan about it again, because it is nonsense; it only causes you to be late, and besides, only girls moan about shoes. If he moans again, he gets a spanking.
  - I would have ....
8. Your ten-year-old lollipop frequently sneaks food from the cupboard and then lies if you ask her about it.
- Every time you catch her, she has to apologise to the whole family for taking something that actually belongs to everyone. That will teach her that lies bring shame on you and that it is wrong to lie.
  - She must pay for everything she takes. You write down everything that "disappears" and then give her a "bill" at the end of the week to replace everything she took.
  - You make a new rule that she has to tell you when she is hungry. When she does this you will always say yes to tasty but healthy snacks and she will have pudding and sweets with the rest of the family. If she doesn't ask, she will be deprived of all sweets and pudding so that she doesn't consume too much unhealthy food.
  - If you catch her, she must share what she took with you so that she doesn't develop a pattern of eating alone secretly.
  - I would have ...

**Answers:**

- |                 |               |               |             |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>1 a: A/C</b> | <b>b: L</b>   | <b>c: C/U</b> | <b>d: F</b> |
| <b>2 a: C</b>   | <b>b: D/P</b> | <b>c: F</b>   | <b>d: K</b> |
| <b>3 a: P</b>   | <b>b: F</b>   | <b>c: L</b>   | <b>d: F</b> |
| <b>4 a: C</b>   | <b>b: L</b>   | <b>c: D</b>   | <b>d: A</b> |

5 a: L	b: U	c: F	d: C
6 a: U	b: C	c: P	d: C
7 a: L	b: P/D	c: C/A	d: C/U
8 a: U/C	b: F	c: L	d: D/P