







### Chapter 3: “Why Are So Many Kids on Medication?”

- 1) What does Dr. Sax say the job of the parent is to teach? (bottom of pg. 50)
  
- 2) Is your child on medication for ADD, ADHD, anxiety, bi-polar disorder, or depression? What was the process you went through in working with doctors, teachers, counselors to finally decide to put your child on medication? Was this a first step or a last resort? How does your child’s medication effect your child at school? At home? In your family?
  
- 3) If your child is *not* on medication, do you see a rise in children on medication or diagnosed with ADD/ADHD, anxiety, bi-polar disorder, and/or depression?
  
- 4) What do you think of the statistics that Dr. Sax points to in this chapter? How do you think these statistics connect with what you see in the culture or your own experience?
  
- 5) What are the two recommendations Dr. Sax gave to be more confident and assert your parental authority?  
  
    Recommendation #1:  
  
    Recommendation #2:
  
- 6) Why does Dr. Sax think it is so important to follow these recommendations? Do you think following these recommendations would lead to less children on medication? Why or why not?
  
- 7) How often do you eat dinner with your child in a week? (at the table at home, with no cell phone or TV) Why is this number true of your family? Why do you think it is or is not important to eat dinner with your child every night? Is there anything you can change, quit, or move around so you can eat dinner as a family more?
  
- 8) Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## Chapter 4: “Why Are American Students Falling Behind?”

For further reading: “*Screen Schooled: Two Veteran Teachers Expose why the Overuse of Technology is Making our Kids Dumber*”  
by Joe Clement and Matt Miles

- 1) According to Dr. Kyung-Hee Kim (an educational psychologist), American kids creativity scores have steadily diminished in the past two decades. This means, children have become less of a lot of things. Name a few of these from pg. 81:
  
- 2) What do you think about Ripley’s research about why academic achievement has gone down? (Three domains: overuse of technology, overemphasis on sports, and low selectivity in teacher training)
  
- 3) Think about your own family and children. How much time does your child spend on technology at school and at home, just for homework? How much time does your child spend in sports-related activities? How would you rate your child’s teachers?
  
- 4) What do you think of this statement: “If kids don’t regard education as cool and fun then they will not be motivated to learn.” Does your child complain of school or church being “boring?” Do you think schools and churches should accommodate to the need to be entertained or have fun learning? Why or why not?
  
- 5) What does Dr. Sax suggest are the solutions to help American students *not* fall behind? (pg. 87)
  
- 6) What do you think is the main point of college education? When college students were asked what the main point of college is, what did they say? Do you find this to be true?
  
- 7) Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## Chapter 5: “Why Are So Many Kids So Fragile?”

For further reading: “*iGen: Why Today’s Super-Connected Kids are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood and What That Means for the Rest of Us.*” by Jean Twenge

- 1) What came to mind when you read the stories of Aaron and Julia? What do you think about Aaron’s father’s response: “*Who am I to tell him that he shouldn’t go after his dream? I just want him to be happy.*”
  
- 2) How would you rate your child on his or her level of *fragility vs. inner strength*? Does your child tend to *give up and retreat* like Aaron or *fall apart* like Julia? If you only have young children, are there things you can do now to grow his or her inner strength?
  
- 3) Where has many young people’s frame of reference shifted to? Where do they look for their identity? Whose opinions matter the most to tweens and teens these days? Who are they concerned about impressing?
  
- 4) Where does Dr. Sax think lies the answer to why kids are so fragile these days? What shift needs to happen? Where should a young person’s self-concept be rooted? Why?
  
- 5) How do you establish *primacy in parenting*? What kinds of things do you need to prioritize?
  
- 6) What does it mean for parents to “*educate desire*” in your child? What things can you do to limit the “American culture” from asserting its primacy in your child’s heart? What should you be fighting for?
  
- 7) Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## PART TWO: SOLUTIONS

### Chapter 6: “What Matters?”

- 1) What do you think about the data that shows intelligence doesn’t predict happiness, but only income and wealth? Does it surprise you that conscientiousness/self-control is the best indicator of all three? Why or why not?
  
- 2) Think about your child. In what ways does he or she show *conscientiousness*, (honesty, integrity, and self-control)? Can you think of a situation where you saw your child shine in this area?
  
- 3) Dr. Sax believes you *can* influence your child to change and become more conscientious (although he admits it’s easier when children are young). What are some ways Dr. Sax says you can change in your parenting to instill more self-control in your child? What can you do?
  
- 4) The inescapable truth, you must teach by example. How can *you* change to become a better person in order to become a better parent? What are things *you* can change to become more honest, integrated, and self-controlled? (For example: less screen time/social media use, getting more sleep, eating your veggies, controlling your tongue, working hard, and not cutting corners.)
  
- 5) Dr. Sax says that teaching conscientiousness requires a different approach than teaching kids to be smart. What is the different approach and why? How does identity play a role?
  
- 6) How can you work your “ethical muscles” more? How do you teach the virtue of hard work and empathy? How do you inscribe/incise virtue in your child? Is there anything you can do, situations you can put your child in, to teach hard work and virtue (giving him or her real experiences instead of just telling them with words)?
  
- 7) Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## Chapter 7: “Misconceptions”

For further reading: “*Be the Parent, Please: Stop Banning Seesaws and Start Banning Snapchat. Strategies for Solving the Real Parenting Problems*” By Naomi Shaefer Riley.

- 1) Misconceptions: Which of these six misconceptions resonate with you and why?
  - a: “*There will be a rebound effect.*”
  - b: “*My child will be an outcast.*”
  - c: “*I want my child to be independent.*”
  - d: “*I just want my child to be happy.*”
  - e: “*If I love my child, then that means I also trust my child, right?*”
  - f: “*I’m worried that if I follow your advice, my child won’t love me anymore.*”
- 2) Describe in your own words: *Too Soft* Parenting, *Too Hard* Parenting, and *Just Right* Parenting: How would you describe *your* parenting style?
- 3) Analyze what your child is watching or playing: video games, social media, TV shows. What are these experiences teaching your child? How violent, inappropriate, or disrespectful are these experiences and why does age matter in the things you limit your child to participate in?
- 4) What role does “fitting in” play in decision making for your child? (i.e., use of cell phones, video games, activities, sports, clothing, or the way you let them talk to you?)
- 5) How would you describe the difference between happiness and pleasure? What’s the relationship between happiness and *fulfillment*? What role does *pleasure* play in the decisions you make for your child?
- 6) How can you create an “alternative culture” for your child? A culture where he or she can learn: “service to others, mastery of the arts, faith in something greater than themselves, and discipline in pursuit of a higher goal?”
- 7) Why can’t love and affection be your main objective as a parent? What should be your main objective or your goal as a parent? Where does your reward come from?
- 8) Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## Chapter 8: “The First Thing: Teach Humility”

1. How is *humility* defined? What does it look like in practice?
2. Why has *humility* become the most “un-American” of virtues? What is competing with humility?
3. Why does the “culture of self-esteem” lead to a “culture of resentment?”
4. What does living in a “culture of humility” lead to?
5. What are some practical ways Dr. Sax suggests you can teach your child humility?
6. What are some reasons you should limit your child’s use of social media?
7. What is something you can do this week to teach your child humility? Is there a chore you can give your child or a device you can turn off?
8. Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## Chapter 9: “The Second Thing: Enjoy”

1. When was the last time you and your child did something fun together that you both really enjoyed? What was it?
2. Why is having fun and spending quality time with your child so important?
3. What are Dr. Sax’s suggestions around dinner time and car rides? Why are these so important?
4. Take a hard look at your child’s schedule. Are their extracurricular activities adding value to their life, or they’re there to be able to say, “Look at me!” or “Look at my kid!”?
5. Is there anything you or your child can give up in order to “*do less and become more?*” What can you give up in order to create more un-rushed enjoyable time together?
6. What is one thing you can plan for you and your child this week that will be fun for both of you? (It can be as simple as eating dinner together unplugged, going for a hike, or playing a board game instead of watching TV.) Think about what things your child likes to do.
7. Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

## Chapter 10: “The Third Thing: The Meaning of Life”

1. What is the “middle-class script,” and what are the problems with it? How does the “Flashdance metaphor” fit in with the script?
2. What is school for? What would your kids say? What would you say? What do you wish it was for?
3. How do we undermine the middle-class script? What’s the antidote to the culture of Flashdance and Facebook (or Snapchat).
4. How do you feel/what do you think about the statement Dr. Sax’s made: “One of the most difficult obligations of responsible parenthood is telling your son or daughter that their dream isn’t going to come true, that they need to find another dream.”?
5. Dr. Sax says, “Without meaning, life comes to seem pointless and futile. Without meaning, young people are more likely to become anxious and depressed.” How do we instill a sense of meaning , a longing for something higher and deeper?
6. Dr. Wright, the Headmaster of Shore, a private school in Sydney Australian, says the purpose of life is: *1.) Meaningful work. 2.) A person to love 3.) A cause to embrace.* If you could write your own purpose statement for life, what would you say?
7. Think about yourself. Do you have work that you find meaningful? How do you give and receive love in a lasting relationship? What cause are you passionate about or involved in, something larger than yourself that you champion with enthusiasm? If you’re a Christian, how are you growing as a disciple and follower of Jesus?
8. Think about your child. What work might your child find most meaningful? How can you prepare your child to give and receive love in a lasting relationship? How can you help your child find a cause, something larger than themselves that they can champion with enthusiasm? If you’re a Christian, how are you raising your child to be a life-long disciple and follower of Jesus?
9. Do you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns after reading this chapter?

