

Ambassador of Love

~ Saheli Sheth (Peoria, USA)

“Speak to your children as if they are the wisest, kindest, most beautiful and magical humans on earth, for what they believe is what they will become.” When we feel love and awe for our kids, we connect with them more deeply. This applies whether your child is a toddler, a teenager, or an adult — all human beings need love, connection, and people who believe in them.

Operating from a place of love is so important. However, when stressed, many of us naturally do the opposite: react out of fear. This fear can look like:

“What if my kid ends up with the wrong company or friends?”

“How do I keep them safe with technology, where everything is accessible at their fingertips?”

“What if I don't parent them perfectly?”

Anxieties and worries are natural, and they only mean you care. But when we're not our best as caregivers, it's often due to fear. Even when we feel anger toward our kids, could it stem from an underlying fear? For example :

- Yelling “Watch out!” when they cross the street, because we're afraid they'll get hurt.
- Arguing over the person they are dating, because we're worried they won't be happy in the future.
- Telling them to stop crying, because we fear we have not made them happy or can't make them feel better.
- Disagreeing with their views on politics or life, because we fear they'll make choices that clash with our values.

When we let fear guide our parenting, it becomes hard to raise our children according to our true values. So how can we shift to a love-based approach?

1. Reconnect with love: Keep baby pictures of your kid in a place that you can easily see, and remind yourself that God created your beautiful child.

2. Take time for yourself: Taking care of yourself is a necessity, not a luxury. Connect with people who love you. Go for walks; be mesmerized by how the tree branches dance in the wind and how the fresh air feels against your skin. When I don't take time to nourish myself, I'm more likely to react negatively. Treat yourself with the same compassion you would offer a friend, and you'll feel more at peace.

3. Connect with a guru: The strongest influence often comes from beyond our own efforts; it comes from our guru's blessings. I love sharing this example: My parents often worried about my sister and me in college, until Sadguru Sant PP Shantidada reassured them, “Your daughters are my responsibility now – just give them love.” This shifted their fear into faith, allowing them to just focus on loving us. Such is the power of a guru in our lives!

From a place of FEAR		To a place of LOVE
“Why were you out so late at night?!” (Fear that our child won't be safe)	→	“You are so precious to me. I trust you, but I worry about others who are out at this time. Come back on time because I love you and want you to be safe.”
“You need to keep your grades up!” (Fear that our child won't succeed or will struggle in the future)	→	“I love you and see that you're trying. How can I help? I know you don't like this subject, and I didn't like it either. Let's figure this out together...”
Enter your own fear here	→	Enter how this fear can be reworded to come from a place of love

A mentor once gave me a great piece of advice: “After correcting my kids, I say, 'I love you.' It reminds them that even if I didn't like their actions, my love for them doesn't change.”

Love breaks down walls and leads to connection. By shifting our words from fear-based to love-based, we can deepen our bond with our children. This, in turn, empowers them to share that love with others – to become powerful ambassadors of love for everyone around them. ◆