

God knew that selfishness would hinder relationships, so He provided honor as the solution. **Romans 12:10 says, “honor one another above yourselves.”** Honor counteracts selfishness in families and relationships, and it does it in a positive way. Instead of continual criticism and “don’t do that!” statements, honor gives families a God-given vision for unselfishness.

Honor: treating people as special, doing more than what’s expected, and having a good attitude.

Honor-based skill #1: Be Firm without being harsh

Some believe that the only way to be firm is to be harsh. Firmness says that a boundary is secure and won’t be crossed without consequence. Harshness uses angry words with the intent to get kids’ attention and tends to be used with the mindset that it will be more effective.

Two things will help you remove harshness from your interactions.

- Talk less and show less emotion
 - Note: Talking less and showing less emotion may sound strange because communication and emotional transparency usually lead to closeness. It’s just that using these two things [communication and emotion] might be used at the wrong place and the wrong time. These two ingredients can confuse the instruction process and don’t clearly communicate boundaries that are needed.
- Firm limits can be presented with honoring words [gentleness vs harshness]
 - Firmness doesn’t need to be cold and distant

Honor-based skill #2: Express sorrow instead of anger

In honor-based relationships, anger is not an appropriate consequence. Instead we can learn to reflect sorrow. Peel away the anger and we tend to find that we are genuinely sad that a child or teen is not acting appropriately.

Please note: There’s a big difference between reflecting sorrow and laying on a guilt trip. And words like “shame on you” or “I’m disappointed in you” communicate disapproval of a person rather than particular actions. These kinds of words and phrases are shame based; they tear down rather than build up.

Honor-based skill #3: Use problem solving and decision making

Developing good decision-making skills gives children and teens the ability to define a problem, look at consequences of various alternatives, and then choose the best solution among the options. Cooperative decision making teaches children and teens valuable skills of negotiation, compromise, communication, and identifying alternatives.

Honor-based skill #4: Enjoy relationships with children and teens according to their needs and interests

Be a great listener!

In a nutshell: it can be easy for adults to think they know what kids want but it's important to take time to really listen and understand.

Honor-based skill #5: Envision a positive future for children and teens

When we honor children and teens by envisioning a positive future, we focus on the good that we see [and what God has planned for them!].

When we envision a positive future for them, we give the children and teens a way of looking at themselves that is in itself a way of looking at themselves that's honoring. In a sense we're teaching them to honor themselves; or said another way, they are learning to appreciate how God has made them and the future God has planned!

- Adapted and Excerpts from: *"Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids!"* written by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller
- Disclaimer: If you pick up this book, I pray that you are encouraged by it. This is a helpful resource, yes. Is it a perfect resource? No. Use what is helpful and be encouraged! As parents we know there are no magic answers and we trust our heavenly Father to guide us on this journey of discipling our children.