

# Parenting Tip of the Month

May 2017



Lower Elementary Teachers

# Teaching with Wit and Wisdom

Barbara Coloroso

- Teaching students to **think** and **act** ethically is three fold:

*Giving them ways to care deeply, share generously, help willingly.*

*Curb their inclination to hoard or harm.*

*Stop in its tracks anything that fuels hatred.*

- An ethic rooted in deep caring is primarily about relationships. Principles, virtues and values are in the service to and at the service of that caring.

- The story about our human nature in today's social and cultural climate is part and parcel of our human nature and our social and cultural climate.

- Holding students accountable for what they do that causes harm, what they fail to do to care, and for what they turn a blind eye to says we care deeply about them. It also says that we believe they are capable of acting with integrity, civility, and compassion. That will require resolve on our part and discipline on theirs.

- **Discipline and Punishment—Why one works and the other only appears to work:**

**Punishment** is adult oriented, imposes power from without, arouses anger and resentment, invites more conflict, exacerbates wounds rather than heals them; is preoccupied with blame and pain; does not consider reasons or look for solutions; does something *to* a student; involves a strong element of judgment; and demonstrates a teacher's ability to control a student.

**Discipline** is *not* judgmental, arbitrary, confusing, or coercive. It is not something we *do to* students. It is working *with* them. It is a process that gives life to a student's learning. It is restorative, and invites reconciliation. Its goal is to instruct, guide, and help students develop self-discipline—an ordering of the self from the inside, not an imposition from the outside.

- The *process* of discipline does four things the *act* of punishment cannot do:

1. Shows students what they have done.
2. Gives them as much ownership of the problem that they can handle.
3. Gives them options for solving the problem.
4. Leaves their dignity intact.

- For mistakes, mischief, and mayhem that unintentionally or intentionally create serious problems of great consequence, the **Three R's**—restitution, resolution, and reconciliation—are incorporated into the four steps of discipline.

- **R.S.V.P.**—Consequences need to be **Reasonable, Simple, Valuable, and Practical.**

- **Six Critical Life Messages**

I believe in you  
I trust you  
I know you can handle it  
You are listened to  
You are cared for  
You are very important to me.

- **Philosophical Tenets**

Kids are worth it  
I won't treat them in a way I  
would not want to be treated  
If it works and leaves both of our dignity  
intact, do it.

- **Three Alternatives to *NO***

Yes, later.  
Give me a minute  
Convince me

- **Alternatives to Abundant Praise, Tangible Goodies,  
and our Presence as a Present:**

Encouragement  
Feedback (compliments, comments, constructive criticism)  
Deep caring (compassion and loving kindness)  
Discipline

- **Big I and Three C's**—Intent, content, circumstances, and  
possible intended or unintended consequences.

If we conclude that our actions could harm another person and  
we commence to act; we come full circle to our intent to harm.

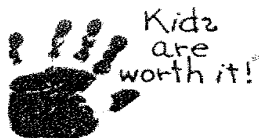
If we conclude that our actions could help relieve the suffering of  
the other, we have three choices: to not act (allowing suffering);  
to act because we want to maintain our image of a caring person  
(get caught); or to act to relieve the suffering of others, because  
we *must*.

- **T.A.O of Teaching: Time, Affection and Optimism**

- **Integrity**

Discern what is the right thing to do.  
Be willing to act when the burden is heavy.  
Be willing to speak up when it is more comfortable to be  
Silent.

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# Material of the Month

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## Parts of a flower - Hibiscus

*Nomenclature* means 'assigning the name'. In this lesson we will assign names to the parts of a flower. In the picture below, we have a *Hibiscus*. A real yellow *Hibiscus* flower is kept near the activity.



This is the Montessori style of doing an activity. We do all our work on the rug. It gives us space and hands move freely. This activity is very good for Kindergartners and other children who can read well, around 4 1/2 and above. In brief, to a 3/4 year old - you will first place the control cards (picture-label card) on the top of the rug from L-R, starting with *the flower* card. Then, match the picture card (card with only picture) by placing it next to the first control card on the right side. If it matches *nod* 'yes', place the card under it. If it does not match *nod* 'no', pick another picture card. So, this activity is a *matching activity* for a child of 3-4 years old. They sometimes are able to match the labels by recognizing the shape of the letters. It works great and they love it.

For a child of 5 and above, you will do a matching activity as shown above. In addition, a child reads the labels first then match it. Labeling is done using the [3 period lesson](#) where the teacher makes sure if the child remembers all the parts of the flower. For example, a teacher says, "This is a Calyx." Child says, "Calyx." Teacher names all the parts and the child repeats after her. She then asks the child, "Show me (the last name she said, here it is) Pistil." The child points at *Pistil*. She asks to show all the parts. Once the teacher is confident that the child knows all the names she goes to the third period and asks the child pointing at the Calyx picture, "What is this?" Later, the child uses the definition cards and defines each part of a flower. The child will also write these definitions on his science journal.

