

Living With Children

By John Rosemond
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“So, anyway, after they take showers I lay out their school clothes for the next day. And then....”

“Hold on right there,” “How old are your girls again?”

“Um, they’re seven and five,” she answered, being the



The rigors of late season hunting can put a toll on one’s patience. This is especially true if the season has not produced the results we had hoped for.

Everything from the weather to the inability to hunt as often as we like, can make us a very unsociable human. Sometimes our rank disposition is turned toward those we love, and sometimes it’s aimed at someone we really want to dislike anyway.

A long time ago, I learned I had better not “cop an attitude” with my wife. First, she would be quick to straighten me out. But secondly, it’s not her fault that I’m tired and that I missed the shot. She is not deserving of my ornery mood. But neither is anyone else. As for those people that I dislike; I try to make them few. All in all, our hunting and fishing escapades only do a little to determine our character, they mostly just reveal it.

If a person is moody, loves to grumble and complain, and finds fault in just about everyone, they will do the

same in the outdoor world. And I don’t want to be around them.

I read one time that moodiness is a sign of spiritual immaturity because it shows a lack of faith in God who is always constant and consistent. When our faith is in God, circumstances will have very little effect on our mood. Of course, there are periods of undue distress such as the loss of a loved one or a serious illness, but overall our lives must be one where our mood-swings are few. And why would a person complain and grumble so much when we are such a blessed people?

When we grumble and complain we become both egocentric and unthankful. We are egocentric in that we put our needs above everyone else’s, and we are unthankful in that we continue to utter our complaints. God’s way is two-fold; humility and praise. It’s the picture of Christmas. The Bible says concerning Jesus, “Though he was God, He did not demand and cling to His rights as God. He made himself nothing; He took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form.” And how thankful (praise) we should be because of this act of selfless sacrifice toward us who needed it most.

Ask God to make you a humble and thankful person. Ask Him to give you a great faith so people will never have to wonder what mood you’re in. In doing so, not only will others like you more, you will like the new, consistent you, as well.

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thirty-something mother of the girls in question. “Why?”

“I guess I need you to explain to me why you’re doing that.”

“You mean laying out their clothes the night before?”

“Yes. Why are you doing that?”

“Well, I, well, if I didn’t, I don’t know, they might pick out something inappropriate.”

“Like what? T-shirts with satanic messages on them?”

(Laughing) “Oh, no, not that! I mean like tops and bottoms that don’t match.”

“Like stripes and polka dots together? Or two shades of orange that clash?”

“Yes, something like that.”

“That’s...you used the word inappropriate...that’s inappropriate? I thought inappropriate was like punching someone in the face for no reason. Wearing stripes and polka dots is inappropriate?”

“Well, I mean, the other kids might laugh at them.”

“Okay, so here’s my very important question: I seriously doubt that kids this age have a developed fashion sense, but that aside, so what if some other kid or kids did laugh?”

(Long pause) “Well, I don’t want my daughters to be made fun of.”

At this point, I had to suppress the almost irrepressible urge to tell this mother that I hadn’t been born yesterday; that I knew the real reason she picked out her daughters’ clothes every evening. The real reason is that with rare exception, today’s moms personalize everything – and I do mean EVERYTHING – that happens to their children or that their children do.

So, if a five-year-old managed, somehow, to get by her Designated Micromanager and wore to school an outfit consisting of stripes and polka dots (I’m having memories of when I was a hippie), her DM, when she found out, would be con-

cerned, convinced even, that people might have been talking about and laughing at HER by proxy. Furthermore, even if the child in question came home and did not complain of being mocked, mom would still be certain that someone out there is thinking that she’s one of the Bad Mommies you hear about.

Choosing and laying out a seven-year-old child’s clothes – something my mother must’ve stopped doing for me before my third birthday because I have no memory of it – is emblematic of the current state of motherhood in America. It’s why I often say to audiences hither and yon, “Raising children has become threatening to the mental health of American women.”


I mean, they worry about everything, and I do mean EVERYTHING! Every detail is important, which means, essentially, that in their minds there are no details. Everything and

anything that goes wrong is potentially apocalyptic; therefore, everything must be managed. Everything even slightly off the beam is cause for reading yet another book. (Did I actually just say that?)

The mother in question came to me because she was having lots of conflicts with her daughters. Good for them, I told her. They refuse to let you tell them what foot to lead with when they begin walking. We made a list of what was really, truly important parenting stuff to which she absolutely had to attend. It was fairly short, actually.

I heard from her three months later. She’s no longer in near-constant conflict with her daughters; she’s having a much, much happier motherhood; and she’s gone back to college. Yay! I mean, YAY! You go, girl! That’s the way to do it!

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3rd January

ACROSS

- 1 Blue: Sp.
- 5 Like a way-out daddy-o
- 8 Janet's "Psycho" poster top
- 11 Singer Ochs
- 15 "Head over Heels" quintet
- 17 Conquer
- 19 Antique car knob
- 20 Distribute
- 21 Fortress's earthwork
- 22 Mercutio's buddy
- 23 Dried grapes
- 25 Alarming times?
- 26 Frigidity
- 28 Compass heading
- 29 Biblical king
- 30 "Take Me ___ Am" (Faith Hill)
- 31 Tribeswoman with plated lips

- 34 Paneled room
- 35 Not garden variety
- 39 Hubert of jazz
- 40 ___ off (angry)
- 42 Max and Buddy
- 44 Fabrication
- 45 Medieval ship
- 46 Mjolnir's owner
- 47 Desert plant
- 48 Nora's pet
- 49 Charms
- 51 She was Graf's rival
- 52 Picnic "table," perhaps
- 53 Mongrel
- 54 Injure one's tongue with tea
- 55 B.P.O.E. member
- 56 Dixie charmer
- 59 Plain and unassuming
- 60 Took hold of
- 64 Et ___ (and others)
- 65 ___ Ste. Marie
- 66 Ward (off)
- 67 Average Joe's grade

- 68 Pacific ___
- 69 Relieve
- 70 Giddy delight
- 71 Give it ___
- 72 Sightings
- 74 ___ jure
- 75 Final authorities
- 77 Advanced deg.
- 78 Swiss river
- 79 Bible's second word
- 80 Regardless
- 84 "Ain't Too Proud to ___"
- 85 "___ an island" (Donne)
- 89 Love affair
- 90 Director Kubrick
- 93 Checking out
- 94 Ship seepage area
- 95 Mortarboard adornments
- 96 Train stop
- 97 British firearm
- 98 Garbo's homeland: abbr.
- 99 Letters on an oil can
- 100 Without, to Fifi

DOWN

- 1 Temple's first husband
- 2 Dreyfus advocate Émile
- 3 Hybrid citrus
- 4 Eases
- 5 ___ d'oeuvre
- 6 Common contraction
- 7 Used an exercise bike
- 8 Grooming implement
- 9 Summon a genie
- 10 One against
- 11 Of speech
- 12 Keyboard key
- 13 Singer Turner et al.
- 14 Durocher et al.
- 16 Gordon Sumner, to his fans
- 18 Part of HRE
- 19 Emergencies
- 24 0 for 2?
- 27 Best Director of 1938
- 29 Hesse's river

- 31 It's out on a limb
- 32 Semitic god
- 33 Truant from service: abbr.
- 35 Parts of mins.
- 36 Ingrid, in "Casa-blanca"
- 37 Islets
- 38 Pastures
- 41 Rosy-fingered goddess
- 42 Ruffian
- 43 Made a fine serve
- 46 Real
- 47 Matzo's lack
- 48 Clumsy crafts
- 50 Christie Brinkley's alma mater
- 51 Rowing shell
- 52 Feelin' groovy
- 54 "___ on Ice"
- 55 Che, to his mom
- 56 Unclad
- 57 Some New Haven residents
- 58 Sagging
- 59 West and Questel
- 60 Command to Dobbin
- 61 Portions: abbr.
- 62 Architect Eliel's son
- 63 Former African rulers
- 65 Paintball battle sound effect
- 66 Arctic slab
- 69 Syntax expert William
- 70 Flows noisily
- 71 Nocturnal lemurs
- 73 Cast doubt upon
- 74 Composer Camille Saint-___
- 76 Turkish sultan
- 78 Humiliate
- 80 Dollops
- 81 Give off
- 82 Doormat scraper
- 83 Olden verb endings
- 85 Wall St. abbr.
- 86 Palm used for thatching
- 87 Part of, as a plot
- 88 Top kicks: abbr.
- 91 Marble game
- 92 Guido's note

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