



## The mathematical formula for balanced parenting

Share this article with other mums



In this weekly column, Avi Liran shares with you some happy tips, inspirational and fun ideas, and clips to provoke your thinking patterns and explore new choices that may elevate your personal and family's HQ (Happiness Quotient)

Everyone can become a parent, no test, no course is required. Most of us learn about parenthood simply by our own experience. Parenthood is a complex combination of responsibilities and joy meant for professionals but given to amateurs.

Most of us make the majority of our parental mistakes with our first newborn. At first, everything is new. We are very worried, stressed and afraid to make mistakes. We often use "Don't" and "No" to define the boundaries and ensure safety. As young parents we do not have the wisdom that role-modeling influences our kids more than our words, corrections and advice. Had we known that, we would have paid more attention to find ways to manage better our legitimate (or not legitimate) anger and frustrations.

If we are not discouraged yet by the formidable task of bringing up kids, our ability to make fewer mistakes with second child is a function of our capability to manage the new "joy" of sibling rivalry. The third child onwards will benefit from the learning experiences we had accumulated along the way.

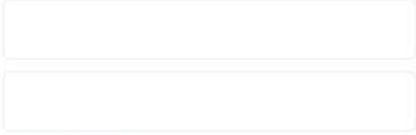
By the time we perfect and hone our parenting skills, being ready to become the perfect parents on earth, the kids start to leave the nest. Therefore, grandparenthood grants us the second chance to finally do it right.

Don't you feel completely comfortable entrusting your kids to be with your parents? Isn't it amazing to see how our parents feel more comfortable with our kids than with us? Joan McIntosh explains this irony with her sense of humor: "They say genes skip generations. Maybe that's why grandparents find their grandchildren so likable." Sam Levenson, the American humorist journalist remarked that "The reason grandchildren and grandparents get along so well is that they have a common enemy."


What do best grandparents do better than we do as parents? They invest more quality time with their grandkids. While parents often use the TV or the maid as the babysitter, a grandparent is a babysitter who watches the kids instead of the television or enjoys active watching of SpongeBob with them.

Rudi Giuliani, the past mayor of New York once said "What children need most are the essentials that grandparents provide in abundance. They give unconditional love, kindness, patience, humor, comfort, lessons in life. And, most importantly, cookies."

Indeed, most grandparents are not as concerned as parents are with homework, grades, extra tuition and cost. They enjoy pampering the grandkids. By now they know that life is short and it is not only about achievements. They themselves made the same mistakes with us and they are now up to compensate what they have missed. It is also about joy and appreciation, about celebrating the love now. They love to spoil our kids and let us have the task of watching their diet. They are proud of their grandkids and they do not need any reason for that. They shower on them endless compliments to boost the confidence of their grandkids. They "borrow" our kids to have fun with them and bring them back to us when it is time to discipline and work is needed.



**GENERAL**



Tell us, Singapore! Would you put your child on a...

**GENERAL**

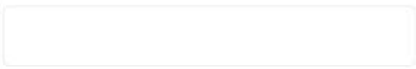


BEWARE of these durian scammers in Singapore!

**GENERAL**



Cute baby dancing to Shakira




56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



One of the greatest virtues of great grandparents-grandchildren relationship is mutual-acceptance. Acceptance does not mean promoting complacency. Acceptance is a condition that can enable smooth positive changes. The American author Ruth Goode remarked: "Our grandchildren accept us for ourselves, without rebuke or effort to change us, as no one in our entire lives has ever done, not our parents, siblings, spouses, friends – and hardly ever our own grown children."

The other important learning point from grandparents is balancing our focus. Appreciating what works and use these observations to encourage and reward good patterns of behaviour. Many parents are trapped in critical mode, skipping the important recognition of what there, focusing mainly on what to achieve next. The American columnist Lois Wyse said that "A mother becomes a true grandmother the day she stops noticing the terrible things her children do because she is so enchanted with the wonderful things her grandchildren do."

I suggest the following happier parenting formula for your consideration:

### **Parent skills + Grandparent attitude**

#### **2**

A great grandparent is a little bit parent, a little more mentor, and a lot of best friend. Striking a balance of well-being in tandem with our hard work of taking care for your kids' progress and achievements will not only make both parent and kids happier, it will also drive better results.

In the next weeks I will share with you the work of Dr. Judy Willis( the neuroscientist both in the lab and class) of how happier kids learn much better. Parents deserve to enjoy with their kids. After all we did not bring them to this world to become just our "second work".

To be a happier parent who raises happier kids, you might benefit from reminding yourself to use grand-parenting skills such as acceptance, effective kind-feedback, patience, humor, providing comfort and appreciation.

At the end of his fun and enlightening book "Stumbling on Happiness", Dr. Dan Gilbert claims that asking someone who is doing NOW what I want to do in the future is the greatest predictor of how I will feel in the future. Therefore, learning NOW how our parents feel about raising the grandkids is the greatest predictor of how we will feel when we get to their age. And if we will feel the same, can we bring forward our grandparents skills and use them now?

Having said that, not all grandparents are grandchildren-friendly. Some grandparents are very traditional, hierarchical, serious and impatient. Some had enough of kids or prefer their total independence. Some simply did not learn from experience and still playing the annoying part of the parent role. In that case, you might have a greater need to add the "ideal grandparent" skills to compensate and nourish your kids with these important missing ingredients. Although inaccurate, imagining what you would have done as the best grandparent on earth thoughts might help you with a sense of balance.

A good question to ask especially in times of stress is: **"If I were the grandparent now, what would I have done in this situation?"**

Avi Liran is co-creator of [www.ha-p.com](http://www.ha-p.com), one of the world's leaders in applying rigors findings from Positive Psychology, Neuroscience and Education, Behavioral Economics and Gestalt spiced with humor, play, improvisation and theater into the 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership program called "The Joy-Care Leadership". Avi is a happy parent of the wonderful kids: 16 years old Roe and 12.5 years old Savyon-Li. Readers are invited to ask relevant questions and concerns. [avi@ha-p.com](mailto:avi@ha-p.com)



**Karen Mira**

No longer a corporate slave to the banking industry, I am a certified Work-at-Home-Mom who is currently mastering the art of juggling domestic duties and writing articles.

0 Comments

Sort by

Categories

General

56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



56 friends like this



Pregnancy  
Baby  
Bigger Kid  
Family  
Parenting Styles  
Education

Health  
In the News  
Events  
Living in Singapore  
Allergies  
Beauty & Fashion

Birthdays  
Breastfeeding  
Celebrity Parents  
Child Health  
Child Safety

Malaysia  
India  
Indonesia  
Thailand  
Philippines  
Singapore  
Hong Kong  
Sri Lanka  
Vietnam  
Kidlander.com  
Pregnant.sg  
ParentTown



### This may also interest you



Little Prince George starts big boy school!

