

Ep #108 Being more effective when giving consequences and rewards

I can guarantee you will not look at rewards and consequences the same after this podcast.

This is episode 108. Let's begin.

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We welcome you to the ADHD Smarter Parenting Podcast. Here to heal and elevate lives is your Parenting Coach, Siope Kinikini.

Hello, my friends. How are you? I hope you're doing well. Thank you for joining me. I am so excited today because there is a lot to talk about. But specifically, we are going to be talking about helping you implement consequences and rewards more effectively. Now, this is a concern that a lot of parents have because they don't know how to go about having rewards and consequences for their child to help change their behavior.

So during this podcast, we are going to be discussing specifically the difference between values and interests, and why it's important for you to know the difference between those when you are [implementing consequences](#) or rewards for your child. Either one.

We're also going to be talking about the need for you to pay close attention to the differences between the two when implementing a consequence and reward. I'm going to share an example from a mother who has a teenage daughter, who she has trained to guide along her path towards adulthood, and so how she's [using rewards and consequences to do that](#).

And then we are going to talk specifically about consequences and rewards, and that they should be always focused on the differences between interests and values. This is something that you, as a parent, need to be able to adopt in your approach with helping your child change their behaviors.

So it's a loaded, loaded podcast today. There's a lot to go through and a lot to define in order to help you along this process. But I can guarantee you will not look at rewards and consequences the same after this podcast. In fact, you are going to be more empowered to implement consequences that work and rewards that work because of this podcast. So let's get started.

The first thing we're going to talk about are values and interests. Now, I want to share an experience that I had. I was watching The Dating Game. Now, a lot of people may not know what that is. It's a show from way back in the 19, I think 60s, 70s. There were clips of it that were online on YouTube. And I found it fascinating the interaction between the contestants.

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Now, the premise of the game is that there is a bachelor or bachelorette on one side, and they're unable to see three candidates that they can choose for a date. It's called The Dating Game. So they would ask questions of these contestants on the other side. And after a specific period of time, they would choose either bachelor or bachelorette number one, number two, or number three.

And while I was observing this interaction, and actually seeing a few other clips of this game show, I was fascinated to focus on how the contestants were determining who they would choose. The questions that were asked were always almost focused on interests. Like, what are you interested in? What do you like to do? And none of them were focused on values.

Now, you may be wondering, "Okay, what's the difference between the two?" I can tell you that values are powerful. Interests are powerful as well. They both serve different purposes in the way that we form our identity and the way that we define who we are. So I wanted to define those.

My perception from The Dating Game is that they would go on a date and they would have things that were of similar interest. But if the values were not there, then there would be no real spark or connection between the two. Rather than creating a long-term relationship, it would just be a spark.

Now, I actually went and observed other game shows that were similar to this. There was one called Joe Millionaire back in the day that I saw clips of as well on YouTube, and I thought it was fascinating. But again, everything that was being asked and everything that was focused on in regards to the contestants were all focused on interests. What are you interested in?

Let's start off with defining values. Values are an intangible standard or principle which give meaning to our lives, and it guides our behaviors and our choices. So when we're talking about values, values are things like honesty, respect, education can be a value, further learning, independence, work ethic, self-worth. Those are values that we have. Compare that with interests. And I think you know where I'm going with interests. Interests are something that excites our curiosity or our attention. And they are things that spark us to engage with another person, but they're not necessarily our personal principles. So interests can include hanging out with friends, video games, parties, those types of things are interests. Rock climbing is an interest.

What I found really fascinating is after I had watched those game shows on YouTube, I went back and I evaluated my own life and my own relationships in the past. What I found was if I was engaged with somebody, a friend, a colleague, when we shared similar values, we tended to create a friendship that has lasted years. Whereas I've had friends where we had similar interests, and because we only shared those interests, we were friends for a period of time, but it didn't sustain over the long-term.

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So I was interested in college in repelling. In fact, after classes, we would go to the canyon and we would repel off the side of a cliff. And I had a group of friends that we all loved that, and that was the one thing that brought us together, it was our interest. Now, as I have gotten older, I don't really have an interest in repelling anymore, and so that has changed. And strangely enough, my friends from that era have changed as well. Whereas the friends that I gained and we shared similar values, like further education, we have tended to stay in contact over time.

Now, I do want to clarify that you can still have friends and have interests that are common, and if you share values and interests, that is a powerful place to be. In fact, long lasting relationships share both values and interests. So while interests can be helpful in bringing people together and forming relationships, if you want relationships to endure and to grow, you need to share the same values. It's through your values that you will determine how strong your relationship will be. And in fact, when couples argue, it's largely because they have different values. So having the same values is going to be essential for success.

You're probably wondering why I'm talking about interests and values so much. But as a parent, it is so essential for you to understand the difference between the two. And in creating a relationship with your child, you need to know their interests, but you also need to know what are the values that you want to raise your child with? How do you implement these values of honesty, of respect, of further education, of work ethic, of self-worth, self-confidence? How do you instill those values in your child? And you can use their interests in order to help move that along. Now, you're going to be able to do that using Effective Negative Consequences and Effective Positive Rewards.

So now that we understand the difference between values and interests, I need you, as a parent, to sit down and evaluate, what are your values? What are the values you want to hand off to your children? What do you want them to value as well? Because once you can define those things, it makes it a lot easier in the process of implementing consequences and rewards with your child, and their behavior to shape it, towards reaching the goal of those values. As you define your values, then you can focus on the interests. What are the things your child is interested in?

Now, this brings us to point number two that I wanted to cover in this podcast. The first one was we wanted to understand the difference between values and interests. Now, let's talk about why it's important. Once you determine what your values are, what are the driving things that you want your child to incorporate into their lives? What are their values? What are your values? You want to focus on their interests, because interests are what you are going to use to implement Effective Negative Consequences or Effective Positive Rewards. It is through their interests that we can help your child adjust their behavior, either increasing something towards the values that you espouse, or decreasing a negative behavior so they can, again, move towards the values that you are trying to teach your child.

Let me talk to you about Miriam. Miriam had a daughter who was a teenager, typical teenager, who would love to go out and hang out with friends. While I was working with Miriam, we started

to talk about these things. What are your values, Miriam, and what are your interests? [Because she had a really hard time implementing consequences and rewards in the home.](#) As we discussed this and I had her list her values, she listed down that she wanted her child to be independent. She wanted her child to have a good work ethic. She wanted her child to have good self-esteem and to be confident. So those are the values that she wanted her child to have when she eventually became an adult, when she turned 18.

Now, as we discussed this, I said, "Okay, well, now that we know what the values are that are driving what you want your child to increase and have in her life, let's focus on what are her interests at this time, because interests can change." So she came up with she loves to spend time with her friends. She loves to use the car. She loves spending time on her phone. And she loves to browse the internet. As we started to list down the interests, we then went across the rules that she had in her house, and determined in what way we could use the interests to either encourage her towards the values that Miriam had of work ethic, self-esteem, confidence, independence, by using these interests to do that.

So one of the biggest issues in the home was that Miriam's daughter would come home late. She just did not respect the curfew and that made it really difficult. So as we came across that's the rule, what are the values we want to teach her? So we want to teach her independence, respect. Those are the values Miriam wanted to implement with her daughter. So in what way can we use her use of the phone, her use of friend time, or internet browsing, to help change that behavior?

In our discussion, we had to go deeper into consequences and rewards, and understand that consequences and rewards have five components that make them effective. And what's amazing about it is that they are exactly the same for both. There are five components that make Effective Negative Consequences effective, and five components that make Effective Positive Rewards effective. And they're exactly the same thing. So I'm going to list those to you so you know what they are, and then you'll see how we used interests, the interests of Miriam's daughter, in order to lead her towards the values that Miriam is trying to espouse in her daughter.

So, the five components to Effective Positive Rewards and Effective Negative Consequences are that it needs to be immediate. You need to be able to give the consequence or the reward as immediately as possible, especially if the children are younger.

The second is degree or size. You want to be sure that the consequence and reward that you're giving are equal to the behavior that you are observing. So if your child is doing something well, you want to be able to give a reward that fits the size of the behavior, not something super huge. If you ask your child to take out the garbage, you don't want to say, "Hey, okay, well, now I'm going to give you \$100." That's too big of a reward, right? So you want to be sure that degree in size is appropriate.

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And you need to be consistent. That's the third component. You need to be able to repeat it and do it over and over and over again so your child learns that this is what happens when I behave a certain way.

The fourth component is important. The reward and the consequence has to be meaningful for your child. This is where interests come in. By you determining what your child's interests are, that really gives you a leg up in determining how you can drive them towards the values that you want them to have.

And then the fifth component for both Effective Negative Consequences and Effective Positive Rewards is that it needs to vary. And that means you need to switch up the reward using different rewards and different consequences over time, because you can't ground your child for a week every single time they do a behavior from the time that they're five until they're 18. That consequence needs to adjust to your child's needs and to where they're at. And this is a balancing act.

One of the things that I wanted to drive into Miriam, and I want you to completely understand, is that consequences and rewards are sides of the same coin. And what I mean by that is that if you're looking at a behavior, depending on which one you focus on, you can help your child using either one.

Now, a lot of parents are thinking, "Hey, we should just punish for negative behaviors." [Sometimes focusing on what they should do and offering a reward for what they should do is more powerful than waiting for a negative behavior and then issuing a consequence.](#) What you want to do is focus in on what side of the coin I need to use in order to teach my child the values I want them to have.

This was a hard thing for Miriam to understand. And as we continually talked about it, she was focused on her child arriving late. So obviously, she was focused on what are the consequences if my child comes in late? So I flipped it on her and I said, "Miriam, what would a reward be for her to come back early? How can we focus this in a different way, improve your relationship with your child, but also gear it towards what value you want to teach your child, which is independence, self-esteem, and confidence? You want her to have the confidence to do the right things and to be rewarded for doing the right things."

This was a mind shift for her because she was so focused on consequences for so long that as I said, "Okay, let's focus on what she can do right and then offer reward for that," it really boggled her mind. It made her think again and again and again, "Okay, maybe I can adjust some things and make them different in order to help my child along this path towards the values that I want my child to have."

Can you see the power of consequences and rewards? Because they are parts of the same coin. They are parts of the same coin, and you as a parent are going to have to decide which side is going to serve you better. Now, in Miriam's case, we offered a reward for her to be able

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to earn if she came back early from a party. And the way that we did it is we took into consideration everything that makes consequences and rewards effective, immediate, degree size, consistent, important, and varied. We included all of those and talked to her. Now, because she's a teenager, immediacy is a little bit different than if you're five. If you're five, you want the reward right away. If you're older, like Marianne's daughter, you can offer a reward that is a little farther in the future.

So, this is what we came up with. We came up with this idea that if Miriam's daughter could come home earlier than the allotted time, she could earn 15 minutes extra the next time her friends got together. Now, you may think that that's small. That's not really, what is that? But what happened was when we presented this to her, the daughter was so open to it. And she was so excited about it that she said, "Okay, I'm going to do this." And so she focused in on the positive side of it. And what happened was, she did come home early. She came home a minute early, went up and reported to her mom, "Okay, I made it back. I'm early. Next time, can I stay 15 minutes longer than I'm allowed to past curfew?" Mariam's mom, because she values independence, because she values confidence, she said, "Yes." These are the values she's instilling in her daughter. And by focusing on the reward side of it, she was able to reach those values.

Now, at the same time, consequences. If she came late, what are the consequences? We decided that it would be 15 minutes less, and she'd have to come back earlier 15 minutes. What we found is when we presented both of those on the table, that Miriam's daughter focused on the rewards, what she could gain from it. Because she wanted to earn more, and she wanted to build confidence and self-esteem and independence, which are all the same values that Mariam had. It was a fascinating way for Miriam to look at ways that she could instill good values and the values that she has in her daughter. Very, very powerful.

Now, during this podcast, we have talked about understanding the difference between values and interests. We've also talked about why it's important to understand these differences. And I gave you a challenge. You need to sit down and write down what are the values you have and the values you want to pass on to your children. And then write down a list of interests. What are your child's interests? Because that will give you a way that you can work through consequences and rewards. And then I shared with you how we can use Effective Negative Consequences and Effective Positive Rewards as the same coin. And we can change behaviors based on what we want and which one leads us to the values that we have.

I could go on forever about this topic, because this is such an interesting topic for so many parents. They struggle with consequences and they struggle with rewards. Once they know that they're part of the same coin, and if the focus is on values, it really does change the game. You're no longer focused on punishing. You're focused on what can I do to get the end result that I want.

Is it strictly obedience? I don't know if that's the value that you want to instill in your child. In my years of working with families, they usually list down obedience as a value until we start

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throwing some other things in the mix. Which is, "Okay, so you want your child to be obedient in any circumstance? To all authority?" "No, just to me." "Okay, just to you. At all times?" "Yes." "Okay. Even when you're being unreasonable?" "Well, no." And then we start going through that and saying, "Okay, obedience is great, and we do want obedience in our child. But we also want to instill in them values that will carry them on as adults, where they can be independent and confident and build self-esteem.

This is a lot of discussion and this is a lot for you to process, but I know you can do it. And I know you're going to take the time to differentiate between values and interests, because it is very important for parents to understand this. Very important to understand how consequences and rewards work, and that they can work together. It all depends on your focus and your desire to instill what values in your child.

I highly recommend you jump over to the Smarter Parenting website, print out the five components that make [Effective Negative Consequences](#) work and [Effective Positive Rewards](#). Print those out so you can take a look at it. And I want you to write down what are your values? What are your child's interests? And start shaping a plan around that, and then determine, can I get what I want by implementing a consequence or by implementing a reward?

Now, the reason I love the Teaching-Family Model is that we are always focused on building relationships and teaching. It's not about punishing a child, it's about teaching a child. Teaching a child to move forward, to grow healthy, emotionally well. And that's why I love this entire approach. So you can take that to the bank, y'all.

I am so grateful that you joined me for today. It's a lot to process, I know, but let me tell you, it is a game changer. If you're able to implement this in the way that you parent, you're going to change the game. Change the game. That's it for me, and I will see you again next week. All right. See ya. Bye.

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