

Developing Character Using The Inclusive Behavior Technique

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By Greg Baker

Character is self government. The ability to rule your desires and lusts--even your needs--is what character is all about. It forces you to do the right thing even when you have no desire to do so. It does not rely on someone else's character but has the ability to determine your direction despite personal desires.

Proverbs 6:6-8 Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: 7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, 8 Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

These two verses should be every parent's hope for their children. We want our children to grow up to make the right decisions, to do the right thing without having us hover over them. Character does the right thing without having a guide, overseer, or ruler telling you to do something.

One way to help develop character in your children is with the Inclusive Behavior Technique. This technique works well at any age, but it is a more subtle form of character development and requires the parent or mentor to be hyper aware of everything he or she is doing.

In the relatively brief time Jesus spent with His disciples, Jesus succeeded in instilling within them spiritual and godly character that would preserve them even after He was gone. Almost immediately, Jesus began applying this technique to develop the needed character in an effort to prepare them for when He could no longer physically walk beside them.

What is the Inclusive Behavior Technique?

In short, the technique includes a child into a parent's decision making and behavior. It makes them an exclusive part of what the parent is doing and thinking. Imagine the power of a club or exclusive group that you are invited to be a part of. When you are accepted and then included into the decision making and the various aspects of particular behaviors, you begin to feel attached--special, if you will--to the point where the logic, reasoning, and behavioral patterns are adopted as a way of life.

If you study gangs, you will see this pattern developing. Wise parents will form their own exclusive family club where you include your children into the subtle dynamics of your decisions and behavior.

Jesus did this. Note the following verses:

Mar 4:10-12 - And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. 11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom

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of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: 12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

Put yourself in the shoes of the disciples. Here you are told by the Son of God that you were privy to the mysteries of the Kingdom of God when few others were! What a pleasure that would be. I imagine you would bend forward just a bit and pay particular attention to the next words Jesus would say. And you would remember them. It would make an impression on you. It would impact your own decision making.

When in college, occasionally a teacher would take me aside and say something like this, "Greg, I'm going to tell you something I rarely if ever tell anyone else" Just hearing those words made me want to hear more. I paid close attention and remembered those words. Much of what was told to me under such circumstances has been a guide to future decisions in my own life.

That is how the Inclusive Behavior Technique works. When you include your children in such a way to your decision making, your behavior that they feel a part of something special, it makes a much more profound impact.

The technique employs a variety of subtle procedures designed to include your children in such a way that they wish to adopt the characteristics of what you say or do into their own lives.

First, your inclusion should be exclusive. It almost sounds contradictory. To make a lasting impact, make the inclusion something special. Make it exclusive to your children, your family, or a small group. Use phrases like: "I don't usually tell other people this." Or, "I'm going to let you in on a secret." This makes what you have to say powerful and enticing to your children.

Secondly, call them to you. Most parents teach by correction. Our children act or do something wrong and we correct it. But when you are having to decide something, or you are preparing to do something, call your children to you and, in confidence, explain to them what is going on and why you are doing what you are doing. Jesus called His disciples. He called them to him. The phrase 'called his disciples' appears frequently in the Gospels. Each time, Jesus had something to say to them.

And thirdly, focus on explaining what you are doing and why. As already stated, when you use yourself as the example of the right things to do and make it exclusive--for their ears only, so to speak--you build a desire in them to want to imitate you. Children, even adults, are great imitators. And when we believe we are something special, something important, we tend to want to imitate those we believe exemplify that specialness.

This works much better than merely correcting them when they do something wrong. Correction is important, but it doesn't make the child feel included. Often it makes a child feel isolated.

Pretend that you like basketball. Now imagine your favorite basketball player took you aside and said, "I'm going to teach you some of the tricks of the game." You would hang on his every

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word. You would practice what he shows you. You would try to implement them in your own game. You would make his character, your character.

These are the principles in the Inclusive Behavior Technique. Begin using them with you children even at a young age and you'll begin to see amazing results.

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