



Father and mother are, by nature, the first and indispensable educators of their children. Its mission is not easy. Is full of contrasts in appearance irreconcilable: have to know how to understand, but also to demand; to respect the freedom of the child, but at the same time to guide them and help them in their tasks, but without replacing them or to avoid the training effort and the satisfaction that performing them carries with it...

Hence that parents have to learn by themselves to be... and since very soon. In any trade vocational training begins when the aspirant reaches highlighted and has among its hands orders of high responsibility. Why in the "Office of parents" should be another way? Does because this is more of an art than a science? Agreement; but in no art enough inspiration and intuition; it is also necessary to educate themselves.

In any case, learn this "office" is not to be in possession of a collection of recipes or solutions already given and immediately applicable to emerging problems. Such recipes do not exist. There are, on the contrary, principles or fundamentals of education that illuminate the different situations: Parents should know them very thoroughly, until they thought of his thought and life of her life, for with them face the daily practice.

Taking this clear, and without too many claims, give a memorandum, the more accessible and as concrete as possible, of the main criteria and suggestions on "The art of arts", as has been called the education.

- Three councils of first order.

1) The first thing that parents need to educate is a true and full love for their children.

According writes G. Courtois in the art of educating boys today, education requires, in addition to "a little bit of science and experience, a lot of common sense and above all much love". In other words, must be mastered some pedagogical principles and act with common sense, but without assuming that it is sufficient to

apply a nice theory to get insurance coverage results.

Why? Among other reasons, because every child is a case" absolutely unique, different from all others. No manual is able to explain that "case" concrete. We must learn to modulate the principles under the temperament, the age and the circumstances in which they are children. And only love enables you to get to know each of them as it is today and now and act accordingly: even granting the portion of truth of the saying that "Love Is Blind", is much more profound and real support that is acute and insightful, clairvoyant; and that, in the case of persons, only an authentic love enables us to know in depth.

In fact, it will be the love that teach parents to discover the most appropriate time to talk and to remain silent; the time to play with the children and take an interest in their problems without subjecting them to an interrogation and to respect his need to be alone; the occasions on which it should be "Drop a bit of rope" and "not be aware" versus those other that what originates is to intervene with decision and even with resolved vividness...

And, according to said, throughout this difficult art parents are irreplaceable. A marriage heavily burdened by their professional work was looking for in a toy store a gift for your child, asking for something which will be funny, keep it quiet and above all it removed the feeling of being alone. A smart dependent explained to them: "sorry, but we do not sell parents".

2) The first thing that the child needs to be educated is that their parents want among themselves.

"We do that is not missing anything, we are pending until from its lower whims, and however...".

Expressions like this we often hear, proffered by so many parents that are flushed apparently on their sons - healthy food, reconstructive games, clothing, holiday next to the sea, entertainment, etc.- but they forget the most important thing that require the kids: that parents themselves love and are united.

The mutual affection of parents has made the children come to the world. And that same mutual affection you must complete the task started, helping the child to reach the fullness and the happiness to which is called. The natural complement of procreation, education, has to be moved by the same causes - the love of parents - that engendered the son.

Now for quite a few centuries it has been said that at the exit of the womb, where the amniotic fluid protected him and feed, the child calls urgently another "Uterus" and another "liquid", without which there could grow and develop; namely, those that originate the father and the mother to love really.

Therefore, each of the spouses must enhance the image of the other to the children and to avoid as far as possible to reduce the affection of the latter toward their spouse. Since the kids are very small, in addition to expressing prudent but clearly the affection that unites, parents have to pay attention not to take mutual recriminations in front of them, not to allow one what the other forbidden, to avoid certain level to the child: recommendations aberrant "This don't tell dad (or a mom)", etc.

3) Teach to want.

As we have just seen, the radical principle of education is that parents want between yes and, as a result of that love which wants really to their children; the purpose of the education is that children, in turn, are learning to love, to love. Curiously and in compendium, educate is to love and to love is to teach them to love.

According to Rafael explained Tom Caldera, "the true greatness of man, his perfection, therefore, its mission or committed, is love. Everything else - professional capacity, prestige, wealth, life more or less long, intellectual development - has to come together in the love or lacks the ultimate sense"... and even, if not routed to love, may be harmful.

The entire educational task of the parents has to go, because, ultimately, to increase the capacity to love each child and to avoid as far as you become more selfish, more closed and pending yes, less capable of discovering, wanting to pursue and make the good of the other.

Only in this way will contribute effectively to make them happy, since such - as shown from the most classical philosophers until the most accurate psychiatrists contemporaries - is not but the unintended effect of exalt the own person, progressively improve: and this can only be achieved by loving more and better, dilates the borders of their own heart.

- Seven recommendations more.

4) The best educator is the example.

Children tend to imitate the attitudes of adults, especially those who want or admire. Never lose sight of the parents, the observed in continuous operation, especially in the early years. See also when they do not look and listen even when they are super-busy playing. Possess a kind of radar that intercepts all acts and words of your environment.

This is why parents educate or uneducated, above all, with his example.

In addition, the sample has an irreplaceable educational value, confirmation and

mood: there is no better way to teach a child to lie on the water to do it with him or before him. The Words fly, but the example remains, illuminates the behaviors... and drag.

At the opposite end of the inconsistency between what is advised and what is lived is the greatest evil that a father or a mother can inflict on their children: especially at certain ages, when the sense of "justice" is found in the guy's rigidly seated, over-developed... and willing to prosecute with excessive hardness to the other.

5) Encourage and reward.

The child is very responsive. If you frequently repeats that is a rude, a selfish, that serves no purpose, will be felt and will truly be rude, selfish, and incapable of performing any work..."although not outside but not to disappoint their parents".

It is better to have a little excessive confidence in himself that too little. And if we see fall in some default, will be more effective a word of encouragement than throw it in face and humiliate him. Show the child that we trust in its possibilities is for him a great incentive; in fact, the small - as, with nuances, any human being - is driven to implement the positive or negative opinion that it has and not to disappoint our expectations in this regard.

When you make a correct observation, even opposite to which we just comment or suggest, there is no need to be afraid to give the reason. Is not lost authority; rather the won, since we do not reside in our points of view, but at the same objective truth of what is proposed.

To animate and commend it is preferable to be more attentive to the efforts that have been made that the result obtained. In principle, you should not reward the child for having fulfilled a duty or to have had success in something, if this has not meant a very special commitment. A gift for good ratings is deforming. The good ratings, along with the demonstration of our joy at this outcome, should already be a prize that provide for adequate satisfaction to the child.

Nor is it good multiply inordinately bonuses. On the one hand, because it teaches you how to act not so that in itself is good, but by the reward that he receives (or, what is identical, to think more in itself than in the other). And in addition, because when they come to miss, the small be disappointed: repeatedly reward which do not deserve is equivalent to transform into a punishment all the situations in which such compensation is absent.

It should not be forgotten a basic law: educate someone is not making always be happy and satisfied, by having covered all their whims and desires, but help to draw from it (e-duce), with the essential effort on our part and yours, all that wonder that contains in its interior until the fullness of his personal condition... do so, as a result, very happy.

6) Exercise authority, without forcing.

By the same token, to educate are not sufficient the affection, the good example and encouragement; there was also a need to exercise the authority, explaining always, to the extent possible, the reasons that lead us to advise, impose, reprove or prohibit certain conduct.

Education outside the authority, in another time much vaunted, today presents itself as a brief fashion failed and obsolete, contradicted by the very same people who have suffered. The child has need of authority and are looking for. If you do not find your around a signaling and a demarcation, becomes insecure or nervous.

Even when they play between them, children always invent rules that must not be violated. For the rest, we all know what unfriendly, annoying and tyrannical who are the children of the other, when they are naughty, accustomed to call always the attention and not to obey when do not want.

But in the case of own, is more difficult to have a lucid judgment. It is not clear whether imposed or out to agree and leave do, so as not to run the risk of having a scene in public..., or finish the question with an explosion of anger and a challenge expressed by (which after leaves more uncomfortable to parents that the child).

Behind this insecurity, there is always a strange mixture of fears and prejudices. The horror to lose the affection of the kid, the fear to run any risk to their physical safety, the dread to make us look bad or we cause material damage.

In short, although not what we want, we advertise or we want more to ourselves that the boy or girl, no to let them our well to yours. Hence, if above so many fears prevail the sincere desire and effective to help the child to recognize their own impulses selfish, greed, laziness, envy, cruelty, etc., would not exist that feeling of guilt when it is corrected using the own parent.

· Based on what has been said up to now, and even when it is not fashionable, it is necessary to reiterate so clear and net the impossibility of educating without exercise authority (which is not authoritarianism) and demand obedience from the same moment in which children begin to understand what is asked of them. It is therefore important that parents, always explaining the reasons for its decisions, indicate to the children what they should do or avoid, not leaving by comfort fall into oblivion their orders or allowing children against them openly.

As a result, a basic criterion in the education of the home is that there should be very few rules and very fundamental and never arbitrary, ensure that always meet... and leave an enormous freedom in everything debatable, even when the preferences of the children do not coincide with ours: do they enjoyed all the "right" to become what are called... and we have none to convert them into a replica of our own !!

Sometimes, however, it is prohibited to something without really knowing why, what it contains wrong, only by Momentum, by the desire to be quiet or because you feel nervous and all bothers you. Undertakes and the authority itself without necessary, abusing it... and is disconcerting to boys, who do not know why today is wrong what yesterday was seen with good eyes.

Any healthy child has need of movement, game inventive and of freedom. Speaking of continuously and unreasonable just to make the authority something unbearable. As Mother of the account that said to the babysitting: "Go to the fourth of the children to see that they are doing... and prohibited".

On the other hand, the conviction of the child that will never withdraw to the parents of the orders has an extraordinary effectiveness, and it greatly helps soothe the tantrums or not to arrive to occur.

(as opposed to this, as I have already hinted, is to repeat twenty times the same order - wash your teeth, take a shower, Go to sleep...- without requiring that they comply immediately: causes a huge psychic wear, perhaps especially mothers, they tend to spend most of the day struggling with the kids, while at the same time that reduces or eliminates the authority itself).

· It is also well worth to be attentive to the way gives an indication. Who ordered dry or lifting without reason the volume of the voice always leaves betrayed nervousness and little security. A threatening tone raises with reason negative reactions and oppositions. Let us give orders or, better, let us ask, please, with serene attitude and trusting clearly we are going to be obeyed.

Reserve the strict mandates for the very important things. For all other requests will be preferable to use a more soft: "Would you be so kind as to...?", "Can you, please...?", "Is there any that know how to do this?". In this way, the kids will be encouraged to conduct free elections and responsible, and will be given the opportunity to act with autonomy and resourcefulness, feel useful... and experience the satisfaction of having happy to their parents.

Sometimes it is necessary to seek the son increased effort from the accustomed; will then create a favorable climate. For example, if you know that your spouse is particularly tired or what grips a migraine insufferable, talk alone with the child and ye shall say: "Mom (or dad) has a strong headache; therefore, this afternoon I ask a special effort to make the least possible noise...".

It may be opportune to give an occupation, and address a loving gaze or a caress, from time to time, to reward their efforts... without forgetting that in this as in all other cases, there are left to fend for the child to fulfill its obligation.

Firmness, therefore, to require proper behavior, but sweetness in the extreme way of suggesting or reclaim it.

7) Know scold and punish.

The mood and the rewards are not typically sufficient for a sound education. A reproach or punishment, given in a timely manner, provided and without regrets unjustified, will contribute to the moral criteria of the boy.

Sensible and intelligent must be the dosage of the reprimand and the punishment. The policy of the "let do" is typical of the parents or weak or accomplices.

Also in education, "manga wide" is dictated often by the fear of not being obeyed or for the comfort ("do what you want, with such of leave me in peace")... they are but many other modes of love own: prefer the own good (not strive, not to suffer to sue the correct behavior to the children.

But it would be pedantic, or even neurotic, a continuous and suffocating control of the guys, scolded and punished by the slightest deviation from despotic some fees established by the parents.

For that a rebuke is educational has to be clear, concise and not humiliating. We should therefore learn to scold you correctly, explicit, brief, and then change the topic of the conversation. In effect, should not be requiring the child to recognize immediately the own evil and pronounce a mea culpa, especially if they are present other people (¿we do, adults?).

It will also be necessary to choose the place and the relevant time to answer; at times it will be necessary to wait until you have passed the own anger, to be able to speak with the due serenity and with greater effectiveness.

On the other hand, before deciding to give a punishment, it should be very aware that the child was aware of the prohibition or mandate.

Of course there is a need to avoid not only that the penalty is the venting of the own rabies or moodiness but that it also has that appearance. In the case of school failures, agrees to know how to judge whether they should to irresponsibility or almost insurmountable constraints of the boy or the girl.

When you rebuke it is also necessary to flee comparisons: "Look how obeys and study your sister..." The confrontations only breed jealousy and antipathies.

Having to punish can and must dislike, but sometimes is the best witness of love that might be given to a child: love "everything suffer", it should be recalled with St Paul,... even the pain of the loved ones, provided that such suffering is necessary.

No fear, therefore, that a fair correction and well due to decrease the love of the Son in respect to you. We sometimes hear it respond to the boy to be punished: "ii do not care at all!". You can then tell you, with all the serenity that you will be able:

"It is not my intention to bother you or make you suffer".

8) Forming conscience.

In our society, children are bombarded by a set of slogans and phrases that transmit "ideals" is not always consistent with a vision of the human being and therefore unable to make them happy.

The solution is not a police regime, made up of controls and penalties. It is necessary that the children internalize and make their own the correct criteria, which form their conscience, learning to distinguish clearly what is good and what is bad.

And to do this it is not enough to say: "This is not well!" or, still less, "This I do not like!".

It runs the risk of transforming the morality in a set of arbitrary prohibitions, unfounded. On the contrary, it is very important to "educate in positive", as is often asserted; which is, in my opinion, to show the beauty and the humanity of the virtue happy and serene, casual and without inhibitions. To achieve this, efforts should be made to live his own life, with all its contradictions, as a joyful adventure that is worth compose each day.

In such circumstances, to discover the beauty and wonder of doing good, the child will be attracted and encouraged to work properly.

In addition, interested in making understand what decisive that it is the intention to determine the morality of an act, and help the children to wonder why a particular behavior. On the basis of their replies, they will see the possible injustice, envy, arrogance, etc., which has motivated. The so-called guilt complex, i.e. the dark and distressing feeling of being wrong, accompanied by fear or shame, born just the lack of a calm and courageous examination of the moral quality of our acts. On the contrary, as also show the psychiatrists more adventurous, is necessary and healthy sense of sin. The clear perception of their own concessions and misdemeanors, with which we have turned their backs to God, causes a remorse that activates and multiplies the forces to find again the love that forgives.

To form the conscience can also be useful to discuss with the child the goodness or evil of the events and situations that we have news, as well as suggest the practice of personal examination of conscience at the end of the day, perhaps helping in the first steps to take the right questions. As it grows, there is that let you take with greater freedom and responsibility of its own decisions, saying as much: "I, it, would do this or that way", and in its case, explaining briefly the reasons why.

9) Not spoil to children.

It naughtly a child with disproportionate or very frequent praise, with indulgence and condescension with regard to their cravings. It is also making often wrong educated in the center of interest of all, and leaving it to him to determine family decisions. A small surrounded by excessive attention and inconvenient concessions, once outside the scope of the family will become, if you have a weak temperament, in a timid person and unable to fend for itself. If, on the contrary, has a strong temperament, is transformed into a selfish, capable of making use of others or to take them ahead.

For that reason, faced to the whims of the children there must be no yielding: there will be simply to wait for it to pass the "pataleta", without being nervous, maintaining a serene attitude, almost of neglect and, at the same time, strong. And this, even - or especially - when "we put in evidence" in front of other people: its well (ithe children!) must always be ahead of us.

10) Educate the freedom.

In this field, the task of the educator is twofold: to make the student aware of the value of their own freedom, and teach them how to exercise it properly.

But it is not easy to understand in depth what freedom is and its close relationship with the well and with love. Who is genuinely free?: which, once known, does good because he wants to do it for love of the good. On the contrary, it is "losing" his freedom who work incorrectly. A man can be removed the life because it is "free", but nobody would say that the suicide improves it in as a person or increased its freedom.

Education for freedom means therefore help to distinguish what is good (for the other, and as a result, for the own happiness), and encourage the conduct of the elections consequent, always by love.

Grant with prudence a growing freedom to the children contributes to make them responsible. A long experience as an educator allowed to affirm to Saint Jose Maria Escriva: "It is preferable that [] parents be fooled once: the trust that is placed in the children, makes shy themselves of having abused, and corrected; in contrast, if you are not free, if they see that you do not trust in them, will feel moved to always cheat".

In short, as before stated that the goal of all education is to teach to love, you can also say - because in the background is the same thing - that is equivalent to go becoming progressively more free and independent to whom we have to our charge: who know how to fend for themselves, be owners of their decisions, with full freedom and full responsibility.

- ...and the key of the keys.

11) Resort to the help of God.

The set of suggestions offered so far would be incomplete if you do not leave constancy of this "last" and fundamentalism precept, which must accompany each and every one of the precedents.

Educate originates in e-ducere, ex-bring, do arise. The principal agent and irreplaceable is always the child itself. In a way even more profound, God, in the natural sphere or by his grace, intervenes in the depths of the person of our children, making possible their improvement.

No child is "owned" by the parents; it belongs to himself and ultimately to God. Therefore, and as pointed out, we have no right to make them "our image and likeness". Our task is to "disappear" in benefit of the loved one, putting ourselves fully to your service so that they may attain the fullness that each of them corresponds to: i yours!, unique and unrepeatable.

Therefore, the father or the mother, the other relatives, teachers and professors... can be considered collaborators of God in the human and spiritual growth of the Chico; but this is the real protagonist of such an improvement.

Parents in particular, in virtue of the sacrament of marriage, are offered a particular grace to assume this important task. It is highly desirable that, especially but not only in times of special difficulty, invoke the help and advice of God... and who know how to be abandoned in him when it seems that their efforts do not give the desired results or that the guy - in adolescence, create paths that make us suffer.

In addition, should not forget the great free service of the Guardian Angel, whom God himself wanted to entrust the care of our children. And also remember that the Virgin continues from the sky to deploy its maternal action, guide and intercession.

Teach them to take all this into account may constitute the most precious legacy which, in the complete set of education, given parents to their children.

Tomás Melendo Granados

Catedrático de Filosofía (Metafísica)

Director Académico de los Estudios Universitarios sobre la Familia

Universidad de Málaga (UMA), España

tmelendo@masterenfamilias.com

www.masterenfamilias.com