



Implementation Process & Handouts

Thank you for participating in Unlocking Your Child's Potential or the *Secrets of Influential Parenting*. Please use this material as a guide for leading your family into a new culture.

Overview

No doubt, like me, you were challenged by the research YTN did with adolescents and want to make a change...but how? The implementation of an influential approach and culture change in our homes is a challenging, but exciting undertaking filled with opportunity for deeper relationships and more mature prepared kids.

It is important to remember why investing this time is essential. While the *Secrets of Influential Parenting* altered your heart and perspective of parenting; the perspective of your kids regarding your parenting has not changed yet. The steps we provide are for them. We found if parents simply start making changes their kids did not know why or believe the changes would last. As a result, they kept the barriers and response patterns in place in spite of the parent's changes. When their perspective of you alters, then they will engage and grant the influence in their lives back to you. Does this mean all conflict goes away? No. Rather it gives you a platform and productive way to move through life together with less conflict, more openness and much less risk of a dual life.

There are four keys to unlocking our ability to approach our young people and gain the influence in their lives.

- 1. Remember that behavior modification tactics backfire with the adolescent brain.** Our role becomes that of leveraging our kids desire to succeed and to please us through questions that engage the front lobe of their brain. In an influential relationship, we can have discussions that help our kids arrive at good decisions based upon their internal desire to do well. These decisions last as they are not based upon our control or fear of consequences and result in more mature capable adolescents who will make good decisions when they leave our homes.
- 2. Today in much of the world, kids 13 and older would be considered adults.** If we can begin to see them more like adults, we can help them learn to discuss, think and respond like adults. This allows us to use skills we already have, from working in the world with other adults, with the young people in our homes.
- 3. It is important to believe that all young people, deep within, want to succeed.** Drawing upon this can be an incredibly powerful force for a Shepherd. Unfortunately, many youth have given up trying to succeed today and we need to reverse that in our young people. To accomplish this, we need to reconnect relationally with our young people and realize our



main role is to encourage. Then we need to give them the reins to their lives earlier. This draws upon their internal desire to succeed, especially when they know we see them as adults, rather than kids. When they take the reins from us and understand it is their life and that they need to ride their own abilities and passions to success, amazing things happen! When we try to use our power to force them to succeed, given the oppositional mindset of adolescents, we come across as micro-managers, often leading to further de-motivation and frequently the dual life.

4. Our young people need to be self-managing before they leave our homes. When working on a college campus, every year we saw parents drop off their young people and shed tears with the best of hopes and intentions. Then we would watch many of the young people quietly, and often unbeknownst to their parents, blow up socially, academically, or financially. These young people crashed because they did not know, apart from their parents, how to manage their lives. Their parents had managed everything for them, so when these students stepped into the world looking forward to freedom and independence they discovered that they did know not know how to self-manage, and were unprepared for the severe consequences and hurts that these failures can cause.

Leverage YTN Parent Support Community and Resources

During the conference, DVD class, or small group series we cover a great deal of ground. Many parents find it helpful to attend or listen to the content multiple times given the depth of the material. Some parents have reported listening to it ten times!

If you know the content of *Secrets of Influential Parenting* is true, but you also know that altering your approach will be difficult, we recommend investing in a membership in our parent support community, YTNU.org. The growing library of videos on YTNU.org offer parents additional insights, information, research and examples of how we can address different situations with our kids in an influential manner. Members also have access to interact with Jeff Schadt on a forum to seek specific answers to their questions.

Some parents choose to seek a coaching relationship with Jeff Schadt and other YTN trained parent adolescent coaches to make the transition to influential parenting easier.

Beginning the Implementation Process¹

Watch the "Introduction to the Implementation Process" by clicking this link <http://video.ytn.org/media/86/introduction-to-the-implementation-process>

¹ If you want coaching on addressing a specific issues with the implementation guide, contact Jeff at jschadt@ytn.org and set up a coaching appointment. Jeff will get the history and help you set a path towards a healthy experience for you and your young person!



Step One: Family Meeting

(Step One Support Video <http://video.ytn.org/media/90/step-1-watching-the-family-introduction-video>)

This meeting is central to setting the stage for a change in the family culture. Preparing for this meeting requires a little time and effort.

First, as a single parent or couple, you need to take time to reflect on the top three things you learned from *The Secrets of Influential Parenting* that would help motivate your young people to see you differently and believe that if they engage good things are ahead for the family and for them.

Second, you must ask your young people for input on the time and location of the meeting. This alone will signal a change. When you ask for this input, let them know that you learned a great deal that helped you realize that you want to make some changes in order to have a better relationship with them. To prepare for this meeting take some time to identify three to five things you learned and would like to change in how the family operates. Have the things you learned ready to share first. Then share some of the things that you want to do differently because of what you learned and some of your hopes for changes in the relationships or culture of the family.

Once a time and location is set, begin the meeting by sharing the top three things you learned that you believe will motivate them. In the meeting share as openly and honestly as possible what you learned, some of the changes you want to make, like doing away with consequences so that they can come to you should they fail and feel guilty, along with your hopes. Also, share that in much of the world at age 13 people are considered adults and that you want to begin preparing them and or viewing them more like adults as you work through this process.

(Depending upon your situation, in the family meeting you may choose to view the Family Introduction Video, available to members of our Online Parent Support System. This video covers the reality of the adolescent brain and is designed to offer reasons your kids should engage with you in this process. <http://video.ytn.org/media/93/family-introduction-video>)

In the meeting, ask them if they would like to see the culture of the family change, and share some examples of changes you think might be possible. **Important: These are not the personal changes that individuals in the family need to make. This will come later and in a much more lasting manner.** These are global cultural changes such as: more of a team, working together, more positive, more encouraging...etc. When they agree that it would be nice to see some changes in the family, share with them that you will need their input as to the changes they think would be good, and ask them to help you change.



Print and give each person in the family the “Family Culture Change Outline” found in the Addendums/Handouts of this document. This outlines the steps you will be going through as a team to alter the culture of the family. Let your young people review the outline and ask any questions. Do not be surprised if you get some push back because they are still oppositional-minded even if they may like the idea. Remember that they have not come to view you differently yet. To help with this process, let them know that you will make the individual times fun by going for ice cream, or McDonald’s, or to the park, and that you are under strict guidelines in this process: you must listen, not react and must take seriously everything said by them! Should you fail in this regard along the way, it will be vital to offer a quick, heartfelt and humble apology and ask them to forgive you and re-engage.



Step Two: The Apologies and Lists

(Step Two Support Video <http://video.ytn.org/media/92/step-2-individual-apologies>)

This step will enable you to set a new course in the relationship with each of your kids. To this end, carefully consider apologies. Make them specific and sincere.

As you consider your apologies, look at things from four different angles:

1. Things that you learned from the content that you wish you had been doing differently.
2. Specific things you believe you have done wrong after going through the content.
3. Things that have happened in the past that you think your kids have not let go of yet, harsh words, statements that hurt them, labels you may have assigned to them like manipulative, dishonest, or selfish.
4. Sources of hurt and self-doubt in your kids that you may have played a role in.

When setting up these apology times with each kid individually, try to do them out of the house so they know you are serious. Take them for coffee, ice cream, or a hike. Make sure it is just you as a couple or single parent with each child individually, when no other sibling is around.

At the close of the apology share some of the changes you want to make related to yourself.

This will impact them more than they will show. Also, ask them to make two lists for you to review and then discuss with them.

List One: The things you as a parent, are doing that drive them crazy and cause them to not want to listen to you.

List Two: The things they would like to see change in the family culture and how the family functions.

Ask them to give you their lists in four or five days. Tell them you will reflect upon their lists and then you will ask them any clarifying questions so that you make sure you understand. It is important that you do not question their motives or discredit their perspective. Remember that everyone in a family has a different perspective on the same things. One perspective is not necessarily right and another wrong; they are different due to position, personality type etc.

Get Their Lists

Make sure you follow up with your young people to get their lists, and find time to ask them any questions you have so that you understand exactly what they are saying. Then reflect upon the lists as you prepare for the next family meeting.



Step Three: Family Meeting (Part Two)

(Step Three Support Video <http://video.ytn.org/media/85/step-3-family-conversation>)

Preparing for this meeting and thinking of thought-provoking questions you can ask to get things moving will make all the difference.

Begin the meeting by reflecting upon some of the things that were on the “drive me crazy/do not want to listen” list. Try to make it light and humorous if you can. Share the themes you saw in the lists and what you learned. Then ask your young people to share some of the things that they think drive you crazy.

Just let them share. Do not say, “Oh yeah, and you need to change that.” Just listen and laugh. We are all stupid at times. Remember, the oppositional brain of adolescents means that often, even when they know they are wrong they still oppose you. You may at some point in this conversation want to share about the brain change and its effects... Then ask them if it makes sense. Follow up with a question like, “Are there times you know we're right but because we're pushing it on you, you disagree or argue and don't even know why?” They will say “yes” and you can laugh about the teenage brain together.

After this, discuss a top-down management style related to what may have been taking place in your house. Then discuss with them how they would be close to or considered adults in many countries around the globe and that given this, that you want to move away from top-down management to self-management. Explain that this is important because when they leave home they will need to be self-managing their relationships, time, priorities and money. (Note: This may be the time to implement the financial piece discussed in the content.) It may also be time to begin to release some of the rules and move to self-management. Discussing these items and what it would look like will be a good lead into the family culture discussion and what it will take to see it work.

After this section, have your family share thoughts about what they would like to change in the family culture.

At this point it is often helpful to pass out three by five cards and have people write one to five word phrases of what they would like the family to be like fun, cooperative, and positive. Once you have brainstormed and your ideas are on paper, then work together to write a definition of the culture you want to have.

After that is complete, then have everyone take turns sharing what they will need to do differently to make that definition a reality. (No one should share what others need to do, but what they themselves need to do.) Ask everyone to begin to think like adults and to begin working on what they shared.

At the close of the meeting, share that part of changing the culture is that you are no longer going



to micromanage and that you want to move to self-management motivated by their own internal desire and goals.

Tell them that in the new spirit of being a coach rather than a parent, you want to help them identify their goals and come alongside them to see success with those goals.

To accomplish this, pass out the “Identifying Your Goals” sheet found in the Addendums/Handouts. Ask them to be very honest and not to fear you, because you will not come down on them or react no matter what they write. Given what you have learned, you truly want to know where they are and want to help them achieve their goals. Let them know if they leave some parts blank it is OK. You will meet later over ice cream or coffee related to their goals sheet. Ask them to be prepared to laugh and to begin figuring it out together.



Step Four: Identifying Goals

(Step Four Support Video <http://video.ytn.org/media/88/step-4-driving-me-crazy-exercise>)

After passing out the Identifying Your Goals sheet at the end of the family meeting, watch how each child responds. If there is a great deal of reluctance from one of them to do this, sit with them another time individually and ask why. If they will not or cannot answer.... ask them if it is because they are afraid if they are honest, you will be upset.

If this is not the case and they are still very reluctant, it could be a sign that they are leading a dual life. If you suspect that a dual life is possible, look to the dual life discussion at the end of this guide and consider joining the parent support community. Then watch all the videos related to the dual life and work towards getting them to be honest with you. If you cannot break through contact Jeff Schadt for some additional ideas on the member's forum within YTN University, YTNU.org.

When it comes time to take your young people out to review their Goals sheet, please pray ahead of time for grace, patience and wisdom to ask questions and help them begin to think about their goals for their life. This will only be possible if you set aside your expectations and realize that our kids are wired differently than us. Your mission is to help them arrive at their own vision goals for their future and to help them achieve them. If you manage to effectively communicate this and to live it out in this meeting, you will end up with exponentially more influence in your adolescent's life than 90% of parents. My teens come home regularly and tell me how their friends wish their parents were like us. Yet our daughter does not party like her friends and has not had sex like they have etc. etc. etc... They want parents like us because of the approach and relationship we have. My guess is that many of them would not be partying and escaping into sex at a young age if they had what our teenagers have at home.

Before entering the meeting, write out questions you could ask about each area your young person has left it blank or has written down a low goal. Open ended questions that do not lead to an oppositional response. Watch the asking healthy questions in the parent support community.

Sample questions:

- Paul, when you get a good grade how do you feel about yourself? ... Great
- When you get a bad grade how do you feel about yourself? Bad
- When you feel bad are you more or less motivated to do your work? Less
- Do you see the problem with this? Yes...
- So, if your goal was to do well and you worked hard do you think you would feel better about yourself no matter what the grade? ...YES!
- What goal do you want to set for your future?



Remember you may be seeing some of your dreams slip away in this exercise. They may not want to play that sport or instrument in high school or college... Ask them about it and hear their heart. They may also be questioning their faith. How you respond will determine how much influence you gain! Responding with love, support, and encouragement will increase your influence.



Step Five: Identifying Goals Part Two

(Step Five Support Video <http://video.ytn.org/media/87/step-5-b-insights-for-family-culture-discussion>)

This exercise is for young people 12 and up. In this step, you will need to acquire copies of the book *Strength Finders 2.0* for you, your spouse if appropriate, and each of your young people. *Strength Finders* is an online instrument that will identify your adolescent's inner strengths and then tie the strengths to potential careers.

We ask that you also take the profile, so that the nature of the relationship and culture in your home changes. When you go out together to review your results, you and your young person will exchange results and help each other see those strengths in each other. Then you can begin the conversation about potential careers. Do not expect a conclusion that day, week, month or even year. What you are doing is arming them with important information that they will have to evaluate. It will also open the door to ongoing communication about the future, their goals and possible careers.

As time goes by, your young people will begin to shape thoughts about careers. As possible career interests arrive, set up lunches with people that have those careers and take your adolescent with you. Have a list of questions ready they can ask about the career, what it takes to get into that career and how to be successful in it!

In the end this will save you thousands in college tuition or trade school fees because they enter having a much better picture of who they are what they would be good at. Then hopefully they will finish college in four years and not switch schools and majors over and over. If you have been a good shepherd and are fortunate, they may know exactly where they are headed.

If your young person is older and in high school, it is all the more important to get started with these conversations. If they have been struggling with motivation in high school, this is very likely one of the underlying reasons. If they do not know where they are going, why bother with grades?



Step Six: Set the Culture Check Up Schedule

Do this around the dinner table. Ask how they have been enjoying the changes and how they think it is going. Seek their input on how often you think you should meet to discuss the culture, clear the air on things that are going off track and to adjust the definition or goals as needed. Let them know that you will try to do a fun activity together around each of the meetings. Have them brainstorm with you on what some of those activities could be.



Addressing The Dual Life

The dual life can exist in all of us to a greater or lesser degree, yet with youth it seems it can be much deeper and more risky. When I consider the possibility of a dual life it has three levels of severity:

The first almost all teens have. These are the little or private things they do not easily share with parents but can be discussed given the relationship, approach and timing. Like with my daughter who is now dating for the first time at almost 18 in her senior year.

The second level is more concerning. This is the level where they are experimenting or participating in activities that they know their parents would not approve of.

The third is where they have made significant life/lifestyle choices that often coincide with activities and behaviors their parents would not approve of.

In the latter two cases, the assignments above (the apology, crazy list and family culture meeting) will be critical before attempting to address a suspected dual life. A safe relationship needs to be present.

If parents want to address a dual life, they will need to adopt the mindset of being a champion and coach rather than a disciplinarian. If youth believe they will meet judgment, relational pain/anger and steep consequences, there is no reason for them to stop hiding their dual life. In order to coax them into the light, the nature of the relationship needs to change. Let them know that you will be there to help them no matter what has happened, that you believe in them and that you know they want to succeed in life. These changes are vital to help your youth have victory over the dual life.

The light is scary for us even as adults. Remembering this and approaching your young people in this way will be important. Recently, I talked with a mom who had discovered something about her daughter, but had not realized it was a sign her daughter was likely doing pornography. As we talked, I asked her to speak to her daughter with a tone of compassion, to let her know she wanted to help and would not come down on her. Then she asked for permission to view the history on her daughter's I Pad. At this the 14 year-old who was talented at leading the dual life broke down crying and shared that she had been viewing pornography since age 10! By changing the nature of the relationship and approaching her as a compassionate coach, the mother helped her daughter walk into the light. The girl was helped over the subsequent months to escape something that would have adversely impacted her life later in high school, college and her marriage. Pornography quickly strips young women of their self-worth and makes them far more likely to become sexually active, rather than believe they are attractive and valued.

If you suspect a dual life, approaching your pre-teen or teen with assumptions and accusations



will drive them further into the dual life. Even if you suspect or know they have had sex, trying to force them to tell you will cause the oppositional brain to kick in and will likely lead to a fight.

Approaching them as if you believe they want what is best for their life in the long run, and that you want to help them but cannot, if they are afraid to be honest, will be far more effective. Remember if they have been leading a dual life for a month or for years, trying to accomplish this in one discussion or even in a week may not be realistic. If they have been leading a dual life for awhile, taking some time to rebuild the relationship and letting them see you come alongside and help them will be beneficial. If we try to force them into the light with their dual life or to change, relationship will be lost and the likelihood of true change drops dramatically.

If you want coaching on addressing a specific dual life issue you suspect, contact Jeff at jschadt@ytn.org and set up a coaching appointment. Jeff will get the history, the signs and help you set a path towards a healthy walking in the light experience for you and your young person!



Addendums – Handouts

- Changing the Family Culture
- Identifying Your Goals
(Support video using the Goals Work Sheet <http://video.ytn.org/media/1/using-the-goals-worksheet>)



Changing the Family Culture Outline

1. I/We want to meet with you individually to apologize for some of the mistakes we have been making as parents.
2. Following the apology I will ask you to assemble two lists in order to help me understand your perspective of our relationship. Then we will meet so you can explain them to me.
(I promise not to react, disagree or argue about anything you share)
3. I/We will take your lists consider them and then we will have another family meeting.
4. At the second family meeting:
 - a. I will respond with what I learned from your lists about our interaction.
 - b. We will discuss the concept of self-management.
 - c. Then I will facilitate a discussion about how we want the family culture to change.
 - d. Together we will write a definition for the culture we want to have.
 - e. We will decide as a group if we are committed to that definition.
 - f. Then we will discuss what it will take to see that happen.
 - g. Pass out the identifying goals sheet.
5. We will set up a time to meet privately to discuss what your goals are rather than my expectations. If you are not sure what some of your goals are I/we will come alongside you to help you discover those goals for yourself.
6. To help with identifying some of your goals, we will all take and share individually a cool “Strengths” profile that will tell us what our deepest strengths are and how they tie to things we can do as adults that will be fulfilling and will have a great shot at succeeding with.
7. As a family we will set fun outings to go along with the schedule for family culture check up meetings.



Identifying Your Goals

Identifying your goals apart from your friends or parents expectations is crucial to your future success. Often as young people we feel trapped and feel like we have to keep our friends and parents happy. As a result, we never really figure out who we are and what we are wired to do with our lives. This can lead to frustration, anger and even depression. It is hard to be motivated when you do not know what you want, where you are going or are just trying to keep everyone around you happy...because that is impossible. This is designed to help you begin to set a course for your life!

Answer the questions and write what you would like to accomplish, or your goal for each of the areas below.

If you cannot answer some of these, it is OK and actually normal. It will give you and your parents something positive to think about and work toward together. Remember, these are your internal desires or goals.... not your parents and what you think they want you to answer.

If there are things that have happened to you or that you are involved in that have hurt you or have damaged your internal desire to succeed in certain areas, we encourage you to share those things with your parents. While it is scary to do so... you will feel a lot better after you do it. It no longer will weigh you down and hang over your head. You can do this because the training your parents have been through has taught them to come alongside you and help you rather than react and judge. They want to make this change so that they can help you heal and succeed in life!

It is important that if you are to change your family culture that you be honest even if it means leaving something blank or writing something negative, or contrary to what you think your parents would want you to write! Real relationships are based upon real feelings and the truth.

When you have goals for your own life and are working toward them you will feel more useful and successful. It will be easier for your parents to let you manage your life, and it will be easier for you to receive help from them – when, where, and how you want it.



Present Goals

Category	Present Goals
<p>Hobbies/Activities What activities or hobbies do you participate in? List them. (Examples: Scouting, a sport, fishing, dancing, music, Karate) Then next to each, write how long you want to be involved with in the activity, how good you want to be and whether you think it might be something you want to do as a career or not.</p>	
<p>Sports List the sports you are involved in and next to each, how good do you want to be in each sport. In addition, add how far do you want to go with it. (Example high school state meets or championships, play in college or as a professional career)</p>	
<p>School How well, deep within you, do you really want to do in terms of grades in Middle School and or High School? Do not let friends' expectations or parents' expectations change your answer. It is important that you set your own goals if you want to succeed. (Example A's and B's, Honor Roll, All A's except in science, all C's, or class valedictorian of my high school) Also write the reason why this is your goal. Be very honest about your reason.</p>	



Category	Present Goals
<p>Friends What type of friend do you want to be to others? What type of friends do you want to have and why?</p>	
<p>Family What type of relationship do you want to have with your brothers and sisters? What type of relationship would you like to have with your parents? Write a goal for each family member.</p>	
<p>Faith (if applicable) What would help your faith be more real to you? What discourages your faith? What might be a good goal or next step for you? (Examples: to get my doubts answered, to invite a friend to church, to go on a mission trip)</p>	



Future Goals

Category	Future Goals
<p>Life Style: Do you want to live in the same type of home and neighborhood as your parents...better or not has expensive? Do you want to have more or less than your parent's in terms of money and possessions?</p>	
<p>College: Do you want to go to college? What type of college would you like to go to? Do you know why getting into one of the top five programs for your area of interest is important?</p>	
<p>Career: What type of career do you want to have when you leave home or graduate college? List any that interest you or the one you know you want to pursue.</p>	



Category	Future Goals
<p>Faith: (if applicable) What role do you think faith plays in your life when you leave home and in your future family?</p>	
<p>Marriage: Is marriage important to you? What type of person do you want to meet and marry? Describe their personality and their traits like honest, out going, etc.</p>	