

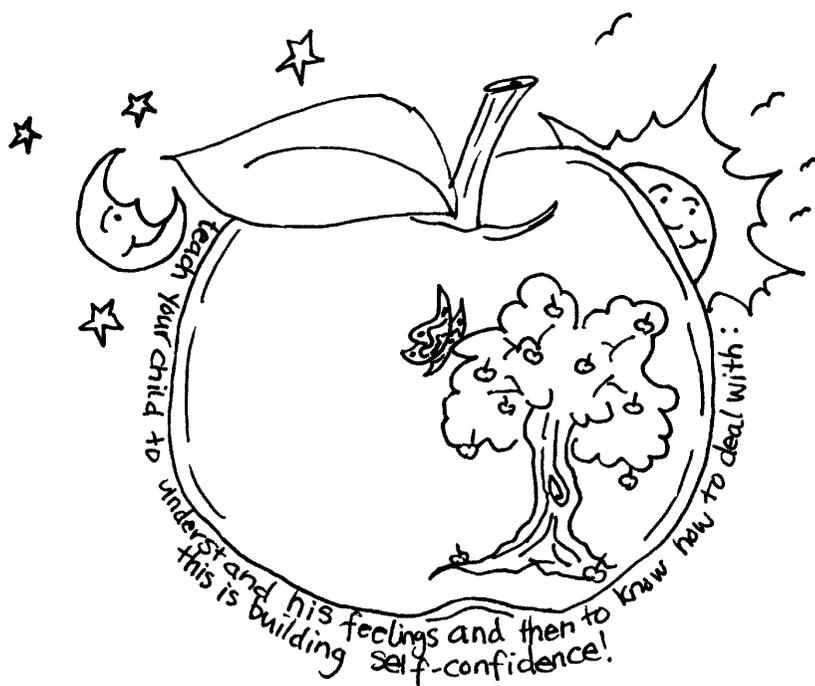
Kind:

KIDS INDEPENDENT NOT DEPENDENT



Mélo die Dupuis

Kind Kids Independent Not Dependent



Mélie Dupuis



Eloquent Books

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I would like to dedicate this book to my grandkids. Melissa, Cody, and Meeshka. Each one unique and special. They are inheritors of our global environmental and social challenges, which are immense! They are our future and will make a difference because they have been taught to care about their worlds. Thank you Andrea and Toby, Zoé and Shane.

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Author's Note

Change occurs in cycles or patterns. They are not random or accidental. Sometimes it is difficult to see how a particular change is connected to everything else. This usually means that our standpoint (the situation from which we are viewing the change) is limiting our ability to see clearly.

—Rupert Ross, “Returning to the Teachings: Exploring Aboriginal Justice,” in *Twelve Teachings of the Sacred Tree*, P. Lane; J. Bopp, M. Bopp, 1996

This quote resonates strongly with my ideas of living. After living more than sixty years, I truly believe that change is the name of the game in life. How changes take place are, most times, in the hands of individuals who are resilient to change. What is one person's desire may be another person's nightmare.

How do we become resilient to change? I believe it starts early, and is all about building confidence in our core values. We are embarking on a global journey into the unknown. History has been made with global economic changes, political changes, and climate changes. We won't know how well we will do with all these changes, but I believe with every cell in my body that if we have confidence in our core values, change can be an exhilarating ride, sometimes uncomfortable, but always worth it!

I wish you all the best in your own journey as a parent, and I have faith in your success because you are consciously making a genuine effort to understand and acknowledge your responsibility as a parent. Your efforts have a direct effect on our future and your kids' future. We cannot have a tomorrow if our kids are not confident, responsible, and kind adults. It is a monumental task that we have as parents. We are not appreciated, recognized, or acknowledged for the daily, weekly, yearly efforts that are required for raising confident, responsible, and kind kids who can be successful in this new global journey.

Module 1:
Infancy—Birth to Eighteen
Months



ATMOSPHERE

It is powerful how your baby can sense feelings in a room. Babies will be most attuned to the person who holds and talks to them the most. Scientific studies have shown that from birth, a baby tracks round objects with black circles to represent a person's face. They are not able to register the face but learn to look for it. It is important that the people around baby present their faces while talking to baby. Eventually, everyone will be rewarded with a genuine, baby smile. Some die-hards will tell you it is not a smile you see, but baby grimacing with gas pain! Don't believe them. Tracking faces is the beginning of learning the complex art of reading body language! Your baby is a radar in the emotional environment, and if there is a lot of fear or sadness, your baby will be absorbing this.

The smile that flickers on baby's lips when he sleeps—does anybody know where it was born? Yes, there is a rumor that a young pale beam of a crescent moon touched the edge of a vanishing autumn cloud, and there the smile was first born in the dream of a dew-washed morning.

—Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali*, 1912

AWARENESS

Conscious awareness is gradual and mirrors baby's brain development. Your baby's ability to recognize you by touch, smell, and sound will come as early as three weeks. By twelve to fifteen weeks, your baby will begin to recognize immediate surroundings that are part of daily routine.

Around nine months, baby will begin to "play strange," which means your baby will be stressed when introduced to a new person. Baby's brain has begun to learn who is familiar and who isn't. Baby's social world has started to expand and your baby is now consciously aware of new people. This stage of shyness is universal in and needs to be honored. Make the introduction to new people as easy as possible, by being relaxed using a calm voice. Baby is very sensitive to your tone of voice and your body language; it is really very amazing how baby "listens" to *all* of you. It is important to remember that the way you introduce baby to new people also teaches baby how you will introduce other things into baby's world that are new. If you show fear, frustration, or insensitivity to baby's feelings, instead of a relaxed body language, that is what your baby will learn.

By around twelve months, your baby is starting to put language together with his/her physical environment. Feelings will still be visible but not intellectually understood by baby until the next stage of development. By the end of this critical period of development, your baby is ready to begin toddlerhood, with all its demands of language and mobility, and begin baby steps in learning to connect feelings with intellect.

BABY-TALK

Baby-talk is very common and not harmful unless it is the only form of language used. Using only baby-talk limits the baby's ability to learn the language of his/her culture. Parents find themselves naturally repeating themselves and that is really important to do. If it comes naturally, pat yourself on the back, but if not, make a point of repeating yourself, especially when communicating important ideas. The use of baby-talk into toddlerhood needs to be questioned. Is it teaching baby the necessary social tools to be successful in the near future? At three years of age, baby is now a young child. Maybe it is worth a thought to ask yourself why you need to continue to talk baby-talk when baby needs more from you.

BATHING

The first place to start is by preparing an area like the table, countertop, or a surface that is not hard on your back. You want to ensure you have everything ready and close to hand. You want to avoid mishaps or accidents that can happen when baby is unintentionally left unattended because you reach for something out of the area. Make a routine out of the process. Some babies will be nicely tired after a bath and others will be very hungry from the exertion. All you can do is try to figure out what works for you and baby.

The next thing to remember is that baby can actually lie in the water if the water level does not cover his/her little ears. It is not the same thing when baby turns his/her head into the water and the ear is submerged. Water doesn't actually enter the ear because of the angle. There are some tools on the market to help out with this. An extra towel helps and you can shape it to your requirements.

When placing baby into the bath, have an extra bathing cloth warm and wet to cover baby's upper body. This gives baby a sense of protection and is comforting for most babies. Don't rush the bath, but mon-

itor the warmth of your baby's chest and tummy. When they feel cool to the touch, your baby is beginning to lose body heat. No worry; they are incredible little heating machines. But this signals the time to finish the bath.

A word of caution: baby really doesn't need any soap or bathing product on his/her tender skin. Warm water and, only when necessary, a little bit of very gentle soap on their bottoms. If you use soap, be careful that you make sure all the wrinkles where you have used the soap are thoroughly rinsed.

If baby develops a rash after the bath, contact your medical support for help. Teething babies usually benefit from a warm bath without any toilet products.

A reminder: have everything ready to go before you start preparing baby for the bath. Just like a breast- or bottle-feeding area, everything needs to be at hand. Safety is the name of the game!

The bath tub can be anything that works. I used a large roasting pan for my son until he was too big to fit into it! Have fun!

There must a few things a hot bath won't cure, but I don't know many of them.

—Sylvia Plath

BOTTLE-FEEDING

I would make one note here that reflects my bias. If baby needs to use a bottle, then it is important to give the bottle in the same way you would if you were breastfeeding: in a quiet, safe place, holding baby in your arms just like you would if you were breastfeeding. This time is special for you and baby, and needs to be honored. *The bonding between you and baby is really very important and this is the best it gets.* It is also a wonderful opportunity to have your partner share this experience. If it is possible to pump extra breast milk for emergencies, you can provide for a special time for your partner to have the feeding experience that you might take for granted. Either way, a bottle is a great way for both parents to participate in this very important bonding experience.

If your baby is using a bottle independently, ask yourself who is benefiting. In the natural world, once a baby can manipulate an object with some dexterity, the baby is ready to use a drinking glass that is safe. Using the bottle as a soother can be harmful for your baby's milk teeth and mouth hygiene.

If in doubt, speak to your medical doctor or a professional about letting the baby use a bottle independently. If your baby is not using the bottle independently but is taking the liquid from the bottle as it is propped up in bed, you need to run that by your medical doctor, too. Is the baby safe? What are the dangers with unsupervised feeding at this age?

BREASTFEEDING

It is really important that you understand that breastfeeding is a time to bond physically and emotionally, and that can be challenging. Let the medical staff or midwife know that they cannot let you go home with baby until you are confident about the whole process.

Take a deep breath and understand that it is more complicated than easy. Learning how to have your baby suckle successfully the first few days is an important task. Yet, the “milk” being pumped out of your breast by your baby is extremely healthy for your baby and you will not get another chance to give this first “milk” to the baby, with all the antibodies he/she needs.

Any question you have about breastfeeding you need to ask. Don't judge any of your questions, just *ask!* If by bad luck you are unable to breastfeed, then be sure you are being followed by your doctor. You need to know why your body is not performing the way it should naturally. Don't make a judgment, but *know*, so you don't feel resentment or confusion about your body, which can also be felt by your new baby.

If you can afford a breast pump, it is worth buying. If not, pump your own milk every time you feel the need. Keep the pumped milk in the freezer for your partner to use when using a bottle. Some dads regularly use breast milk in the bottle to create an emotional and physical bond with their baby. Just a note of caution for dads: wait until mom and baby are very successful with breastfeeding first. Dads should not think about starting this until after the first three to four weeks.

The routine needs to apply to dad as well as to mom when using the bottle. Feeding your baby, whether from the breast or the bottle, needs to have a routine that becomes familiar. Choose a place you can use most times when you give your baby the breast or bottle, because it is a time of physical and emotional quiet. It is especially important to start this routine as soon as possible so both baby and parent are creating a comfort zone.

The routine will become better and better, and you will be more prepared for anything that comes along during breastfeeding. Doctors would like moms to breastfeed about a year if possible, but in this day and age, it is a real challenge for moms to be able to continue breastfeeding beyond six months. You do the best you can, and that is always the best!

Challenges are what make life interesting; overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.

—Joshua J. Marine

Crying Looking after baby is a full time job at first because, until a routine is created, baby and parent won't have much time for anything else but each other. If the parent keeps the baby close all the time, the baby is being taught to be close to the parent all the time.

This may look like baby falling asleep while breastfeeding and mom doesn't put the baby into baby's bed. Another common event is baby being cuddled and falling asleep, then being held for the comfort of the holder. This may be okay the first week or two, but after that, your baby will begin to understand that this is routine. The constant holding now becomes a problem. Rule of thumb: when baby falls asleep, put baby in his/her bed.

When the parents decide they don't need the baby as close anymore, these parents have changed the rules, and the baby is now scrambling to catch up. Most times, you will have a crying baby who is confused and feeling lost because the constant closeness has disappeared.

On the other hand, parents have complained about baby making demands they can't meet very well. It is usually because the parents don't have a successful daily routine and are not growing with their baby.

For example, parents who are not confident about interpreting their baby's cries use the method of holding the baby until their baby is soothed. The parent is actually not skilled enough at this point to read baby's signals, and gets emotionally stressed from the crying, and it is natural for parents to be stressed by a baby crying. The unfortunate consequence is that the soothing behavior becomes a problem and is no longer soothing for either the baby or the parent.

It is really important that the parents listen to the different sounds baby makes and to learn them well so that they respond successfully and productively for themselves and their baby.

If in doubt, or if you have concerns about your baby's crying, you will need to contact your medical doctor for assistance. Babies cry to communicate, but if you aren't sure what the baby is communicating, ask for help from a professional. It's important to not judge your concern as less valuable than it is. If you are concerned, then honor this feeling. You hurt no one, and may be doing some good for you and baby.

All of us, at certain moments of our lives, need to take advice and to receive help from other people.

—Alexis Carrel, *Reflections on Life*

DAILY ROUTINES

You need to create a daily routine! The routine gives both baby and parent a sense of security about their world. Baby is hungry: parent has a routine to feed baby. Baby is cold, hot, wet, lonely: parent will have a routine to make baby comfortable. Parent's voice, touch, and smell are very important for baby's sense of security. If your touch, smell, and voice are a constant in your baby's little world, this is the beginning of the routine. Your baby is learning that when he/she is upset, the soothing voice, smell, and touch can be expected.

If luck holds and baby sleeps a couple of hours at a time, you have the time to prepare the changing station and feeding station. It helps to have everything you will need handy at the different areas. Try to think of what will baby need, and what will you need when changing or feeding baby. Some moms will have a stack of receiving blankets or little light blankets that they use for burping the infant. These little blankets are used to catch the wetness that comes with burping. Some little light face-cloths may come in handy, as well. Once you have been through the routine a couple of times, you will know what you need, and before you know it, you will have naturally created a very functional feeding or changing area.

If all goes well, you will be able to put your feet up and enjoy some quiet time with a cup of tea or your favorite drink. If soda pop is your favorite drink, you may need to rethink drinking it during your time breastfeeding. Most soda pop has carbonic acid or is carbonated, which makes the drink bubbly. This acid destroys essential minerals in your system, which you will really need while breastfeeding. Your doctor will be able to advise you how long you will need to breastfeed

to get the most benefit for your baby, which will determine how long you will stay on the “baby-diet.”

So, baby finally wakes up and is not a happy camper! Picking up the baby, using your soothing voice, and changing baby may be the answer. If after changing baby, he/she is still upset, a feeding may be what is needed. It is important that you take your time with the routine of changing and feeding. Baby will learn to handle the normal stress of having to wait it out for the parent to make him/her comfortable. This learning is really important for parent and baby, because it begins the process of feeling secure for both mom and baby. Baby cries and parent responds without panic or fear: this is the most important gift you can give your baby.

Give yourself three days to create a natural routine that fits both you and baby. In that time, it is important to establish approximate times for feeding, bathing, and sleeping for both of you. You will know that you have your routine in place when you feel relaxed and more confident dealing with a new behavior from baby.

Two tools you will use all the time are your *voice* and your *touch*. If you are afraid to touch, remember that touching is always a good thing. Baby will feel the love that comes from your touch, and baby needs to be touched. It is important to understand that baby uses a part of the brain that registers feeling as a kind of memory bank, because baby hasn't learned to use language yet. It is almost scary how babies feel the feelings that surround them. But, it is their first line of defense, as they are so vulnerable without their parents to protect and care for them.

*Sow a thought and you reap an action;
sow an act and you reap a habit;
sow a habit and you reap a character;
sow a character and you reap a destiny.*

—Anonymous

DIAPER CHANGING

Your baby will usually tell you when he/she needs to be changed because of his/her discomfort. There is no fast rule and each baby is unique. Some babies will endure a dirty diaper longer than others. The important idea to remember is that your baby will tell you when to change the diaper. Most times, diapers are not the only soiled cloth-

ing, so keep a collection of other garments handy in your designated changing area.

You may want to think about alternatives to disposable diapers. Cloth diapers or a diaper service may be available in your community. If possible, research the cost of these two alternatives and compare them to the cost of disposable diapers. You may need seventy-five to eighty diapers a week during the infant stage, so use this number when making your decision.

EMPATHY

Teaching empathy, the ability to understand how another feels, usually starts during this stage, after eight months, with something as simple as beginning to ask your baby to share a cookie, toy, or something special that your baby enjoys. When your baby is having difficulty with the idea, you show sadness using facial expressions, and your eyes should reflect the feeling of sadness. When the baby learns that a smile comes with “giving” you what you asked for, baby and you are both rewarded!

Be gentle with this teaching, as you don’t want to create resentment but rather a willingness in your baby to please you. The ability to learn to want to please comes with a big responsibility for the parent, but it gives your baby an incredible sense of empowerment, which is the foundation of your baby’s sense of self.

This learning will continue until your child is around eight to ten years of age. After that, if your child is still having difficulty, you will need to teach your baby the concept of empathy with natural consequences that support the learning, and not rely on your child naturally using empathy when the circumstance arises.

FEVERS

How do you know your baby has a fever? The only sure way is to take your baby’s temperature. The high threshold for a baby is above 103° F or 40° C. A low-grade fever of 101° F or 38° C is a good sign that your baby is fighting the problem effectively. A fever may fluctuate dramatically, but always keep in mind that it becomes an emergency if the fever stays high for more than a couple of hours. Other symptoms, such as vomiting or flushed, hot skin, and many other signs, may accompany a fever, and be unique to your baby. It is always important to contact medical help when you are unsure about

the condition of your baby's health. Fevers usually come with teething, but if it is an infection or more serious problem, your doctor is the place to start immediately.

A low temperature, below 97° F or 36° C, is always of concern and needs to be dealt with immediately. It is more serious than a high temperature.

FOODS

It is important to consult with your doctor when and how to supplement your breast milk or formula with solid foods. Each doctor may have his/her own preference, but it is really important to make your doctor aware of what you are feeding your baby. Also consult with your doctor before feeding your baby other liquids, as your baby may have a sensitivity to colored liquids or the amount of additives, sugar, preservatives, etc. in the product.

HONORING FEELINGS

At this stage, the first step in learning how to honor your baby and your feelings is to learn to recognize the different sounds your baby makes in expressing feelings of joy or discomfort, and then respond to them as quickly as you can. The next module discusses the development of you and your baby's relationship in more depth.

It's also important to honor your own feelings during this intense stage of change. Make sure you have a mentor or a resource person you trust to listen and help out with understanding your feelings. To not honor your feelings will create tension that your baby is guaranteed to reflect. So for your baby and yourself, try really hard to understand and honor your feelings.

NOISE

Normal household noise needs to happen naturally so that baby becomes accustomed to the familiar noises. Complete silence is uncommon for most homes, so parents should continue moving around and doing normal things, and forget about worrying about making noises that will disturb baby. Some parents have been known to vacuum while baby is sleeping. Baby is calm because this is a noise that is familiar. Most parents will have a radio station on or the TV.

Normal noise creates a routine. When there is none or very little noise, baby will learn that it is night-time and that sleeping for long periods of time is expected. Baby will learn this slowly but eventually through the routine you have created.

Just a word of caution about loud, angry music or sounds: the human brain is programmed to react to these disturbing sounds because they elicit strong, uncomfortable feelings and may create stress in baby that will not necessarily be noticeable immediately.

PLAYING

Baby may want to play as early as a few months or as late as five months. Movement appears to be the most common form of amusement for baby at first, because baby is learning to track with his/her eyes. Awareness of colors comes next, and most times it all comes with sound.

Small doses of stimulation are the normal approach, and baby will let you know when those periods of “play” can get longer. Around three to four months, laying baby on his/her tummy with objects in easy reach will help stimulate your baby’s brain development by encouraging eye-hand coordination. They are very awkward at first, but the reaching is necessary for healthy brain development.

Babies can start to sit up on their own from five to nine months. This morphs into “falling over” onto their tummies, and then they continue the process of reaching to include a primitive form of crawling, or attempts at it. This, too, is healthy brain stimulation, to have left arm and right leg moving in tandem and vice versa. The expression, “you need to learn how to crawl before you can walk” has a scientific explanation. Baby’s brain is beginning to form different components, and physical movement is part of the formation.

Baby is also exploring more aggressively the physical world at around a year old, and will try to manipulate things around them. Let baby have as many things he/she needs to learn new ways to manipulate. If baby becomes frustrated, quickly distract baby and change the activity.

Babies, universally, will eventually learn how to use eating utensils, throw balls, etc. The trick is not to be intense about the baby’s learning new things. Let baby set the pace and the tone. Try not to have preconceived ideas about what your baby should be doing. It is what your baby needs to do that is the guiding force.

It is important to not leave baby in a frustrated state when learning new behaviors or skills, because they don't have the formal thought process yet to deal with their feelings. Distraction with a new sound or movement is a wonderful and effective strategy.

POSTPARTUM

According to the American Psychiatric Association, this difficult and challenging condition can occur in 1 in 500 to 1 in 1000 deliveries. Many women will feel terrible guilt about feeling depressed after an event that is expected to be an extremely happy time in life. It is important to keep your doctor aware of how you're feeling. Having negative feelings about the whole process is an indication that your hormones are out of whack and you may need to be followed by a doctor for you and your baby's health.

Remember, your baby feels at a cellular everything that you feel. Please don't judge yourself, but seek help immediately. There is a cure!

Many women feel betrayed by their body because of this condition and it's important to know that it is normal to feel resentment. The guilt and mixed feelings are all part of the condition, which is totally out of your control as a new mom! If only we could tell our hormones to get a grip! We would eliminate mental health issues right off the bat!

Mysteriously and in ways that are totally remote from natural experience, the gray drizzle of horror induced by depression takes on the quality of physical pain.

—William Styron

SLEEPING

In western cultures, it is recommended that baby learn to sleep in his/her own bed. The common reason given by professionals for this is to prevent you from smothering or crushing baby while you sleep. But another reason is because independence and privacy are valued in western cultures. If the idea is to teach children to be independent and learn privacy boundaries, or behaviors that honor these values, then teaching baby to sleep in his/her own bed is the beginning of this complex process.

Let me explain how it works. If you almost always put baby into his/her own bed after baby has fallen asleep, the routine is established. Unfortunately, life happens, and parents, exhausted after dealing with an upset baby, may just leave the baby with them in their bed. It is really understandable how this happens.

The task is to remember why you put the baby in his/her own bed. By making sure that baby sleeps in his/her own bed most times, you create a routine that honors the baby's independence from you, and you have secured your privacy in your own bed. Baby will wake up in a familiar place and, as a consequence, feel secure.

If you attempt to do this for the first time when the baby is more than three months old, you create potential distress for baby and you, because, eventually, you will expect baby to sleep in his/her own bed, which has not been part of the daily routine.

To introduce this expectation into the already established routine is difficult and stressful for everyone! Having baby sleep in your bedroom but not in your bed may ease some of the stressful feelings of having baby close to you in case of an emergency. Know that it is your feelings and not baby's that you are honoring by having baby sleep in your bedroom.

It is really important not to judge the decision either way. What needs to be judged is whether the baby is safe. Yes, baby is safe in his/her own bed in the parent's bedroom. Is the baby safe sleeping with you in your bed? It is more difficult to guarantee baby's safety in that case.

SLEEPING POSITION

Your baby needs to sleep on his/her back. The medical profession does not recommend your baby sleep on his/her tummy. The concern comes from babies having suffocated from sleeping on their tummies. They can spit up and block their nostrils or choke from the fluid because they are unable to lift their heads to breathe, thereby unable to save their lives.

SLEEPING ROUTINE

If you are able, this is the time to manipulate the routine to begin the baby's sleeping for longer periods at night. Parents have some very creative manipulations to help them get more sleep. The goal is that baby sleep six to ten hours at night by three to four months. The

easy way is to prolong the waiting period for the last feeding five minutes every night. After a week, you have already gained more than a half hour.

Some parents will bathe the baby at the end of the day to help relax the infant, but it is not necessarily a good strategy for every baby. Some babies are stimulated by a bath and it becomes a disadvantage. This is the time to play with ideas and see how baby and you respond to your creativity.

Most babies have two-hour intervals between feedings. The trick is to let baby sleep until he/she wakes up, be it two or more hours. This may be a chance to start a routine for both you and baby that is natural. The goal is to create a daily routine that is easy to keep. Babies need routine and will need fairly structured daily routines until they are about twelve years of age. Changing routines can be a positive experience if parents are relaxed about changes. Too much change can create stress for parent and baby.

SOOTHER

Ask yourself, is the soother or pacifier for you to have some quiet and peace, or for baby to actually be independent in self-soothing? This is a tough one, because most parents are concerned about babies sucking thumbs or fingers, which may impact how their milk teeth grow when they eventually come in.

It's really important to choose a pacifier with what you need in mind. Some behaviors for self-soothing come naturally and others may be introduced. You just need to know the long-term consequences of the chosen pacifier and if you are prepared for them.

A pacifier for baby may be a behavior, sound, movement, or a physical object. An example for behavior is baby rocking naturally or rocking with parent in a rocking chair. Sound could be music, a clock ticking, or baby's humming noise. When in doubt about your baby's behavior, one quick call to your baby's doctor may be all you need to know if baby is soothing and is safe. This doesn't mean you will always accept and follow through with what is medically recommended, but it is a good place to start.

The rule of thumb is that you can NEVER have too much information before making an important decision. *If you don't know what to do, DO NOTHING; make no decisions! This is your new mantra!*

When exhaustion and frustration with baby is too much, put the baby in bed and take a time out. Baby usually will get tired from cry-

ing and fall asleep. If you are able to endure the crying when the baby is in bed, pull up a chair and lightly rub the baby's back while using a soothing voice or singing a quiet song. The idea is to present a quiet, soothing atmosphere in spite of the baby's angry crying. It really helps to have a back-up, so you can call someone to give you some relief if baby is upset for long periods.

It is also important that baby's doctor knows how long the upset periods are and what happens for baby during those periods. If unsure, have a pad and pencil handy and jot down the time the baby became upset and couldn't be soothed and the time baby finally relaxes. Then make notes about baby's body language because it may help the doctor to understand what is going on for baby.

By three months, you are now an old pro at being a parent! NOT! But heck, you are getting more relaxed about the whole thing, aren't you? The task for the first three months is to create a healthy routine for baby and parent and to learn to communicate confidently with each other. You are now confident in reading your baby's different crying sounds and your baby's behaviors that are telling you what your baby needs. Be gentle with yourself. This may sound simple, but it isn't. *Communicating is always a challenge and needs a lot of attention.* Know that, after the first three months, you will have completed your first parental marathon! Now go and celebrate!

SOOTHING BABY

Using a calm voice, gently touch baby and rub or hold your baby, and keep this contact until the baby is comfortable. If you find yourself making a habit of touching in a specific way or with a specific movement, continue with this habit, because this becomes a pacifier in itself. For example, if you softly rub the side of your baby's cheek and neck area when your baby is agitated, then just this touching will create a sense of safety for your baby, because you have taught your baby that comfort comes with gentle touching of the cheek and neck area.

SOOTHING PARENT

When you feel out of control, take a deep breath through your mouth. Close your mouth, and count to three. Then release the air through your nostrils as slowly as you can. Usually, three repeats are enough, but do it until you feel centered again. *DO NOT* continue

whatever it was that triggered your feeling of being out of control. Your baby will not die or be physically or emotionally in trouble if you take the time to look after yourself.

If anything, if you should not stop, you run the risk of physically and emotionally getting into trouble, and your baby will then be in trouble, too. You may need to give your family members a heads-up that you need to look after yourself for a moment and you will be able to deal with anything after you have yourself under control again.

I have never been especially impressed by the heroics of people who are convinced they are about to change the world. I am more awed by those who struggle to make one small difference after another.

—Ellen Goodman

SPEAKING WORDS

Baby will begin to form words or baby sentences by one year. If you watch carefully, you will see baby actually communicating much more information. By waving a cup, baby may be asking for more to drink. Baby is now more skilled at having eye contact, although this is still fairly limited. This is the time when parents are really challenged to interpret baby's communication because actions will now come with word noise. Baby is learning much, much more than what you see! *Your basic tools of voice and touch will always save you in a pinch!*

For words are magical formulae. They leave finger marks behind on the brain, which in the twinkling of an eye become the footprints of history. One ought to watch one's every word.

—Franz Kafka

SPOILING BABY

A question that has been asked many times is, "Can you spoil a baby?" Absolutely NOT! Let me just explain what spoiled is. To spoil a child is to teach the child a false sense of security by teaching that child to NOT consider other people's feelings or possessions. To spoil a child is to teach the child that your child is in charge of his/her own world, which is not fair to the child because your child cannot be in charge of his/her world until about twelve years of age. A spoiled child has unrealistic expectations of parents and the world around

him/her to provide everything your child believes she/he wants, not needs.

The parent is responsible for the child's world. A parent is responsible for the child's nutrition, health care, academic learning, and social attitudes, not the child. It is safe to say that a child doesn't have the knowledge or understanding of the world to make healthy and effective decisions about his/her emotional and physical safety, unless they have been taught and the child is actually capable of learning.

So, spoiling a baby is impossible because your baby is not developed enough to understand the social messages of emotional neglect that come with spoiling a child.

*Cleaning and scrubbing can wait till tomorrow
For babies grow up, we've learned to our sorrow
So quiet down, cobwebs
Dust, go to sleep
I'm rocking my baby, and babies don't keep.*

—Anonymous

TALKING TO BABY

Talking to your baby is very, very important from the time baby is born. Baby learns your voice, which begins to stimulate the brain to learn language. This is a critical connection between parent and baby, because it is the first step in social development. We will talk about this idea later, in the module for toddlerhood, dealing with learning language. For now, it's enough to know that your baby is learning, from birth, about the world through you and your family.

Did you ever think that your voice would have so much power? That your tone, touch, and movement would actually be registered in your baby's brain forever. *It's important to remember that your baby is ALWAYS registering your tone, touch, and movement because it is the only defense your baby has to survive in the world.*

When you're feeling terrific, notify your face.

—H. Jackson Brown Jr.

TEETHING

This is unique to each baby. Some babies start teething as early as a few months, while others won't start until after a year. It can be a stressful time for the babies and the families. It would help to have

your family doctor on board so you can contact him/her when you have concerns, questions, or need suggestions to get through this physically and emotionally challenging time. It is very stressful to witness your baby's physical pain and not have any means at your disposal to "fix" the pain and make it go away.

TEMPER TANTRUMS

How old can a baby be before he/she has an actual temper tantrum? Well, let's look at what a temper tantrum is. It is usually a behavior or behaviors that are out of control, and are typically a result of feeling frustrated because of a sense of powerlessness.

Your baby, from birth to six months, usually has fairly simple responses to the world around him/her. A baby over a year old is more socially aware and may begin to have feelings of powerlessness, but not to the extent of a toddler, who is beginning to manipulate the world consciously and able to compare things.

Your baby can get frustrated because you haven't given food fast enough, or haven't distracted him/her quickly enough when learning new skills. This frustration can be dealt with quickly and productively with a distraction of some kind. Whether it is changing the location of the baby, moving the baby while singing, or making a new noise, find something that works to distract.

But a full-out temper tantrum it is not. Your baby is just being passionate about what she/he needs! Take a deep breath and work on distracting him/her before your baby gets very distressed.

TEMPERAMENT

Baby's temperament is starting to become predictable during this stage of development. It is still the bare bones of personality development, but it's pretty obvious to the family what type of temperament your baby has.

The best way to look at this stage, and probably all of the stages of human development, is to understand that baby is the teacher and you are the student. What you learn from looking after baby is a direct result of how baby reacts to you and his/her world.

The task, and it's challenging, is to learn your lessons well so that you are prepared as best you can be for the next lesson that is going to come at you. It's almost like we don't have enough time to digest what

we've learned when we are expected to learn some else. The scary part is that ALL of the learning is IMPORTANT!

Never forget that you are one of a kind. Never forget that if there weren't any need for you in all your uniqueness to be on this earth, you wouldn't be here in the first place. And never forget, no matter how overwhelming life's challenges and problems seem to be, that one person can make a difference in the world. In fact, it is always because of one person that all the changes that matter in the world come about. So be that one person.

—Richard Buckminster Fuller

WALKING

This momentous occasion can happen between nine months and fourteen months. It begins with crawling, to create the necessary brain development. Some babies will be hesitant and unsure, while others will “run before they walk!” Always try for a safe environment for this stage of learning. Falling can be rather spectacular and frightening.

A word of caution: walking too much is stressful on your baby's spine and legs. Baby can use some help, with support and parents' hands. Be very careful in pulling baby up by the arms. There is a good possibility that you will dislocate their shoulders. Use the body instead of the arms to lift your child. Their little joints are not ready to carry all their weight until after toddlerhood.

Fall seven times, stand up eight.

—Japanese Proverb

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