

Training for Triumph E-Newsletter Issue 017 July/August 2007

trainingfortrumph@mchsi.com
www.trainingfortrumphhomeschool.com

Table of Contents:

Section I: Training for Triumph (TFT) Events and Announcements

1. Hello: Letter From Donna
2. Upcoming Events for TFT:
 - *August 25th Loving Education at Home (LEAH) Tea
 - *September 5th Craigville Cottage Classes Begin
 - *September 7 and 8th in Lansing, Michigan
3. Friendship Vouchers Extended Through December 31st!
4. Representatives: Join us Now! and Welcome to Our New Reps in Iowa, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Canada!

Section II: Kitchen, Household, School, and Family Organization

5. Freezer Meals: A Few Favorites
6. Organizing Tip: Chore Times Revisited (Part I of II)

Section III: Heart Helps

7. Heart Strings: A Friend Shows Himself Friendly

Section IV: Article from TFT

8. Article: “I Want an Oompa Loompa Now, Daddy! Part III of III”

By Donna Reish

*Email Jonathan at trainingfortriumphhomeschool@mchsi.com if you wish to be taken off this mailing list—or to add a friend. Thanks!

Section I: Training for Triumph (TFT) Events and Announcements

1. Letter From Donna

Dear Friends,

Summer is quickly coming to an end, and this newsletter is a couple of weeks late! I don't want to group this one with September's, however, because I want to have a back-to-school-issue with some more tips (though not as long and drawn out as last year's!). So...here is a quick (!) July/August newsletter with some info that might be a little too late for some of you who start school early (or on time!).

We just got Kara back from the **Academy of Arts** summer drama teams where she and her “south team” gave their performance “Sanctity of Life” over thirty times to hundreds and hundreds of people. This performance brought dozens of decisions for purity in the lives of young people—and some decisions for life for expectant young ladies. What an incredible blessing! Additionally, many of the students on this team, as well as the other two traveling teams, made deeper commitments to the Lord and His will for their lives. We went to pick Kara up in South Carolina and got to watch their final performance—and attend the awards ceremony. It was an awesome experience for Kara—and one that we feel was good in increasing her confidence as a Christian young lady serving the Lord with her talents. (Read more about the Academy of Arts in past newsletters!)

Speaking of Kara being gone, the boys are glad to have Kara back (even if only for a few days before she takes off for **Summit's Worldview Conference** for two weeks in Colorado). It was heartwarming to see the boys longing for Kara so much—and especially to see them awaiting our reunion (and counting down the day and hours) the week before we got her.

We are so grateful to have been featured in *The Old Schoolhouse* magazine's **summer edition with an article about Training for Triumph** as well as an extremely positive review. Order their summer edition directly from them or pick one up at Borders, etc. It just came out a few days ago, and we are already receiving positive feedback.

Speaking of positive feedback, a special thank-you to those of you who have been patient with us as Ray works full time and runs paper routes to fund Training for Triumph (getting closer to the end of having to underwrite TFT with other work though!); I write, edit, spend time with our teens and young adults, homeschool, and tutor; and our kids try to learn the ropes of operating various aspects of TFT. Jonathan (age 14) was doing great the first part of the summer taking orders, corresponding with customers, filling orders, etc. Then when we got busier, he nearly had a meltdown! ☺ He told me recently that he is going to create a new signature line for all of his emails to customers that will always come up when he signs his name---**Sorry for the trouble. Sincerely, Jonathan.** ☺ **What a good sport!**

If you are about to start school and do not have a writing or complete language arts program in place, do not despair! You can go to our website to CQLA—the four levels—and **print off a complete month of Character Quality Language Arts to try out**—including the lesson plans and Answer Keys—for all levels. This will give you an opportunity to see if CQLA is for you—and help you get a good look at the level(s) your student needs to start in.

If you desire to take a look at CQLA with someone there to answer your questions, and you are in a **state where we have a new rep**, let us know, and we'll connect you with her. (See new rep list below.) Also, folks from near Lansing may come see us at the conference on September 7th and 8th.

Also, I am back **blogging!** I started in January and only lasted a couple of weeks—once Kayla went back to school, I couldn't figure out how to log in, how to post, etc. But she helped me again this summer, so I'm up and running. Hopefully, I will be posting many, many past articles from newsletters, outlines and handouts from presentations, etc., assuming I can figure out all of the technical aspects of it. You can visit my blog at <http://www.homeschoolblogger.com/relationalhomeschool>

Have a happy, short remaining summer! And (as recommended in Heart Tips below), try to **surround yourself with people who are an encouragement** to you in homeschooling. We all need it! ☺

Love,
Donna
www.trainingfortriumphhomeschool.com

2. Upcoming Events for TFT:

***August 25th Loving Educators at Home (LEAH) Tea**

On Saturday, the 25th, I will be speaking at my church's support group—LEAH: Loving Education at Home's (LEAH's) back-to-school tea. My topic, which I LOVE to speak about is "Hide Them in Your Heart: Teaching Your Children's God's Word and God's Ways."

***September 5th Craigville Cottage Classes Begin**

On Wednesday, September 5th, TFT will begin our cottage classes for the fall 07 school semester. We still have a few openings in biology, elementary speech, elementary and middle school composition, Spanish, and research paper. Our language arts and chemistry classes are full. We have canceled our FW cottage classes due to low enrollment in speech and debate classes and have moved many of those classes to our home in Craigville. You may get more information by contacting us via email at trainingfortriumph@mchsi.com

***September 7 and 8th in Lansing, Michigan**

On Friday, September 7th and Saturday, September 8th, TFT will be vending and speaking at a back-to-school conference in Lansing, Michigan. More details will follow in the August newsletter.

3. Friendship Vouchers Extended Through December 31st!

We have had warm reception to our Friendship Voucher Program, so we are extending it to the end of the year! That's right. Until the end of December, every time someone buys CQLA and tells us her friend recommended it to her, that friend will receive a \$10 voucher towards her next CQLA purchase **for each CQLA book her friend orders**. There is no limit to how many vouchers you may

earn, so share CQLA with your friends and earn your books for free!! (See our website for more info on Friendship Vouchers or email Jonathan to receive more info.) **Homeschoolers everywhere are benefiting from our vouchers, and we are pleased to be able to offer them. Keep telling your friends and earn more free CQLA products.**

4. Representatives: Join us Now! and Welcome to Our New Reps in Iowa, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Canada!

We are also having warm reception to our representative program. If you like CQLA and think you can sell ten books per year, consider becoming a rep! It is a low/no investment way to earn your curriculum and help homeschoolers.

Welcome to our new reps: Tina James (Ontario, Canada); Sherryl Wilson (Covington, Kentucky); Tiffany Davis (Oklahoma City, OK); and Jane Subra (Des Moines, Iowa). (Contact Jonathan for more info on becoming a CQLA rep.)

Section II: Kitchen, Household, School, and Family Organization

5. Freezer Meals: A Few Favorites

We have been putting some entrees in the freezer again this summer in anticipation for the busy school year ahead. This might be a little late for those “early bird” schoolers who have already begun this academic year, but I wanted to give you some of the recipes we have been using this summer to mega cook.

These recipes are not all one type like I have always done in mega cooking in the past (i.e. all shredded chicken recipes) because we did not do them all together this time. In that way, those of you who do not have full days to cook because of school may still use them. **One person can have six or eight entrees in the freezer in two to three hours.** Two or more people working together can get them done even sooner! (Work together with a like-minded friend that you have secured after reading Heart Tips and split the entrees between the two of you!)

In Issue 008 (August/September 2005) of past e-newsletters (found at our website), you can find a **full ground beef cycle** all ready for you to do for the day, putting dozens of entrees away. But if you’re short on time, try some of the recipes below!

Note: The recipes serve various amounts of people, based on how many of each entrée I desired. You may cut them in half, double them, etc. as needed.

Note again: The **information for the labels** is given in each recipe. We copy and paste that info into an address label program and print address labels off instead of writing on bags. Be sure bags are completely clean and dry before placing labels on (after you've placed food in them). If you do not use labels, be sure to use a sharpie-type marker to keep the writing from fading; and be sure to let bags dry thoroughly after writing on them before placing food in them (so you do not smear your words).

GRANDMA'S MEATLOAF

A recipe I've made for all twenty-six years of marriage, given to me by Ray's maternal grandmother. Another **recipe everyone likes**. Yippee!

1 cup beef base	1 ½ cup+ minced onion
1 tsp pepper	
20 lbs ground beef	4 tsp salt
1 ½ cups ketchup	16 c. oats
16 eggs	milk, as needed
8 (9x13) foil pans	

1. Mix all ingredients.
2. Shape into 16 loaves of 1 ½ lbs each.
3. Place two in each 9 x 13 foil pan.
4. Cover tightly. Label. Freeze with nothing on top of them.
5. Make labels for them as follows (8 labels needed)
GRANDMA'S MEATLOAF Serves 5 per loaf
(Uncooked)
Thaw. Bake at 300' for 1 ½ to 2 hours w/ sauce over them (just over an hour for one loaf), if desired. Sauce per two meatloaves: 6 TBSP brown sugar, ½ tsp nutmeg, ½ cup ketchup, and 2 tsp dry mustard.
6. Yield: 16 loaves of 1 ½ pounds each; each one serves five or so.

GROUND BEEF ENCHILADAS

This is about **as simple as it gets!** The only way it could be simpler is if you used canned shredded beef instead of cooked ground beef!

10 lbs lean ground beef

6 (28 oz) cans of Enchilada sauce (or little more)
15 cups shredded cheese (4 lbs or so)
64 tortillas (8 pkgs of 8 soft flour tortilla shells)
5 TBSP minced onion

1. Fry ground beef and drain thoroughly.
2. Spray 8 foil pans with PAM.
3. Combine the following in a huge bowl:
 - all of the cooked ground beef
 - 3 cans of the Enchilada sauce
 - 10 cups of the shredded cheese (2 1/2 to 3 lbs)
 - beef base (dissolve in some of the sauce and pour all over meat)
 - minced onion (dissolve in some of the sauce and pour all over meat)
4. Spoon enchilada filling (approximately 1/2 cup generous) onto tortillas; roll up and place seam sides down in foil pans--approximately 8 per pan.
5. Pour remaining enchilada sauce over top and sprinkle with remaining cheese.
6. Cover tightly, label with label below, and freeze.
7. Each pan of 8 feeds six people; we use two pans for the ten of us.
8. Labels:

Ground Beef Enchiladas

8/07 Serves 6

Fully Cooked

To use:

Defrost fully; cover tightly; bake 20-25
minutes on convention until bubbly
(30-40 traditional oven).

“GRILLED” CHICKEN TENDERS

This recipe keeps chicken breast tenders (or breasts themselves) from being so dry. “Grilled” is in quotation marks because we sometimes grill them and sometimes just pan fry them in their marinade. Either way works fine. This recipe calls for a small amount of soy-based marinade (or soy sauce). You may desire more of that and less water. We do not like a strong soy taste, so that’s why we came up with this recipe that is still **tasty and moist, but less soy sauce/Oriental tasting.**

Once we have these in the freezer, we use them as is for a main entrée with mashed potatoes and chicken gravy, wrapped with bacon and sprinkled with Monterey jack cheese for Monterey Chicken Breasts or Monterey Chicken Bites (appetizers); cut up for grilled chicken Caesar salads; folded into tortillas for fajitas or wraps; sprinkled over tortilla chips for Chicken Nachos; on sandwiches for grilled chicken sandwiches; cut up and tossed with veggies and cooked for chicken stir fry; cut and up and tossed with cooked rice for a chicken-rice entrée; pour bbq sauce over them and heat; etc. etc. They are **versatile, low-fat, and tasty!**

For 10 lbs of chicken breasts or tenders:

5 cups water
5 TBSP olive oil
3 TBSP chicken base
1 1/4 cup teriyaki or oriental marinade (or 1/3 to 1/2 cup of soy sauce)
2 TBSP Splenda or sugar

1. Optional: Tenderize chicken breast or tenders by hitting with a tenderizing mallet (my boys' favorite job!). We sometimes sprinkle a powder seasoning on them here, too, such as Mrs. Dash or chicken/bbq seasoning.
2. Combine all marinade ingredients from above.
3. Marinade by either placing all marinade and chicken in huge bowl in fridge for a few hours or overnight (or place part of marinade and chicken pieces in zip-type bags for same time).
4. Remove tenders or breasts and either grill on grill or pan fry in small amount of marinade for 3-6 minutes per side, depending on thickness of chicken and whether breasts or tenders are used.
5. Remove from skillet or grill and drain on paper towels until cool.
6. When batch is cool, fill one of the pre-labeled quart bags as full as you can to get two lbs into each bag, approximately.
7. After each bag is bagged up, lay it flat on shelf in upright freezer to keep tenders from setting out too long.
8. Labels for tenders or breasts:
Grilled Chicken Tenders
Fully Cooked
2 lbs DATE

Braised Beef Cube Mix

This has been my **all-time favorite freezer recipe for seventeen years now---** since I made it in anticipation of the arrival of sweet (but colicky!) Kara, who just had her seventeenth birthday. I have told about it before in newsletters. It came from the ***Make-A-Mix Cookery* book that I have used hundreds of times throughout the past twenty years** or so. And—it's a recipe everybody in my family likes—that's no easy feat with up to ten people to please! ☺

12 lbs stew meat
6 bay leaves
3 TBSP parsley flakes
8 cans cream mush soup

6 TBSP minced onion
3 TBSP beef base
2 tsp garlic powder

Equivalent of 8 cans of homemade cream soup/gravy—beefy (to replace golden mushroom—we make our own but can just buy Golden Mushroom soup, though it's pricey)

3 quarts water

1. Brown beef cubes dredged in flour in oil until browned on the outside only.
2. Place all meat in huge roaster.
3. Cover with all other ingredients.
4. Cook for 5 to 6 hours at 300'.
5. This may also be baked at 300' convection for 4 hours or so or regular oven for 6 hours.
6. When cooked, freeze in quart sized zip lock bags and label with printed labels that say:

Braised Beef Cube Mix

1 quart fully cooked

Date:

To use:

1. Defrost.
2. Use in one of the two recipes below or as desired.

Beef stew—for each quart, add the following:

6 precooked carrots, cut up. (Cook in micro for 20-30 minutes until just tender but not tender.)

4 potatoes, cut up. (Cook in micro for 20-30 minutes until just tender but not cooked.)

1 onion cut up.

OR add two large cans chunky Vegall vegetables, drained.

Bake uncovered for one hour at 300' convection until bubbly.

Stroganoff—for each quart, add the following:

2 cut up onions and 1 lb. mushrooms.

Cook through on stove top or micro until heated and bubbly.

Add 2 pints sour cream just before serving.

Serve over noodles or rice.

LASAGNA

I like this lasagna recipe as it is **simple**. We do not pre-cook our noodles. It is **just mixed, layered, and frozen**. I will warn you that our biggest bowl (which is, by the way, huge) does not hold all of the cheese mixture. We have used medium-sized, cleaned out tubs for this (I know, you perfectionists out there are cringing!)—or you could use a couple of your largest bowls. I also want to warn you that no matter how many times I have tweaked this recipe through the years, I never come out with the correct amount of things at the end. Thankfully, we're

1. Pour hash browns in twelve, greased 9 x 13 pans.
2. Melt butter, half and half, and Velveeta on stove.
3. Dissolve cottage cheese in hot mixture (heat off).
4. Pour over hash browns evenly. (Five cups for each pan, then in 1/2 cup increments until mixture is gone to be sure each gets the same amount.)
5. Let sit at least one hour or overnight in fridge.
6. Bake uncovered for an hour to hour and half at 350. (Note: I like this over-baked rather than underbaked. And the setting time is important in the texture.)
7. For freezing: Cover tightly with foil and label as in point 8 below. Freeze unstaked until thoroughly frozen.
8. Labels:
 - Creamy Potato Casserole
 - DATE---Thaw. Bake uncovered for one to one and a half hours at 350'. Let sit before serving for ten minutes.

6. Organizing Tip: Chore Times Revisited (Part I of II)

-excerpted and revised from a previous newsletter article

In order to run a busy household, clean, cook, chauffeur, teach several children, keep everyone moving ahead in their independent work and extra studies (music, speech, etc.), be a wife, be attentive to parents and other extended family members, participate in church, sometime work part-time, and more, home school moms must learn to **delegate some of the household work**.

When I give my presentation on Organizing Your School, Life, and Home, I often tell moms that if they are new homeschoolers and their days were already full before beginning home schooling, **how can they expect to put another four to eight hours** (depending on the number of and ages of the students a home school mom will be schooling) into an already full schedule?

The same concept applies to a veteran homeschool mom as her children get older, more students are added to her daily schedule, older students have more activities to be run to, etc. The more items a mom adds to her schedule each day, the less time she has for other things. Are those "other things" just going to vanish? We all know they do not. They scream out to us in the form of cluttered closets, uncleaned sinks, and piled up laundry.

The solution? Train the children to take on part of the work. Of course, the **children are not "doing Mom's work."** The household work is everyone's. Every person in the family eats, dirties laundry, and clutters the closets. One way to organize children's household help is in the form of chore sessions. (See past e-newsletters at our web site for information about other ways to organize housework and children.)

Those who have already had built-in chore sessions for many years have probably found what I have found: chore sessions change from season to season and year to year. Our chore sessions now are drastically different than they were ten years ago. Our chores sessions now are amazingly different than they were four years ago when Kayla and Cami (our two oldest daughters) were here all day most days---and each one took a servant/cooking day. I have less “chorers” now than I have had since the days when my oldest three were preschoolers---and three-fourths of my helpers now are teen/elementary boys to top it all off! The remaining girl that I do have to help around the house on a daily basis has a full academic schedule and is one of our key editors. Thus, each child has more to do in their daily jobs---and many of the weekly and monthly tasks get skipped. There’s simply not enough time for everything, and I have learned (most of the time!) to accept that.

The most successful chore schedule I have found is that of the before-meals sessions (though we’ve done after meal sessions, twice a day, all-work-done-before-read-aloud, and many other methods with success too). How you organize your chore day will be dependent upon the following things (plus more, I’m sure):

- *How many and the ages of those completing chores each day
- *Whether you are just doing daily jobs during chores or trying to scatter weekly work among the chore sessions too
- *Whether you have any other systems in place to take care of some work (i.e. Friday afternoon family cleaning, servant day for meal preps, mega cooking meals in freezer, maid (!), etc.)
- *How many activities everyone is involved in and how often students are actually home to do the chores
- *Whether you personally do most of the cooking or delegate that to others
- *What you eat for your meals (leftovers for lunch takes less time and can be done by younger children than cooking a hot lunch from scratch)
- *Whether your children are trained to re-use clean, already-worn clothing and not create unnecessary laundry or not
- *Whether you use convenience foods or primarily cook from scratch
- *Whether your husband helps you with household work, enforces the children’s work—as well as his work schedule/hours
- *Whether you sit down to meals each day or just “eat on the go”
- *Your level of perfectionism/acceptance of less than perfect rooms, meals, and clothes
- *Whether your students work independently often or you work with them for the most part

We have **taught our children to work hard and long from very early ages**. Our three oldest children could do amazing things when they were very young. I can remember when Kara (number 4) was seven years old and whined about making toast for breakfast. I would say to her, “When Kayla (first daughter, second child) was your age, she made the bread from scratch, baked it, sliced it, then toasted it for breakfast!” Now **I don’t focus on amazing feats**---simply keeping the house picked up, the laundry all done, dishes completed, and easy meals prepared are my goals for my three little workers, boys ages nine through fourteen; Kara (just turned 17!); and me.

Whenever I talk about children and chores, people *always* want to know exactly how our chore day runs. Thus, I will post our current chore schedule below, for those interested. You will notice immediately how much the little boys do and how little it seems that the girls do. As my kids get older, their housework decreases, not increases (at least after age fourteen or so). This might seem odd, but it is how we have handled our older children in many ways (with the exception of Kayla who ran the kitchen and food storage single handedly until she was sixteen as her ministry to me while I wrote WBLA for the Advanced Training Institute).

First of all, we do not “waste” the older children’s talents and time doing menial tasks. (Please note that **all of us work together on “menial” tasks all the time**---dinner time clean up, family work sessions, cooking all together, etc. For daily work, I simply use the **youngest person who can handle the job**—and old tip from Gregg Harris workshops many years ago. See past newsletters for info about this topic). I normally do not “waste” Kara (age 17) on loading the dishes, folding laundry, or sweeping the porch. She can do so much more! I save her for deep cleaning the bathrooms, corresponding with customers, putting edits into the computer, and more.

Secondly, my older children have “paid their dues” when it comes to the daily ins and outs. They were faithful, diligent, and responsible to help me manage things when there were seven children ages fourteen to newborn. Now they have moved on to greater things (including, Joshua helping his wife now!)---though none of them is opposed to any task we might ask of her.

Thirdly, older children are simply less available. My “middle ages” of children (fourteen or so to sixteen) have more school work and academic responsibilities than my younger children do. My young, single adults (ages nineteen to twenty-one) have taken the initiative to have ministries of their own. These ministries take a great deal of time (and often even money that they must earn, which takes more time).

Finally, my oldest children (young adults eighteen and up) are often in college or other higher education pursuits (internships, etc.). They are not at home very often (though they do still live at home). **The little kids simply have more time to do daily jobs than the older kids do.**

Please note that things almost always look perfect on paper. (Homeschool moms know that only too well; we make out perfect schedules and charts every year only to find that they are only perfect on paper!) There are many days that I am tied up helping Kara with a speech or tutoring first thing in the morning and the kitchen doesn't get done the way I want it done. Days when someone accidentally hits the "fluff only" on the dryer, and we wonder all day long why neither of the boys' loads of laundry is ready to fold and put away....and end up at six pm with undone laundry. Days when nobody starts the dishwasher during lunch clean up, and there aren't enough spoons for dinner that evening. And on and on and on. **We just regroup and start over.**

Sure, sometimes I scream, "If you want anything done right around here, you have to do it yourself!" –but that is a poor way to teach character, for sure! However, overall, our children know that they are vital members of this family---because of the way they keep things going by all of their hard work and efforts and because they are loved and cherished just for being who they are. **Chores are not an end in themselves---they are a means to an end---a well-run, organized home with everyone doing his part to make that happen—so that all its members are free to serve God and others.**

Watch this spot next time for Chore Schedule Tips and a Sample Chore Schedule!

Section IV: Heart Helps

7. Heart Strings: A Friend Shows Himself Friendly

Friends. That is an interesting concept in many ways, but even moreso for busy homeschooling moms who have little time leftover for ourselves and our needs. Most of us have friends (even if only superficial or social friends) of various types—but do we have the friends we need? A teacher I respect tells in his seminars that you should have two types of friends—those whom you help and

mentor and those who help and mentor you. Kayla and Cami went to our church's national general conference last week and reiterated this point from a speaker they heard there: You should have two types of friends---**those who press you on in spiritual things and those who you press on in spiritual things**. Similar teaching—and one that I have found to be true in my life. And one that we have tried to teach our kids in developing their friendships.

But homeschooling moms are often lacking in a type of friend they truly need—**likeminded, encouraging, fellow homeschoolers**. For the past ten years, I have been blessed to have those types of friendships. We have encouraged, advised, chastised, and rewarded one another. They have loved my kids—and I have loved theirs. They have pointed me in the right direction in my relationships—with my husband, the Lord, my children, and others.

Recently, a close homeschooling friend and I were having lunch. And before we knew it, we were both in tears. She would talk about one thing, and we would cry. I would bring up something, and we would cry. The thing about it is this: we were not crying because we were sad. We were **crying because we were reminding each other of God's faithfulness in our lives** and the lives of our children.

I would say, “Do you remember when we prayed for your son (now grown) every morning for months and months and months? And now, look what God has done!!!”

She would say, “Donna, can you doubt that God is going to work in your child's life after we saw him do such a mighty work in your other child?”

And on and on.

Tears of joy. Tears of remembrance. Tears of gratitude. **All because I had a good friend reminding me of what God has done for me in the past.**

Sure. I often cry tears of sorrow, fear, or disappointment with my friends. But I also often cry tears of rejoicing and celebration. With a true friend, both are accepted—and both are met with proper responses.

These are the kinds of homeschooling friends we need in our lives. I remember so well ten years ago when my little “support group” would meet and do book studies or watch teaching videos together. We often had twenty-four kids with us among the five of us—and that doesn't include the dozen or more older ones we had among us! The next time we saw each other, we would ask if there had been a breakthrough or if things were better in the area that we discussed. We would remind each other to practice first time obedience (I mean, make our kids practice it!). We would tell each other that we need to build our husbands up, not tear them down.

We cooked for each other when new babies came. We met together with our husbands for parenting classes. Sometimes we just scrapbooked and talked. And talked. And talked.

We never suggested that someone's pregnancy was a bad thing—unfortunate timing. We never recommended that one of our children would be better off going to school. We didn't just complain about situations that needed changed—we encouraged and challenged each other to change.

Oh, **how I long for each of you reading this to secure these types of friends**—even one or two---to help you in your homeschooling journey. I know from past experience that it feels like they are not to be found. It seems that everyone already has their groups of friends. You might feel that others do not desire your friendship. Then throw children—and protecting them from too much peer interaction---into the mix, and friendships really become difficult.

But I encourage you to seek out a friend or two this school year. Just phone or email someone and suggest that you double date one night or ask her if she would like to read an article together and discuss it. These non-commitment activities will help you see if you are “kindred spirits.”

Seek out a friend or two who **loves homeschooling at the same level you do**. (I personally do not want a close friend who suggests that I put the kids in school when the going gets rough.) Someone who loves and respects her husband. Someone who disciplines her children in a manner that is similar to your family's. Someone who protects her children from negative influence in a like way.

(Note: **You will not find someone exactly like you!** My circle of friends vary somewhat in the amount of peer interaction, television and movie viewing, types of music, and even denominations and doctrine, etc.—but there's not a huge discrepancy in our lifestyles—in a way that would pull me down instead of lifting me up.)

And remember this adage: A friend shows himself friendly. Do not sit around and wait for others. We live in a very un-initiative culture. Take the first step. And see how much encouragement and friendship can help you in your homeschooling.

Section V: Article from TFT—

8. Article: “I Want an Oompa Loompa Now, Daddy! Part III of III”

By Donna Reish

Large Family Discipline

People often gasp when we tell them we have seven children. "Seven children? I can't make the two I do have listen to me, much less seven of them."

To which I reply, "Well, we didn't get them all at the same time. We had time to get used to and teach one before another one arrived."

It is often assumed that because we have seven children, we have seven times the amount of disobedience, disrespect, and discontentment that someone with one poorly disciplined child has.

First of all, it doesn't matter if you have one, seven, or twelve children; if they are disobedient and disrespectful, it still brings heartache to the mother and shame to the father, according to the Bible.

Secondly, when you begin disciplining your children effectively from the beginning (or at least with the first two or three children, in the case of a large family), it has far-reaching effects to your younger children. **You set a standard for behavior in the older ones that has the potential to trickle down to the younger ones** (assuming the older ones interact with the younger ones and the entire family spends a lot of time together). We actually have had to punish our ten and thirteen year old sons (our fifth and sixth children) twenty-five percent of the amount that we had to punish our second child---the most selfless teenage girl I have ever met. (Of course, she wasn't selfless at ages two and three!) (Note: I was referring to punishment there; training and consequences have definitely been more extensive with our younger boys than with the girls. Gotta love three fairly compliant girls in a row!)

Thirdly, yes, there is the potential for seven times the amount of heartache for parents of seven children as there is for parents of one child, but **there is also the potential for seven times the amount of joy**. We have chosen to focus on biblical, effective discipline so that the potential for those joyful, loving, less problematic times is increased exponentially.

Children are never perfect... And I never want to paint a picture that is unrealistic. Ray wouldn't have to tell me that we are "getting the behavior that we want" if our children were perfect! Some days, I go to bed weary and worried. How will we help our young adult daughter through the difficult time she is having? How can we turn a bad attitude around? Is a recent trend in one of the kids indicative of something much worse? Even the most disciplined parents have problems. We are not guaranteed perfect children even if we do discipline and love consistently. However, **the alternative that we see in the world--joyless, problem-saturated homes---is enough to keep me moving ahead in**

what I know the Lord has shown us.

Taking Back Control

Many parents are bewildered as to how to take back their rightful place as, well, the parents. We have found the combined advice of James Dobson, Gary Ezzo, and S.M. Davis to be a big part of the answer: **If a child is not happy when he does not get his own way, he should not get his own way.**

In a practical sense, this means that if our two year old screams because he has the blue sipper cup and he wants the red one, he is not mature enough to make that decision. The boundaries have been widened for that child too early, and they need to be brought back in. (And the child should have the blue sipper cup for the rest of his life! ☺)

It means that if our four year old cannot share a toy with his brother, he is probably not old enough (or mature enough) to have that toy. It means that if our ten year old is not doing her homework on time, she should not be the one who decides when she will do her home work, where she will do her home work, and what she is permitted to do until the home work is done. It means that if our sixteen year old cannot seem to get home on time after debate club, he is probably not mature enough to drive to debate club.

One way that we have found to take back control of our children during times that we have felt that we lost control was to bring in the boundaries. When our children are not obeying, they are often being given too many choices and too much freedom. At that time, we have brought in the boundaries in different areas of their lives---and regained control.

For example, when a child is consistently unhappy with his meals, he should have less choices (not more to try to “make him happy”). We need to bring in the boundaries of his choices---just offer meat and vegetables or soup or whatever works until he is content and thankful for what he does have. When a teenager begins displaying negative behavior like her peers, we need to bring in the boundaries that were broadened too much for her maturity. Lessen the time she spends with peers and discriminate more carefully which peers she should and should not be permitted to spend time with.

This is especially helpful with very small children. When we have found ourselves with a two-year-old who threw his food, would not eat what was put before him, and screamed in his high chair, we had probably broadened his boundaries---his areas of control---too early. Those boundaries needed brought in. He was not obedient or mature enough to have his entire meal on his tray; he was not

content enough to choose what he wanted from the dinner menu; he was not compliant enough to remain in his high chair for family worship, he needed removed from the family and placed in his crib until worship was over. His boundaries had been too wide.

And no, none of this is easy! We had one child who for nearly a year (around 1 ½ to 2 ½) had unbearable high chair behavior (among other behavioral issues)—so much so that each night we had a designated “runner”—someone who had to cart the little tyke upstairs to his crib when he screamed or threw his food. Every night it was a different person, so that at least some of us could enjoy the meal and interact with each other. This went on nearly every dinner for a long, long time. It was terrible. The older kids still tease the little guy about when they had to be the runner for him! (However, they will not forget the endurance and determination it took to turn this behavior around—and hopefully, it will give them the motivation to persevere during difficult parenting issues.) If Ray had not been so determined, firm, and practical, I would have given up long before the results came about—and I probably would have given him whatever he did want to eat every night just to keep peace.)

Disciplining children is a fine balance among punishment, consequences, discipling, and praise. It is the world’s most important job---and that is not just a trite phrase for a parenting article; it truly is. We have the opportunity to help shape future adults by our faithfulness (or lack of faithfulness) to biblical discipline. We must remain steadfast in our job—lest we end up with a house full of Veruca Salts!

A Baker’s Dozen Discipline Tips

1. **Begin early** demanding first time obedience from your toddler or preschooler. Punish swiftly for disobedience, and reassure him of your love.
2. Teach and instruct your children about your expectations for behavior during **non-conflict times**. In other words, do not confront them about other behaviors during times of punishment.
3. Discern whether a behavior is **disobedience or childishness** and discipline accordingly with either punishment or consequences.
4. Make the **consequences fit the crime** for childish behaviors like irresponsibility, forgetfulness, procrastination, and messiness.
5. Always explain the **why’s of your commands**---but expect obedience even if the why’s are not understood.
6. **Bring in the boundaries** of your children’s lives in order to regain control of their bad behavior.
7. Do not expect to do the same thing you have always done discipline-wise and

get different results. **Different results require different action.**

8. Explain to your children what the Bible says about disciplining and training children. Let them know that **God's Word says that if you do not discipline and train them, you hate them**—or at least do not love them with a true, biblical love.
9. **Do not give choices to a child who is not happy if he does not have choices.** Too many choices too early creates self-centered, spoiled children—and eventually selfish young adults and adults.
10. **Do not allow your children to throw temper-tantrums.** Punish immediately for tantrums and teach them early on that fits and tantrums will not be tolerated. (Remove the child and isolate him until he has regained control. Once a child starts controlling a parent with fits and tantrums, it is extremely difficult to regain control.)
11. **Place character training and obedience training above other activities and pursuits in the early years**---over sports, education, clubs, friends, and activities. If you must make a choice, always choose training first. It will pay off in the end.
12. **Do not buy into more “modern” disciplinary techniques** like counting to a certain number before demanding obedience, sitting a child in time out for direct disobedience, making a child sit in a laundry basket when he back talks, discussing how he feels about the command, etc.
13. Always **reassure your child of your love** before, during, and after any disciplinary situation, and affirm and **praise your children for good behavior.**

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