

Chapter 12

Parenthood

Providing Unconditional Love and Unlimited Support to Your Offspring

Becoming a parent is a cinch, so simplistic we can be inserted into parenthood un-expectantly; changing our lives in as little as 9 months. Those who are unable to consummate children of their own have the legal right to *adopt* children to parent as if they were. Regardless the biological status of a child and or *how* they begot here on this earth I believe each and every human is *entitled* to having parent figures as a part of their lives; not saying this is always the true case, however even if the relationship is distant the fact of *loving* someone enough to recognize them as *Mom* and/or *Dad* is *priceless*. As adolescents we all had *role models* we looked up to for whatever the reason (athletes, entertainers, politicians, family members, neighborhood influences). As *parents* it is ideal to be the figures our young ones target to emulate. Any man and woman can make a baby, but it takes a special soul to excel in the category of *parenthood*.

My definition of a *positive* parent consists of a slew of *qualities* and *values*; having an ardent zealotry to do **anything** for the children we parent is the utmost vital *principle* to oblige by. In my opinion if one is not ready and willing to put their entire livelihood on the line for their young ones then that person also is **not** ready or willing to represent as a positive parent. A positive parent is a dependable and sensible *guide* who publicizes *compassion*, demonstrates *communication*, bolsters *safety* and *health*, coordinates emotions, promotes *integrity*, instills healthy *M.V.Ps*, and contributes *love*. The ultimate *goal* of a parent is to raise a genuinely happy, healthy, productive, loving adult who embraces morals, values, and self-confidence. The *purpose* is to allot our next generation *independence* and *identity*. Most importantly; to guard these goals, a positive parent is *physically* present. Children mimic what they love— be there, *provide*, *educate*, *console*, *love*. Unfortunately we all know that no one is perfect and I will be first to divulge that. December 2015 is when I was released from the heinous shackles of the penitentiary. By that time my son was already 6 years old, my daughter a mere 4, and I at age 25 had allowed my destitute *choices* to wield my physical presence away from more than **half** of my children's total existence. Incarceration amongst other circumstances incubated my latency as a young father. I was still yet to put my negative and unhealthy

patterns to adjourn.

Early 2008 age 19, I turned myself into the Ramsey County Correctional Facility after receiving a 57 month dispositional departure via Judge E. Wilson. I plead guilty to 1st degree aggravated robbery. The deal included I commit to 20 years of probation and serve an initial 180 days of jail time. At the time I was young and green to how the system worked so all I knew was that I *temporarily* avoided going prison for 48 months which was the original deal. I say temporarily because as it was all said and done I was convicted on new charges and served all 57 months after later executing the entire sentence.

So there I was, no more than a month into my initial 180 day sentence. Just as any other day I jumped on the phone for a 15 minute call to check in with my Grandma and Girlfriend. However this time the conversation with my girlfriend was a bit different than any other previous; this was the day that Sarah informed me that she was pregnant with our first child. I was overfilled with excitement. At that moment I intended on being an *active* and positive parent that will provide by any means for my child. Thus if there were a time for me to straighten up my life this was good as any. I was a 19 year old soon to be father with my whole life ahead of me, though upon the conclusion of my first stretch behind bars as an adult I chose to return to the exact arbitrary *thinking patterns* and *behaviors* in which corresponded to my original demise.

My son was born later that year and after failing to comply with my conditions of release by ignoring my mandated 270 hours of community service as well as amassing continual run-ins with the law, I rapidly netted myself a probation violation that ultimately landed me right back in the possession of the County. Time is of an essence. I lost a little more than six months out of my life during the stay and the timing couldn't have been more diabolical. First off though I was present for my son's birth I was absent for early stage bonding time with him. Then just two days before my release date in October of 2009 my Grandmother took her last breath. My release was bittersweet. The greatest person in the world had left this earth, yet on the brighter side I was reunited with my newly born son.

This time around upon my departure from the Ramsey County Workhouse I made it a point to become more of an *active* parent in my son's life. Sarah and my son Darian would frequently spend several nights at a time over my Grandparents' house with me so we could be together as much as possible. For a while I was *active, positive, and physically present* as a father. I was consistently working a job and using the majority of my income to provide essentials to my young dependent. Children are indeed awfully expensive; amongst diapers, clothes, food, and medical insurance parents can expect to pay an astronomical amount of dollars each year raising a little one. Fortuitously for me I had help from Sarah as we undertook the journey together as partners in the situation. While everything seemed to be thriving I still yet could not entirely part away from my *addiction to criminal thinking* nor the ostensible "easy money" and unrestrained lifestyle that I craved to gain from it. I continued to sell drugs, gamble, steal, and anything else that would grant me the means to flourish for an instant. I attempted to justify these habits by using *tactics* such as *magnifying* to divert my openly visible negative actions into a false illusion of something less sinister by telling myself, "I have to engage in these undertakings to permit a better life for my son". In actuality I was thinking and behaving selfishly with a dearth of vision towards the bigger picture of being a *positive parent* and true predecessor.

Early 2010 I received more baby news from Sarah; we were going to be having our second child. Once again I was tremendously joyed that I had been blessed to bring another life into this world. On the same stage as my elation played my distress; I desperately wanted to be a positive parent, conversely my ravenousness and infatuation with keeping up with my own pretentious lifestyle was the impetus to my *distorted thinking* and *unhealthy habits*. Unwilling to extricate from my disparaging *thinking patterns* I sustained my oxymoronic belief that the negative frequency I was transmitting throughout the universe would phenomenally benefit my family and I. My son was outgrowing clothes by the week, soiling diapers by the hour, and eating meals by the minute; in addition to those analytics I had less than nine months before welcoming in a newborn to the family. Considering the fiscal circumstances I grew relentless with my transgressions in attempt to satisfy my standard of living as well as to provide for my offspring.

A couple months after the second pregnancy announcement; I was arrested and detained in the state of Wisconsin for my role in a counterfeit money scam. Once the charges filed my Grandfather posted my bond allowing me to refute my case from the “outs”. *Grandpa* always had my back no matter the situation. At this time I was still mid my 20 year probation with Ramsey County Minnesota and had roughly 30+ months yet to serve if I were to violate my conditions. One of those conditions was for me to notify my probation officer about any police contact. The best thing I had going for me was that I had not been *convicted* of any charges however leaving the state while on felony probation was enough to violate me on the spot. In the wake of meeting with my P.O I was relieved to have been given a break with no violation reliant upon the judgement of my pending Wisconsin hearing. Already knowing how slim the chances were of getting my entire case completely dismissed I coerced my public defender to assist me in delaying the proceeding process for just about as long as we could. During the continuation of my court dates my beautiful daughter Taylor was born only one day shy of sharing a birthday with my beautiful Grandmother Patricia. Following Taylor’s birth my court hearing came to a conclusion. I was originally charged with “Uttering a Counterfeit” - a *felony*, however agreed to plead guilty to a lesser charge of “Receiving Stolen Property” - a *misdemeanor*. This plea deal came with it no initial jail time as well as 5 years of probation. Remarkably, after relaying the final results of the case to my Probation Officer I received a blessing as I was told by my P.O that he would **not** be recommending a violation for this incident. In my mind I foresaw arresting agents waiting for me at the door, so to hear this news from the horse’s mouth was undoubtedly sobering.

I carried on by continuing to work my part-time job while at the same time whelm myself in negative and illegal activities. During this span I became much less **active** in my children’s life and my relationship with their Mother began to diminish. The **less active** I was with my *offspring* = The **more active** I was with my *unhealthy habits*. In addition to reducing my presence with my kids I was also doing less to support them financially. The streets consumed my time as my gambling and chemical addictions pulverized my profits.

Four months behind my Daughter's birth my name was given to the St. Paul Police Department as a suspect of an *alleged* Assault. I won't share details but I will say no *charges* or *arrests* were ever legislated. Impetuously, before knowing the fate of the situation I was under the impression the circumstances would not be in my favor so I made a heedless decision to drop everything and run. In less than an hour I had packed my bags, organized a ride, changed my phone number, deleted my social media accounts, and was on the express way in route to Fort Dodge, Iowa. By going on the run as a fugitive I forfeited my job and violated my probation as collateral; worst of all I came to be *totally inactive* as a parent to my children.

Post arriving in Fort Dodge and spending a few nights isolating myself immersed inside a cheap motel, I got in contact with an "O.G." from St. Paul named Marc who at the time just so happened to be the general manager of a cable television company operating out of Des Moines, Iowa and was recruiting new sales reps. Marc extended me the offer and within the next 48 hours was at my room door to pick me up for my first day on the job. I had never personally met Marc before this day, I only knew of whom he was through mutual connections so I defiantly avoided exposing my runaway status to him, but as we got more acquainted he progressively gained my full *respect* and I couldn't stand to keep lying to him about my story. Marc and I canvassed the neighborhoods of Des Moines selling digital cable for about a week before I communicated to him the true reason why I was living out of a motel in small city Iowa. Rather than judge me and turn his back, Marc was there for me when I was too stubborn to listen to what anyone close to me had to say. Not only did Marc look out for me as we continued to serve cable to the people of Iowa but most importantly he shed his *wisdom* and *encouraged* me to get back **active** in my children's life.

I remained in Iowa truant from the authorities as I commenced the effort to rebuild my relationship with Sarah and the kids. Each passing day separated from my young my heart would grow fonder. For about a month I traveled back and forth between Des Moines and St. Paul to be with Darian and Taylor on the weekends. Gradually as time intervened the Assault allegation that was predominantly responsible for accelerating my whole eluding charade officially settled cold and closed its files due to a lack of evidence. Even after being exonerated from the burden of presumption I was inept to bolt the hamper of certitude as I still was wanted by Minnesota's judicial system for violating my terms of probation. As much as I wanted to gad free with my family I couldn't

in fear of the police tracking me down, therefore *co-parenting* emerged as a preeminent proponent in I supporting my kin while perching cloaked from the law.

Co-Parenting describes a parenting situation where the parents are not in a *marriage, cohabitation, or romantic relationship* with one another. Sarah and I were together as a couple but lived separately; she and the kids lived in a place of their own and I was jumping state to state, place to place, staying everywhere but where I needed to be and that was at home with my sprout.

It is a child's right to retain a limitless quantity of equal support from each parent. *Neglecting* one's own parental responsibilities or *inhibiting* the opposing parent from an opportunity to be active will only hurt the child. Children should never be used as pawn to seek revenge on, extort, or enrage the other parent. Saying things like, "*I don't ever want to see you or the kid(s) again!*" or "*You will never see me or the kid(s) again!*" will only hurt the child. If two parents cannot cordially communicate and agree upon a suitable visitation schedule or determine an appropriate monetary contribution amount amongst one another then "Family Court" may be the best alternate to mediate the details.

I believe a positive parent is active with their seed from adolescent to adult. Regardless the circumstances; for our children, **Any battle is worth The battle**. If anyone deserves it, our children deserve it. There is no greater reward.

My activeness as a father was marginalized after the inevitable transpired; I was pulled over as a passenger while riding with a buddy who had suspended license and who had also forgot to turn his headlights on. Despite confidently reciting a false identification to the officer I was still brought into Washington County Detention for fingerprints. The flight frenzy was over. I was transferred from Washington County Detention to Ramsey County Detention then to the Ramsey County Workhouse to serve a one year sentence for my profusion of violations. My fight to engross relevance as a *Dad* trekked on.

Joining *parenthood* holds an everlasting membership. My experience of parenthood so far can be described as a one way journey to happiness that occasionally bears rugged terrain but reaps an abundance of joyous treasures along the way. I'm still on that journey. My expedition can evolve as per I do or as often as my brood's next stomach ache. No matter what comes next my **goal** to be a **positive** and **active** *Parent, Father, and Dad* will always be **priority**. I could not and would not consider myself a man if I didn't know in my heart that I did and will do anything and everything in my power to actively support and raise my kids.

All children of all nations deserve a pair of solid parents; teach them early what we learned late. Building strong families builds strong communities. I don't know about you, but I don't want my litter growing up in squalor and violence, I want the best for mine and hopefully you do too. Play your position. Our next generation needs our devotion.