



Parenting when you don't see instant results

The results of your parenting often don't come until adulthood but you've got to keep doing your best in the meantime. That's one of the great frustrations of being a parent.

There aren't too many activities you do where it can take years to see the results.

Parenting is one of them.

As your kids grow up, you put in a lot of groundwork teaching them how to behave, how to be confident, how to treat others well and so on. But you don't always see the REAL results of all that effort until your kids are adults.

Nevertheless, you've got to keep doing the right thing regardless, even though it takes a lot of **faith**.

I was reminded about this when speaking to a mother recently whose son had struggled at school all his life. She'd put so much of her emotional and physical energy into helping him learn, jollyng him along and nursing him through the many ups and downs that only struggling kids seem to experience.

Her son, now a teenager, was about to give up trying. And I could see that his mother felt like giving up too!

She asked: **"When do you stop being a child's coach and cheer leader?"**

The answer, of course, is that you can't!



She knew that but, like her son, she needed some encouragement to keep going.

We all do from time to time.

That's why it's useful to remind yourself that parenting is a **long-term activity**.

The Einstein Factor

All parents should be aware of the **Einstein Factor**. Albert Einstein was one of the preeminent scientists and thinkers of the 20th century, yet he maintained that he was no smarter than anyone else. He believed he **just stayed on problems longer** than most people.

In the same way, there are some children with whom you just have to stay on the job longer than you would with others.

- ▶ If you have a **shy** or **socially-challenged** child you might have to stay on the job until adulthood, when she finally finds her own way of building a network of friends and colleagues. Until then, it's all about *supporting, coaching and cajoling*.
- ▶ If you have an **ADHD-type** child you might have to keep on the job longer to keep him out of trouble. You may not see the results until his mid-20s when all that energy goes into starting up his own business or doing something absolutely amazing. In the meantime, *explain, teach and be firm!*
- ▶ If you have a **late bloomer** you probably have to keep him interested in learning until he learns the practical skills needed to succeed in the workplace or in business, just as many kids who struggle at school end up doing. In the meantime, *encourage, scaffold and model learning*.

We all want instant results in whatever we do. Parenting is no different, except that instant results are rare!



That doesn't make it any easier when you don't see results for the effort you put in. But you've got to keep on doing the right things, and making the best choices for your kids. In other words, you need to bring the Einstein Factor into your parenting. To help do this:

- 1. Get support and feedback** from your partner, or a colleague. *Feedback fires you up.*
- 2. Keep building the skills and knowledge** that will help your kids be successful or overcome individual challenges. *Kids get lifelong learning from parents more than school.*
- 3. Be around people who fire you up** and energise you. It's no coincidence that great parents hang out together. *Support keeps you grounded.*

Small hinges swing big doors

A former parenting mentor used to say, "***Small hinges swing big doors***". He meant that it's the little things done by parents on a regular basis that make the biggest difference to kids.

You've just got to choose the right actions and keep doing them ... day after day. Have faith that the results will come ... **eventually!**

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