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Elevating Child Care: A Guide To Respectful Parenting



Synopsis

Janet Lansbury's advice on respectful parenting is quoted and shared by millions of readers worldwide. Inspired by the pioneering parenting philosophy of her friend and mentor, Magda Gerber, Janet's influential voice encourages parents and child care professionals to perceive babies as unique, capable human beings with natural abilities to learn without being taught; to develop motor and cognitive skills; communicate; face age appropriate struggles; initiate and direct independent play for extended periods; and much more. Once we are able to view our children in this light, even the most common daily parenting experiences become stimulating opportunities to learn, discover, and to connect with our child. *Elevating Child Care* is a collection of 30 popular and widely read articles from Janet's website that focus on some of the most common infant/toddler issues: eating, sleeping, diaper changes, communication, separation, focus and attention span, creativity, boundaries, and more. Eschewing the quick-fix "tips and tricks" of popular parenting culture, Janet's insightful philosophy lays the foundation for a closer, more fulfilling parent/child relationship, and children who grow up to be authentic, confident, successful adults.

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Customer Reviews

"Not your average babycare advice book, Lansbury's short essays offer practical, reassuring guidance on everything from infant sleep and diaper changes through all things toddlerhood. At its heart... this book encourages moms to trust themselves and their babies, a simple and yet revolutionary concept... I love this book." Taylor Hengen Newman, *Mom.me* "This book... is an absolute go to for all parents, therapists, anyone who works with, is, or knows parents of young

children. Not only is (Janet) amazing in person, this book distills her wisdom into words. I can't wait to share it with all the parents I know!" - Dr. Wendy Denham, PhD"Janet's writing is an exceptional combination of knowledge, first hand experience and lots of heart. Her caring and dedication to helping parents and educators is outstanding. Through her extremely compassionate and easily understood delivery of valuable information and insights, ultimately our precious children are going to benefit greatly." - Deborah McNelis, *Brain Insights*"This book is inspiring and will give you the tools and information you need to transform your relationship with your baby, and to find your own passion for parenting. Check it out today." - Lisa Sunbury Gerber, *Regarding Baby*"Take Magda Gerber's Educaring Approach, add passion, 20 years' experience with babies and parents, mix with insight, humor and a way with words, and you get this little gem of a book." - Ruth Mason, *Educaring*

A former actress and model, Janet's passion for parent education began when she became a mother and sought guidance from infant expert Magda Gerber. Deeply inspired and grateful for her wisdom, Janet began training with Magda professionally. For the last 20 years, she has taught RIE parenting classes in Los Angeles, been a presenter at numerous early childhood conferences, written parenting articles, and served on the board of directors of Resources for Infant Educators (RIE). Janet is privileged to now be supporting millions of parents internationally through her website, JanetLansbury.com, where she shares insights gained through her parenting classes and personal experiences as a mother of three.

In writing this book Janet Lansbury has elevated the RIE philosophy to a whole new level. I read Magda Gerber's books when I had my first child, and I found them to promote distant childcare - at least from my perspective of a new parent entirely steeped in the Attachment Parenting (AP) philosophy (my review of the book talks at length about the differences between AP and RIE *Your Self-Confident Baby: How to Encourage Your Child's Natural Abilities -- From the Very Start*). I was also in love with Maria Montessori's writings advocating respect for the child, so I didn't feel Magda's books offered a novel idea....until AP failed me. I loved spending every second with my son, I carried him everywhere, co-slept, nursed him until he self-weaned at 3.5yo, kissed him every chance I had, obsessed over his diet and bowel movements...only to find out this was never enough. He wanted more and more and more of me, until my self-sacrifice took a toll on my health and emotions. Just as an example, leaving the house was a 1-hour ordeal that started with "mommy don't go," moved into guilt trips "mommy I cry angel tears for you when you leave," proceeded into

demands for treats or toys, and culminated in a heart-wrenching scream-fest a block or so down the road for all neighbors to see (might I add, in the arms of his dad which he adored, and who quit his job to be a stay-at-home parent). We were all out of give. Having amassed an extensive library of parenting books, I revisited some of them in search for answers. Magda's book struck me differently then. I just had to be honest with my son (I have to leave tomorrow to go to work), validate his feelings (I know you don't like me to leave, I hate to go too), and comfort him if he cried without having to stop the meltdown (I see you're sad/disappointed...). Then magic happened. I could leave the house! That elusive "more" that my son wanted from me was validation, he wanted to know that I understood what he was going through, he did not want me to never leave the house. I started to pay more attention to how *he* felt and responded to his feelings. The key was to not take his feelings personally - they were his - but to make sure they were all acceptable in my book (including hysterical crying). When I had my second baby, I decided to give RIE a more serious try. I read Janet Lansbury's blogs, followed her advice on Facebook, and a number of very smart parents who have now become "my village". I am blown away by the results. It's true that every child is different, but I am doing things very similar this time around (I'm still nursing on demand, co-sleeping, etc., etc.). The only difference: I am paying much more attention to my child, not assuming anything until I stop, watch, and think, and offer minimal intervention when I find out the cause. For e.g., my baby fusses and cries, I go over (no, no longer running frantically fire-drill style), I calmly say: "you sound upset". Then **I OBSERVE**. I don't pick up, latch on, and rock around the room until the crying stops. I look for clues as to what might have upset my baby. 90% of the time involves situations for which hugs and milk are the wrong response (such as toy fell off her reach, I stopped singing, brother left the room...). And then, I don't pick up the toy and put it in her hands, I simply validate: "you're upset because the toy fell. You were having fun with it." And then DO NOTHING. Simple, right? Another situation: 6-mo old baby is congested, and wakes up mad throughout the night because she can't breathe and she can't nurse. With the first baby, the solution was saline spray followed by the Nosefieda (my arms and feet wrapped around my squirming child, heart aching from having to put him through that). I knew the process did not hurt one bit, because I had resorted to spraying his nose in his sleep and he didn't even wake up. With the second child, I showed her the spray bottle and simply explained what was going to happen. First few times she squirmed and cried just as hard as my boy....until I RIE-d the process further. I just put her on her bed, and did not try to subdue her at all. Just told her what I was going to do and waited for her "permission" - any sign of readiness to proceed. I sprayed, she smiled, and it was over. Husband almost fell on the floor (yes, he often had to come help me hold the kids from flailing around while I cleaned their

nose, all 6ft of him). One of Janet's first chapters gives you the keys to resolve such situations. She proposes a role reversal. Think about yourself incapacitated, and your child (or some big bulky tall person) taking care of you. They show up with strange instruments, hold you down, and proceed to insert things into your nose - your only breathing apparatus!!!! - and you gag at the feeling, but you are powerless. Wouldn't you scream and fight too? (I've read alien abduction stories that went like this...). Going back to the separation anxiety example, suppose your loved one is leaving the house for an indeterminate amount of time over which you have no control, and he looks like he can't wait to get out the door, rushing through the house collecting clothes, keys, coffee, etc., you totally invisible at best, and at worst a nuisance. Wouldn't you cry too? This book should be read by all parents - new and seasoned. I am not advocating RIE over any other parenting philosophy (although now I strongly prefer it). I think this book is a must for showing you how to think through situations from the eyes of a child (not just telling you to do so) and giving you the tools to respond in a respectful way (in other words the `how-to' missing from the Gerber and Montessori books). In addition, the book fills a very big gap in parenting books: how to raise emotionally intelligent children. I had read all about how important emotional intelligence is, all about how empathy is a better predictor of success than IQ, all about how boys grow up emotionally illiterate, etc. I had read Freud's writings inside and out while in college and knew early experiences might doom my child to perpetual counseling. I knew ABOUT the importance of all the above, but did not know the HOW to go about raising a child who knows what they feel, and knows that whatever they feel is ok (not what they do, what they feel - not advocating permissive parenting here), and knows how they want to be treated. (My older child has coached me through my mommy-tantrums a couple of times now). The book is a collection of Janet's blogs, so one commenter questioned the need to buy the book at all. However, once you go down the RIE path, you will probably encounter resistance because your parenting will appear odd (what do you mean, you don't shush a crying baby? "You're ok" is the wrong thing to say?! You don't want me to say "Good job!"??). To have a book that you can hand to your husband, nanny, parent, or whoever is taking care of your child (or judging your childcare), is much more convenient than printing out or forwarding blog articles. In addition, you can choose to purchase the audio version - which is what I did. I get more "listening" time than reading time these days. As an added bonus, Janet's voice conveys warmth, confidence, and happiness - a reminder that the childrearing years are good times, not drudgery to wish away or over with. Instead, she advocates an almost Zen approach to parenting: slow down, observe, listen, and be present. Even a messy diaper change can be an opportunity to connect with your child. In today's busy life where parents focus on doing more more and more for and to their child, this book

points out the benefits of doing less, but doing it with your child. I am very indebted to this lady for the amazing difference she has made in my parenting.

Janet Lansbury is the bomb...hands down. She completely revolutionized my parenting style and her philosophy has brought so much joy into my house. I can honestly say that my 14 month old twins are absolutely delightful kids...all thanks to Janet Lansbury...seriously. By implementing a culture of respect and communication in our house we've created a relaxing and calm environment. I am no longer stressed by my kids expressing their emotions (aka yelling) because I now GET them - it DOES suck that I won't let you kamikaze down the stairs because you really did want to do that. And they are entitled to their range of emotions. I have seen my kids thrive by using the consistent boundaries recommended by Janet. Let me tell you about the moment that I knew that this philosophy worked: We did baby led weaning and always allowed a lot of freedom with food. When we introduced plates and utensils at about 9 months there was some throwing of the plates, cups, etc.. I would always be really consistent in saying "When you throw your plate it makes me think that you are all done. If you throw your plate again I'm going to take it away." And I would take it away if it happened again. Amazingly, they didn't throw their plates after we did this routine just a few times. But that's not the impressive part. Anyways, fast forward about a month. one of them lifts her plate up, I glance over casually but say nothing, she looks at me, puts her plate down and makes the sign for "all done". My heart was singing

I found Janet's blog when I had a two-year-old and a six-month-old. I was frustrated at my oldest's rivalry with the youngest, and at my wit's end with his hitting. At the time I practiced attachment parenting, and thought my love and gentleness should have been enough to have loving, gentle children. Janet's advice and RIE saved my family and me. It not only helped us find our way out of that dilemma, but all of the other parenting pitfalls I hear others running into. Sleep, visits to the doctor, sharing, manners, and so on were no longer something I dreaded. In fact, learning from Janet helped shift my perspective of parenting so I saw my children in a completely different way, and I've learned to have a respectful relationship with them so *nothing* is dreaded. I'm certainly not perfect as a parent, but RIE and Janet's advice doesn't require perfection. Instead it suggests humanity, respect, and acceptance. If you are looking for a different kind of baby book, that isn't dogmatic and truly can work for anyone, this is it. It will change your life.

Read this, read it again, and then buy it for everyone that is a parent or who wants to become a

parent. You know how they say that kids don't come with a manual? THIS IS THE MANUAL! Janet's advice is easy to follow, easy to read, and completely relates to real life. We discovered RIE when my daughter was almost 2 and it has changed our lives. I've purchased 4 copies of this book as gifts and will continue to do so!

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