4 WAYS YOU MAY BE WORKING AGAINST YOUR CHILD'S NATURE

and

How to Gain Their Cooperation Using Simple Yet Powerful Strategies

by Nina Cuellar-Barry

WELCOME! SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE

Congratulations on taking some important steps to creating a closer relationship with your child. You're an amazing, caring mom!

Hi! I'm a former Special Educator and mother of 2 wonderful adult children. The viewpoints and techniques in this workbook are some of the same ones I use to help moms create a closer relationship with their children. I've used them myself in my own mothering journey.

It can be challenging to understand what your children are telling you with their behavior, but moms tell me how rewarding it is when they can really understand and work **with** their children and truly gain their cooperation.

I hope you find the suggestions and ideas in this workbook helpful in your mothering journey!

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#1 YOU MAY ASSUME YOUR CHILD WILL LIKE THE SAME THINGS YOU DID WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE

You may have loved books when you were little, begging your mom to read them to you again and again. But if your little one is a whirlwind of activity who only sits still when they're engrossed in an activity of THEIR choosing, you may be disappointed by their inattention when you try to read them a story.

Try this instead:

1. **Observe what your child enjoys doing, either alone or with others**
2. **Join them in whatever they're already doing**
3. **Notice whether this 'shifts' the energy of the activity you share**

Q: What are some things your child would do all day if they were allowed to? What happens when you join your child in one of these activities?

#2 YOU BUY YOUR CHILD CLOTHES THAT LOOK ADORABLE ON THEM - BUT THEY WON'T WEAR THEM!

Why won't they wear the cute outfit you bought them? It may not make sense to you, but children are often very decided on what they like and don't like about what they wear.

Before your next clothes shopping trip, some brainstorming and planning might give you some direction for clothing they will *love* to wear.

1. **Notice what kind of fabric your child doesn't mind wearing - snug or loose-fitting; textured or smooth fabric; stretchy or more stiff material?**
2. **You might offer choices of lots of colors (even black!) to figure out which they are drawn to (patterns; solid colors; bright or muted)**
3. **Are they more interested in how they look in the clothes, or how the clothes feel on their bodies?**

Q: Which articles of clothing does your child wear over and over? Ask them what they like best about their favorites. Are the answers surprising?

#3 IN ORDER TO BE FAIR, YOU TREAT ALL YOUR CHILDREN 'THE SAME'!

Differences in temperament, skills and challenges often show up at birth! Some children are risk takers, while others are super cautious. One may love the water and relish jumping in the pool, while another may find swimming pools uninviting and cold. Even when many children of your child's age can do what is hard for your child, it doesn't mean that your child is 'lazy' or 'stubborn.'

Since every child has strengths and challenges and different inborn skills, you might need to make changes to your expectations - at least until you're able to teach and coach them in the problematic situations.

1. **Make a note of the activities or situations that are difficult for your child**
2. **Can you determine the reason for your child's negative reaction to the experience or activity?**
3. **If a challenging activity or event is necessary for your child, can you acknowledge the difficulty *and at the same time* gently support them in moving through it with lots of loving encouragement?**

Q: When does your child struggle with an activity or event? What might help them improve a little or accept the situation a little better?

#4 TO HELP YOUR CHILD DO BETTER, YOU POINT OUT ANOTHER CHILD'S BEHAVIOR AS A MODEL

It's true that children learn from each other, so it seems to make sense that if you show your child what another child is doing (much better) it should help them. Unfortunately, young children don't perceive another child as a good model, because they tend to see only that they are 'wrong' and the other child is 'right' in your eyes.

So how do you encourage your child to learn needed skills in a positive way? Here are some strategies you can try:

1. **Tell your child what you notice they're really good at**
2. **Ask them what they want to learn to be better at and (together) make a plan for how they can do that**
3. **Decide what skills your child really *needs* to master right now, and give yourself and your child grace about the others**

Q: Are there skills your child needs to get better at right now? Can you help your child learn them, or do you need to enlist someone's help?