

Walls and Personal Mom Statements

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How many times has this happened to you... you are going about your day when all of a sudden your cell phone rings? You pick it up and on the other end is someone asking you to do something (come for a play date, donate to a cause, volunteer at your child's school, etc.). Your stomach tightens as you hear the word "yes" come out of your mouth.

These situations often catch us off guard. Sometimes, we even find ourselves saying "yes" when we actually want to say "no". This may be particularly true with all the hustle and bustle of the holidays upon us. Why might this be?

Ultimately, it all boils down to lack of clarity. Even though we have a vision of where we are headed, most of us have only a vague sense of how our moment to moment decisions and actions link to our value system. Without a clear connection between the two we can wake up one morning struggling to understand how we ended up so far away from where we dreamed we would be. It is also worth noting that in the culture we live in, achieving clarity is not easy. We are constantly bombarded with messages telling us what we need to do, be, and have in order to consider ourselves successful. So, unless our purpose and value system are practically bullet proof, the chances of us meandering off the path we have chosen are high. So how do we address this?

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The concept of a wall is a concrete way to illustrate the fact that the small decisions we make on a moment to moment basis contribute to what we build in life. The energy we spend making our moment to moment decisions is what builds our wall. What we have to recognise is that the particular moment in which we are making a particular decision is filled with competing goals all vying for our attention. Without a clear organizing principle, we can easily get thrown off track. One way to achieve this organization is by creating a Personal Mom Statement. This is a mission statement for your work as a mother, similar to a mission statement that might be created for a company. It can help you to create an overarching parenting philosophy so that you respond consistently to your children and so you and your partner can stay on the same page. It can also give you a set of values against which you measure the activities you choose to participate in. This way, when you pick up the phone and are asked to commit to something, you can be clear about whether or not it fits with the "wall" you are trying to build.

Activities can quickly turn into the kind of busyness that pulls us in too many directions at once if they are not held together with an overarching purpose. We have to be aware of how we spread our energy. If it gets spread too thin you will end up with a wall that is wide but not high. If we say "no" to too many things, we will end up with a wall that is tall but very narrow. We must somehow find a way to balance the two dimensions of width and height. Lastly, be aware of how the culture we live in is influencing the wall you are building. Is it making your wall wider than

you want it to be? Narrower? If so, it may be time to consider creating a Personal Mom Statement.

For more information about developing an overarching parenting philosophy and Personal Mom Statement, attend our ***Raising a Confident Child*** seminar December 6 and 13, 2010 or book a ***private consultation*** with one of our counsellors. Visit www.bearentingpro.com or call (403) 230-2959 to register or book your next appointment.