

Training for Triumph E-Newsletter Issue 020 February/March 2008 **March CQLA Sale!!!!**

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*Email Jonathan at trainingfortrumphhomeschool@mchsi.com if you wish to be taken off this mailing list—or to add a friend. Thanks!

Section I: Training for Triumph (TFT) Events and Announcements

1. Hello: Note From Donna

Dear Fellow Heart Trainers,

Happy winter! We hope this newsletter finds your family learning and growing in the Lord.

We have been super busy here at TFT converting *Character Quality Language Arts* from Volumes (Volume I, II, and III) to Color Series (Red Series, Blue Series, Green Series). We hope this will eliminate some of the confusion in the numbering—and let people know that you can start with any “color/volume” at each child’s level. (See below for more info on this—and for info about our spring sale.)

Additionally, we have been putting the finishing touches on our first non-curriculum book, *The Well-Trained Heart*. We have included an excerpt from our book in this newsletter to give you a taste of what the book is all about. We are praying that it will help homeschoolers everywhere to prioritize relational and spiritual training above all other training—while still providing their children with quality educations. You can also find information about order our new book or securing a TFT speaker for your homeschooling event in this mailing.

This will be short—we don’t want to take away from the WTH chapter we’ve included. We also want to be sure that CQLA users are made aware of the spring sales, so they can obtain CQLA at reduced prices.

Don’t let the coldness or length of winter discourage you in your homeschooling! Before long the kids can be running around outside (instead of from the kitchen, through the dining room, and into the living room where Ray and I are working, like our three little guys just did!)—and everything will look “sunnier.”

Love,
Donna

P.S. To read about the latest excitement at the Reishes—Cami’s courtship—go to my blog at <http://www.homeschoolblogger.com/relationalhomeschool/490507/>
To read about my winter spending fast (much less exciting!), go to my blog at <http://www.homeschoolblogger.com/relationalhomeschool/490482/>

2. March and April CQLA Sale

It is time for our annual CQLA Sale!! Read all about how you can get CQLA for reduced

prices in March and April:

1. CQLA books (700-900 pages each) are \$20 off during the month of March!! Instead of the regular \$79 price, you may purchase CQLA directly from TFT for \$59 until March 31st.

2. CQLA books are \$10 off during the month of March!! Instead of the regular \$79 price, you may purchase CQLA directly from TFT for \$69 from April 1st through April 30th.

3. CQLA reps will get an even greater price break during March and April. Representatives may purchase CQLA for \$10 off the regular rep price until April 30th. This will allow reps to have their own sales and specials during these months (or to stock up for summer sales). To learn more about becoming a CQLA rep, check it out at our website at <http://www.tfths.com/rep.php>

4. North East Indiana Homeschoolers (FWAHS, LEAH, WACHE, and SACHE) may purchase CQLA for \$59 a book year round. Our way of saying thanks for your ongoing support and encouragement!

Note: If you want to learn more about CQLA, consider joining the new CQLA Users Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CQLAUsers/>

3. About the Colors and Volumes—new labeling information

Color Series and Levels

In CQLA, it does not matter which color you begin with! The three color series'-- Red, Blue, and Green--are just the way the character qualities are divided. Choose the level you need according to your student's language arts abilities (Level Pre A--2nd and 3rd grade; Level A 4th and 5th grade; Level B 6th, 7th, and 8th grade; Level C high school), then choose the color series you desire according to the character qualities you would like to study that year. Be sure to get the same color (same set of character qualities) for each student so that the entire family is studying the same quality at the same time.

Red Series (formerly Volume I): Choose Level Pre A, A, B, or C

Red 1 Peacemaking Red 2 Boldness

Red 3 Endurance Red 4 Joyfulness

Red 5 Initiative Red 6 Thoroughness

Red 7 Truthfulness Red 8 Compassion

Blue Series (formerly Volume II): Choose Level Pre A, A, B, or C

Blue 1 Creativity Blue 2 Obedience

Blue 3 Orderliness Blue 4 Virtue

Blue 5 Love Blue 6 Responsibility

Blue 7 Wisdom Blue 8 Decisiveness

Green Series (formerly Volume III): Choose Level Pre A, A, B, or C

Green 1 Alertness Green 2 Self-control

Green 3 Gratefulness Green 4 Humility

Green 5 Meekness Green 6 Diligence

Green 7 Gentleness Green 8 Sincerity

4. Upcoming Events for TFT

April 11th and 12th—APACHE (Peoria, IL)
May 2nd and 3rd—INCH (Lansing, Michigan)
May 17th and 18th—FWAHS (Fort Wayne, IN)
June 26th, 27th, and 28th—CHEO (Columbus, OH)

TFT speakers have other dates open! Contact us to secure a speaker for your event. Or email to receive a list of over fifty speaking topics. Ray and Donna are available to speak in one to six workshops on our book, *The Well-Trained Heart*.

5. Representatives: Join us Now for Even More Savings!

CQLA reps will get an even greater price break during March and April. Representatives may purchase CQLA for \$10 off the regular rep price until April 30th. This will allow reps to have their own sales and specials during these months (or to stock up for summer sales). To learn more about becoming a CQLA rep, check it out at our website at <http://www.tfths.com/rep.php>

5. Reishes' First Non-Curriculum Book: *The Well-Trained Heart*

We made it! Our first non-curriculum book (after over thirty curriculum books, I deserved to write something else!!) is being released in two weeks. It is called *The Well-Trained Heart*, and we are excited about its message! We are praying that it will help homeschoolers everywhere to focus on the most important things first—training their children's hearts to love God and serve others. We are including the Table of Contents (below) and Chapter One in this newsletter.

To order *The Well-Trained Heart* during our March and April kick-off sale, just send a check for \$12 (shipping included) to the address below. (That's \$2 off plus free shipping!) Your book will be shipped by mid-April.

Training for Triumph
6456 E US 224
Craigville, IN 46731
(Credit card orders may be called in 260-597-7415)

Table of Contents of *The Well-Trained Heart*

Chapter 1: Don't Go Breakin' My Heart--What Is the Well-Trained Heart?
Chapter 2: Journey to the Center of the Heart—How We Discovered the WTH—Part I
Chapter 3: All I Really Need to Know I Learned From Debate—How We Discovered ...Part II
Chapter 4: Bible Heart Beat—What the Bible Says About Heart Training
Chapter 5: Let It Begin With Me—Heart Training Begins With Mom and Dad
Chapter 6: First Things First—Prioritizing and the Well-Trained Heart
Chapter 7: Recipe for Rebellion—Rules and the Well-Trained Heart
Chapter 8: You Gotta Have Stick-tu-a-tive-ness—Other Hindrances to the WTH
Chapter 9: I Want an Oompa Loompa, Now, Daddy—Avoiding a Child-Controlled Home
Chapter 10: Spank, Rattle, and Roll—Child Training the Well-Trained Heart Way
Chapter 11: It's Not All About You—Raising Children to Be Others-Focused
Chapter 12: So How Do You Really Feel About That? –Teaching Children Empathy
Chapter 13: Got Your Gear? –Equipping Children to Live the WTH Life
Chapter 14: The Socialization Traps—Socialization and the WTH
Chapter 15: What a Smarty Pants!—Academics and the Well-Trained Heart

*Note: Some of the formatting and footnotes have been left behind when moving the chapter from the publishing program into this email. Sorry!

Section II: Special Feature—Chapter From *The Well-Trained Heart*

Chapter 1: Don't Go Breakin' My Heart "What Is a Well-Trained Heart?"

DEFINING THE WELL-TRAINED HEART

What Is It?

Defining a child with a well-trained heart is like trying to define what a Christian life should look like---because a homeschooled student with a well-trained heart should have a life that looks, well, "Christian." But even that is vague, especially in our society today where over eighty-five percent of people surveyed say they are Christians.¹

The well-trained heart is one that has been held, protected, and nurtured by the parents---until the child is ready to protect and nurture it for himself. It is one that was given voluntarily to wiser, stronger, and more capable people (his parents) until the day it grows strong enough to face those things that young hearts should not have to face alone. And then, in due time, it is a heart that is given back to the young adult when he is wise enough, strong enough, and capable enough to go it alone.

A well-trained heart resides within the son or daughter who is taught from an early age to love that which is good---obedience, kindness, deference, thoughtfulness, empathy, and other godly character traits. It lives within the child who is trained to live his life for God and for others---regardless of what his future occupation, social standing, family situation, and education level may be. It lives within the student who sees his school years as preparation for a life that glorifies God---not himself. It lives within the boy or girl who is constantly reminded (and develops the belief within himself) that "it's not all about him." Thus, he gives himself fully to God and others. It lives within the young person who studies, trains, and learns because he enjoys being diligent and reaching goals---since he knows those studies and early training opportunities will lead him to a life that will be worth living.

Moreover, the well-trained heart is one that has been prepared academically, morally, spiritually, and socially to become all that God has planned for that person. It is not a heart that has neglected academic training or socialization. However, in a well-trained heart, academic and social skills have been developed in a way that God and others remain in the forefront of the child's life---and in a way that helps that young heart grow into an adult heart that spends its life serving rather than being served.

It Begins With You

Of course, all godly training begins with the Lord. But once God begins His work in us, preparing us to train our children's hearts, the heart training of our children begins with us. It is up to us parents to begin, little by little, giving to our children what the Lord has

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poured, and continues to pour, into our hearts. This is, of course, the most difficult part---and the reason that so few parents train their children in this way.

Homeschooling already requires a level of parental example that no other method of education requires. Quite frankly, our children see exactly what we are---and measure daily how close what we are comes to what we say we are. Because of this, it is challenging to live with our children in the way homeschooling provides---and still place character and lifestyle expectations on them. We know our children know us, I mean truly know us, and we often feel inadequate to expect a way of living from them that we ourselves may not be able to (or are not willing to) attain.

But in the truly well-trained heart home, this transparency does not end the training---it actually begins it. You see, a heart-training parent cannot have religion and rules only and pass them on to his or her children. It simply will not work. (Oh, it might work for a while with younger kids, and might even look like it is working with older ones, but many times these rule-dominated children are "standing up on the inside" even when we are making them "sit down on the outside.") A heart-training teacher knows her failures and shortcomings---and still exposes her heart to her children anyway. These unveilings are springboards for the training of her children. Those failures and inadequacies become ways of saying, "Look, I am human too. I have trouble living a life for Christ also. But let's try to do this together."

Heart-training parents do not impose a set of rules and religious checklists onto their child in the hopes of gaining that child's heart. You see, it is getting into the heart of the child that makes a parent successful, not regulating the outside.

Reb Bradley, veteran homeschooling father, speaker, and author, addresses this very topic in his essay entitled "Solving the Crisis in Homeschooling":

It is also possible that they see the shallowness of our "religion" and are not attracted to it in the least. Christianity is not a system of do's and don't's - it is following a wonderful Savior who gave his life for his people. A legalistic faith consisting primarily of "avoid this, wear that, and attend this" is not attractive to most children. Such children grow up full of knowledge and rules, but lack attraction for the Lord Jesus. They may identify themselves with Christ at an early age, but it is possible that the Christianity they learned from us was characterized chiefly by religious rules and doctrines. They will eventually forsake their identification with Christ because they grew up under the weight of religious standards, but lacked the grace and power to carry them out. Many such young people have forsaken "religion," and still need to find Jesus and the grace of salvation.²

A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING AND PARENTING

It Requires a New Way of Thinking

If you truly want to become a heart training homeschooler, the place to begin (after submitting yourself and your life completely to God's service) is within your mind. We could all train our children much better if we were able to rewind, erase, or at least store

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elsewhere for a time all of our preconceived ideas about education, child training, success, and even life. Unfortunately, that isn't likely to happen, so we have to force ourselves to look at things differently.

There are several thought processes that are incompatible with training our children's hearts well. One of these is thoughtlessly adopting man-made methods as our own. We have to remember that so many of the things we do and the ways we do things are technically man-made. Like the mantra that has been preached to teens forever, we homeschooling parents need to learn: "just because everyone else is doing it, doesn't make it right."

For example, why do children go to school at age five? (Now in some cases at age four, and in some states for the entire day, five days a week.) Is this based on solid research? Is this determined by some scriptural authority? Is this a result of long-term studies showing that going to school all day at age five builds strong minds, strong bodies, or strong social skills?

Or, how about driving? In our state, students may get a driver's license at age sixteen. Other states allow students to drive with an adult at age fourteen! Is it truly safer to have children drive at fourteen than it is at thirteen? What about eighteen? Is it safer for people to only share the roads with young people who are eighteen or older?

School age, driving age, voting age, dating age---these are all man-made. Yet, most of us assume they are right without question. Many man-made "rules" (written or unwritten) need to be followed as good citizens---we cannot allow our children to drive before the age adopted by our state; we must school our children 180 days a year in many locations; we are supposed to provide "equivalent instruction" to the public school beginning at age seven in various areas. It is showing good character and citizenship to obey laws that do not contradict God's laws.

However, succumbing to such ideas without measuring them against God's Word (which reveals God's way of living) is not good parenting. It is unwise---and will often not result in children with well-trained hearts.

Throughout this book, we will expose you to many ways of thinking that Christian parents have adopted unthinkingly, from having child-controlled homes, to pursuing education for the sake of education, to measuring success by the world's standards, to the best ways to develop true and meaningful socialization in our children. If we desire to raise children with well-trained hearts, we must look at accepted, man-made ideas and goals differently---and be ready to adopt different ways of thinking if they will lead us closer to our homeschooling and parenting goals.

It Is the Approach of Royalty

In recent years, movies and books focusing on princes and princesses have become widely popular. Many of these point to a way of living for royalty that is, well, royal. They often reveal a higher calling in the life of those given such rank. The children and young people in many of these books and movies are taught in specific, concentrated,

untypical ways compared to those around them. Training is more purposeful; expectations are far greater.

How much more important should the training of God's sons and daughters be? We are called a "royal priesthood"³ in Scripture. We are training our children to be royalty! We should not shy away from the difficult path, the higher road, the responsibility-laden life. We should teach and love our sons and daughters as though they will be serving in the court of the highest royal King---because they will be.

Oftentimes, we forget this concept. We think that our children should have it easy---that we should make them happy and comfortable as opposed to raising them to meet the difficult challenges of serving in God's royal court. I think it is interesting to note that those in royalty do not apologize for the demands on their children. They make it clear from the beginning that their family is "different"---and they will be held to higher standards, have to meet unusual challenges, and represent the royal family in style. We should train our children's hearts to be the princes and princesses they are called to be.

It Requires a Biblical Approach to Parenting

A strange thing happens when we parent our children in a non-biblical way. They become spoiled. But it doesn't stop there. Spoiled babies and toddlers become bratty preschoolers. Bratty preschoolers become surly elementary children. Surly elementary children become selfish teenagers. And selfish teenagers become self-absorbed adults. It simply continues throughout our lives---and we live lives that are unfruitful and self-gratifying rather than fruitful and others-oriented.

To avoid this domino effect, it is imperative that we learn and practice a biblical approach to parenting that results in children with well-trained hearts. Throughout this book, we will elaborate on this biblical parenting and life-long discipleship of our children because it is the foundation to heart "holding" and proper heart-training. Gaining our children's hearts in such a way that they allow us to "enter" and influence them to live godly, "one another" types of lives requires a truly Christian approach to parenting.

Many books and teachers instruct parents in how to parent effectively and, often, what they view as scripturally. But if the end result of that parenting is not selfless, character-filled living, are those approaches truly "Christian" (Christ-following) parenting? If they are harsh and unloving, could it possibly be God's way of parenting? There should be major differences in our parenting approaches compared to the secular world. But in true heart-training, there will be even another level of parenting exceeding nominal Christian living---that which focuses on the heart and on teaching children to yield their lives to God.

Below are some key differences between worldly or non-biblical parenting and parenting for the well-trained heart. We call the first one child-centered or indulgent parenting. The latter we will simply call WTH (Well-Trained Heart) parenting. Note that the

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WTH approach is more than the typical "putting out fires"- "keeping our children out of trouble"- "raising successful kids" type of parenting.

Indulgent Parenting

WTH Parenting

Focuses on me

Focuses on Christ and others

Teaches self-indulgence

Teaches selflessness

Teaches immediate gratification

Teaches longsuffering

Focuses on frivolities

Focuses on things of
eternal value

Desires to make children

Desires to help children

happy & comfortable

learn to deny themselves

Raises children in a

Raises children in a selfless,

materialistic lifestyle

giving lifestyle

Teaches that others are

Teaches that others should

lower than we are

always be first

Teaches self-sufficiency

Teaches that without God,
each of us is nothing

Attempts to make child
happy

Helps child learn contentment in all things

Lives for the next thrill

Sees thrills and fun as
rewards for hard work and service

Teaches minimalism in
living, work, & service

Taught to give all---maximum work and service

Encourages children to
declare personal rights & ownership

Encourages children to realize all belongs to
God---teaches yielding of rights

It Is Most Effective When Begun Early

Many of the tips and pieces of advice in this book refer to starting when a child is young. Obviously, any new approach, whether it is homeschooling, new house rules, or changing a child's focus from himself to others, will be more difficult to implement in older children. But this is not to say that it cannot be done. We truly believe that older children's hearts can be turned to their parents and families---and to God and others---when Mom and Dad fully submit to God's new training in their lives, and the children (even teens) see that their parents are humbly submitting their lives to a new approach.

Yes, we are all born with sin natures. We all constantly do the things we do not want to do and do not do the things we know we should, as Paul reiterated in Romans 7:15: "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (RSV).⁴ However, we are all born with desires and capacities to know and love God as well.

So, for those of you with preschoolers and younger children, your work will not be as difficult as those with older children when it comes to heart training. But it will begin with biblical parenting (described above and other places throughout this book) and consistent discipline. Contrary to many parenting philosophies, we do not gain our children's hearts by being buddies with them from birth. This approach will not magically transform them into obedient children and, later, submissive teens who love, respect, and trust us enough to give us their hearts. Children are born helpless and foolish---which is why they are given to adults to raise. If we begin heart-training early, by expecting obedience and submission and giving loving, gentle discipline, then later heart-training and mentoring will be genuine possibilities in our homes.

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THE WELL-TRAINED HEART APPROACH BEGINS WITH LOVE

If You Love Your Child, You Will Discipline Him

I remember early in my parenting, when I had one little girl who was, well, stubborn. She required so much punishment that I often grew weary of it---and frequently questioned what I was doing in her training. I can remember over and over again telling her that the Bible says in Proverbs 13: 24 that "He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly" (NKJV).⁵ In addition to being stubborn, she was also wise beyond her years (not sure why she wasn't wise enough to obey!). Anyway, she always agreed that, that was what the Bible says---and that if I didn't punish her I hated her. The bottom line is that if we love our children---and truly want the best for them---we will discipline them.

A Sacrificial, Character-Based, Unconditional Love

Of course, all parenting begins with love. But well-trained heart parenting begins with the biblical "love your child enough to punish him"---then moves into a type of love that few people in our world have ever felt or given---sacrificial, character-based, unconditional love. It is a love that says, I understand that I was given you to nurture in order to bring glory to God, and I will do anything---and I mean anything---to carry that out.

In the well-trained heart approach, the love is sacrificial because it requires more time, effort, and energy than any other parenting approach. Additionally, it is sacrificial because it requires us to put our own wants, hobbies, education, careers (even dads too, at times) and financial aspirations aside until our children are grown and no longer require so much of us (which is much longer than if they went to school at age five or we gave them up to allow other people and peers to influence their hearts).

This love is character-based. It is a love patterned after Christ's love rather than the world's---one that is characterized by behaviors similar to I Corinthians 13 (gentle, kind, selfless, humble, non-irritated, etc.) and the "one anothers" of Scripture. This love is not secured through belittling, yelling, arguing, demanding, etc. Certainly, non-homeschoolers can love their children according to these parameters too, but it is more difficult when the children are away so much and the influence is lessened simply by time constraints. Homeschooling offers us a precious, concentrated opportunity for more character-based love.

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Finally, this love is unconditional because even though we have made our hopes and aspirations for our children clear---that they would live lives of selflessness and service---our children know that we will always love them regardless. They understand that, of course, we would be disappointed if they chose a more selfish path, but that it would not change our love for them. In the "rules and regulations" model of parenting and homeschooling, too often our children feel that we love them if they "make us proud" by following our external rules, but "crush us" if they do not or if they embarrass us in some way. This unconditional aspect of love may be the most challenging for homeschoolers because we often put too much emphasis on our children pleasing us.

In his book, *Grace-Based Parenting*, Dr. Tim Kimmel describes this depth of love for our children as secure love: "This is a steady and sure love that is written on the hard drive of children's souls. It's a complete love that they default to when their hearts are under attack. It's the kind of love that children can confidently carry with them into the future."⁶

The type of love required to train our children's hearts well can be obtained by all believers. Obviously, it is hard work, but it is also a supernatural work. If we desire this type of love and are willing to "do the hard things" to live and love in this way, God's Word says that we can pray for these changes to take place in us. This is clear many places in God's Word, such as in Romans 5:5: "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (NKJV).⁷

Not a Guarantee or Magic Formula

Back in my more authoritarian days of parenting, I often quoted "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6) (KJV)⁸ to explain that if we were training our children "in the way they should go," they would not disappoint us; they would remain faithful to God and our teachings. After years of debate training with our children and after more thorough explanations of hermeneutics by Kayla, our resident Bible student, I have come to believe that this is not necessarily so.

First, let me assure you that I believe the Bible with all my heart. But, I no longer believe in picking random verses and making them promises to me straight from God or in making them doctrine (unless they were intended to be so).

If we pull Proverbs 22:6 out and make it a literal promise, then we would also have to literally believe other verses in Proverbs are promises. For example, when it says that we will be wealthy if we honor God, we will be wealthy. Well, we have tried to honor God in our lives, and we are far from wealthy! Does this make God a liar? Does this make his Word untrue? Of course not.

The laws of hermeneutics demand that when we attach a certain meaning to a verse, we find other Scriptures to back that one up, other verses that say the same thing. There

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are other verses on parenting that seem to indicate that proper training in children will yield favorable results, but there are also others that suggest this is not always the case (i.e. the prodigal son⁹ and Adam and Eve,¹⁰ which are pictures of God as a Father; surely he did not "mess up" in His parenting!).

So, I no longer believe that if we do everything "right," our children will always follow God and our teachings. I do believe, however, that Proverbs 22:6 shows us that the likelihood of having faithful kids is increased if we point them in the right direction when they are young. I also believe that if we approach our children in much the same way that God has approached us, we have a better chance of gaining their hearts---just as God has gained ours.

No, the well-trained heart approach is not a guarantee that our kids will serve God and others their entire lives. It is not a magic formula or ten steps to successful parenting. It is, rather, a way of thinking, living, and loving that we have found to be the most satisfying, biblically-sound way of homeschooling our children---with rewards far more vast than any other method we have seen---or could have ever imagined.

So...Don't Go Breakin' My Heart

In a nutshell, the well-trained heart is one that has been protected and trained. We have, within us as parents, the power to protect and train our children's hearts---the power to keep our children's hearts from being broken unnecessarily and the power to train our children's hearts well.

"Don't Go Breakin' My Heart" Discussion/Application Questions

--- Chapter One ---

1. In the past, have you valued spiritual training and heart training over all other types? If so, how have you done this? If not, how can you start doing so?
2. Do you try to hide your shortcomings or do you use these as springboards for training your children?
3. In what ways does your life show that following Christ is

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superior to other ways of living? How do you show your children relationship with Christ rather than religion?

4. What man-made benchmarks and ideals have you adopted?

Do these benchmarks or ideals have a biblical basis? A logical reason? A research-based foundation?

5. Re-read the indulgent parenting vs WTH parenting list.

Discuss how you might be contributing to your child's self-centeredness by focusing on his foolish desires, over indulging him, instilling in him a desire for his own way, etc.

6. What can you change in your life in order to have more time, money, and energy to develop the well-trained heart lifestyle in your family?

7. How much emphasis do you place on your children following your rules to keep you from being embarrassed vs. reaching into their hearts with unconditional love?

8. Do your children feel that you will love them even if they disappoint you?

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