

COVENANT EFC



PARENTING

FROM INSIDE OUT

**Towards an
Intentional Disciple
Making Family (IDMF)**

MEMBER'S WORKBOOK

PARENTING

FROM INSIDE OUT

TOWARDS AN INTENTIONAL DISCIPLE MAKING FAMILY (IDMF)

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**PARENTING FROM INSIDE OUT
TOWARDS AN INTENTIONAL
DISCIPLE MAKING FAMILY (IDMF)
Member's Workbook**

© 2017 Covenant Evangelical Free Church

Published by
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Scripture references are taken from English Standard Version (ESV).
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FOREWORD BY SENIOR PASTORS

Dear Parents,

This parenting material is meant for your own growth journey, and possibly for journeying with others who are also in a season of discipling at home. Although there are no perfect parents or foolproof parenting method, the Bible gives us clear principles on how to teach and train our children in the way of the Lord. It is a redemptive discipleship journey and we need to practice patience and grace in raising our children — in the same way that our Heavenly Father has been gracious to us (Rom 5:8; Psa 103:8-12).

Parenting from Inside Out Towards an Intentional Disciple Making Family (IDMF) is based on the spiritual anchor of Covenant EFC found in Acts 20:28. We embrace growth from inside out as we emphasise the importance of discipleship at home. Thus, we need to pay attention to three specific areas:

- **Our Relationship with God**

We need to grow deeper in our relationship with God.

- **Our Relationship with Self**

We need to take care of ourselves and develop self-awareness.

- **Our Relationship with Others**

We need to strengthen our relationships with our spouse and children.

We recommend that this material be used in sequential order as the lessons are arranged following a “from-inside-out” format. It is best to go through this module in a small group to foster support within a like-minded community. Each lesson can also be used as a stand-alone material. The questions in each lesson are for both discussion and self-reflection.

As we journey together towards IDMF, may we experience God’s redemptive work in our lives and in our families!

Rev Tony Yeo & Rev Tan Kay Kiong

**“WE EMBRACE
GROWTH FROM
INSIDE OUT AS
WE EMPHASISE
THE IMPORTANCE
OF DISCIPLESHIP
AT HOME.”**

GROUND RULES

To ensure that this Parenting Group is a safe place to learn, it is important for the group members to agree on the following ground rules:

1. I agree to respect the time of others by being punctual.
2. I agree to keep everything shared in the group confidential.
3. I agree *not* to be abstract, but to be personal in my sharing. I agree to use “I” statements (i.e. I feel, I think, I need, etc.) when sharing my needs, attitudes, feelings and ideas.
4. I agree that it is important to process past experiences which make my parenting less effective, and to confront issues that are challenging me. I agree that some of these may need to be followed through with the help of an experienced counsellor outside the group.
5. I agree to be discreet and sensitive to others when I share.
6. I agree *not* to give unsolicited advice, and *not* to accuse or pass judgement.
7. I agree *not* to criticise my spouse and family members during the sessions.
8. I agree to be prepared to give and receive feedback.
9. I agree *not* to debate on our intellectual opinion about what should happen. We will share our opinion only in relation to our own families.
10. I commit to journey with the Parenting Group for the entire duration of the module.

Name and Signature:

Date:

PROPOSED PROGRAMME

1. Review the previous lesson by going through *Review* and *Quick Catch-Up*.
2. Leader to read *Introduction* and facilitate an icebreaker (icebreaker is optional).
3. Watch the short film (3 mins).
4. Share one take-home lesson from the short film (10 mins).
5. Watch the teaching video (10 mins).
6. Divide into discussion groups (3 to 4 couples per group) so that everyone can fully participate.
7. Discuss using the questions in *Group Discussion* and *Personal Application*, emphasising on *Personal Application* (45 mins).
You may answer only those questions which are appropriate to your group's current journey. If necessary, you may extend the sessions to cover the rest of the questions.
8. Bring the Parenting Group back together for conclusion and closing. Leader to summarise the key points (5 mins).
9. Close the session by praying for one another.

LESSON FOUR

EXPRESSING
UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

(M.O.D.E.L.S.)

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDREN

By Pastor Adrian Chan and Mrs Doreen Chan

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► REVIEW

The foundation of parenting is your marriage. You have to recognise that the family begins with the two of you. Your relationship needs to be cultivated in order to last and leave a legacy for your children.

► QUICK CATCH-UP

Choose one and briefly share with the group (5 mins):

1. What is one thing about your spouse that you got attracted to when you first met?
2. What is the anchor verse you chose as a couple?

LESSON FOUR

EXPRESSING UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

INTRODUCTION

Nobody likes a nagging person. Yet circumstances at home trigger mothers to nag, and fathers as well! Apparently, finger-pointing is usually done towards the children for not following instructions, leading the parents to reiterate the unaccomplished tasks again and again. When this happens, parents sound like broken record, driving the kids crazy and fellow adults too!

How should we communicate to one another in the family?

Communication skills are certainly needed at home, but when all else fail, unconditional love should be upheld.

Gary Thomas wrote in his book *Sacred Parenting*, “Godly children are a tremendous blessing; this is a precious biblical truth. But Scripture is honest, and we should be as well. Wayward children can, at the very least, feel like a fierce curse.” When you are in this kind of situation, what would you do — kill them or forgive them?

If you are feeling hopeless with the challenges of parenting, take heart, you are not alone!

■ Short Film (3 mins)

Watch *Over-Reactor*.

▶ <https://vimeopro.com/covenantefc/pfio-session-4>

■ **Sharing (10 mins)**

Do you identify with the father or any member of the family in the short film? Share briefly.

■ **Teaching Video (10 mins)**

Watch *Expressing Unconditional Love*.

▶ <https://vimeopro.com/covenantefc/pfio-session-4>

Points to Ponder:

Through their own redemptive journey, parents should learn to relate appropriately to their kids by expressing unconditional love, no matter how challenging it may be.

■ **Group Discussion (40 mins)**

Divide into discussion groups (3 to 4 couples per group).

1. What are the common mistakes parents make when they engage their children in conversation?

Share your own experience.

2. Why do children dread talking to their parents? What creative ways can parents use to engage their children meaningfully in order to acquire healthy understanding of each other?

3. Fathers, what did you pick up from Ephesians 6:4? Mothers, what can you do to support your spouse to train your children in the way of the Lord? (You may refer to *More Thoughts for Fathers* by John Piper <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/more-thoughts-for-fathers-on-ephesians-64>)

4. The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32) tells of the undying love of the father towards his younger son. If you were in the shoes of the father, what would be your personal obstacles in showing unconditional love?

■ **Personal Applications**

5. Do you need to forgive your child who has apologised for his/her mistake? Or do you need to apologise to your child for the wrong you have done? What would you do when you see him/her again?

■ Group Summary (5 mins)

Key Points:

1. The previous lesson focused on the first part of Relationship with Others (spouse). This session focuses on the second part Relationship with Others (children).
2. Understanding the personality and love language of your children (refer to the links provided in *Homework* for free online assessment)
3. Demonstrating unconditional love: Love is spelt T.I.M.E.

■ Closing Prayer

Lord, thank You for Your great love for me even when I was still a sinner (Rom 5:8). You had Jesus Christ die for me on the cross at Calvary. Even though I have sinned time and again, You always forgive me when I confess. Help me demonstrate this same love to my children when they come to me and acknowledge their faults and misbehaviours. Give me the strength and grace to love and forgive. Amen.

■ Homework

Do an assessment of the 5 Love Languages for each of your kids:

- For children: <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/children/>
- For teens: <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/teens/>

■ Recommended Readings

1. *Sacred Parenting* by Gary Thomas, Chapter 9 “Walking on the Wild Side of Parenting: The Gift of Extremely Demanding Children”
2. *The 5 Love Languages of Children* by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell
3. *The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers* by Gary Chapman

■ Preparation for the Next Session

1. Read the next lesson: Learning to Communicate Boundaries.
2. Pray for yourself and your group.