

Expectations vs. Reality



When you were little, maybe you dreamed that you would grow to do or be something in particular. You grew up and maybe this expectations were aligned to what you became or did, or maybe they changed, perhaps they weren't realistic, but dreaming has never costed anything right?

And we all live with certain expectations of how we want to be, what we want to accomplish, how we want others to be and even more in their relationship with us. Then children come, whether by birth or adoption. And again, our expectations begin to surface.

Expectations of how the relationship will be, how you're going to raise them and help them become who you would like them to. You know, respectful, trustworthy, responsible, loving, receptive, successful, etc.

Sometimes we are aware of our unrealistic expectations, other times, start noticing as soon as reality starts crashing with what we were hoping for the future, or even today. And when that moment comes we have some options, we either start adjusting ourselves or we keep insisting on things being as we think they should. We continue to hit that wall of wounds and difficulties of the children and teens that God has brought to be part of our lives, whether 24/7 or a couple of hours a week.

Lets see it this way, if every single day we have the expectation that something

should happen, and it doesn't, we face feelings of disappointment, bitterness, sadness, anger, etc. All those emotions impact our motivation, desire or ability to interact with that person who did not meet our expectations. And then it comes: misunderstandings, difficulties, guilt, sadness, anger, indifference or withdrawal from the other part.

What we want to suggest today isn't that you throw your expectations out the window. It is important to have expectations because it allows us to have a goal and they can also help us adjust with reality and make a plan that will take us as close to the goal as we can. We want to ask you to see where you are today.

What does it take to reach where I would like us to get to?

What can I do as the adult in the relationship, to adjust to our current reality?

How could I help empower my child so he can see he's able to reach goals, as little as they may seem to be?

Maybe it feels mediocre. But what if, taking in consideration your talents, abilities and opportunities, what seems mediocre for you, may be success for someone with a different history and abilities?

Or, what if you need to lower yourself a little bit, to where he is, to help him reach the goal instead of thinking he should know by now to do it by himself?, or what if it takes him longer than hoped for or expected?

What if your child doesn't get to where you see him in the future? Have you considered that you may be so inclined on rowing in one direction, and with just a couple degrees of adjustment you may help your child reach his potential? Maybe he'll develop better than you thought he could. And only by changing your approach. This goes also to their academic, social and professional abilities. Sometimes children have different gifts that what we hoped for and it may be a little difficult for us to accept that fact or that it will take them a little longer and with more effort and support.

We have a great challenge as adults in the lives of children and teenagers that grew initially in a difficult place. Many times we have the hope that they will be able to adjust to our reality soon. As the adults in their lives we cannot, and should not give up on them or their difficulties as they struggle to adapt.

One of the hardest things we may find as the adults in the lives of adopted children or children in foster care is the importance and the need of introspection. These children are the people that will do most things that will impact our sadness, anger, frustration, disappointment, hopelessness, guilt, shame, etc. And that is why it is so important to acknowledge and see: which button is she pushing this time? What do I must face about myself in order to impact in a better way my child?

We must keep structure and healthy boundaries, but we must also give ourselves

the opportunity for our wounds, frustrations and fear to be exposed in order to be healed.

Remember that to bring our children to that desired place, we must go first to take them by the hand, guiding their steps and being their ally every moment. Even when they fail, that they may find in us a source of guidance, support and redirection not a source of condemnation, punishment and rejection.

What does the Word say?

¿Por qué te fijas en lo malo que hacen otros, y no te das cuenta de las muchas cosas malas que haces tú? Es como si te fijaras que en el ojo del otro hay una basurita, y no te dieras cuenta de que en tu ojo hay una rama. ¿Cómo te atreves a decirle a otro: "Déjame sacarte la basurita que tienes en el ojo", si en tu ojo tienes una rama? ¡Hipócrita! Primero saca la rama que tienes en tu ojo, y así podrás ver bien para sacar la basurita que está en el ojo del otro.

Mt. 7:3-5

Éstas palabras fuertes se unen para ser un llamado de atención. ¿Qué estoy tratando de corregir en el otro sin tomar en cuenta que tengo que lidiar con mis cosas también?, ¿estoy buscando ser un modelo íntegro en la medida de lo posible para mis hijos o los chicos a los que sirvo y apoyo?

Si a los niños o adolescentes que Dios ha traído a nuestra vida, les cuesta mostrarnos amor, ¿estaremos dispuestos a ser una fuente de amor y apoyo aun cuando seamos rechazados, humillados y lastimados?

Muchas veces nuestra dificultad en relacionarnos con el otro tiene más que ver con nuestras heridas y nuestro pasado que con las del otro. Las de los chicos las sabemos, muchas veces nos cuesta más reconocer la nuestras.

Que el Señor revele a nuestras vidas y corazones todo aquello que está siendo un obstáculo para amar, perdonar y relacionarnos con aquellas personas que Él trajo a nuestras vidas y nos ayude a caminar de Su mano.

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