

Passages Press



Parenthood

Gabrielle Taylor, Auburn

Parenthood is amazing, rewarding,
eye-opening and even magical.

It can also be difficult, challenging and heartbreaking at times.

Parenthood is patience, love and sacrifice.

It is giving up everything for your child,
and sometimes putting your entire life on hold for them.

Parenthood is more than just picture-perfect moments.

It's runny noses, late nights, teary eyes and tantrums.

It's also sleepy cuddles, bright morning smiles
and unconditional love.

Parenthood is sleepless nights,
early mornings and days when your children won't nap.

It's trips to the park, play dates and birthday parties.

Parenthood is saying no and often not being your child's friend.

It's time-outs and groundings.

It's teaching them right from wrong, and consequences for bad behavior.

Parenthood is teaching your children not to follow in your footsteps,

but to walk the path next to you and go further than you did.

Parenthood is smiling as you watch your children grow and learn,

but having your heart break just a little

because your child will never be little again.

Parenthood is never giving up no matter how difficult the task

because your number one fan is watching you.

Letter to Ellis

Kayli Preston, Westbrook

Dear Ellis,

Right now, you're four and a half months old as I write this letter to you. I want you to know that you saved me in many ways and that you're the best gift a mother could receive. You're definitely the sweetest, and most talkative baby I know. As you get older, I know you will ask me a lot of questions that I won't have answers for until your teen years when you can understand. It will be okay, everything will be. You have two loving parents, and maybe even step-parents when you're older who will love you just as much as your father and I do.

I was in the hospital for two weeks before I got induced into labor. It was pretty stressful because your umbilical cord was under your head and if my water broke on its own it would have cut off your breathing. It was important that I stayed in the hospital until I was 36 weeks pregnant. My fluid level was 37 which wasn't too good, and my two amniotic sacs were separating. I don't want you to worry while reading this, you were perfectly happy and healthy before and after you arrived.

When you finally arrived by cesarean and I heard your little sound you made, I started to cry before even seeing you. Then I saw you, my heart skipped a beat, and it finally hit me. I started to ball my eyes out. I thought you were the handsomest baby I have ever laid eyes on. I never thought I'd feel so much love for someone like I do for you. It felt like my whole world came together.

When you turned one week old, you opened your eyes and I finally got to see those big, blue eyes for the first time. It was so heart-warming. I'll always love, care, and protect you, Ellis Vance-Knight Preston.

Building a Bond

Angelica Thurlow, Steep Falls

Since babies cannot use words to communicate their needs, they use a universal language to communicate. The universal language for babies are actions, like the way they react to things they need. When Keith was hungry as an infant, I could tell his cues by his suckling, getting cranky, and holding his hand up to his mouth. Keith's cues for being tired included being very irritated by the smallest things, like his lazy eye will become more noticeable, and he will rub his eyes and often lay down wherever he is.

It is important to start building a bond from the very first day your baby is born. You can easily do that just by holding them and having skin-to-skin contact.

When a baby is in the belly, it can hear the sound of voices. Once the child is born, it recognizes its mother's voice and often the father's voice, depending on how often he talked to the belly.



Prioritizing quality time for your child is a big way to form a bond with them. Prioritizing time to spend with your child is very important, whether it's reading a book, singing them to sleep, or even just watching a movie.

The better bond you have with your child, the better the child trusts you. It's important to be there for your child and encourage them as much as possible always using positive reinforcements. Often as a parent you can get irritated and loosen the bond with your child. If that happens, you can always start to mend that bond by trying to be there more. You can do that by asking your child if they want to play one of their favorite games or read one of their favorite books. By doing this,

you are showing them you want to be a part of their world and do things that are fun for them.

Reconnecting is easiest when it starts with a hug. It makes the child feel good and it lets them know that just because you were mad doesn't mean you don't love them. Explaining to your child about why you were upset helps with communication skills. It's good for your kids to see you talking about the way you feel, because it makes them more comfortable talking about their emotions. Having a bond with your child is one of the most important things in building a relationship.

Crinkle Toy for Haven

Autumn Francis-Stevens, Pleasant Point

I chose to make this toy for my daughter because she loves things that make a "crinkle" sound so I put something inside that will always make that sound. She loves to bite and suck on tags and that is why I attached the random tags around the toy.

Everything she has is pink, so I gave her the option to choose a pink and purple fabric or a black and white fabric. She went right for the black and white fabric. When it was first done, she played with it for about five minutes and now when I give it to her, she just throws it on the floor. She likes new stuff but not for long. I really thought she would love it because she plays with the most random things, but she isn't as interested as I thought she would be.



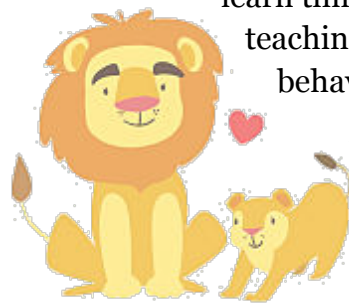
Authoritative Parenting

Devon Danforth, Swanville

The parenting skill that I think is the best is to be authoritative. According to verywellfamily.com, this means, someone who has a positive relationship with their child and believes in enforcing rules. The reason I picked this one is because I think keeping a great, loving bond with your kids is the way to do things.

They are just kids and to be honest, when they are really young, they don't know any better. They

learn things from you as a parent teaching them or they learn bad behavior by watching other people around them. An authoritative parent puts a lot of time and effort into creating and maintaining a positive relationship with their kid.



They also explain the reasons for what is happening and for the rules that they set as parents. As parents, we can observe how our kids are feeling. We can put ourselves into their position and then we can enforce our rules and guidelines as parents from there. We only do it for their future and for their safety!

We have been using this strategy for raising our son. He is only eight months old, and I have to say, that as of right now, this parenting strategy is working. As he gets older, I believe we will continue to be authoritative parents.

"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted. They seem not to notice us, hovering, averting our eyes, and they seldom offer thanks, but what we do for them is never wasted."

- Garrison Keillor

It Can Feel Like a Battle

Candace Barry, Lewiston

Everyone has different views on parenting, even couples have to compromise on how to raise a child. There are so many things you learn from a smaller human, and others who are raising them. Everyone will try to give you advice and try to help. It's just what we do as parents, because most likely the parent telling you about co-sleeping or yelling at your kids, wishes someone would've given them the advice they're giving you. You don't know everything about other parents, and there's no way to know what they're like with their kids at home.

It has taken me a bit of time to realize that I'm not the only one being frustrated, and I'm not the only one who yells at their child. Something else I've learned is that sometimes the mothers who I thought had it all together, are struggling just as badly as I am. I'm going to try and not be so hard on myself. No one is perfect, especially not parents.

Something that I see other parents do, that I want to do too, is to have more energy for the kids. I want to put in the effort, but I'm just not quite sure on how to do that yet. Something I want to do differently than other moms, is that I want to spend more quality time with Abby. I often get jealous when other parents talk about what they get to go out and do with their children, but I often wonder what they do at their own homes. Do they play with them there, or do they just stick them in front of the TV? For our family, having Abby lead our playtime may be better than going somewhere noisy, because I have anxiety which makes it hard to participate in activities in public.



Mommy Instincts

Gayle Wood, Machias

When I became a new mom, I was mainly thinking, "Just try your absolute best at everything and don't ever drop the baby!" I had so many worries and doubts, but when I held my darling, newborn Coraline, I instantly had those mommy instincts you hear about. Those instincts kicked into overdrive and all of the sudden I could wake up at the sound of blankets rustling, my touch had become ever so gentle and I just instantly knew what felt comfortable for both of us. I always knew what she needed before she needed it. I rolled with it and that's how I've made it thus far!



Hopes & Dreams for Kennedy

Elizabeth Hustus, Searsport

One of the hardest things about being a parent is leaving your child in the care of someone else when having to do the necessary things to provide for them, such as going to work. This is hard for me even though I know that my child is in safe hands with her dad or grandmother. It's always sad to leave your baby. It's a mother's instinct to worry about their child.

Something I love about my baby is how she is half of me and half of Troy. It's crazy to think that we created a little life. She is the most precious thing that I've ever laid eyes on. I am so lucky and grateful to be her mom and watch her grow.

I hope Kennedy realizes how deeply she is loved. She will always have someone who is there for her and someone to lean on. She will forever be loved unconditionally by her father and me.

Something I think my baby enjoys is being outdoors. Kennedy is really content with looking around at all the trees and new things to see outside. She loves to look at all the vibrant colors that she doesn't get to experience inside. She also loves hearing the birds and the chickens at her great-grandmother's house. Everything is new and exciting to her.

Something I'd like to learn more about parenting is how to put your baby on a set schedule. I have tried to have her eat and sleep at certain times, but each day something new may get in the way of her staying on that schedule. Things such as her being sick affects her sleep schedule. When she's sick, she gets up in the night more often, so she sleeps more during the day. I know that you can't necessarily help that, but it can be difficult to get her to sleep even when she's not sick, depending on whether I am with her during the day or if I am at work and am not able to control her schedule.

One thing that I want to be different from my own experience growing up is that I want her to know there is always someone to help her. I want her to be able to come to her family when she is struggling and know that we are willing to face the challenge together. When I was struggling and missing school, I wish someone could have helped me get through, and stayed on me about it.

Something new that I have noticed about my baby is that she is now trying to hold her bottle on her own! Last night she fed herself half of her bottle. It is amazing how fast she learns new things.

**"If you were born without wings, do nothing to prevent them from growing."
— Coco Chanel**

2020 Goals!

Collage by Sarena Bennett, Westbrook



My Life on Paper

Miranda Leavitt, New Gloucester

A good day is when you are given another day to live.

A bad day is when you lose a friend, a family member, or someone you're close to.

A good day is when you hear from someone you love or some good news.

A bad day is when you don't know what is going on with a sick family member.

A good day is when you are full of energy, happiness, and confidence!

A bad day is when you can't get enough sleep or coffee.

A good day is when you haven't snapped and killed someone.

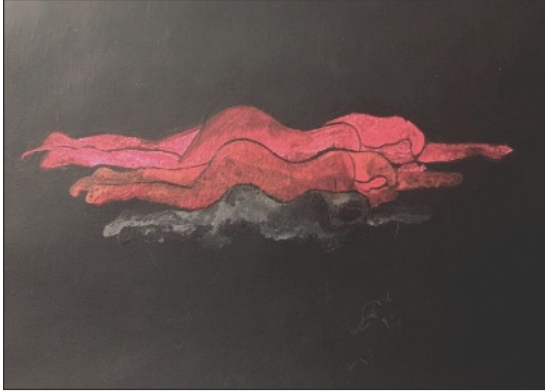
A bad day is when you have snapped and killed someone.

A good day is when you see animals that you love.

A bad day is when you lose an animal that you love.

Fighting in My Head

Illustration & Poem by Anonymous



Sick of the fighting in my head,
why won't it stop?

Can we get along instead,
just agree,
this isn't me,
let this inner child free?

How can this be,
she hears the screams and cries out
but there's no one near.

Does anyone even care,
I'm losing me,
my mind,
all the time it's just a big fight.

I'm struggling to keep the light in sight.



Self Care

Savanah Doak-Turner, Cushing

I define self care as, “taking care of yourself.” Whether that means shopping for yourself, a night out on the town with your friends, a spa day/night, taking time off from work, or just shutting off your electronics for the day.

Self care is important because without it you are most likely going to get burnt out. Burn-out is an actual thing. Working in the healthcare field I have experienced it first-hand.

Self care is taking care of yourself, and self-awareness is knowing what you are feeling/the vibes you are putting out about yourself.

I have a hard time taking care of myself. I do have nights out with my friends, and I do have days out with my family, but I barely ever take time off from work. I am taking two weeks off in April, and although I feel bad about doing it, I know it's needed. I haven't not worked 40+ hours for over a year.

Working at Sweetser I have gained the skills to talk to people effectively. Or at least attempt to. I am willing to sit down with anyone and talk about the needs, or the wants of things. Even though sometimes I am unable to express myself effectively to everyone I work with, I am able to express myself to my boss who will make sure things get “settled.”

Trust

Madison Dorais, Buxton

I read an article about trust on loveisrespect.org, and I learned that you can't demand or prove trust. It's a choice. If your partner trusts you, he or she will support you with whatever it is you do, and the same goes for you supporting your partner.

Trusting your partner's words and actions is a big thing, especially if they aren't consistent with their words and actions. If they don't match up, trusting them can be difficult at times.

Letting your partner go out with whomever, whenever, and wherever is a choice you make by trusting your partner regardless. It means you are hoping and trusting they wouldn't let anyone, or anything come between your relationship.

If you are able to trust your partner after being hurt, you're a warrior because trusting someone after being hurt isn't easy. It takes time to get over it. Trusting your partner after being hurt can take six months or less, maybe even six months or more; it's not the same for everyone. Your partner should understand if you aren't ready to trust right now, and that you'll be ready to trust when you feel like you can.

Just remember, trust is a choice, not something to be forced.



Separation Anxiety

Kristina Kenney, Hope

A parenting skill I'm interested in is separation anxiety. When my son goes off to kindergarten - just thinking about it gives *me* anxiety - I know I'll have a hard time.

According to an article about separation anxiety by Lee L. Krecklow, he mentions that the main goal of separation anxiety is to help your child realize that they are in no real danger and to show them how to slowly start letting go of the anxiety, but not get rid of it all. There are many different levels of anxiety.



One tip to reduce stress in your child is to make a plan before going to a new place. A few examples would be showing them the school environment before it starts so they can feel comfortable, taking a walk around the school, having them learn to introduce themselves to their teachers and saying goodbye on their own. One big piece is not to let them see that you may be nervous. By researching this I realized that it is an issue that "*I have*" and that I need to get control of it. I don't want my son to have to see my nerves and be affected by it. It's best to help them feel comfortable with their own emotions and how they may feel.

Learning to Manage My Time

Raelynn Philbrook, Cushing

If your time is managed correctly you can do things more efficiently and do things that need to be done in short amounts of time. The outcome of good time management is more free time for your own desired activity. It can also reduce stress.

Goal setting

Goal setting is having an intent to accomplish a specific target.

Prioritizing

To prioritize you put the more important needs before the rest.

Self-motivation

Self-motivation is having the ability to do something on your own, even something difficult, without needing someone else to encourage you.

Planning

To plan you need to remember or write down a date, time, destination, etc.

Delegation

Certain assigned tasks that are given to other people.

Stress management

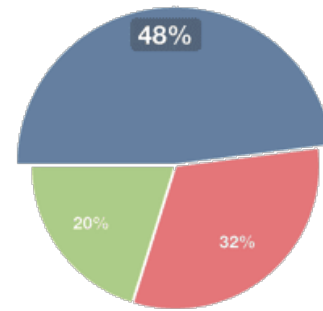
Stress management is a wide range of different techniques that train the brain to manage stress. The techniques can help improve daily function and chronic function

Categorizing

Breaking things down into small units.

Efficiency

The capability of achieving something quickly.



Keeping Track

Kristina Kenney, Hope

I've noticed since keeping a log of my daily intake of food on the *My Fitness Pal* app, that when I eat breakfast in the morning, I feel so much better throughout the first half of the day and more energetic than if I didn't eat anything for breakfast. I noticed that when I am done with dinner, if I feel like I want seconds I should wait 20 minutes or so and see if I am still hungry. Usually when I don't wait and just go get seconds, I feel blah, overly full and crappy. I've also noticed that if I'm wanting a snack, instead of choosing chips or a fatty junk food if I have carrot sticks, yogurt, and granola available, I feel better about my decision, which makes me feel better emotionally and physically.

If I keep doing better with what I eat and how much I eat, I know it will affect my son in a good way. If Sander doesn't see all the junk food and overeating that I do, and by having healthy snacks and home cooked meals, that will be what is normal to him.



French Culture

By Kenzie Phifer, Union

Values

In France, their values are quite different from the United States. They are a very sophisticated, private, and polite country. In France they appreciate politeness and sophistication. When you first see someone, it's necessary to say, "Bonjour" and when you leave to say, "Au revoir," and do not thank someone for giving you a compliment - it's considered vain or snooty.

French Cuisine

As most people know France is known for their wine and bread. The French appreciate high quality, sophisticated things and that most certainly includes food. The French eat every part of an animal, including organs! Did you know that french fries weren't called "french" fries because they were made in France? They're called that because Thomas Jefferson discovered their existence in France.

Clothing

The French have very distinct clothing choices. Their style of choice is usually dark and professional. Women often wear soft colors, nice dresses, long coats, scarves, and obviously berets are definitely necessary! You may not know how many designer brands are from France including, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, and Armor Lux.

French Art

Did you know that the Mona Lisa was created in France? In fact, many of history's most renowned artists are from France, such as Claude Monet, Pierre Auguste Renoir, and although Leonardo da Vinci was born in Italy, the Mona Lisa was painted in France. Most people don't know that religion greatly impacted French art, mostly in the Gothic or Renaissance pieces.

Religion in Different Cultures

Olivia Orff, Waldoboro

Some elements of a culture include language, values, symbols, religion, style, politics. Religion is one of the more important elements to a culture.

According to Wikipedia, in Indian culture approximately 80% of the population practices Hinduism, who believe in a large number of personal gods, each either an aspect or avatar of the Supreme Brahman, or significant powerful entity known as a deva.

In African culture, the original religion was known as animism. This religion believes that all things on earth: rivers, trees, weather, rocks, essentially possess a spirit and are animated/alive. Now, Christianity and Islam are the two most practiced faiths in Africa.

In Russian culture, the most popular religions are Russian Orthodox, Orthodox Old Believers, and Muslim. Russian Orthodox believe the same thing when it comes to God and Jesus Christ as Christians do, however it varies significantly in the ways they believe a person should live. Bishops must stay celibate. Confession is also used. In Greek speaking churches only priests who have been blessed by the Bishop as 'Spiritual Fathers' are allowed to hear confessions.

"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color."

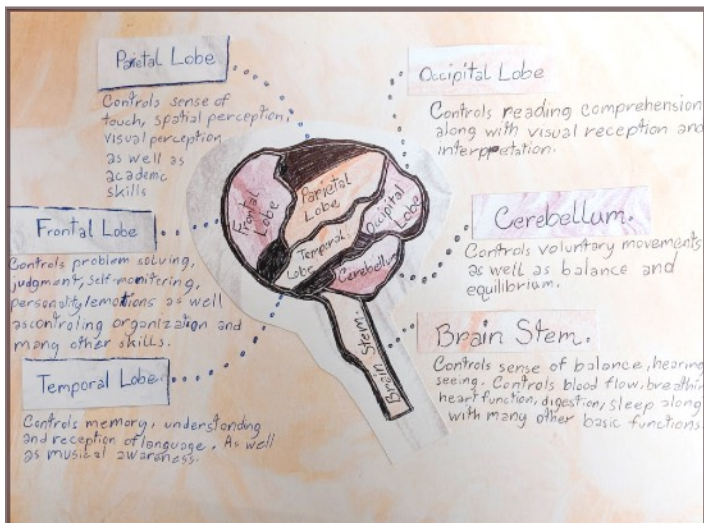
- Maya Angelou.

**From: *Vittorio the Vampire*,
by Anne Rice
Illustration by Ben Berry, Sanford**



“There came out a young priest, very handsome with well-formed limbs and a healthy look to his complexion.... Only when I was utterly finished with every word did I look over and realize the perfect distress and horror on his face.”

Parts of the Brain
Illustrated by Gabrielle Taylor, Auburn



Getting to Know Us
Tiny Interviews with Wayfinder Staff

Cathy Ames
Passages Teacher, Midcoast Maine



When I was little, I think I wanted to be everything. I remember thinking I was going to be a long-distance truck driver. I thought the idea of driving all over the country sounded exciting. There was a show on when I was little called, *BJ and the Bear*. It was about a handsome truck driver and his pet monkey. They had adventures all over the country. I didn't want a pet monkey, but I thought it might be fun to have a super-loyal dog on my adventures. I would drive to Colorado and save some orphans that were about to be adopted by a mean family, and just by chance I'd find a smart, beautiful, single librarian to take them in. Well, I didn't save people all over North America, and I never learned how to drive a semi-truck, but I have helped a few people in my life, and I have cats - but no dog yet.

I wanted to be a lumberjack for a while and live out in the woods eating big breakfasts and riding logs down the river. That didn't work out either. When I was older, I thought I would marry a big, burly lumberjack and he would be in the woods for three weeks at a time and then come home and be my happy husband for one week. I'd have my freedom and have true love as well. Now, I kind of like knowing my family is warm and tucked inside my house and around most of the time. I've learned that relationships aren't about giving

up freedom, it's about adding blessings. I can have a relationship and my freedom. No lumberjack needed.

I thought about becoming a great writer a few times too. I was going to write a Great American Novel. It would be a great, survival story in which I was the heroine building fires and foraging for food all alone in a secluded place. I wouldn't be afraid though; I would probably befriend a bear like Grizzly Adams. I also thought that I might write a collection of poems all about teen angst and it would become famous after I died. When I was a little older, I thought I could write short essays and articles for a newspaper. I haven't done this yet, but it is still on the list.

For a fleeting moment, I wanted an orphanage and welcome kids who just needed love. I wanted it to be in the beautiful Swiss and Italian Alps. I would rescue children and read them *Pinocchio* and *Heidi* as I tucked them in. Those of you who know me may find this hard to believe, as I get anxious in a kindergarten room, and I stand in fear at a toddler's birthday party.

I wanted to be a pastry chef once too, making cream puffs, sweets and fancy cakes. Rolling butter into dough to make flakey croissants, baking pies and biscuits. I applied to culinary school in high school and got accepted. I didn't go. I stayed home and got pregnant and had children. The only fancy baking I did was Christmas cookies and birthday cakes. I learned that I like making dinner rather than sweets for my family. "I'm not a baker, I'm a supper maker."

Having children may have changed my plans, but as you can see, I wasn't sure what I wanted to be anyway. I did know that I wanted to be a mother. In my high school yearbook, it says I would, "Marry Prince Charming and have the Seven Dwarfs." My husband now is more like the bear I would have befriended in my adventure story than the prince in the fairy tale. I stopped at four kids, who I had in two batches of two, 15 years apart.

Now, I guess what I want to be when I grow up is loving, grateful, compassionate, strong, soft, needed, helpful, and wise. I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up, but I do know who I want to be. I am successful because each day I get up, show someone love, and do something that makes me feel alive.

Julia Johnston

Passages Teacher, Southern Maine



Up through high school, I never felt like I quite fit in anywhere because I just didn't fit any box: I was a girl but I have always wanted to be tough, I am an American but I grew up in Belgium, my parents are wonderful but they never let me do "normal" things. When I was young, I thought not fitting in was the worst thing ever. Now I could not be more grateful for all the ways that I didn't belong. It's amazing how much our view changes through the years. Plus, now I love kale, Brussels sprouts and all the other things I used to hate.

One of the surprising lessons I have learned in life is that you just have to show up and do what you say you are going to do, and often that makes you seem like a superstar. You may notice that a lot of people say they will do something, but then don't. Just being someone that people can count on opens so many doors, both in work situations and in friendships. It might not seem like a big thing, but it can sure make life a lot richer and a lot easier!

The other lesson that I am always trying to learn is when to break the rules and when to follow them. I definitely don't know the answer, but I guess it has worked for me to follow them at first, and then figure out all the ways I can break them without harming anyone else (including me).

I don't know why people hate getting old. It's fun to see what's going to happen and what I can figure out next.