

Raising Memories

Raising children (the tempered version)

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Children are a blessing.
Parents love them,
Worrying about them,
Pray for them,
Fear for them,
Take them back.
Neverending.

Memories of our children are many.
Memories of love that touch the heart.
Memories of little things they did, like discovering their own shadow, and a photo of that moment. And when the pacifier first fell on the floor, remember you boiled it sterile? But after a while and it fell on the floor again...you blew on it, whipped it on something, and plopped it in the mouth.

The first bicycle ride, every parent remembers, giving them the gently push, having courage when the fall, and kissing the *ohh-ees*... and off they go again.

Memories of first high fever...calling your parents for what to do— and being told each child is different, and there are no manuals, but if the temp is over 99 ° —take our grandbaby to the emergency room!

Memories about the teen-years, when they suddenly have no time to talk and think they know everything and want the rights of adulthood without responsibilities.

Memories of *him* discovering girls (a growing concern); *her* discovering boys (alarming)— remembering your experiences—and your resolve to protect them. And the big dramatic proclamation—you are “Ruining My Life!” (but today they don’t remember).

Memories of the first, “Can I have the car keys?” And your being only adult in the room you cave and hand the keys to him— not releasing until laying down a list of things not to do; hour to be home; and how the world as he knows it will end if any Rule is not followed to a T, then demanding he repeat them twice (never got it exactly right)— until reluctantly... you released them.

When he is late, you wait for *The Phone call*. Worrying if you should call the hospital, police, or morgue, while searching for that sports-list of all his friends— realize, it has only been fifteen minutes— and dump your family-counseling-mantra (I’m okay...I’m’ okay) and put all your trust in Jesus.

Tic... Tic ... Tic.

The car pulls in the driveway, lights out and coasting, and you run to the bedroom— and back (twice)— then lay in wait for the door open.

He strolls in, “*Sorry... I didn’t know Ben Hur was three hours long....*” You make a note to double-check... gaging the range of a proper reaction—between World War III or old dad over-reacting—flies out the window, you opt for *Trying to be Cool*, reply, “Oh ... okay. See you in the morning.”

So much for *Tough Love*.

Memories of grades dropping. Finding marijuana in their room. The big argument about violating “My Right to Privacy” for searching the room without a warrant. Harsh words. There is no adult in the room.

The night they don’t come home— for two; the three days. The police say they’ll keep an eye out, but they can’t find every 15, 16, 17-year-olds who took off.

Prodigal-child finally comes home as if nothing’s wrong, you play the role, and hope adulthood will sink in. And with family counseling, things seem a little better. But after a boyfriend *she* brought home for dinner (finally) left, she asked, “What do you think of him?” The words just seemed to fall out of your mouth: “He’s the nicest loser you’ve brought home yet.”

Years pass and you are smarter now (they realize), and they are out on their own when the call comes— about grandbaby’s first fever....

Raising memories and children never really ends,
And now worry about grandchildren.