

ENDINGS

1



Parenting



ENDINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“You’re like a cool breeze, on a summer’s day/
You are a river running through the desert plain/
You are my shelter, from the pouring rain/You
were my comfort, even before the pain.”

India Arie

Reflection

Think about one person you keep in mind. How do you hear that person’s voice in your mind?

Action

Think about how your child keeps you in mind. Are there ways that you help your child remember you and keep you close, even when the two of you are not together? Is there something else that you would like to do?

ENDINGS

2



Parenting



ENDINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“So go ahead, fall down. Things look different from the ground.”

Oprah Winfrey

Reflection

What does it mean to fall down and pick yourself up?

Action

Sit on the floor. Stand on a stool. What does the world look like? What does the world look like for your child?

ENDINGS

3



Parenting



ENDINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“When the music changes, so does the dance.”

African Proverb

Reflection

Imagine that growing up is a dance between parents and children. What kind of dance are you and your child dancing right now?

Action

Watch to see how your child moves. What happens when you follow along? How do you feel during these moments—excited, surprised, bored, sad?

ENDINGS

4



Parenting



ENDINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Parents who are afraid to put their foot down usually have children who step on their toes.”

Chinese Proverb

Reflection

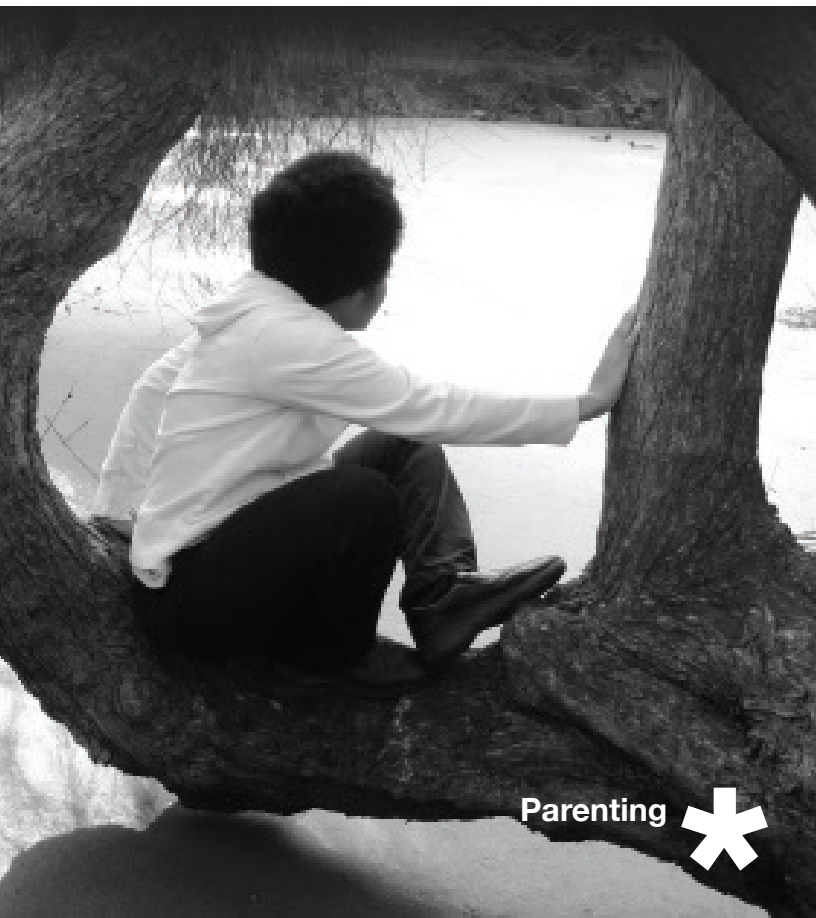
What would make parents afraid to “put their foot down”? If parents are afraid to be strong, what will their children think?

Action

Try to remember when your own parent or another adult told you “no” or that you weren’t allowed to do something. Can you remember if you felt angry, or relieved, or had some other feeling? Do you understand the experience differently now?

UNCERTAINTY

5



Parenting



UNCERTAINTY

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do.”

Dr. Benjamin Spock

Reflection

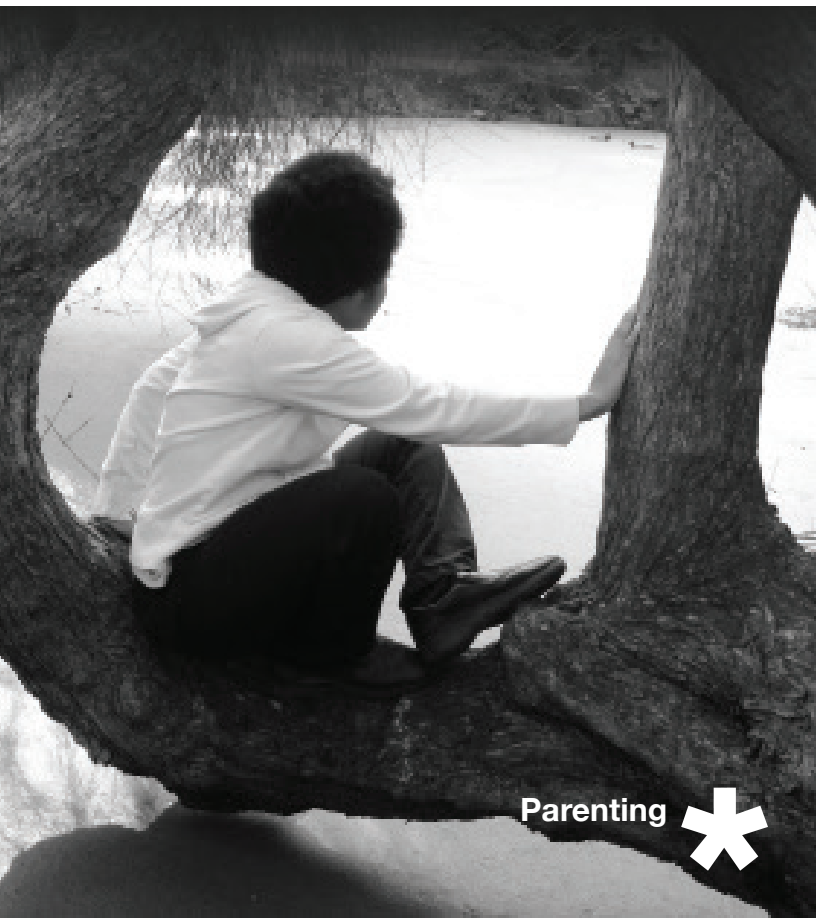
When things are stirred up, it can be hard to remember that you have experiences that can help guide you. Sometimes letting yourself talk helps you know what you think. How do you listen to yourself?

Action

How do you pay attention to what your child is saying? Do you always pay the same kind of attention? Are there times when the way your child says something is more important than what your child says?

UNCERTAINTY

6



Parenting



UNCERTAINTY

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“After a storm comes a calm.”

Folk Saying

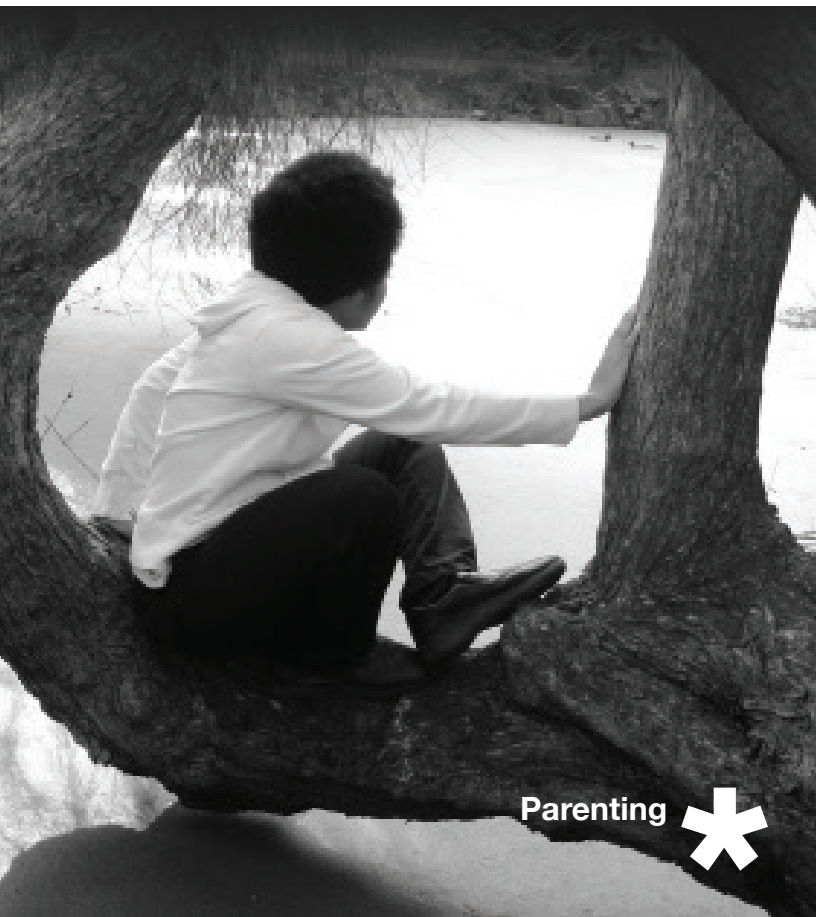
Reflection

Take a moment to remember a time when your child was very excited, cranky, or had a temper tantrum. Can you recall how the storm made you feel? How did you feel after the calm?

Action

For the rest of the day see if you can notice when your child is stormy. See what your child does with his or her body. Discuss with a friend how your own feelings helped you with your child, or got in the way.

UNCERTAINTY 7



Parenting 

UNCERTAINTY

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Everybody’s looking for that something/One thing that makes it all complete/You’ll find it in strange places/Places you never knew it could be.”

Westlife

Reflection

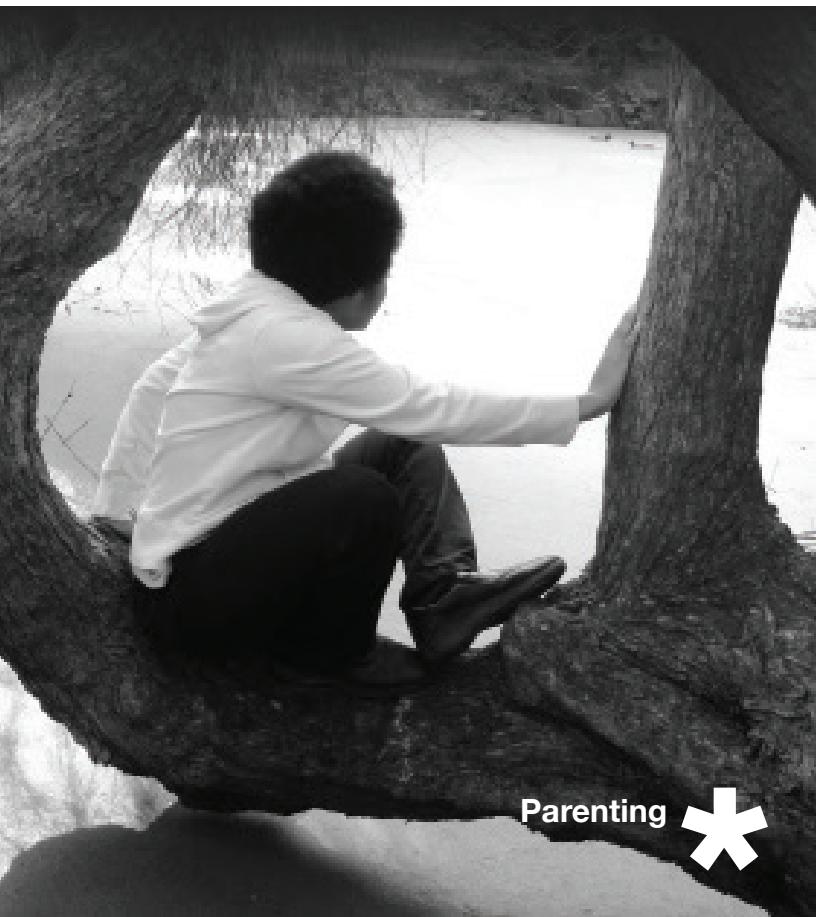
What about being a parent makes you feel “complete”? Does it ever feel like being a parent makes it harder, or easier, to realize your dreams?

Action

Spend five minutes imagining what you would like the future to be for you, your child, and your family. Have your dreams changed since you became a parent?

UNCERTAINTY

8



Parenting



UNCERTAINTY

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“He who teaches children learns more than they do.”

German Proverb

Reflection

How do you think children learn best? Can you remember learning something new as a child? What are you giving your child through your teaching? How does this affect others?

Action

Take ten minutes to try to teach your child something new. What did you learn?

BEGINNINGS

9



Parenting 

BEGINNINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“So here we are right back /We can’t let the future become our past /If we are to change the world/Won’t you tell me.”

Ben Harper

Reflection

Parenting sometimes makes people remember things from their childhood. What reminds you of your childhood? What do you want to be similar or different?

Action

Draw two circles. In one circle, list where you are in your life. In the other circle, list where your child is and what your child is learning and doing. Do you see any similarities? Are there differences?

BEGINNINGS 10



Parenting 

BEGINNINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“You need to listen to your body because your body is listening to you.”

Dr. Phil

Reflection

What does your body tell you when you feel hungry, tired, excited, sad, or angry?

Action

Practice paying attention to what your child's behavior tells you about how your child is feeling. What could you say to your child when your child is crying? What could you say if your child is smiling? List three ways that you can tell when your child is hungry, happy, or angry.

BEGINNINGS

11



Parenting



BEGINNINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“A little body often harbors a great soul.”

Proverb

Reflection

Write down, think about, or share what you hope your child will be like when he or she grows up.

Action

Think of your child as a young adult. Write a letter to your child describing what your child was like as a baby or young child. How do you imagine your child as a young adult?

BEGINNINGS 12



Parenting 

BEGINNINGS

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“He who does not know one thing knows another.”

Kenyan Proverb

Reflection

Is there something that you used to know that you aren't so sure about now? What made you look at it differently?

Action

Write down three things that you used to think were true about yourself. Write down three things that you think are true about yourself now. Are they the same?

RENEWAL

13



Parenting



RENEWAL

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Reflection

Sometimes it helps us to take a risk if someone we believe in tells us that it is going to be okay. Has that been your experience?

Action

Draw a map of a recent change in your child’s life. How many steps were there from the ending to renewal? Was it a straight path? Were there unexpected steps along the way?

RENEWAL

14



Parenting



RENEWAL

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“The great art of life is sensation, to feel that we exist, even in pain.”

Lord Byron

Reflection

How do you help your child feel whole and safe when your child is unhappy? What do you think your child learns about himself or herself when you help?

Action

Write a note to your child about an experience that might make your child feel both happy and sad, or scared and excited. How do you feel writing the note?

RENEWAL

15



Parenting



RENEWAL

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Maya Angelou

Reflection

We often pass along feelings, both good and bad, through our words and actions. Do you remember things that people have said or done to you that you've passed on to your child?

Action

Look in the mirror and make a face that would make a child feel happy. Make a face that would make a child feel scared. Where did you learn to make these faces?

RENEWAL

16



Parenting



RENEWAL

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped.”

African Proverb

Reflection

Think of something that your child just learned. When do you think that change started? What did your child leave behind? What is something that you've just learned as a parent?

Action

Without turning around, describe what is behind you. Now turn around and look. Is it what you remembered?