

## **100,000 Hours**

from *The No-Cry Discipline Solution* (McGraw-Hill) by Elizabeth Pantley

From the time your baby is born until the time your child leaves home for college or wherever the future leads, the two of you may have over 100,000 hours to interact and connect. It would be absolutely, utterly impossible for all of those 100,000 hours to be blissfully happy and precisely choreographed. There will be plenty of rough spots, uncalled-for anger, and mistakes – both on your part and your child's. To even attempt perfection would be ludicrous and stress invoking, yet most of us parents criticize ourselves unnecessarily over every negative situation.

Raising a child requires that we make many decisions every single day, from the insignificant to the life-altering. Sometimes it is obvious that you have made the right decision, other times it is unclear, and from time to time it's apparent that you have made a mistake. Nearly every mistake that you make as a parent has been made by a multitude of parents in history. Small mistakes are unavoidable in parenting, and they rarely leave a lifelong impact. They are just human beings living everyday life.

### **The big picture is more important than any one action.**

What is more important than any single decision or action is your overall philosophy and approach to raising your child. When love is your foundation, parenting skills are your structure, and your goal is to raise your child to be a good human being, with whom you can have a pleasant lifelong relationship, then it is likely things will turn out as you hope.

### **What really matters?**

What matters most to you in the long run? Take some time to contemplate your most important goals for your children and for your family. Determine which values you will use to guide your decisions towards your goals. Make an effort to learn good parenting skills and use them on a daily basis. And then, take a deep breath and forgive yourself and your children for the mistakes that inevitably will happen along the way.

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