

# How You Can Influence Your Daughter's Self-Esteem

How does your daughter see herself? How about your wife? I wrote about something similar last month, but this deserves more attention.

There's a fascinating video put out by Dove—aimed at women—that explores the idea “You're more beautiful than you think you are.” Before I continue, watch the video. (It's really worth 6 minutes of your time.)

*Mark Merrill is the president of Family First. For the original article, visit .*

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## Top 7 Reasons for a Trip to Israel

This summer marks our 30th year as pastors at King of Kings in Jerusalem. Ann and I still pinch ourselves that we get to do this!

From time to time, I've toured the Israel with newbies—and often they're pastors. It's fascinating to get a fresh look at Israel through their eyes and to watch their childlike excitement.

I've heard them ask, “Why I didn't come years ago?” A few have even confessed they'd unwittingly told some lies in their sermons because of ignorance about the land of the Bible.

I'm going to give you my top seven reasons you really need to visit Israel, especially if you're a pastor and/or Bible teacher.

**1. The pages of your Bible will be even more alive and real.** This is where Abraham trekked, Joshua battled, David reigned and the Son of God lived, died, rose and ascended.

After seeing the land and people of Israel, you'll teach the Bible with more accuracy and confidence. Well-known pastor Mark Batterson from Washington, D.C., came to Israel for the first time this year. He tweeted, "One revelation from our trip to Israel? I read the Bible wrong! Just knowing the geography adds nuances of meaning. Text + context = aha!"

After you've scanned the topography, heard the sounds, breathed the air and smelled the scents, you'll paint the backdrop of a biblical narrative with more vivid colors.

As a serious Bible teacher, you've probably spent thousands of dollars on theological education. You've invested in building your library. And you continue to spend money on resources to keep you current. So you know the value of investing money in the best tools of your trade. Here's a thought: Amortize the cost of this trip over 50 years of ministry, and it's peanuts!

George O. Wood, the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, just preached for us at King of Kings. He's been to Israel more than 40 times! He's initiated a program to enable every Bible student in the denomination to get to Israel at least once in their lives.

**2. A visit to Israel will enable you to pray more intelligently for the Middle East.** Israel is the epicenter of a conflict as old as the patriarchs. CNN and Fox can't convey the whole picture. But coming to this land will enable you to better understand the realities.

A visit to Israel will enable you to meet with Jews and Arabs.

Coming to know the faces and names, as well as their stories, will inspire you to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Ps. 122:6).

**3. If you make a point of visiting the local believers, you will hear fresh and exciting testimonies of God at work in Israel today.** Many will tell you how the Lord revealed Himself in a dream or vision. Local ministry leaders can share how the body has grown tenfold in the last 20 years.

Getting to know the body in this land will introduce you to ways you and your church can partner with local ministries—and in turn receive blessings (see Gen. 12:3).

**4. A trip to Israel will inspire you and increase your level of faith for your nation.** The blessing of God is on Israel. Its very existence is a miracle you’ve got to see with your eyes to believe. Friends who return to Israel every few years marvel at the progress since their last visit.

Israel is a shining example not only of how to *survive*, but also *thrive* against all odds. With limited natural resources, a microscopic piece of real estate and the existential threats of war and terrorism, the only explanation of Israel’s success is God.

**5. Israel is teeming with history and culture.** Whether visiting archaeological sites, roaming the museums or spending an evening with the Israel Philharmonic, you will be enriched.

**6. Israel is a great place for a vacation.** You’re going to spend money on a vacation anyway, right? We have one of the most ideal climates in the world. If you come in the winter, it’s possible to ski the snow-peaked Mount Hermon in the morning and swim with dolphins along the coral beaches of the Red Sea in the afternoon. We have three remarkable seas—the Med, the Red, the Dead—and, of course, the Sea of Galilee, around which the Lord did much of his public ministry.

**7. You could even visit Israel for free.** Yes, I said free. Most travel companies offer a free trip for every seven to 10 people you bring with you. Now what's your excuse? I am convinced that a visit to Israel is a wise investment in your ministry and those you serve.

Have you been to Israel yet? What were some highlights? Did it enhance the quality of your ministry? If so, how? I'd love to hear from you.

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*Along with his wife, Ann, **Wayne Hilsden** has served as lead pastor of King of Kings Community in Jerusalem, Israel, since 1983.*

*For the original article, visit [here](#).*

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## **4 Signs Your Workout Needs a Facelift**

There's this little thing called entropy at work in the universe, a pesky law of physics whereby everything gradually declines into a state of chaos and disarray. Until the cosmos is restored and made perfect once again—as Acts 3:21 and Revelation 21:1 tell us—we will be laboring to maintain order in every area of our lives.

Children need disciplining. Our spirits need refreshing. Our bodies need healing. Our minds need renewing. Our relationships need rekindling. And let's not forget the furniture that needs dusting, the lawn that needs mowing and the hair that needs cutting (or coloring!). And, like it or

not, workouts need revamping ... which brings me to today's post.

Two years ago, I knew my workout routine needed a makeover. I'd been doing the same old thing for eight years: spending 80 minutes in the gym either attached to some swanky machine, pumping out rep after rep, or running or cycling indoors with my iPod or a magazine blocking out the world. The initial infatuation I'd felt for fitness in high school was fading fast.

I remember thinking: *Will this be how every workout will be for the rest of my life? I don't think I can keep this up forever!* I'm so thankful I was introduced to CrossFit. It was exactly what I needed to renovate my routine and recharge my fitness batteries, not to mention make me my fittest.

Today I want to share a few of the signs that helped me realize I needed to make a change before I came down with an affliction informally known as Workout Burnout. If you find that you're experiencing these so-called "symptoms," I don't necessarily want you to believe that I'm prescribing CrossFit classes as your remedy.

I *do*, however, encourage you to think outside the box and be open to exercise activities that perhaps you've never tried, even the ones that seem "too intense," "too challenging," or "too scary." Such an endeavor might be just what your body needs.

### **Sign No. 1: You're Bored**

Stressing out during squats by thinking of what's next on your to-do list after your sweat session is over is definitely a sign that your workout fire needs stoking. Even innocuous thoughts regarding what you'll cook for dinner or what your weekend plans are shouldn't be occupying your mind, at least not for long. Instead, you should be focusing on proper form and technique, as well as your breathing. In addition,

if you're constantly looking at the clock or your phone or scouring magazines for something to keep your mind off the tedium of your routine, you need to kick the intensity up a notch or try something altogether new.

## **Sign No. 2: You Talk Too Much**

Are you working hard or hardly working? Merely going through the curling, pressing, pushing, rowing and running motions does not guarantee that you're getting a good workout. When on your preferred cardio machine, be it a recumbent bike or a hilly road, you can use the "talk test" to determine if you are in the aerobic zone or if you're just ... zoned out.

To determine if you're actually challenging and strengthening your heart, you should be able to say a short sentence, catch your breath and then say a few more words. And you should be sweating! Working out in the aerobic zone will improve your heart's ability to pump blood and will increase your lung capacity, which in turn lowers your heart rate.

When you circuit train or do high-intensity training such as CrossFit, you want to be in the anaerobic or "performance" zone. You want to perform your exercises at 80-90 percent of your maximum heart rate, which you can easily estimate by subtracting your age from 220. If you're able to converse and breathe as you would in a quiet cafe, you're definitely not in the anaerobic zone.

Interval training at this level will increase your V02 max, which is the maximal oxygen uptake, or the maximum volume of oxygen that can be utilized in one minute during maximal or exhaustive exercise. It is measured as milliliters of oxygen used in one minute per kilogram of body weight. Those who are fit have higher V02 max values and can exercise more intensely than those who are not as well conditioned. Numerous studies show that you can increase your V02 max by working out at an intensity that raises your heart rate to between 65 and 85

percent of its maximum for at least 20 minutes three to five times a week.

I will mention that talking comfortably isn't an absolute no-no, but to ensure you're pushing your body to grow and adapt to become stronger and fitter, you need to put the phone away or tell your workout partner you can chat after your session over a protein shake or wheat grass shot.

### **Sign No. 3: You're Sitting Too Much**

Whether sitting at the pec deck to perform rear delt flys or reclining at the incline leg press to work the quads, I'm of the opinion that people sit too much during their workouts. These seated exercise generally target just one muscle group at a time, unlike more dynamic, multi-joint, *compound* exercises that hit multiple muscles at once. A great example of a compound exercise is the squat, which engages many muscles in the lower body and core, including the quadriceps, the hamstrings, the calves and the glutes.

Isolation exercises, as the name implies, isolate one muscle group at a time.

Examples include bicep curls, tricep extensions and hamstring curls. These exercises are frequently used in physical therapy clinics and rehab centers in order to correct a specific muscle weakness or imbalance that often occurs after surgery, illness or injury.

Compound exercises are generally preferred and recommended for healthy individuals who want to get the most out of a training program. Here are a few reasons why:

- More calories burned during exercise
- Simulates real-world exercises and activities
- Allows you to get a total body workout in less time
- Improves coordination, reaction time and balance
- Improves joint stability

- Decreases the risk of injury during sports
- Keeps your heart rate up and provides cardiovascular benefits
- Allows you to exercise longer with less muscle fatigue
- Allows you to lift heavier loads and build more strength

#### **Sign No. 4: You're Not Getting Stronger or Looking Fitter**

This really could go without saying, but if you're eating properly, working out consistently and still not getting stronger or looking fitter, it's time for a makeover. I had been using the same weight loads and had the same so-so stamina and endurance for years before I checked out of the gym and into a CrossFit box. Now I'm stronger than ever and have achieved better muscular balance throughout my body.

I hope this has been helpful to you. Don't be discouraged if you identify with one or all of these signs—there is a cure! I'll be back soon with suggestions for how you can makeover your workout and climb out of your fitness rut.

If you have any questions or would like some feedback on your current training regimen or tips for starting a new one, please contact me through my website, , or send me a tweet @Dianafit4faith. If you have time, please check out my Blog Talk Radio program on this topic here.

Stay fit. Stay faithful.

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For the original article, visit .

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# Report: Syria in Possession of Russian S-300

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Russia on Tuesday in an effort to dissuade him from selling advanced anti-aircraft S-300 missile batteries to Syria.

But could he be too late? According to the London-based Arab paper *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, Russia has already transported the missiles to Syria, Israeli media outlet *Walla* reported Tuesday.

According to the report, attributed to a Syrian military official, the missile batteries are not yet operational, and are currently under full Russian supervision.

The Russian missile system is also capable of intercepting drones and cruise missiles. Its deployment in Syria would undermine Israel's aerial superiority in the region.

Israeli officials have already asked Russia repeatedly to stop supplying Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime with such "game-changing" weapons.

Despite the civil war in Syria, Russia has rejected Western demands to halt such sales, arguing that Russia has not violated international law. The Russian arms deliveries have included air defense missiles and artillery systems, but Moscow has so far held off on providing Damascus with the advanced S-300 batteries.

The powerful weapon has a range of up to 200 kilometers (125 miles) and the ability to track and strike multiple targets

simultaneously with lethal efficiency. It would mean a quantum leap in Syria's air defense capability and pose a strong challenge to any possible aerial campaign. Israel also fears that advanced Russian weapons could fall into the hands of Hezbollah, a key Syrian ally in neighboring Lebanon.

Israeli Tourism Minister Uzi Landau accused Russia on Monday of destabilizing the Middle East by selling weapons to Assad's regime. "Anyone who provides weaponry to terror organizations is siding with terror," Landau said.

Speaking in Warsaw on Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that Russia was completing the delivery of air defense systems to Syria under earlier signed contracts, but avoided specifying whether the S-300 batteries are among them.

Earlier this month, Lavrov met with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, and they announced they would host an international conference during which Syrian government officials and rebels would be offered the chance to name an interim government.

On Friday, Putin met with British Prime Minister David Cameron in Moscow for talks that also centered on Syria.

Cameron said the two were committed to developing a proposal for a Syrian transitional government. The British leader didn't say if the missile issue was discussed, but Russian news agencies said Moscow had insisted it would honor all earlier signed contracts.

The business daily Kommersant, without citing a source, reported Monday that Putin told Cameron during the talks that the S-300 will be delivered to Syria. But Vyacheslav Davidenko, a spokesman for Russia's Rosoboronexport state arms trader, refused to comment on the issue Monday.

Russia media have reported that Moscow signed a contract for the delivery of the S-300s to Syria a few years ago, but

shelved it under pressure from Israel and the West.

Igor Korotchenko, a former colonel of the Russian General Staff who now heads the Center for Analysis of Global Weapons Trade, said the decision on the S-300 delivery would have to be made by Putin himself.

“It may lead to a new round of confrontation with the West,” he said. “It will have a serious impact on the balance of forces, depriving Israel of its air superiority.”

Korotchenko added that Syrian crews will have to spend up to one year in Russia training on how to use the S-300 systems. “Without that, the delivery would make no sense,” he said. “It’s a complex system, and only highly qualified crew can handle it.”

Russia has been a key ally of Assad, joining forces with China at the U.N. Security Council to shield his regime from international sanctions.

The Syrian civil war, which began as a popular uprising against Assad in March 2011, has killed tens of thousands of people and displaced several million. The two sides are deadlocked, though the regime has scored recent military gains against the rebels.

Israel carried out a number of airstrikes in recent months aimed at halting the transfer of key weapons to Hezbollah, according to foreign reports. In January, Israel destroyed a shipment of anti-aircraft missiles bound for Hezbollah, and earlier this month, it destroyed Iranian-made guided missiles also believed to be headed to Hezbollah. Israel has not officially confirmed carrying out the strikes.

For the original article, visit .

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# 7 Traits of Kids With Good Character

We all want our children to possess character traits like peacefulness, patience, kindness, gentleness and self-control. But when we set out to teach them how to live these ideas daily, it can be difficult.

The concepts may seem too broad or vague. Kids do better with a specific directive or challenge. So we came up with some ideas to help instill those habits at an early age.

**1. Love.** Kids understand the affectionate and fun part of love, but do they understand that really loving someone means being willing to sacrifice for them and put them first sometimes? Challenge your child to let a friend or sibling “go first” when it’s time to do something fun, enjoy a treat or even get in line at school. Learning to put personal desires aside and want good for others is a sure sign of love!

**2. Peacefulness.** Dads of girls report lots of “girl drama” swirling around their child’s social set—constant hurt feelings, retaliation, accusations and, well, drama. Before the next sleepover or group playdate, instruct your child to be the place where it all stops, and work to minimize the conflicts. It may mean sticking up for a child that gets bullied or mistreated, or refusing to participate in gossip. Often, all it takes to stop trouble before it starts is one child who reminds others of what’s right.

**3. Patience.** Oh, this one is tough! And the younger your child, the tougher it will likely be. Kids have a hard time waiting through a shopping trip or a lengthy sermon at church without fidgeting and complaining. Before the challenging

event begins, remind your child that patience is important, and encourage them to try to make it all the way through the event without complaining. Then it's like a game with a defined goal of making it to the end. You can even offer acceptable ways for them to distract themselves from the wait (like doodling or reading) and an incentive for making it to the finish line.

**4. Kindness.** If kindness is what you want for your children, give them a specific way to recognize a need and offer kindness to another. It might be looking around the playground and seeing if anyone is left out or playing alone and then asking them to join their group of friends. It's such a simple gesture, and it trains your child to think of others and take action.

**5. Gentleness.** This can be harder to explain until you've encountered an example of a lack of gentleness. For instance, if you catch your child saying something harsh or hurtful (even if it's truthful), stop them and say, "That wasn't very gentle and could hurt someone's feelings if they heard you say it." Then either instruct them to refrain from commenting on the topic at all (like on the appearance of others, except to pay a compliment) or demonstrate a gentler way to communicate the idea.

**6. Self-Control.** This one overlaps with patience to some extent. One of the greatest character traits your child can exercise is that of self-control. Learning to monitor and police their own behavior is essential to good relationships and success in life. Challenge your child to count to five before responding in word or deed to things that make them angry or excited. In that five seconds, remind them to ask, "Is this really what I want to do/say? Is it the right thing to do/say?"

**7. Faithfulness.** In a world where commitments often have a shorter shelf life than a loaf of bread, training your child

to be faithful is crucial. One good training ground is household chores. Your child should be reminded that those are his responsibilities and that he should be faithful to complete them—others are counting on him! To neglect what you've promised to do is to be unfaithful. Friendships are another arena to learn about faithfulness. Encourage your child to invest in good friends and to resist casting them aside the moment someone more interesting comes along.

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**All Pro Dad** is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a by-product, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include: daily emails, blogs, Top 10 Lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.