

5 Attitudes That Can Help Your Family Live in Peace

In 1938, as Europe hurtled toward another world war, Britain's prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, signed the Munich Agreement. Chamberlain remembered World War I only too well, and he desperately wanted things to be different.

He waved his little piece of paper at the airport, and he declared he had secured "peace in our time."

But in avoiding conflict at any cost, the prime minister made a move that virtually guaranteed a more devastating confrontation in the future. Chamberlain did not understand that a peace that counts is anything but passive; he didn't grasp the truth that active peace brings something intentional to the table, he didn't remember that real peace has nothing to do with fear.

Likewise, it's too easy for families to dodge conflict, shut down communication, secure "a little peace and quiet" and cost themselves the opportunity for coming together. Peace is not a negative value; it's not the absence of anything. No, it turns out to be a lot more proactive than that.

1. Joy. Research demonstrates that a positive attitude reduces stress. And we all know reduced parental stress lowers tension in the home. So do yourself a favor, Dad. Turn off the talk radio, park the car, take a deep breath and bring a smile into the kitchen.

2. Patience. Patience is a decision. Here's the equation: listen, absorb, clarify, reflect, respond. Peace is more probable when we take the time not to react.

3. Kindness. Again, it is a decision. Random acts of kindness are okay, but we recommend deliberate, applied, unrestrained

kindness.

4. Generosity. We're not talking about money here, but about generosity in relationships—giving the benefit of the doubt, preemptive love strikes and giving forgiveness.

5. Faithfulness. A lot of discord comes out of uncertainty. As a dad, you can eliminate a lot of uncertainty by being so resolutely and predictably faithful in all the ways that count. Be the husband mom can count on, the dad the kids feel safe with, the powerfully positive presence that carries certainty and peace in its wake.

Huddle up with your family tonight and discuss what it means to be a peacemaker.

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