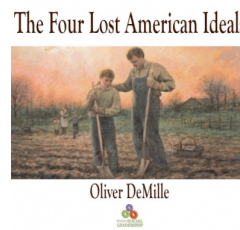
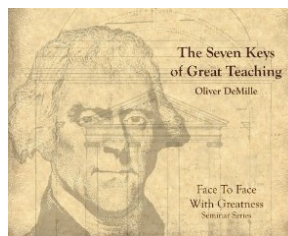
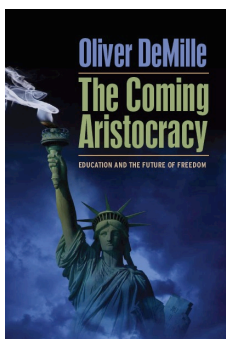
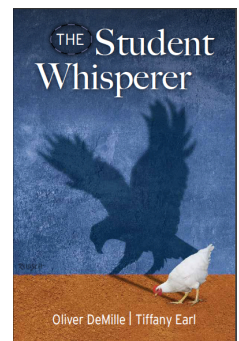
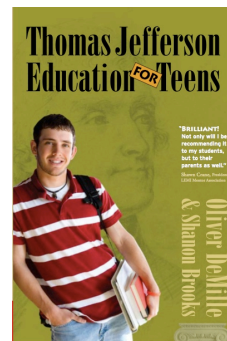
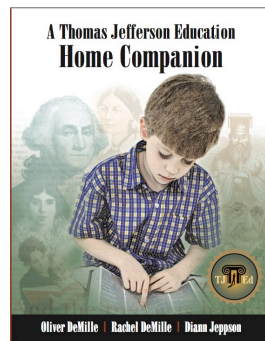
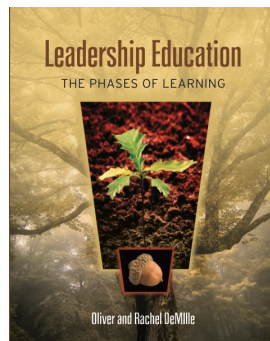
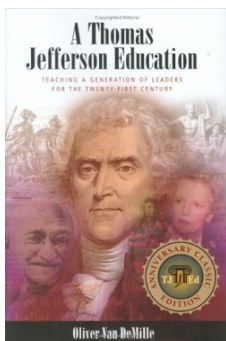




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# **Leadership Education**

## **The Phases of Learning**

To W. Cleon Skousen  
(1913-2006)

who inspired us off the conveyor belt

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## Core And Love Of Learning: Ingredients 31-55

**B**y now, you should be getting a better idea of the ingredients that will be included in the lives of future leaders. Keep reading as we examine the final chapter of ingredients. These ingredients will enrich and facilitate the success of those previously discussed.

### **Ingredient #31: The Academic “No”**

The first academic “no” refers to curbing your tendency to push, push, push. The second is a mental “no” to set boundaries that do not allow the voices of pushy, opinionated, well-meaning people to distract you from what you know is right for your family.

In the Oriental tradition, the great master required new applicants to wait for long periods of time to see him (a tradition purposefully copied by modern Western medicine). Similarly, in the Western world, the master charged huge amounts of money to discourage those who were not really serious (the medical profession seems to have mastered this one also). When you really need the doctor or any other type of mentor, you are willing to both wait and pay—a testament to the value of their expertise, as well as the mentee’s level of submission and sacrifice. Those who push past the initial “no” and demonstrate persistence are much more likely to be really ready to benefit from the relationship.

On the conveyor belt, we do exactly the opposite: we push everyone, whether they are ready or not, and then get anxious and affix labels when someone is “behind.”

If you need permission to go at a healthy child's pace, here you go: It is okay to go at the child's pace, to let them learn when they are ready and to enjoy doing things they really like instead of frantically trying to keep up with someone else's curriculum. You also have permission to take time and get yourself off the conveyor belt. Focus your energy, discipline and deep, burning desire to "stay ahead" on yourself instead of on the kids. Under FEC advisement, set up an educational plan and demand follow through from *yourself*. This way you will get the education you always deserved and they will get the example they need. Keep yourself busy enough getting your own education that you can let the children enjoy their childhood and stay in love with learning as they grow.

It is always ironic that the more deficient the education of the parent, the more frantic they are likely to be to push their toddlers. Adults with a quality education tend to relax and let their children enjoy learning. Think about that. Adults with a great education are the least likely to burden their children with the fear that they will not get one. They are most likely to expose their children to greatness and inspire them to fulfill a personal mission. We just need to remind ourselves that being highly-trained is not equivalent with having a great education. This is not to disparage training—for most peoples' mission, excellent training must be a part of the preparation. But it is not the same thing as a great liberal arts education.

This ingredient should not be used to say "no" to Core Phasers who want attention or to do projects. It is to remind you to tell yourself "no" when you want to ZPD them into quantifiable progress or you are feeling insecure and are imposing an agenda upon your child based on external judgments that emanate from conveyor belt mentality. The academic "no" is for work that compels and sends false messages that are directly opposed to core values. If your child is engaging in learning activities that he chooses and loves doing, by all means, encourage him! And by all means, make sure that your home environment is providing adequate—no—*abundant* exposure to the values of Core and Love of Learning. When all signals suggest that your child is ready to move on to Scholar Phase, tell her "no" and watch how she takes it. If she is relieved, she was not ready. If she says "fine" and nothing changes, she was not ready. But if she just keeps persisting, pleading, demanding and begging to go to Scholar Phase, she *might* be ready.

### **Ingredient #32: The Discipline “No”**

Often at this point in seminar presentations of this material, somebody in the crowd raises their hand and asks (usually in an exasperated voice), “so you’d just let a toddler run out in front of a car?” or “so we should never make our five-year-old eat his peas?” The principle here is “Inspire, Not Require,” and it is fundamental to training leaders. But it is so far from the conveyor belt that people often experience huge culture shock when we teach it and ask questions like these.

Let’s answer these questions directly, just for effect. “We recommend that you run and grab the toddler and keep him out of the busy street,” and “we recommend that you follow good nutritional guidelines in feeding your children.” We separate discipline from academics.

If you want him to be safe, stop him from running into the street. If you want him to be healthy, provide good food, exercise and rest for him. But if you want him to get a great education, show him how to love learning and then let him make that choice. If you force him, you are likely to get a fourteen-year-old who prefers video games, malls, and hanging instead of learning; one who will only do the bare minimum you require and who seeks constant entertainment. In short, you will get a teenager instead of a young adult.

The irony here is that there are two proven ways to create a teenager: 1) force and push children academically and 2) let them do whatever they want in their personal life. In contrast, young adults are raised by parents who: 1) have firm disciplinary standards and 2) a high-quality freedom-oriented educational system. The two components of creating youth are natural and excellent complements.

Set rules and be firm in following them. Do not set too many, and be consistent. When a youth breaks a rule, tell her: “try that again.” It might take a few tries, but eventually she will get it right. Start this system while they are Core Phasers and it will be natural later. If you simultaneously set a great Scholar example for them and help them love learning—you will have fourteen-year-olds who beg you to allow them to study. This really works, as thousands of parents have shown in the last fifteen years since we started promoting the Leadership Education model.

By the way, this is not hyperbole. At the time of this writing, young Oliver is almost 17, Emma is 15 and Sara is 14. They study almost all day long. They literally must be interrupted from their studies to eat or to help out when necessary. All day, they study. And lest this be construed as vanity on our part, let us here say

that we personally know literally hundreds of youth with the same game plan. It would not be appropriate to name them all here; but for those who are tempted to view this as a hopeless exaggeration: rest assured it is not, and our case is by no means isolated.

### **Ingredient #33: The Yard**

Sun and fresh outdoor air is very important to the Foundational Phases. So is a place to run, fall, jump and run some more. A place to play and a place where real work is necessary for the good of the family are vital. Good fences, lawn and dirt are also very helpful. In short, your yard matters when you are raising and educating leaders.

Fences keep them separate from the neighborhood, except when you choose to invite the neighborhood over. This is extremely important. Just as architecture can really impact the success of your Leadership Education home, so can the landscaping and set up of the yard. We are not recommending manicured landscaping maintained by a professional. This looks great but can cheat children of fabulous work opportunities with their parents. Spend time working with them on things which really upgrade the family's life, and you will increase their preparation for leadership.

Yards are wonderful for rolling in the snow, making a snowman, raking leaves, mowing lawns, cleaning the pool, weeding the flowers, planting and nurturing the garden, etc. Sun, wind and rain are necessary to Leadership Education, and yards are the best place to learn many of these lessons. The smell of rain in your yard is different than anywhere else. In fact, it is worth living and dying for. If your children do not learn important realities such as this through working, living and making family memories in your home and yard, they may not be willing to fight, die or even vote for their fundamental rights.

Trees are better than textbooks. Each limb you climb teaches a new perspective, viewpoint, and worldview with a host of corresponding lessons. Parks can teach part of this, but the allegorical life of the tree itself must be known up close; the metaphorical array of beings it hosts must be studied up close and personal. A relationship with a place, a land, and a country is necessary for true leadership and effective statesmanship.

Basketball, football, volleyball, baseball, kickball, horseshoes, camping—all are



better in your own yard than anywhere else—better educationally and better in raising future leaders. They are also better attended to and engaged in when the television and computer are properly limited or in storage.

The yard is a valuable part of Leadership Education on so many levels. Consider the yards in the educational settings of *Laddie*, *Little Britches*, *Little Women*, *Pride and Prejudice*, etc. Do the best you can to create an outdoor environment that is ideal for your children's education.

### **Ingredient #34: The Evening Reading List**

We strongly believe that no one should rely on somebody else's classics list; we each need to carefully develop our own. However, there are a few classics that we just could not leave off our list of ingredients for success. We call this our Evening Reading List, and it contains those classics which we have found to be particularly helpful in healing family culture and fostering healthy views of each one's role. Reading these together as a family is a priceless experience: *Little Britches*, *Man of the Family*, *Mary Emma and Company*, *The Fields of Home*, *Laddie*, *Where the Red Fern Grows*, *Pollyanna*, *Carry on Mr. Bowditch*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Little House in the Big Woods*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Farmer Boy*, *Trumpet of the Swans* and *The Cricket in Times Square*.

Several years ago, we ran out of books to read in the evening. We tried several dozen different titles, and either did not finish them or agreed that they just were not up to the quality we wanted. We kept looking for something of the same caliber, but kept being disappointed. "I guess we've just covered the really great ones and we'll have to settle for less," Dad said one evening as we decided to quit reading another disappointing book. But then four-year-old Ammon brought Mom a copy of *Charlotte's Web* and asked her to read it. He had seen the picture on the shelf and was interested. After some initial groans from older ones who thought they were too big for that, the whole family got excited evening after evening as we read, and we realized that we had forgotten the definition of a classic: a work worth reading over and over again. In fact, the second time through was actually more fun for the older children. Even the oldest would sometimes say he would rather do such-and-so, but would inevitably end up with us every time.

Once in a while we find a book that deserves to be added to our evening reading list. But in the meantime, we love going through this list the second time—and

we are looking forward to sharing these books again when our babies are ready in four to six years and later with grandchildren. Classics are great!

### **Ingredient #35: The Chores**

As we have said several times in this article, real work is key to training leaders, and it must start at an early age. Adler pointed out that most modern students only do hard academic work after college—either in their first real job or in professional training such as law or medical school. By the latter part of the twentieth century, hard work of any kind had become something reserved for adults—a significant cause of the leadership crisis. The irony is that the end of work among children coincided with the workaholic generation of parents. Two-parent working families left latch-key kids to watch TV and play Nintendo alone, and workaholic parents put in eighty-hour weeks to “pay for play” for their suburban children from birth to young adulthood. It is normal now to walk through an upscale neighborhood and watch dozens of teenagers drive by in BMWs and SUVs without seeing a single parent—they are too busy working to provide a lazy play life for their increasingly unhappy and dysfunctional kids.

Chores must be real. That is a challenge in our modern times, but it is a necessary ingredient to Leadership Education. Chores cannot be arbitrary or they simply pit parental will against youth will. If chores are necessary to the family’s well being, responsibilities that really matter, they build skills, character and leadership. If this means you need to make significant changes to your lifestyle, then do it. If the choice is between maintaining your lifestyle or raising leaders, make the right choice.

Chores are not the same as work for pay. A good model for this is the book *Little Britches*, where young Ralph has numerous home responsibilities and also works for pay wherever he can—his pay contributing to the needs of the family. There are three modern mistakes we tend to make in this area. First, we pay our kids to do work at home which they should do as part of the family. Second and worse, we just give them an allowance for doing nothing. Third, we encourage outside work but do not expect them to contribute to the family.

It has become part of our modern worldview to do things the easy way, to take short cuts wherever possible. This sickness has almost killed quality education, which can only be restored if we are willing to embrace the pain of learning as the inevitable accompaniment of attaining educational goals.

Interestingly, Love of Learning and Adler's "pain of learning" go together if we follow the phases correctly. The pain portion comes in Scholar Phase, but it is important that students in the Foundational Phases learn to look forward to the opportunity of the demands and rigors of true scholarship: studying so hard it hurts, struggling, sweating, crying themselves to sleep trying to get past a writing slump or to understand a classic and doing the hard work needed to have the kind of education Jefferson, Madison, Newton and others earned. There is a reason why mentors like Socrates and Jesus Christ were so demanding—why following them was like having air or worth selling all your possessions.

These ideas may seem extreme and they are definitely counter-cultural. In our hearts we believe they are right. Classic works and even some popular movies capitalize on this theme. How many movies are considered classics because of the way they illustrate this mentoring process that takes the individual through pain and struggle using sports as the medium (*Rocky*, *Miracle*, *Hoosiers*, etc.)? How about comebacks from health crises or injury (*The Other Side of the Mountain*, *Ice Castles*, etc.)? We find these stories inspiring but hope they never happen to us.

At the same time, in our society, we seem to be perfectly comfortable with torturing our little kids with stress and tears in the name of "what is best for their education," yet we somehow reject the notion that crying real tears in the process of getting a Scholar-level education for ourselves might be worth it. IT IS!

There are too few of us who get to the other side of that mountain, so we do not have myriad examples and testimonies of the joy that follows the pain. We fail to internalize the process as a goal that we aspire to personally. We celebrate and respect those who make that sacrifice, but somehow do not make the leap of owning that objective for our own personal struggles. Whether or not we choose the path of greatness, we will struggle nonetheless—that is just life. Unless we consciously choose to embrace that ideal and take the road less traveled, we will lack the vision or focus to give our trials real meaning and the sense of divine purpose that consecrates them for our good.

The answers are clear and simple, and have been around for centuries. Children need to play more and work more—with their parents at their side. If lifestyle changes are needed, then they are needed. Just being honest about this is a huge step toward success. And real chores that require hard work and are truly necessary to the family are a vital ingredient in a Leadership Education.

### **Ingredient #36: Grandparent Mentoring**

Wherever possible, each living grandparent and several adopted ones should be engaged as mentors. Children need to be tied to the older generation, and nothing does this more effectively than quality mentoring. Grandparent mentoring takes on a unique focus by emphasizing the teaching of skills. As part of your six month inventory, write down each Grandparent and possible Grandparent mentor, and list at least one skill they could pass on to each child. Then build your family vacations or other times together around this opportunity.

For example, our oldest son spent hours and hours on one trip learning to weave the seats of antique chairs—taught by his Grandpa. Emma spent a whole vacation learning to crochet from her Grandmother, and she has made hats, scarves, sweaters, etc. Her hand-made crocheted gifts to people have been amazing. She now develops her own patterns her Grandmother and others copy. Oliver learned hunting from his Grandmother and Dutch oven cooking from a Grandpa.

Grandparents can be fabulous mentors when engaged to pass on skills to a new generation. It builds relationships, binds generations and significantly increases a young person's education. Love of Learning is the time for skills focus. It is a time of fun and growth that is constantly open to new projects. Grandparents can be a wonderful part of this (more on this from the Grandparents' perspective in Part IV).

### **Ingredient #37: Teaching the Model**

It is essential to teach the young person the entire educational model over and over. We suggest teaching each child the Seven Keys and all the phases during Core Phase, and then re-teaching them repeatedly during Love of Learning and Scholar Phases.

We suggest teaching the model at least once every six months, and reinforcing it as appropriate in weekly interviews and whenever it comes up in daily discussion. If the goal is an adult who fully accomplishes their mission in life; we need youth who love learning and will study long, hard hours of their own free will and choice. To accomplish this, we need young children who play and work with their parents and older children who gain knowledge and skills and love learning and working.

The educational model must become part of the family culture, part of life's focus for each member of the family. When people ask our children what grade they are in, they answer "Love of Learning Phase," or "Scholar Phase." Then, when questioned,

they explain what that means and what they are studying. They do not see themselves as children or teenagers, but as Core Phasers, Love of Learners and Scholars.

Teaching the Seven Keys is also vital. For example, a young person who understands “Inspire, Not Require” and “You, Not Them” knows their education is their own responsibility. Such a person studies to learn, has taken on the stewardship of their own education, is not dependent on someone else to teach them and is on the path to getting a true Leadership Education.

Unlike the conveyor belt, which keeps older grades and future curriculum under a shroud of expert secrecy, leadership educators outline the whole system right from the beginning. The more the young person understands the system, the higher the opportunity for leadership, initiative, and excellence.

We have noticed that many of the people who are best applying the Leadership Education model attend the Face-to-Face seminar series themselves then come back with their Scholar Phase students and go through the whole seminar series again. This reinforces it for them, and simultaneously helps the young people really know the Leadership Education system.

### **Ingredient #38: The Central Classic**

All classics flow from a central classic, and all great classical education centers around a National Book: a centrally accepted family or national source of truth (*The Bible*, *The Qur'an*, *Bhagavad Gita*, etc.). The central classic is the book which it takes a whole lifetime to study, the book which everyone in the family reads from each day. Central books differ by family, but having one and spending a lifetime studying and applying its precepts is a necessary ingredient of Leadership Education.

The central classic should be read together daily. Everyone should be there, even the little kids. Those who can read participate, taking turns reading a verse or paragraph or more at a time. Everyone should have his or her own copy and follow along during the reading. We like to stop and ask questions, teach details that add depth and breadth, and discuss the meaning as we read. We let the teeniest kids play most of the time, right there on the floor in the middle of the room as we sit around them and read and discuss together. Once in a while we will have non-readers take a turn “reading” a verse by prompting them in their ears and having them repeat it to the group.

Scholars and parents should do a more in-depth daily study of the same cen-

tral classic. Whatever your family's national book, making it a central part of daily education is vital to Leadership Education.

### **Ingredient #39: The Awakening**

One day not long ago, our son Ammon had his “Awakening.” He had been joining us for daily scripture study for several years, mostly playing in the middle of the floor—disrupting when his cars or dinosaurs got too loud, and seeming to pay no attention. Once in a while we would say, “It’s Ammon’s turn” and have him repeat a whispered verse out loud, but mostly he was too engrossed in his play to take part much.

On this day he was sitting looking through his books that had been pulled off the messy bottom Core shelf of our Leadership Education bookshelf, while everyone older than him took turns reading and everyone younger played on the floor or in somebody’s lap. At one point in our reading, Dad asked a question to try to bring depth to the reading. There was the slightest hesitation after he asked the question, as Oliver James, Emma, Sara and Eliza considered whether or not they knew a good answer. In this brief moment of hesitation, before anyone said anything, Ammon looked up from his book and blurted out an excellent answer.

Everyone looked at him in surprise and with respect. “That’s a great answer,” Dad said. “Does anyone else have anything to add?” Ammon beamed, and then he went back to his book. He had awakened. Later that very same day, when Mom said “it’s time to pray,” Ammon yelled out “let me say it!” This was another first. We have seen it with every child, though not always so dramatically. Younger family members are there for the family routine, but allowed to play and not required to take full part. But suddenly one day they are ready, voluntarily jump in to participate, and from the answers they give it is clear that they have been listening for some time—maybe they were aware all along.

That same week Ammon started coming to Kidschool. He had been in the same room all along, but now he actively and voluntarily started participating in all the activities, studies, readings, etc. The Awakening had come.

### **Ingredient #40: The Interruption “Yes”**

When Core Phasers—babies, toddlers and children—interrupt during your studies and work, gladly give them real, focused attention. It is amazing how the conveyor belt has conditioned us to boss, push, structure, schedule and demand

when the child has his own wants and interests, but when he comes asking questions or requesting help, to be too busy.

We have covered several “no’s” so far, and this is the first of several very important times to say “yes.” When the child is asking questions, even three-year-old “why” questions, it is the perfect time to answer, teach, stop and talk or read together, answer with a project, initiate a game or lesson. Whereas the conveyor belt motto seems to be “when the student is ready, the teacher is too busy maintaining the structure for all the students who aren’t ready,” Leadership Education optimizes the teaching moment when the student is ready.

#### **Ingredient #41: The Stateswoman**

Implementing this whole recipe in order to effectively train leaders is very demanding. Parenthood—both fathering and mothering—is the most challenging, fulfilling and rewarding “career” or mission available. It is interesting that some modern feminists have described the stay-at-home mom or homemaker as caught in a life of boredom, subjugation and sad mediocrity. But true feminine ambition focused on the training of future leaders who fully understand and can accomplish their missions is the greatest challenge and opportunity of our time or any time. It is not enough to train up one’s own children. The true mother must also train and properly raise the whole community in which her children grow up, looking ahead three or four generations and acting accordingly. This is not a government village raising the child, but a mother raising her own children, her future sons- and daughters-in-law, and communities of great and good leaders who will ensure the liberty of her grandchildren. Not, “It takes a village to raise a child,” but, “It takes a mother to raise a village.”

The greatest educators are fathers and mothers—from Eve, Mary, the mothers of Moses, Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln, to the women who embrace and magnify their roles and responsibilities as mothers in your neighborhood and your own family. These are statesmen and stateswomen engaged in the work of building the family—the basic unit of society. A stateswoman puts her relationship with God and spouse in their proper place of preeminence, leads an inspirational life, is actively progressing through the phases herself, runs a Mom School, has her home arranged as a leadership home, says “no” and “yes” in the Leadership way, and mentors through the Phases of a Leadership Education. She is a powerful example

of a woman living a life of challenging, fulfilling, exciting feminine ambition and expertise that is literally world-changing. It takes a mother to raise a nation.

#### **Ingredient #42: The Core Reading List**

A few books we recommend every home should carry, thrown in a jumbled pile on the bottom shelves of the leadership bookshelf in the Family Room, include: *Oh, The Places You'll Go*, *Emma's Pet*, *The Cat in The Hat*, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *Even if I Did Something Awful*, *Blueberries for Sal*, *Ferdinand the Bull*, *Peter Rabbit*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *I'll Love You Forever*, *The Monster at the End of this Book*, *Are You My Mother?*, *The Little House*, *The Stories of Little Bear*, *Hop on Pop*, and *Go, Dog, Go*.

There are many others, and each family should collect its own list of favorites and read and re-read them many times with each child. In our family, all of these are favorites. We especially have had fun with *Are You My Mother?* and *Emma's Pet*. Indeed these early classics, read repeatedly, teach many of the lessons which are later covered in more depth by youth and adult classics. We stop and discuss, even with toddlers, and relate principles to those of our central classic. We hear our Love of Learning and Scholar children referring back to these stories, emphasizing their principles or utilizing their analogies during conversations about a wide variety of topics.

Classics are a powerful source of cultural literacy. We recommend that people studying a foreign language start with the central classic and children's stories in that language and from that culture, since true native fluency requires cultural as well as phonetic and grammatical knowledge. Of the three, cultural fluency is the most valuable. We certainly all benefit from such an understanding of our own culture, and one of the best ways to obtain it is through repeated readings to and with children.

#### **Ingredient #43: The Degree Program**

Yours! To truly do early Scholar Phase yourself, just start reading as many classics as possible. But at some point, in order to get the Scholar Phase you deserve and that your children need you to have, it is important to engage a high quality Liberal Arts Mentor. This can be done informally or by enrolling in a degree program.

If you already have a college degree, ask yourself whether or not you actually had a true Scholar Phase—5,000 to 8,000 hours of mentored study of the great classics. Upon such an examination, you may decide that you are ready for additional mentoring.



There are so many reasons for not pursuing your education and/or degree and getting the superb education you want. But there is such a huge difference, a world of difference, between the education you can offer your children when you have a true Liberal Arts education and when you do not. Now we are not saying a “formal,” that is, “institutional” education is necessary, but we are saying that a *great* education is—one attained with the help and guidance of great Liberal Arts mentors.

The biggest roadblocks are time, money and will. In reality, only the third is the absolute obstacle. We have seen hundreds of people pursue advanced Scholar and Depth Phase studies with great mentors who had no more time or money than the thousands who do not. Rachel started her master’s degree with three children under age three—a difficult time during which she lived on very little sleep and constant interruption. When she finished, she still had a number of challenges and three little children—but in addition she had a superb education from which to mentor them, not to mention an amazing sense of accomplishment and a new avenue of service and personal depth as a teacher of Hebrew.

There is such a difference between the community book club and the same group with a great Liberal Arts mentor. There is such a difference between the homeschool with a really dedicated and conscientious mother and the same mother with a superb, mentored education. Rachel has been asked countless times for help in starting groups in other areas that mirror her own Colesville Academy. Her answer was a delicate but frank one: it cannot be done. To duplicate what she does, one would have to *be* her. By contrast, those who do have even the beginnings of a Leadership Education rarely ask her for anything but very general advice on how to run their own Mom Schools. They do not want to duplicate hers, they want to do their own thing! They have their own “mine” to draw from.

It is tempting to think “not right now.” But when is better? When the kids are themselves in Scholar Phase and need your world class mentoring? Or when they have moved away and will not benefit first-hand from your educational example? Another temptation is “I just can’t afford it.” But we have seen hundreds of people who could not afford it find a way—because they knew that in reality they could not afford *not* to have a superb Leadership Education. Even more, they knew that their children vitally needed them to have it. There are many things vital to your children’s well-being that you would not dream of foregoing in the name of finances. You would simply find a way to make it happen.

We feel so strongly about this that we challenge you to do whatever it takes to

get the education you need and see what miracles you can witness in your life. As with many miracles, however, you probably will have to step out onto the water before you find out for yourself that it will hold you up.

We are spending so much time on this because after fifteen years of promoting Leadership Education or the Thomas Jefferson model, the only people we have seen do it really well are those who get mentors and do the full Scholar Phase study. Remember, it is “You, not Them.” The fact that getting great mentors takes some commitment and that getting a superb education is hard should not deter you from achieving excellence.

#### **Ingredient #44: The Formal Ball**

At least once a year, attend a formal black or white tie event. If possible, get the kids dressed up for it and have them attend too. But at least let them see you dress up and go. This is powerful socialization, and very important in training leaders. Leaders need to be comfortable in every setting and with any group of people. Great educator Arthur Henry King taught that the language of the classics is like any other language—if you learn it while you are young, you speak it like a native. If not, you will probably always carry at least a slight foreign accent.

Our point is not that the future leaders you are training in your home need to fit into the formal world. Churchill, Jefferson, Lincoln, Adams—none of them fit the mold. But they were familiar with the mold, knew its language, and knew how to *effectively* not fit in. There is a great difference between 1) the bumbling hick accent which constantly communicates “treat me as an inferior,” 2) the polished courtier “I want to fit in more than anything because I want to feel superior” worldview, and finally 3) the habit of “I am at ease with anyone in any setting so let’s talk because you are truly important and I want to get to know you.” The third one comes attached to “I stand for something, and I care about what you stand for too.” The latter is the view of statesmen—calm, sure, confident, not easily swayed but always openly optimistic and interested in others more than self.

There are many types of socialization, and the first two listed above leave much to be desired. The formal event is ignored, even avoided by the first, and overly emphasized, often worshipped by the second. It is attended by the third, attended because people are there with missions to accomplish. Love of Learners and Scholar youth who are comfortable in such settings will be comfortable accomplishing

missions in such settings. The self-conscious are as unlikely as the self-absorbed to look around and follow spiritual promptings that are needed in formal settings where many important decisions are made. Indeed, perhaps the most important decisions leaders make is whom to trust, and formal events are where many first impressions are made. Besides, such activities are a lot of fun, and they can inspire additional studies—before the fact as well as after.

While we are on the subject, we think it is important to not just gloss over the question of socialization. Perhaps the best summary we have seen is by Dr. Julie Earley:

“No matter what you do or where your children are for their educational experiences, they are being socialized. We are always learning social skills and habits. To say that socialization is bad or wrong because it is such an emphasis of public schools is to throw the baby out with the bath water.

“Not only is it neutral, it goes on whether you plan it or not. Employee education socializes for jobs, professional for the world of experts and therefore Leadership Education must also have a direct and specific curriculum of socialization. It may not consume as high a percentage of the curriculum as in public or professional education, but it is still an important part of educating a leader.

“Leaders must feel comfortable in different situations, with people from different cultural, national and socio-economic backgrounds. A leader must be able to work with all different types of people, and in many diverse situations. We socialize a leader by taking them to a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, to symphonies, to rest homes, to formal balls, to political receptions, areas of crisis where help is needed, etc, etc. They need to understand how to be, and how to act in different situations.

“We can never just train them for social experiences, because we don’t know exactly what type of social settings they’ll need to master during their lives. This requires education—they must learn principles so they can use them in whatever situation in which they may find themselves. This type of socialization is more than just a nice by-product, it must be part of a conscious effort of mentoring a leader in the making.

“Like I said earlier, they will be socialized, it will happen regardless, but what will they be socialized for?”

When we give our families a smorgasbord of social experiences, it is natural and obvious that different skills, tones, and manners are effective and appropriate in different situations, and family members become agile in their social skills. By contrast, when teaching etiquette to adults in preparation for an event there are inevitable objections: “This just isn’t natural for me,” “I feel false when I behave this way,” or “But what happens if...”

We do our children a disservice by bringing them up to believe there is only one correct way to behave. This leads them unwittingly to attitudes of bigotry, bias, isolation and segregation. We and they should become fluent in talking with, building rapport with and cooperating with homeschoolers and public schoolers, people of our own religion and those of different beliefs, people of our own political persuasion and those who passionately hold another viewpoint, etc.

Too often artificial boundaries of “us” and “them” are drawn simply because we lack the aptitude or inclination to bridge the gap with those who could be our allies and friends by building on the common ground that almost always does exist, if we know how to identify it. And in the trying times our children will undoubtedly face, an indispensable asset will be the talent of forming alliances with those who can help us accomplish our missions and with those whose worthy purposes we may advance.

#### **Ingredient #45: The Assignment**

When the student is bored, struggling with a project or book, or just seems caught in a rut and can not seem to get going, try giving an assignment. The conveyor belt builds its entire system around assignments, an open admission that it assumes all students to be in trouble and in need of outside direction at all times—to be incapable of self-direction and excellent pursuit of personal interests and talents.

In the Leadership Education model, we do not give assignments all the time—just when they are needed. We highly recommend the excellent book *The One Minute Manager Leads High Performance Teams*. It teaches that we all start new things with high energy and low direction, then move to a point of low direction and low energy called Dissatisfaction. As with the Seven Keys, this must be appropriately implemented in the context of the Phase the child is in. It is most explicitly applied in Scholar Phase, and as most parents of this generation who have children in Core

and Love of Learning are in Scholar Phase themselves, a review of this principle in this context can be valuable.

With Core Phase, frustration and dissatisfaction are often just a by-product of a logistical problem: too little sleep, inadequate nutrition, lack of a meaningful routine, uncertainty regarding family and/or chore roles, etc. An Inventory will most likely reveal the issue at hand, and FEC can prescribe the solution.

When the inventory reveals that the dissatisfaction for an older student is Dissatisfaction, or, that part of the learning cycle when enthusiasm wanes and challenges loom, it is time for The Assignment. In Love of Learning and early Scholar Phase, you may need to jump right in and start doing the assignment with them. By later Scholar and Depth Phases, you can simply give the assignment with a due date and reporting time (then be absolutely sure to follow through—in fact, mentors and parents should read *The One Minute Manager* in addition to the sequel on teams mentioned above).

Your assignment immediately gets rid of Dissatisfaction, since direction is high even though energy is low. As the student gets into the assignment, both energy and direction will be high and they will begin working hard and learning. This takes a few hours in some cases, and perhaps several months in others. But by knowing this pattern you become what Aneladee Milne has called the “parent mentor.” The parent mentor can immediately move a student from Dissatisfaction—where many conveyor belt students stay for years and years. We do not mean to communicate that this is easy, but it is quite routine and simple even though it takes creativity and some hard work for the parent mentor.

The real challenge is to know the perfect thing to give the student, the perfect assignment that will inspire them to do the hard work needed to get past Dissatisfaction. There are two essential parts to this. First, as we have said above, the parent mentor must personally experience Scholar Phase. A parent who has pushed past Dissatisfaction with the help of an assignment from a mentor will know how to do this better than if they have never had the experience. The second essential part of giving assignments is to help the youth make the assignment fun. It must be truly inspiring, and for Love of Learners that means really, really fun.

One easy way to do this is to jump into it with them and have fun yourself. When Love of Learning Phasers are in Dissatisfaction, the measured and inspired use of Assignments can motivate progress and learning. However, do not leer and hover, waiting for the opportunity to interject an assignment just so you feel like a mentor. In most cases the Love of Learner benefits most when they overcome the

slump on their own. They need “the right kind of vacuum” to motivate them to do what they feel they should and have been avoiding, or to try something new as a last resort to avoid dying of monotony. When an Assignment is called for, it should be of the fun and horizon-expanding variety.

Note that this is most likely the wrong way to do this in Scholar Phase. Again, if you have done Scholar Phase or are doing it with a great Liberal Arts mentor, you will know this by experience. In Scholar Phase, “fun” is not nearly as inspiring as “really, really hard.” And most often the called-for Scholar Assignment is not to branch out into a new area, but to delve deeper into the one we’re struggling with already. We know this runs counter to the current wisdom. The conveyor belt says teenagers “just wanna have fun.” The truth is that youth naturally, passionately, even desperately want much more than to have fun. When they get into Dissatisfaction, they will willingly choose fun as an escape. But it leaves them feeling empty, ever wishing there were something more. What they really want is depth, quality, meaning, opportunities to really grow up. They want a true challenge. They want an adult challenge.

It was a source of pride and joy when Emma recently announced that she was in Dissatisfaction and would therefore be tripling her reading commitment in a book she had not been particularly enjoying (it was to be discussed by the class she was participating in). She was pleased to announce two days later that Dissatisfaction was long gone. She had been taught by her mentor about Dissatisfaction and took steps on her own to overcome it. Her maturity in the way she handled the situation brought us great satisfaction; but more than that, she felt a sense of personal triumph and a defining of character to have chosen to do the hard thing against her more self-indulgent inclination. This lesson will stay with her and her ability to self-correct during hardship is expanded simply because her mentor, Dr. Henke, taught her this principle and she trusted him enough to apply it.

Many youth might tell you that “fun” is what they really want, that “hard” is nowhere on their list. They do not fully know themselves yet—many never will, especially if they do not experience a mentor who understands that they must get past Dissatisfaction through hard, demanding, stretching assignments which pull and grind. Now do not get us wrong, they want “fun” too—pretty much every evening. But having fun will not pull them out of Dissatisfaction. Only doing a really hard and challenging assignment will do that.

As a mentor, your education is hugely important here, since your depth or shal-

lowness will directly impact what assignment you give. You cannot pass on what you do not have. But you can get what you do not have, and you can start getting it immediately—today. If you are a chapter ahead, you can assign effectively. If you are fifty books ahead, you can assign more effectively.

By the way, you may have noticed that during this discussion, we have made little mention of Core Phase. We do believe in assignments during Core, just not too many academic assignments. Learning to work, obey, treat others respectfully, make apologies when they are called for—there are many worthy Core Phase assignments for toddlers and young children.

### **Ingredient #46: The Mission**

The basic source of inspiration for achieving a Leadership Education is mission. Those who know they have a mission desire to prepare for it—to do the hard work necessary to get the needed education. This is not to say that a person must know every detail about his mission, or have any idea what it fully is. Even Jesus Christ learned line upon line. Simply the knowledge that “I have a mission” is enough to inspire the corresponding “and so I’ll prepare for it.” Mission is the inspiration behind Scholar Phase, the impetus of the focused attention of Depth Phase, something parents should help students prepare for, something everyone has. We believe that a person who fulfills his mission will literally change the world. We believe this is true of every single person who is born and every single individual mission.

Core Phase is a very important time for everyone to learn the parts of their mission that are shared by everyone. There are certain things that all human beings have as a mission, and Core Phase teaches these things. In Love of Learning Phase, we continue this universal learning and simultaneously begin to explore areas of personal mission—which often come to us as interest, talent, skill, ability, intelligence, gift, etc. Most importantly, the parent mentor must clearly understand and be able to articulate what he knows about his own personal mission(s). Young people think in terms of whom they want to be like much more than what they want to accomplish. Being able to tell them what your mission is when they ask or at some other key moment is incredibly inspiring. Share this sparingly, in special moments when it feels right.

Finally, it is essential that you clarify what your mission is and align your life

to be actively pursuing it. There are few things more incongruent than someone who says they have an important mission and then lives in conflict with it. This is a great way to confuse children and to leave them with only one strong conviction: that they will never amount to much. If you do not know your mission, spend the time to clarify, discover and articulate your mission. And if you are not living your mission, make the necessary changes to do so. What else could matter more to your personal satisfaction and the happiness of those around you? If you do not, your mentoring will not be inspiring no matter how many books you purchase, seminars you attend, or techniques you employ. If all you have is the conviction of what you are supposed to be doing right now that will take you toward fulfillment of your mission—just do it. Honestly, this is the way it works for most of us. The most important thing about mission is to carry out yours and invite your children to do the same with theirs.

#### **Ingredient #47: The Friend**

We need to speak for a moment directly to the mothers, though the fathers can listen in and be supportive. Great mother mentors have a few close, great friends. The great friend is someone you can trade off with when you have a bad day—who can take your children and not change the schedule at all because she is following it too. She shares your values, has children with ages close to your children's ages, and follows a similar Leadership Education pattern in the home. Such a friend becomes a mentor to your children, and what Tiffany Earl calls a “Soul Mentor” to you. You share ups and downs together, often letting her help when you are down and in turn helping her when you are up.

At least one such friend is invaluable to a Leadership home. If you do not have one, or if you do not feel there are enough such people in your community, muster your feminine ambition and go out and build such a community of support. We have been so blessed to have literally dozens of such friends in our small community. Rachel has worked very hard in helping this community to develop, broaden its scope and deepen its educational roots. Numerous others have done the same kind of hard work in our community, and the networks now intersect. One way to build a community of like-minded families and nurture friendships is to create an opportunity for an activity of interest to many that will bring families together. Some wonderful and inspirational Leadership model activities that work perfectly



to build a community of families and gain Leadership Education friends include:

Spelling Bee	Theatrical Production	Science experiments
Geography Bee	Risk Tournament	Sewing Class
Math Bee	Night of Poetry	Chess Tournament
History Bee	Talent Show	Musical Group
Sewing Bee	Family Ball	Build something
Cookoff or kid potluck	Garden	Sports Day at the park
Create recipe book	Girls Clubs	Service Project

We look at it this way: if you look around at your community and see many young people being raised in the perfect way in order to marry your children a few years from now, then you have got a wonderful community and need to actively take part in improving it. If not, you have a lot of work to do, and a Mom School is just the ticket. A great friend, likely more than one, will naturally arise out of the process. The work needs to start with your own Scholar Phase education, and progress to training and organizing a community that fits the needs of your family—for the next four generations. Nothing small, just something that will change society for the benefit of your posterity. This is the essential endeavor of any good, healthy civilization.

#### **Ingredient #48: The Core Phase Curriculum**

The curriculum of Core Phase is short. It is sweet. It is ignored in most homes and schools. It is vitally important:

Right and wrong, true and false, good and bad.

This curriculum is best taught through work and play with loving parents at home. No other institution can teach it as well. Few other institutions are even trying. But worse, few homes give it full attention for the first eight years of a child's life. So many other things are allowed to enter in—good things, positive things. But anything which distracts from teaching right and wrong, true and false and good and bad during the Core Years from birth to around age eight are just that—distractions. And they should be labeled and treated as distractions.

If you truly want your child to succeed in his mission, to be happy and fulfilled

in life, be sure to give full parental focus on the Core Phase curriculum during these vital years.

### **Ingredient #49: The Love of Learning Curriculum**

Example	Inspiring Parent	Freedom
Environment	Mentors	Fun
Opportunities	Guidance	Personal Attention
Work	The Bookshelf	Younger Siblings
Play	Mornings	Older Siblings
Study	Afternoons	Mom
Projects	Evenings	Dad
Field Trips	Summers	Grandparents
The Library	Winters	Questions
Family Room	Exploring	Discussions

### **Ingredient #50: Spring is for Science**

Each spring the world is re-born, and science in all its varieties fills the air. Just as there are natural patterns of age, time of day, weeks and months, the year also naturally lends itself to the training of leaders. “Spring is for science” is a great motto, one which will bring numerous exciting field trips, library trips, discussions, outdoor activities, and family evenings. It will open books on your bookshelf that have collected dust much of the year, and will naturally take you to parks where Six Month “No’s” and Six Month Inventories are achieved in the bright sunshine to the smell of fresh flowers. Experiments, readings, studies and other science projects flourish and grow in the spring.

### **Ingredient #51: Fall is for Beginnings**

In our family we do The Six Month Inventory each spring and each fall. This seems to work especially well since the summer and winter months are so different from each other. In the fall, students are excited to set goals, raise the bar to a new level of study, and make plans for the months ahead. Vacations and activities are

past, and a return to normal structure and routine feels wonderful to parents and children alike. Inventories in the fall naturally outline a world of learning for the months ahead, carefully considered with each individual child in mind.

### **Ingredient #52: The Subscription**

A few carefully chosen subscriptions are a real help to the Foundational Phases and beyond. In our family we subscribe to two monthly magazines, which we read each month to the Core Phasers and Love of Learners. First, our church publishes a wonderful children's magazine, and we love the faith promoting stories, introductions to other young people, and messages from religious leaders. Second, a wise grandparent asked young Oliver if he would like a subscription to *Ranger Rick* magazine as his birthday present one year, and we encouraged him to tell her yes. She has renewed the subscription year after year at his bidding, and though now in Scholar Phase, he still pulls up a chair to listen when we read and show pictures from each monthly issue to our Core and Love of Learning children. Indeed, Mom and Dad never want to miss an issue either (Rachel's subscription to *Ranger Rick* did not lapse from early Love of Learning until she left home to go to college at age 17).

We recommend that you spend some time at a library or bigger bookstore reading through the various magazines available and pick a couple that suit your family. We have had other subscriptions, but found it best to maintain the top two and carefully read them together each month. Scholar and Depth Phasers have moved on to other subscriptions more applicable to them as they get older, but it is interesting that everyone in the family still looks forward to reading the Core Phase subscriptions together.

We also suggest letting grandparents know how much your children would love such a subscription for their birthday. Another great idea is perhaps a year's worth of lessons for Christmas (they could pay for them or better still give them personally where applicable). Of course, this requires communication so that gifts are not given that do not meet FEC approval. It is unfortunate when gifts are trivial, especially when a little communication would result in them being integrated with the family's goals and efforts.

### **Ingredient #53: The Dinner Meal**

We already talked about the kitchen table, but the dinner meal is extra special. It can bring so many of the 55 ingredients together in one place. The dinner meal

is a little like the instruction to “stir well” or “thoroughly mix until smooth” in most recipes. In our current twenty-first century paced world this vital step is often forgotten or justified away, but it is essential to the leadership home. If you truly cannot have a family meal with all family members present daily, have one as often as possible—at least a majority (four) of the days in the week.

At the dinner meal, etiquette can be taught, not from the “here’s how to impress” model, but rather from the perspective of training politeness and polish which allows for unaffected graciousness now and later. World events should be discussed and important ideas shared. Children can recite, perform or share work accomplished. The future, personal missions, books just studied, and events attended are natural topics of discussion, along with so many other things which will come up naturally if we just spend regularly scheduled meal time together.

There is something about eating that is very bonding, a natural concept that seems to be hard-wired into our biology. Just as evenings bring bonding, eating together in the evening is perhaps even more powerful. Sometimes the smallest things make the difference, what a recent bestseller appropriately called “the tipping point”—the little detail that affects everything. Eating together in the evening is one such thing, a small detail which may make the difference between your family’s successes and failures. Like Sunday FEC’s and interviews, inspirational evenings and consistent morning routines, the dinner meal can make a huge difference in your Leadership Education.

#### **Ingredient #54: The Discipline “Yes”**

During the Sixth Month Inventory it is essential to say “Yes” to your own education, re-assessing your strengths, weaknesses, areas that need work and subjects you should be studying and making a plan to follow through. The conveyor belt has taught us to have structure, good discipline and to conform to the demand to follow through. All of these skills are wonderful if applied to the one person whose education you really control: Yours.

A few of the Seven Keys have particular aptness in personal application to your own life. “You, not Them.” Structure your education and discipline yourself. “Simple, not Complex.” Read the classics, get a mentor and work hard. “Structure Time, not Content.” Have a set time, perhaps in the mornings, where you study, study, study. “Inspire, not Require”—others. Go ahead and require of yourself that you

follow through on your plans. If your tendency is to be Sergeant Mom, give yourself some orders and get in your own face until they are accomplished. Say “yes” to disciplining yourself and getting the education you want and that your kids need you to exemplify.

### **Ingredient #55: The Academic “Yes”**

Once you are disciplined and following through—which is to say, once you are ready for your own Scholar Phase—say “yes” to the hard areas you have been avoiding. Maybe it is math for you, or an advanced branch of science. Perhaps you just have not been able to muster up the will to wade through Euclid or Newton. Or maybe you started Einstein but did not seem to understand anything and did not want to spend time deciphering equations with the help of a physics dictionary and a lot of hard thinking. Perhaps for you the issue is non-fiction works, or all those Great Books that seem such a pain to dig into, including Shakespeare. Or maybe you love Shakespeare but Sophocles and Homer seem too remote. Maybe you need to ramp up your vocabulary or your skills with spelling or punctuation.

Whatever your areas of weakness, the Academic “Yes” says it is time to raise the bar. Of course, do not even try this unless you are doing The Discipline “Yes.” Until your discipline is there, you cannot really raise the bar effectively. But once you have structured time and are following through, tackle a few of the hard things.

This does not mean you have to focus only on the hard areas. You can still keep studying all the things you love. Just push yourself by adding in some of the areas you have not dared to do yet. Venturing into the hard and challenging is truly worth the sacrifice. This is where the lifetime of learning comes in.

We still have fond memories of when Oliver realized that literature had to be a central part of the George Wythe College curriculum. He loved the Great Books, the Harvard Classics, the deep philosophical, political, legal, economic and historical texts. But he saw the literary works as lighter and less valuable. When he read the entire Great Books collection one year, he went slowly and took detailed notes through Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Plutarch, Locke and other deep non-fiction works, but he simply made it through the “lighter” literary works of Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Tolstoy and others, and really chafed as he read Homer, Dante, Milton and the other poets. He had a love of the deep and philosophical but the literary seemed less engaging.

Then a mentor insisted that the most important lessons of Western Civilization were to be found in its stories, literature, poetry and art. At first Oliver resisted, even to such an important mentor, but the mentor held firm. Oliver reluctantly started re-reading all the great literary works, this time looking closely for what the mentor called the “real lessons learned by Jefferson, Madison and the other great statesmen.” It did not take long to reach Dissatisfaction, and Oliver returned to the mentor sure that he had good reasons why these works were inferior (as a side note: There are undoubtedly those reading this who, having heard Oliver lecture on the importance of literature in the last ten years, may gasp or sputter with incredulity. We nonetheless affirm that this is absolutely the unadulterated truth. This is evidence that we all go through the phases; even those we consider our mentors were once where we are now, and we can certainly progress to where they are).

The mentor was not fazed. Instead of listening to Oliver’s wonderful arguments, the mentor did what all great Liberal Arts Mentors do when a Scholar or Depth student comes in Dissatisfaction: he gave him a very hard assignment. In this case he was to read a list of ten key literary classics in a very short time period and return to report. Oliver, doubting the mentor’s words, but trusting the mentor, set out to accomplish the task. The first two books were valuable; he learned a great deal and wrote a few notes to supplement lectures on other non-literary works. Then he read *Les Miserables*.

Rachel drove to a Mexican restaurant (it was date night) while Oliver sat in the passenger’s seat finishing the last few pages. As she turned into the parking lot, she glanced over and noticed that tears were trickling down his face. By the time she pulled the car to a stop a sob had escaped, and by the time the ignition was turned off he was hunched over, weeping. Neither of us remembers much of what we said as we talked there in the parking lot for over an hour about life, tests, trials, Christ and the atonement, real leadership, family, truth, love, honor, justice and mercy, paying the price of greatness, much more. We covered it all. But we both remember very distinctly how it felt. We never did eat Mexican food that night, but we certainly had a feast.

Yes, literature was about ideas; deep and moving and profound ideas. Yes, literature was also passionate and feeling. Yes, literature was actually better at teaching the principles than the other type of writing (the mentor had been right, as usual). Yes, both types of writing were important. Indeed they powerfully complemented

each other. Yes, God must have inspired both, and on purpose. Yes, the arts, sciences, math and other fields would be studied as well and no doubt they would be equally important.

But it was much more than this. These new lessons and values, albeit very important, paled to the real lessons of this book. This was not a book about Jean Valjean, Cossette or Javert, this was a book about Oliver and Rachel, about little Oliver and Emma, about the 1990s and the coming 2000s (then just a vague image of something far away), of world challenges and healings by the 2030s, of new forms and statesmen who stood and said “no” and swayed the course of history, of documents written and liberties purchased at an incredible price and millions freed to live and love. It was a book about equations with new mathematical symbols where tithes and offerings factor in returns of ten- and hundred-fold, of math that shows why mom staying home significantly increases the bottom line, of plays on stages and oils on canvas eclipsing the masters of old, of children with children and grandchildren of their own and smiles on their faces. *Les Misérables* was about our mission, and yours—about our children, and yours. And it still is.

So is *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *War and Peace*, *A Merchant of Venice*, *Principia Mathematica*, *Guernica*, *Starry Night*, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, *Laddie*, *Little Britches*, *The Weight of Glory*, “*MacDuff*” (the actual title is *Macbeth*, but this title makes more sense to Oliver), *Faust*, Smetana’s “*The Moldau*,” “*Finlandia*” by Sibelius, and so on.

Classics are about more than they are about. They are about each new reader and what God wants to communicate to him, if he will listen. As we build on the shoulders of the greats, God continues to inspire greater and greater things. We believe that the very best the world has to offer—in literature, art, science, math, government, family, in everything—is still ahead. It will come precisely as we move outside of our personal comfort zones and push ourselves into the unknown, as we “put our hands in the hand of God and step out of the light into the darkness.” That experience with *Les Misérables* communicated on so many levels, but the most basic and enduring lesson is that we must trust our mentor and venture into the hard stuff. It is truly worth the sacrifice.

We are so optimistic about the future. In this time when so many people seem to be full of anxiety, we are thrilled to be part of the future that is coming. The lessons and cycles of history leave no doubt that the future will bring challenges, troubles and struggles. But of one thing we are certain: this generation and those

ahead will rise to meet the challenges and build a better world, with God's guidance, than anything we have yet seen.

We believe that every person has a mission that can make all the difference. We want to see each person get an education to match their mission, and for that to happen parents must step up and create Leadership homes which mix the ingredients in the unique way best suited for that home. This will create the leaders of the future. You are the expert on your home, and as you mix these and other ingredients into your recipe, as you pay the price to inspire, not require, you will, in Gandhi's words, "be the change you wish to see in the world."

### **Mixing Instructions: Training a Generation of Leaders**

Together, these 55 ingredients and others like them will create a mountain or move it, whichever is necessary. None of the ingredients are perfect alone. Nobody that we know does them all perfectly—least of all, us. But together they create the recipe of a fabulous leadership home, of world-class, superb leadership-level education in children, youth and adults.

"Thoroughly stir, mix, and bake" your ideal mix of ingredients to get educated parents and children, grandparents and community. The ingredients train leaders, citizens, statesmen and ultimately the parents of the future. Some are helpful, others are vital. Together they are the basis of success in educating children who will become adults and leaders who move our societies, nations, and world forward toward a better place.



## Transition To Scholar

**T**he transition from Love of Learning Phase to Scholar Phase is one of the most important facets of a young person's education. Those who transition well will almost invariably have an excellent Scholar Phase experience; those who do not will likely continue to struggle. Fortunately, this transition is natural and virtually any healthy child will quite automatically make many of the transitional changes on his own. The challenge is that parents who were trained on the conveyor belt may not realize what is happening, and may in fact, block, slow down or otherwise frustrate this natural process. That is why it is essential for parents to recognize and understand this vital transition in a young person's life.

Transition occurs in most girls between ages ten and twelve and in most boys between eleven and fourteen. Some psychologists and counselors speak of this age as the root source of most problems in men, who are often pushed too hard at this age to "put away childish things" and take on adult responsibility. One of the biggest pressures many boys feel at this age is pressure to perform academically. Girls are usually ahead of boys at this age, yet boys are often pushed to keep up to girl "grade levels."

The key words of this period often conflict in parent's minds: independence and protection. Children at this age need to feel both. In a healthy child, without undue parental or societal pressure, this is a positive, happy and enjoyable age. Speaking of important life transitions, Montessori observed: "The middle age crisis signals that the adult is on their way to death; in contrast, transition excitement about learning signals that the child is on their way to life." It is important during this transitional time to remember that the child is still in Love of Learning Phase and to consider

and treat Transition as such rather than as the beginning of Scholar Phase.

J. S. Ross expressed that a “being from another planet, who did not know the human race, could easily take these ten year olds to be the adults of the species; supposing they had not met the real adults.” Just as puberty signals physical readiness for Scholar Phase and getting certain permanent teeth signals the move toward Love of Learning Phase, a height spurt between the ages of nine and eleven often signals readiness for transition.

The following chart lists typical traits and behaviors of children in Transition to Scholar stage:

TRAITS AND BEHAVIORS INDICATING TRANSITION TO SCHOLAR
Physically, a growth spurt after age nine for girls and eleven for boys often signals that your child is getting ready for Transition.
Calm and Happy
Mentally and Physically Healthy
Emotionally Stable
The child hits “diversity” age, when parents and teachers notice major emerging differences between children.
Play with older children is more “peer play” than tag-along; play with younger children becomes organizing or calling the shots in the activities rather than just joining in.
Heightened concern for fitting in with peers—in dress, activities, academics, etc.
Heightened concern for appropriateness of self and family in public or social settings
Increased independence
Increased attention span
Loves focused projects of his or her own interests
Likes to learn new things
Initiates projects without supervision
Greater level of follow-through on projects
Takes some things to extremes

Starts getting very messy about room and/or grooming
Gets excited by a collection: Star Wars Cards, stamps, model horses, etc.
Likes to get away from home and be with friends
Starts to worry about life, his/ her future, and the problems the parents are facing
Tests the rules, or tries to argue for personal exemptions from the rules
Has strong likes and dislikes
Wants more personal attention
Initiates more discussions with parents
Loves praise
Loves and thrives in structure

### **Transition Discoveries**

In addition to these specific lessons and skills, Transition to Scholar is the ideal and natural time for the child to make a number of interesting, fascinating and exciting discoveries. If we take away this time of discovery, or push it too soon, a “hate of learning” ensues rather than the healthy love of learning most children will encounter. Some of the discoveries that a child will naturally make during a healthy Transition to Scholar include the following:

- Learning never ends.
- Learning is used in adult life.
- I will someday educate children as part of the cycle of life.
- Learning combines doing with talking with practice (and later with thinking).
- Imitation speeds up the learning process.
- Unconscious creation needs to be followed by conscious work.
- There is not an answer to everything (but there is to the most important things).
- Character flaws hurt.
- I can contribute to society (or make the mistake of trying to achieve to impress).

- I have an impact on my own future.
- Mom and Dad have flaws.
- Mom and Dad also have authority, so I live in a potential tyranny that must be closely watched.
- There are other cultures, many of which are different than my own.

During this same period of great discovery, youth go through several world-shifting experiences, including:

- They enter society.
- They begin concentrating.
- They wonder how things work – a radio, a tree limb, a dandelion, etc.
- They can absorb massive amounts of information.
- They draw conclusions about what they are good at, bad at, etc.

As you can see, the discoveries of Transition to Scholar are numerous and wonderful. It is so important that parents help provide an environment where children can make these discoveries in a natural and healthy manner. As they do so, they will also learn the following Transition Skills, as outlined by Wayne Dyer in *What Do You Really Want for Your Children?*:

- Take smart risks
- Don't put yourself down
- Inner Approval: Don't emphasize external measures of success
- Don't complain or whine
- Don't be judgmental
- Never get "bored"
- Learn from mistakes
- Learn to lose and win well
- Practice smart self-reliance
- Choose to feel at peace and serene
- Realize that life is about smiling
- Never fear your own greatness

Students in Transition also learn many of the skills that will determine their learning effectiveness (or weakness) in the years ahead. In fact, during Transition to Scholar ages, students develop fully half of the nine ways necessary to human learning, as discussed in *A Mind at a Time* by Mel Levine. Study the following chart to learn the skills of each system and the Phases in which they are learned.

EIGHT SYSTEMS OF LEARNING, SKILLS AND PHASES WHEN LEARNED		
SYSTEM	SKILLS	PHASE
Language	Automatic/literate, concrete/abstract, basic/ higher Receptive/expressive, understanding, interpreting	CORE
Motor	Large and small muscle movement/ coordination	CORE
Attention Control	Alertness, mental effort, arousal, consistency Selection, depth/detail, activity, span, satisfaction Previewing, options, pace, quality, reinforcement	TRANSITION
Memory	Story acting, task accomplishment, short/ long term	TRANSITION
Spatial	Perceiving, sequencing, patterns, remembering, creating, organizing— managing time and materials	TRANSITION
Sequential		
Social Thinking	Relationships, popularity, intrapersonal politics	TRANSITION

Intuitive Thinking	Downplayed in modern conveyor belt; powerful and vital skill marking readiness for Scholar Phase. EQ (emotional intelligence) has a much higher correlation to leadership, relationship, career and life success than IQ (conveyor belt measure)	TRANSITION
Higher Thinking	Conceptual, problem-solving, rule-guided, creative	SCHOLAR

The healthy child naturally learns all of these thinking skills openly or subconsciously—unless they are squashed. Unfortunately, the conveyor belt rejects Intuitive Thinking and simultaneously over-emphasizes the need for Higher Thinking skills at an early age. To compensate, many young students turn to Memorizing as a way to fake Higher Thinking skills which their brains are unprepared to utilize. If success and happiness in life, mission and relationships were not good enough reasons to safeguard the foundational phases, this alone should be compelling. Many who substitute memorization for Higher Thinking maintain this habit through adulthood resulting in a nation of highly-trained but narrow experts. In such a society, expert training passes for education, and rote expertise substitutes for independent thinking.

It is not hard to see the effects in society of the combination of these two examples of bad education: The “good” student with a high ability to memorize before the age of ten (leading to a “straight A” label which sticks) often grows into a careerist who “succeeds with renown” in his or her professional field at the expense of lasting and nurturing family relationships.

Parents can have a significant positive influence on all this simply by helping children identify and choose wisely in the Transition to Scholar age between nine and fourteen. Of course, this starts by not pushing too hard when the child is still learning Intuitive Skills, and in waiting to push higher order academic subjects until the child’s natural maturity has equipped him for Higher Thinking.

Whichever life path (conveyor belt or leadership; see discussion in Chapter Two) is chosen between the tender ages of nine and fourteen will likely be maintained for a long time. A central reason for this is that the two paths teach their own set of lessons, and once we learn them it takes a long time to change the values,

assumptions and life patterns which these lessons instill in our hearts, minds and souls. Thus it is vital for parents to understand and teach their children the contrasting lessons of the two paths.

LESSONS AND RESULTS OF THE TWO PATHS DURING TRANSITION TO SCHOLAR		
	CONVEYOR BELT	LEADERSHIP PATH
Lessons	to copy to count to compare	to create to value to impact
Result	dependable followers	responsible leaders

Ponder these two sets of lessons and results. What kind of education comes from focusing on the abilities to copy, to count and to compare? What kind of career does this prepare a person to pursue? How does this measure up in training future parents? Voters? Community leaders? Perhaps most importantly, what are the inherent values that are learned from this type of education?

In contrast to the sad consequences of only learning these mediocre lessons, future leaders need to know how to create, to truly value, and to effectively impact the world around them. These three lessons are essential traits of leaders. The result of training young people with these abilities is better fathers and mothers, better citizens and voters, more effective entrepreneurs and leaders, more creative artists and scientists, and a society of independent thinkers and statesmen.

The leadership path teaches the young person both sets of lessons. The most important skills and curriculum of Transition to Scholar are the habits of creating, valuing and impacting. Youth who know how to create naturally learn to copy, while those who can value and impact must be able to effectively count and compare. But the reverse is not true; the conveyor belt path does not train students for leadership. The leadership path trains students in all the knowledge of both paths with the attitude and vision of leadership.

It is a sad and unfortunate circumstance when a nation sets as its educational

target the inferior skills of copying, counting and comparing. This is especially lamentable when the youth of the day are bright, inquisitive and interested in creating, valuing, impacting, and leading. To “dumb down” a nation of natural leaders, telling them that they must put their interests aside in order to qualify for a future job, is a tragedy. Twelve or more years of conditioning to spend their days doing things they do not want to do, because “that’s just the way it is,” readies them for the modern jobs their parents so highly prize and personally hate in such high numbers. The solution to this all-too-typical process is simple: Leadership students must learn to create, value and impact.

In summary, Transition to Scholar is an exciting and wonderful time for a child on the leadership path, and parents largely choose which path the child will take—at least at this point in her life. The right choice can make a huge difference in the education of each child, and in the life mission she will pursue. During Transition, the future is in the hands of parents, and is a product of the proverbial mix of “inspiration and perspiration.”

### **Parenting Skills for Transition**

Transition to Scholar has a huge and lasting impact on each child, and the parental role is central and extremely influential. How can parents provide the best possible Transition to Scholar for their children? In this section, we will outline, consider, apply and gain mastery in thirty-five parenting skills for parents of children in Transition. These skills were derived from the works of Mel Levine, John Holt and Wayne Dyer as well as our own experiences. We will discuss each skill in the context of mentoring a Transition to Scholar child on the path of leadership.

Of course, we reiterate what we have said many times. Parents are the experts on their own homes and families. Everything we suggest here should be applied by wisely considering what will work best in your unique situation and with your one-of-a-kind child. Many were born to be great leaders in the decades ahead and no “one size fits all” system will work for them. Personalize and incorporate skills from this list that meet the current needs of the individuals in your family along with any other skills that you know are needed. And of course, keep in mind that we are not suggesting that every parent must apply all thirty-five skills at once, but we hope that a close reading of all thirty-five will help you identify which you need and perhaps spark additional ideas that will be helpful to your family.



The first six skills come from the work of child psychologist Mel Levine.

### *1. Focus on Strengths and Affinities*

Too often parents emphasize weaknesses, a conveyor belt lesson based on the assumption that education is about not letting children get behind in any of the “important” subjects. This lesson often travels through the person’s life. Business guru Peter Drucker blames much of business failure on hiring people for their lack of weaknesses instead of for their strengths. When business leaders hire based on strengths, their organizations are much more effective.

The same is true for children. When parents and teachers emphasize the child’s strengths and affinities, the child grows in ability, confidence and learning, and naturally applies these strengths to overcoming areas of weakness. So much of conveyor belt education is fear-based—worrying that the child will not measure up. In contrast, Leadership Education assumes that the child will not only meet but exceed basic levels of learning, and more importantly, totally excel in certain chosen areas of focus. During Transition, parents should pay attention to the child’s affinities and interests, strengths and passions and areas of focus.

### *2. De-mystification*

During Transition children have lots of questions. They want to understand why they are the way they are, why the world is as it is, and why you, as parents, are the way you are. Leadership parents take the time to de-mystify things, to explain, and to talk and discuss things at great length with their children.

### *3. Accommodating*

This is of vital importance in the training of leaders. In contrast to the conveyor belt, Leadership parents do not require or push the child to fit a preconceived system, curriculum, social status, or other arbitrary label. Instead, parents treat each child as an individual, and do the hard work to build a system around them that works! When they are well into Scholar Phase they can move into a different, more demanding system (such as a program defined by a mentor) as needed to progress, but during Transition they should be treated as a unique individual.

In fact, even in Scholar Phase they only enter a program at their own choosing, and for a relatively short time period. Overall, their entire education is personalized. This can be a challenge for parents whose educational experience was

conveyor belt, but as we have stated many times before: unless parents get off the conveyor belt, they will struggle to train leaders.

#### *4. Interventions at the Breakdown Points*

When things do not work, when the child has discipline problems or a learning meltdown, parents should intervene and help the child through this difficult period. Interventions should be used very sparingly, and the wise leadership parent realizes that a certain level of getting bored, frustrated, or wanting to push the limits of the rules is only natural. Instead of reacting with anger, punishments, inappropriate structure or “rescue,” a relaxed and understanding parent who laughs it off and inspires the child to do better in the future will have the best results.

In fact, if the child trusts the way you handle problems, she will often *ask* for your intervention when help is needed. Interventions should be short, direct, matter-of-fact, fair, and limited. When the student’s life breaks down for whatever reason, the intervention helps them get back on track. Often the parent can simply let the child know what the various options and consequences of each choice are and allow the child to choose. Where more drastic interventions are appropriate, parents should still remember that the goal is to help the child return to the natural leadership path.

#### *5. Protection from Humiliation*

The main role of the parent during Transition Phase, at least in terms of the needs of the child, is protection from humiliation. Since it is during this period of life that the child is learning how to nurture relationships and how to deal with other people, this role is very important with lasting implications. It should go without saying that it is a real tragedy if the parent is the instigator of a loss of dignity. Core issues of confidence, esteem, faith and self-worth are reinforced or threatened during this period, and parental trust is crucial.

#### *6. Supporting Expertise*

If the child “develops a love,” as Mel Levine puts it, do whatever it takes to support it. Transition is a period of exploration and discovery, and is part of the Love of Learning Phase. Providing children freedom and encouragement to pursue their loves and interests is essential. One of the best ways to do this is for parents to find out what their children are interested in and begin to study it.

On the conveyor belt, students are expected to study the topics assigned by

teachers. On the leadership path, parents and mentors get their assignments from the students, studying their interests and loves in order to help guide them. If the child changes “loves” several times a year, or even several times a month or week, this just means that he is healthy and loving learning. Parents should seek inspiration to prioritize and invest themselves in the study of these loves as much as possible in order to be prepared when the child asks questions or needs help or validation.

Skills 7 through 11 were taught by John Holt, considered by many to be the father of modern home schooling and many non-traditional private schools.

### *7. Sports*

Children learn better academically when they are developing the whole person, including their physical side. Beyond fitness and nutrition, being involved in athletics during Transition helps children develop confidence and work on social relationships. Oliver James, Emma, Sara and Eliza are all actively involved with their Karate, and Ammon looks forward to the day when he will join. There are many ways to fill this need, including organized sports teams or dedicated family or community sports days.

For example, one excellent practitioner of Leadership Education, Angie Baker, established a sports clinic for community youth as a Mom School designed to help her own family. When she reported about this at a seminar, Rachel felt inspired to do something similar in our community. She instigated “Sports Day,” where during one fall whole families came together each Friday afternoon at our neighborhood park for a pot-luck lunch and then “recess.” She remembered how much fun she had with four-square, jacks, jump rope, kickball, wargames, monkey bars, and so forth as a child. She wanted to share these things with her children and friends. Sports equipment of many types was brought, and children chose their own activities, from jump rope or kickball, to foursquare, jacks, hopscotch, capture the flag, ultimate frisbee, playground equipment or even sword play. There were even adults to mentor such things as tumbling, jump rope tricks and songs, baseball, chess, and so forth.

A visitor observed during Sports Day, “I noticed, and mentioned to my husband, that there was no fighting or problems with the kids. Then I wondered if I just wasn’t catching it, so I made a specific endeavor to watch for contention or other anti-social behavior. After a couple of hours of cooperation and fun, with

little and big ones playing right together without any problems, I told my husband, 'this is what we want for our son!' ”

Another way to integrate sports into the equation is to invite the children to participate in a parent's hobbies. Oliver loves mountain biking and tennis. When Oliver James got old enough to participate, he enjoyed going on mountain biking trips with Dad and learning to play tennis. As they reached Transition age, Emma, Sara and now Eliza all joined in these activities and the younger children all beg to take part. Of course, during summers, our family plays a lot of sports. Several nights a week, Oliver James practices running football routes while dad plays quarterback, and often the whole family joins in for a game of touch football or basketball. Even the Core Phasers participate where they can, or just run around getting in everybody's way. Maintaining the sports equipment and playing area provides opportunity for family work to be accomplished as an accent to play.

#### *8. Lessons*

Children who enroll in lessons learn structure, practice and how to work with mentors other than their parents. We discussed lessons at some length in the Core and Love of Learning section, and will not repeat all of that here. Suffice it to say that Transition is the signal that the time to start lessons for most children is here, or fast approaching. It is also a reminder that parents should avoid the conveyor belt temptation to enroll the child in every lesson available. Most children get more out of mastering one or two areas of focus rather than a shotgun approach which turns mom into a mini-van chauffeur.

#### *9. Do-ing*

Children in Transition learn so much more by doing things than just reading. While books are a very important part of Transition, projects take a center place in the curriculum. Projects can and should vary: one day doing science experiments and another day working on artistic creations. We followed up a project on geology with a visit to a rock shop and a field trip to Zion's National Park. Oliver James and Ammon fell in love with the subject and started a rock collection. Another time, we followed an art project with a field trip to a museum after which Sara spent hours and hours working on her drawing talent. Children need to do, not just see or hear.

### *10. Show-ing*

Over the years, as we have spoken at numerous seminars and events to parents about Leadership Education, we have had so many mothers ask about how to get their children to study math. We always respond by asking them what math classics they have read in the past few months. The typical response is for them to look at us like we are crazy. “Why on Earth would I read math classics?” they seem to be thinking. If we want our children to value something, just telling them to do it will not work. We have to show them. In short: don’t just tell them to study math, do it. Love numbers, shapes, diagrams, and read the biographies of Newton, Pythagoras, Nichomachus, Archimedes and Hawking around the house. Show them what you want them to do by doing it yourself, and they will value it. The fact that Rachel plays the piano and that Oliver takes martial arts lessons has drastically impacted our children’s desire to keep taking these lessons even when they are hard. Without example, children tend to lose interest.

### *11. The Arts*

Artistic learning is valuable for everyone, but it is especially important during Transition to Scholar where the child’s brain development is going through significant growth and patterning. Art can be done as lessons, projects, field trips, performance, or just for fun. For example, we know that if we ever want to motivate Emma, we need to tie the project to a performance. Once when we were reading Shakespeare as a family, Oliver paused every few lines and asked the children to translate Shakespeare’s phrases into modern English. We immediately noticed that Emma had a real gift for this. She naturally understood the meanings and nuances that the rest of the family struggled to interpret, or missed entirely. We felt that she should develop this strength, yet she showed no desire to pick up Shakespeare and read. When she auditioned for a youth play, however, she got very much involved in Shakespeare.

On another occasion, when we were memorizing poems and writing poetry, Emma got excited about the project when Dad suggested that she write a poem about our disabled son, Hyrum, to send out to extended family members. The performance opportunity inspired her to work long hours on writing, polishing and improving her poetic gifts. Sara, on the other hand, prefers to do artistic projects for her own gratification. She often reworks something to make it excellent and then just files it away in her journal without showing anyone. In both cases,

including the arts during Transition to Scholar helped our children develop their unique talents and interests and inspired them toward further learning. Whatever the needs of your child, many experts affirm that artistic projects help with brain development and build all areas of learning, not just artistic talent.

Best-selling philosopher and family expert Wayne Dyer taught skills 12 through 27, and we highly recommend you familiarize yourself with his other excellent writings for all ages and family situations.

### *12. Listen to them*

Transition age children have a lot to say, and they need to be heard. Parents who listen, who really take the time to talk and discuss, are training leaders. If they cannot get you to listen your children will search elsewhere. Indeed one of the sad stereotypes of pre-teen and teenagers is the “generation gap” myth, where youth simply have nothing to say to parents. In many cases, this is more the parents’ fault than they realize. Certainly they have more power than they realize. The so-called generation gap is actually just a communication gap that started in Transition, or even before.

Unfortunately, the conveyor belt teaches that this gap is normal and even healthy. This is reinforced by modern lifestyle wherein we flip on the radio instead of talking while we travel. We used to talk while preparing meals or washing dishes; we now grab fast food and load the dishwasher with the television on. Dad used to work long hours with his children, but he is now away at work somewhere—and so is Mom.

Ironically, this faster pace actually slows down our education. Our thirteen-year-olds are more sophisticated than past generations, more cosmopolitan in their language, tastes and morals, but they are far less educated. Refinement and wisdom are seldom the goal of modern education during the Transition years. A powerful antidote could be a healthy dose of listening from parents.

Be aware that for some, listening means just being silent and doing something physical together, like watching a sunset or going bowling. The volumes that are spoken non-verbally just might lead to the three words you are longing to hear.

### *13. Hold, hug, and kiss them*

Children in Transition need to be treated like children: held on your lap, kissed

on the cheek and forehead and hugged several times a day. Referring back to child psychologist Erik Erikson, children at this age are choosing whether to feel inferior or competent, and the determining factors are how much they feel loved and how industrious they feel. Transitioners need to be actively engaged in doing important things, and to feel secure and loved by their parents. Industry in this context means meaningful play, work and service. Parents who treat ten year olds like they are still children (which they are!) in the physical relationship, such as sitting them on your lap and giving them a big hug, while simultaneously talking to them and treating them with dignity and respect as an adult, will see the best results. And it may be that this formula does not expire even as the child grows older.

#### *14. Treat them like adults*

When you talk to Transitioners, treat them like the adults you want them to be. Interacting with them on the adult level shows respect for them as individuals and confidence in them as they begin to take on responsibility for their own lives. Sadly, many parents treat children this age like adults in the physical sense, seldom hugging them, tickling them or making them treats, but speak to them with condescension or even contempt. It is little surprise that they turn to their peers for the emotional support that should come from their parents.

Of course, we are not down-playing or criticizing the positive and natural relationships that all youth want to have with friends near their own age. We are simply saying that parents should be the best friends of Transition and Scholar Phase children. In fact, really true friends act a lot like good parents. The conveyor belt definition of a friend as someone who accepts whatever you do without judgment has prompted some experts to suggest that parents must not be friends but firm parental figures of authority. While it is true that parents do have a vital authority that few if any other friends ever should, great parents are also great friends.

Few things have brought Rachel more joy than to share with her youth her love of classic rock and roll, or to have them rave about a book that she recommended (having read it at their age), or to have her jaw drop to hear a clever witticism come out of one of their mouths.

As much fun as babies are, having those lovable critters stand tall and look you in the eye, and knowing that they will be your life-long friends and eventual peers, is one of the greatest rewards of having a family.

### 15. *Encourage their friends to “hang out” at your home*

This is so important. Several years ago our lifelong friends and Leadership Education partners moved away and new neighbors moved into the house next door. The new neighbors had children the same ages as ours, but they had different perspectives on life, the “teenage” years, and education. Our daughter Emma quickly became a “bosom friend” with a wonderful girl her age (she was reading *Anne of Green Gables* that year and used this phrase to describe her new friendship), and we worried that the new relationship would decrease her interest in studying and increase her focus on boys, clothes and make-up. It turns out that we had a lot to learn about being good parents.

Over the course of the next two years, we learned so much from this great family—the parents and the children—and they became dear friends. We invited their children into our home, and they did the same with our children. During the summer, their children, who were out of public school for the summer, joined ours in daily school studies and projects. Rachel tutored Emma’s new friend right along with Emma, and we even established various Mom School activities to benefit the neighbor kids specifically. The family also taught our children a number of skills, and when discipline was needed, we found that our new friends were a lot more like us than we had first thought. If anything, they were much more consistent and strict than we! It was amusing for our children to come home from their friends’ house in shock because of the amount of chores they had to complete before they could play, or how long they were on restriction for sassiness. We loved it! They helped our children learn important lessons every bit as much as we helped them.

A community is a wonderful thing, and inviting our children’s friends to hang out at our home created a lot of fun and boosted rather than detracted from the learning environment. We had good mentors in this, taking as our examples Neil and Cherie Logan—great Leadership Parents who seem to always have the “whole neighborhood” in their home involved in some positive activity. In short, bringing your children’s friends into your home and educational environment is an important Transition and Scholar Phase parenting skill.

### 16. *Keep reading aloud with them*

As we mentioned in the Core and Love of Learning discussion, families should adopt a core of great books that they read together as a family. Ours include Scrip-



tures, *Laddie*, and *Little Britches*, among others. We have found that re-reading these books is not a negative at all for the older children. They love being re-acquainted with these old friends multiple times. The story is a different experience for them each time, and they learn more than they did in past readings. In fact, it now takes us longer to get through these books, since Oliver, Emma and Sara have comments to add where it used to be only Mom and Dad.

Adding new books to the list helps also. Remember what Andrew Pudewa, one of the foremost authorities on reading and writing instruction, teaches: what you hear read out loud has the most impact on your ability to write well later in life. Beyond the educational benefits, reading out loud may be the most bonding of all possible family activities. Families which learn together also think together and feel together, thus creating powerful lasting bonds and improving life-long relationships.

#### *17. Be involved in their age-related activities*

This would seem obvious to any generation but ours, but the conveyor belt has conditioned many of us to applaud our children's activities from a distance instead of getting actively involved. As valuable as it is to include the children in our interests and activities, it is also important to put aside our own hobbies sometimes and get deeply involved in theirs.

Doing this in *Transition to Scholar*, and even before, communicates to them that their interests are important, that they are competent to choose good interests which others also value and that you are fully committed to them and their lives. Do not just send them off to basketball practice; spend a lot of time working on the fundamentals with them one-on-one, or one-on-four if several of your children share interests. Instead of just driving them to piano lessons, take the lessons with them; and where you would otherwise tell them, "It's time for you to practice the piano" say, "Do you want to practice first or shall I?" Volunteer to help with scout activities or to assist the director of the play. Learn to surf or collect coins because they are interested.

A word about territory might be wise. Some parents overdo, or have a child who does not value the *shared* interest. Be sensitive to let the kid have "his thing" without co-opting every new opportunity as a "bonding experience." In such a case you can accomplish much by letting her be the expert and being appropriately impressed by her depth of knowledge and skill. You can experience solidarity with this type of child simply by having your own passions that help you resonate with theirs.

*18. Avoid political labels for you and them*

Young people need to learn to think and lead before they start dividing themselves into camps of allies and enemies. Unless you are actively running for office, where a party affiliation is vital to your message and effectiveness, a specific label will tend to limit your leadership options.

Religious labels should be taught in an inclusive and respectful sense rather than as disdainful of others on the one hand or elitist on the other. A deep respect for all good ideas, people and organizations, and the ability to identify both the good and the error in all things is an important part of Transition. This is an age where the child notices differences and draws conclusions that will either lead to a life of bias or respect. Parental example in this is very important. The real lesson that is passed on will not be any political view (which the adult child will eventually re-evaluate anyway), but rather the choice between an attitude of wisdom and careful thinking and an attitude of closed and blind partisanship.

*19. Encourage them to try new foods, especially ones you do not like*

At first blush this seems out of place in a list of parenting or education skills. But in truth, it is a really powerful parenting technique that teaches independence, confidence, and that you value your children's unique personality, tastes, choices and individuality. Because taste is so personal, and so very tactile as well as emotional, the lessons taught by parents about food are often translated to other arenas of the child's life.

*20. Positively reinforce their dreams and goals, even if they sound impossible*

Transition and Scholar Phases are not the times to shut down dreams, and parents should never be the ones to kill dreams anyway. The world will exert enough pressure to frustrate and block the child's dreams. Particularly during Transition and early Scholar Phase, parents should ask children about their fondest dreams and hopes for their lives and future, and parents should reinforce the possibility of great things. Not only should parents avoid attacking youthful dreams or goals, they should also not attach too much active focus on them. Chances are that the dreams will evolve or just flat out change and parents pushing an eighteen-year-old toward a dream he mentioned at age thirteen but gave up at fifteen is sad, wasteful, and all too common.

Transition and Scholar Phasers will "float" a lot of ideas, and parents do best to

calmly and positively support these dreams and not get attached to them. When students ask for specific help toward a goal, parents can provide support and active guidance and then enthusiastically shift to a new dream when it comes up. Remember that Transition and Scholar are designed as simulations for adulthood. Youth are allowed to play at maturity without lasting repercussions. This should extend to their passions and goals. Parents can affirm that this is appropriate for this age, and that a different level of focus is appropriate for another phase to come later. Most importantly, parents should share their own dreams with their Transition and older children, and they should model the *adult* level of vision and commitment that brings dreams to fruition as they actively set an example of pursuing those dreams.

*21. Live your life through your own contributions, not through your children's accomplishments*

Few things are more sad than a child spending his or her life unhappily trying to achieve the dreams of a parent. If the child shares the dream, of course, then this is a wonderful generational project, but far too often a child gives up his own mission to seek the approval of or carry out the directions of a parent.

Leadership parents set the example of living their life in pursuit of their own dreams, and by helping their children pursue *their* own dreams. In most cases, questions and discussions about life and goals start in Transition. When children ask about discovering and achieving their own life mission, dreams and interests, parents can help most by setting an example, giving positive guidance and reinforcing the importance of a high-quality Scholar Phase in preparation for whatever mission the child eventually chooses.

*22. Stop using blame*

If your own personal Transition years were less than ideal, this may be a challenge for you. But this skill is vital: Stop using blame. If you want to raise leaders, stop using blame. If you want your children to develop and learn effectively and happily, stop using blame. To stop blaming them, it helps to stop blaming everyone—including your own parents. One sure sign of maturity is lack of blaming. If you want to immediately improve your parenting, stop using blame. Focus instead on what needs to be done to move forward, take positive action and solve problems.

23. *Be type A with yourself, type B with the children*

We have taught this before, but it is worth repeating. Take all your educational angst and pushiness toward the children and their learning and apply it to your own Scholar Phase. Structure your own education, make demands on yourself, and push yourself to sit down each day to learn all those subjects in the curriculum. Let your Transition Phasers have their own life and gain their own education.

24. *Don't get them "ahead" in life; relax*

Help your children get a superb education by setting the example and teaching them about the Phases of Learning, Seven Keys of Teaching, Five Environments of Mentoring and other principles of a Leadership Education. Keep in mind the old fable of the tortoise and the hare, with a small modification. On the conveyor belt, the hare does not finish the race at all. If you have a clear vision of you (and your child) making an impact in the world in your waning years, trust the process.

Apply the old Zulu proverb taught to tourist-climbers of Mount Kilimanjaro: "Po-le po-le," meaning: *slow and steady gets it done*. In the lower elevation, the novice climbers tend to rush ahead. Those who attempt the climb without a guide can be clearly seen passing up the groups with a guide. He shakes his head and assures his wards that they will later be helping these foolish, hurried ones, who think they need no guide, to make it home. When the trail grows steep and the air thin, the climbers' reserves that seemed plentiful down in the foothills will be all but exhausted before the climb is through.

Always trying to get ahead can lead to burnout, where the whole process of education is virtually abandoned. Besides, the drive to "get ahead" is extrinsically motivated, and thus has no long-term power to stand up to the trials, tests and traps that inevitably appear on the path. Again: trust the process, proceed diligently and an amazing education, an amazing individual, and an amazing mission will unfold before your eyes.

25. *Don't compare them with anyone, especially their siblings*

Each child is her own person; treat her like it. The conveyor belt promotes many comparisons in order to teach the central lesson of "compare." Leadership Education teaches each individual instead to "value," which means to look at things for what they really are instead of just comparing them. The leadership path also teaches the student to impact, which includes individualizing and focusing.

The one exception to this rule is when you use a positive comparison to inspire greatness followed immediately by personal differences, such as: “I can see you having a mission like Newton or Hawking, except that your focus is in chemistry and your contribution will of course be unique to you. What do you think about your future?” Using “comparison” as a sub-point of valuing and impacting is more in keeping with the leadership path than “why can’t you be like Johnny?” or even “you’re just as good as Johnny.”

26. *Live in the present more often*

Transitioners are children, and so they nearly always live in the present. Many parents, in contrast, either live in the “glory days” of past achievement or in a planning state for future events. When counseling those in Transition to Scholar, parents need to put themselves in a present state where they can be happy, at peace, and enjoy the projects, play and other activities along with their children. Not only does this help the children, but it helps parents improve their leadership abilities and happiness.

27. *Discipline yourself to have long talks with them where they do most of the talking*

This skill is a lot like #12. It is important in many of your discussions to simply be quiet and let your children talk. Listen, make comments as appropriate, but learn the discipline of holding yourself back and allowing them to express themselves while paying close attention and focusing on what they are telling you.

Rachel recently had the opportunity to take young Ammon (Core) to the Emergency Room for stitches. Due to some other complications in our lives at the time (it was during a period of Hyrum’s needs required most of her attention), it had been quite some time since the two of them had talked at length alone. She was amazed at the vocabulary he used while engaged in a conversation when he did not have to compete with older siblings to take part. He had so much to say and share!

The same experience has been true with Eliza and Sara. It was a reminder that all of our children benefit from our individual attention, and there is no substitute for listening intently to understand. Transition to Scholar is a hugely important time to revisit this skill, as the child is becoming more set in his patterns of trust and communication. If he shuts down now, it is only under stress or great duress that he opens up later, and then the expressions are often highly emotional and even destructive.

We have included skills 28 through 35 from our own experience and research.

*28. Use the library*

Your children's interests may well outrun your knowledge, but should never exceed your own enthusiasm. When your child says she is interested in a new subject, one you know little about, say: "It's time for a library trip! Get your backpack." One of the best skills you can teach during Transition is how to find things in the library, in your home bookshelves, and on the computer. Just go with them and keep looking until you have found everything you, and they, need. Note that both of you will be studying the new subject, so a combined search will help you both find what you want to use to study. Just remember not to take over or to soak the fun out of it by making every expression of interest into "school." Gauge your response to show support and enable you to be a resource and safety net.

*29. Be the authority*

Many times people hear our philosophy of "inspire, not require," and assume that we do not think parents should use discipline or exert authority. Nothing could be further from the truth. In family relations, the classic equation of "Low Authority = High Insecurity" is still true. Children need to know their boundaries, they need to know the rules, and they need to be held accountable for their adherence to appropriate standards. This is especially true in Transition to Scholar, where the natural tendency of the child is to "push the envelope" and experiment with what might happen when rules are set aside.

But the other equation of parenting is equally true: "High Authority = Low Creativity." Children who are constantly pushed and forced, from verbal or emotional abuse to simply lots of nagging, shut down their intuition, creativity and leadership, and they feel insecure, inferior and incapable at best; and often they compound these hang-ups with anger and disengagement from the parental bond. Leadership parents understand that neither Low Authority or High Authority are effective, but rather that parents must exert high levels of inspiration along with effective and consistent authority.

Where needed, discipline and consequences must be used. We struggled with this for years, because our disciplinary styles were so different. Finally we learned to wisely follow our own systems, and consult with each other as a check and bal-

ance on mistakes. We are learning to avoid consulting in front of the children and try to uphold each other in the moment of conflict or crisis. We make a point of speaking to each other in private about the effectiveness and/or appropriateness of the discipline and its outcome. Then we make changes as we decide together in committee.

There is a time and place to require, and children need to know the boundaries and be held to them. But even at that, the principle is not devoid of inspiration. They are not required by threats of pain; there is simply a consequence following both obedience and disobedience. Consequences, in questions of good/bad, right/wrong, can actually be inspiring. However, parents should be careful to clarify that discipline is discipline, and is not designed to require children or youth to excel in academics.

### *30. Nutrition matters*

It really does. For example, after an upsetting dental bill, we offered a special reward for anyone who cared for their teeth and did not have cavities at the next check up. Oliver James and Emma decided that they would not eat sugar for the next year and that they would do extra flossing along with their regular daily dental care. Oliver's resolve lasted until his next scout meeting, when the soon-to-be-world-famous Kaczmar Chocolate Chip Cookies ended his new plan. Emma, however, stuck to her plan for over two years. An interesting side effect was that we all noticed a significant increase in her education. Her attention span increased, she needed less sleep and was less moody, and her mind just seemed to grasp things more quickly and in a deeper way. We all wondered if these changes came from her maturation; but after she reached the two year goal and went back on sugar, some of the same weaknesses and tendencies that had been exhibited two years previously by Emma returned.

Every time our Six Month "No" comes around, we find ourselves restructuring the family dietary plan. When it is high quality, we all learn better; when it deteriorates, we learn at a lower rate. We are not here to advocate a particular regimen; but many, if not most people, are aware of certain food sensitivities in their family, or predisposition to this or that. To neglect this information when considering our family culture and education is to lay aside a valuable tool. And the transition toward puberty is a time to be particularly vigilant of elements that might lead to emotional distress. Heaven knows it's difficult enough without introducing a food

or substance that the specific child's body doesn't metabolize well. That's like administering a psycho-active drug, or even a poison!

Perhaps even more significant is the impact we have noticed diet has on children's ability to cope with stress, their patience, compassion, initiative, sense of moral obligation, etc. This can be especially true for children with disabilities or other special needs. We have wondered for a long time if the incredibly high rate of Ritalin prescription in America may be correlated to the high sugar or high-allergenic diet Americans generally consume. British children, for example, consume lower amounts of sugar and are given similar drugs at a much lower rate. In any case, improving nutrition will impact your children's education and the quality of life in your home.

We know of many good books and mentors that can assist a family who feels like they need to emphasize improved health habits and principles as a part of their family culture and education plan. If this applies to you, seek one out and use the FEC to apply the advice you receive.

### *31. Sleep matters*

Dr. Michael Platt called modern America "The Teenage Society," and one of the evidences for this is that many parents today subject their children, even little children, to adult schedules and bed times. It is not uncommon for two year olds to be put to bed as late as eleven or twelve p.m., in order to accommodate parents' entertainment habits. This model of teenagers raising teenagers, in both sleeping and dietary habits, causes untold distress to education. Again, the same stress is put on the child's ability to function and mature in an emotionally healthy manner.

Relationships are strained for no greater reason than sleep deprivation, and the ability of the child to make good choices is impaired in exact proportion to their getting insufficient rest. Children do not learn, interact, or choose well when they are tired, and nearly all of today's children are tired if compared to, say, children in the 1950s. The greatest concern may be that the child makes assumptions about their learning style, their will to do what is right, and their attitudes toward others based on skewed data. They do not actually know what they are like, and how good they can be, when they are not over-tired and under-nourished. These negative and incorrect assumptions can be carried into later years and solidified by the complications of hormonal and other changes to routine and environment that further stress them. Adequate sleep and good nutrition should be considered an essential basic for a healthy Transition to Scholar.



### 32. *Schedule matters*

A daily schedule is the difference between chaos and a high quality leadership home. In other words, “Structure time, not content.” When we take our children with us to seminars or conventions, the question they get asked the most by people is what our family schedule looks like. Sara usually answers: “We start with devotional at nine a.m. and then we study whatever we want. I study math, I work on art projects, and I read a lot.”

Emma, on the other hand, says: “We get up at six a.m. and get Hyrum ready to take the bus to school as well as get groomed and ready for the day. Then we clean our rooms and have breakfast by around eight, then clean up from breakfast and clean the house by nine. At nine, we have devotional, then Mom reads and works with the little kids while I read and study. At noon, we break for lunch and clean up, then I study more until dinner. After dinner we have family activities, or youth activities like Karate or church events, and then we go to bed about nine p.m. Actually, we put the little kids down by eight p.m. and then read some more. Saturdays are sometimes different, and Sundays are always a different schedule. And some days we drop the whole thing and go on a field trip or to the library for the afternoon.”

If you asked Meri, age four, what the family schedule is, she would likely cock his head to one side and wonder what you were talking about. Eliza, age eleven, would report a schedule similar to the one Sara outlined: school from nine a.m. to five p.m. with projects through the afternoon. There are many schedules that could work, and as the expert on your home you will want to choose one that works best for your family. The key is to have a schedule and follow it. Routine helps the children learn much more effectively than chaos. Note that Hyrum, who has cerebral palsy, functions best with even more structure. The schedule is very important for him, as it is in many ways the language he understands best. When he gets on the bus, he knows exactly where he is going. When we sit down for family study, he immediately folds his arms for prayer even though he does not yet communicate verbally. And Abigail, just two years old, is beginning to understand the language of schedule and is able to join in. A family routine matters, and learning improves with a better schedule. Of course, this should not be used as an excuse to over-schedule or over-program. Children need flexibility within structure in order to flourish.

### 33. *The environment matters*

Another seemingly small detail which actually makes all the difference is the feeling in the home. The artwork in the home, the music that gets played, the tone of parental dialogues, the entertainment that is on, and the general feeling all play a direct and highly significant role in whether or not students of Transition age receive the benefits of the Love of Learning Phase they are still in. This can be extended to the external environment in which a home is physically situated. A friend recently asked for our opinion about a troubled youth which they were trying to “take back to Core Phase.”

After a lengthy explanation of the youth’s escapades in just about every form of undisciplined behavior, complete with the scenes of remorse and renewed commitment, we commented that having a living room that was friendly to Core Phase might not be sufficient for healing in this case; the youth was sneaking out a window and abandoning the Core at will. There were easy and compelling choices near the neighborhood that competed too strongly for the youth’s fragile resolve to withstand. The environment was not wholly dedicated to success, simply by virtue of the location of the subdivision and its proximity to the trouble that the youth tended toward. It is true in any Phase, and perhaps especially true in Transition to Scholar, that the environment we choose both inside and outside of the home contributes to or detracts from our family culture and educational success.

### 34. *Discipline wisely*

We do not consider ourselves experts in this. The more children we have and the longer we live with them, the more deficient we seem to be! We can witness that different things work for different children and at different ages. In fact, just when we think we have it figured out, our children grow up another year and we have to re-evaluate everything. But as with any endeavor, there are guiding principles that underpin success.

Specific discipline tips for children in Transition: Be willing to spend a lot of time listening to them and discussing the reasons for things. Be patient and answer their questions as if they really are trying to understand rather than assuming that they are just trying to talk you out of things. In truth, they are doing both; you need to be okay with this and not turn it into an emotionally charged situation.

Know that they are at the time of life where they are beginning to think ab-

stractly. One of the hypotheticals they will test is whether or not you and your pronouncements of policy are reasonable, or perhaps more simply, whether or not their logic can sway you in their favor. Do not assume they do this with malice or to challenge your authority, even if they seem to relish being at odds with you. This is a natural and constructive part of their maturation process.

The best way to reinforce your position is to show you are not threatened by their newly found powers of reasoning and discussion, and to teach them through this experience how to discuss questions of divergent interest with civility and respect. Be at ease with the process and be open and calm when the circumstances permit discussion. When this is not possible, state simply and with finality that this is not an appropriate situation in which to discuss your decision. Then if you feel it appropriate at a later time, instigate the discussion yourself and see if he wants to dialog further about the decision.

### *35. Get Dad involved*

Because Dad is centrally important in Scholar Phase, Transition is a good place to increase his involvement. Of course, ideally Dad is involved in education through all the phases, but during Transition it is even more vital that he have a cool head and take an active role in listening, talking, doing activities, reading aloud, and taking part in all thirty-five keys to Transition parenting. Because Mom is often absorbed in the tasks of homemaking and the care of younger ones who need her especially, Transition is a time when, too often, young people might find themselves being left to their own devices. Do not let this happen!

We have already addressed how important their bond of security and affection is at this stage, and their educational progress is no less important to their well-being. When Dad steps in to reinforce and cultivate his particular brand of closeness, the Transitioner quite naturally assumes the role of helping Mom as a caregiver and provider of services, and at the same time begins to look toward Dad as a mentor. This sets up a perfect Transition to Scholar where the youth has stewardship over given home responsibilities and is accountable for his study and work to his mentor.

## **Final Thoughts for Fathers and Mothers of Children in Transition to Scholar**

For Fathers:

1. Salman Rushdie said, “The reality of a father is a weight few sons can bear.” Please ponder this truism, and consider how it applies in your home. It may help to take a minute and picture the weight of your own father when you were a child. Then picture the weight your sons feel. Later, envision the ideal of how you would like it to be. And finally, identify what you would need to do to make the ideal a reality. Few things are more impactful in a young life than a father who comes close to an ideal that you have in you and can choose to become.
2. Maria Montessori said that “Play is the child’s work.” In short, the child needs to put as much effort into playing as you do into your work. Think about that for a minute. How are you helping them with this, or hurting their progress in this important endeavor?

For Mothers:

1. As James Dobson taught, every twelve-year-old boy is a wounded soul, desperate for healing. If and how he heals literally makes the man who will marry your daughters and become the father of your grandchildren. How can you help?
2. John Taylor Gatto, the renowned former New York State Teacher of the Year, wrote: “When I see kids daydreaming in school, I am careful never to shock them out of their reverie. What I have to say can wait.” Wow! How does this apply in your home?
3. And finally, children in Love of Learning and Transition to Scholar age are energetically interested in many things (distracted), able at moving between one activity and the next (disorganized), and willing to consider almost any possibility (disoriented). Smart mothers join in and have fun with them, or at least give them the space to explore without negativity!

As with the 55 ingredients of Core and Love of Learning, wisely use these 35 Transition to Scholar parenting skills as needed and in whatever combinations best

suit your family. This will help you parent more effectively as you guide your Love of Learning children in the Transition to Scholar Phase.

### **The Three Indispensable Choices**

There are Three Indispensable Choices parents should make during each child's Transition Phase. If any one of the three is forgotten or ignored, Transition is slowed down or impacted negatively. And while it may be hard to do all three as well as you would like, understand that good parenting is hard and that doing all three will be worth it.

First, parents must remember that the child is still in Love of Learning! This is incredibly important. All the Ingredients and other principles of Love of Learning Phase still apply; few, if any, of the Scholar Phase methods should be used until later.

Second, you must be effectively progressing in the Phases! Some parents may be in the process of renegotiating their Foundational Phases. For most adults in today's society this means: time for Scholar Phase. There is a growing number of families whose parents have gotten ahead of the game (actually, who did things in a more convenient time and season) and are ready for Depth Phase when the children come. In any case, a child in Transition needs to see her parents setting the example. Your children need to see you actively progressing in *your* current phase during their Transitions.

Third, as you apply correct principles you must truly relax and trust that your youth will do a Scholar Phase and do it well. Like riding a bike, driving a car, being physically fit (in a home where physical activity is the norm) or going to college (with parents who are college graduates), Leadership Education comes naturally in homes where the parents are on the Leadership Path. Pushing them too soon will only slow down the process, and may actually push them off the Path of Leadership. Remember that you are the expert on your home and your children; trust your feelings and impressions more than the views of the so-called experts, neighbors or extended family members. Trusting does not mean giving in to your pride or paranoia at the expense of compromising tried-and-true principles. It means applying principles according to the vision and counsel of the FEC and not allowing other voices to incite you to second guess your hard won inspiration.

Be cautious when you become aware that your feelings can be characterized

as “fear,” “guilt,” “pride,” or some other self-centered, basically negative emotion or motivation. If these elements enter in, your feelings and impressions need to be double checked with FEC so that you do not subconsciously apply your past experience in place of your new vision.

We know that parenting is an incredibly challenging endeavor; certainly, it’s the most difficult and demanding task we have ever undertaken. Yet by applying true principles, just as in any other life challenge, we know that we can find success and have a lot of fun along the way.

In short, there are few things in life as enjoyable, as rewarding or as downright fun as living through a great Transition to Scholar with your child during Love of Learning Phase. Enjoy it, slow down and savor it for as long as it lasts, and smile, hug and laugh a lot more.

### **Questions about Transition**

*Q: How do you know your child is ready to Transition?*

A: Use the descriptions provided at the beginning of this chapter to measure whether your child seems to show the behaviors described. Of course, it is important that the child always has a say on which Phase he or she is in. A healthy child will usually be quite reliable in assessing himself in the right Phase. Parents should teach the Phases well at a very young age and then re-teach them often, letting the child know that he has a voice on which Phase he is in.

Be aware that most parents’ conveyor belt training impels them to push (even with subtle non-verbal cues) toward Scholar Phase. A good mentor will not allow her mentee to accept commitments he is not prepared for, and will do all in her power to help him get the most out of the phase he is in before taking on the new. Also be aware that in most cases when the Scholar struggles or abandons Scholar Phase, it is because of obstacles placed by the very parents who were so anxious that this time should arrive. Again, refer to the next chapter on Scholar Phase for the bigger picture of how it all fits together and how to successfully mentor the whole process.

*Q: What should parents do with a child that is “out of sync” or way behind in the phases?*

A: There are so many ways to answer this question, probably as many as there are

children who are “behind.” The first thing is to be sure that the child is actually behind, not by comparing her to other children in the Conveyor Belt model, but by looking at each individual child and the descriptions of the Phases of Learning and clarifying if she is where she should be. Another way to phrase the question is: are the Core and Love of Learning intact?

If the answer is “yes,” then consider if the child is merely a late bloomer. Another possibility is that the child has already successfully transitioned and you aren’t recognizing the behaviors because you were expecting something different.

For example, one mother expressed concern for her fifteen-year-old daughter whom she thought had done all the right things up to that point, but wasn’t a book worm. Why wasn’t she in Scholar Phase? What should the mother do? In this girl’s case, she was spending hours each day in choral groups and with an excellent mentor. Mom simply did not see that as “scholarly.” Over time, this young lady progressed from there to attending college as an excellent student.

If the answer is, “no,” then you already have an agenda, and it is not Scholar Phase. Go back to the beginning and help the child renegotiate the choices that need to be rescripted. With many children, the process may begin with a simple conversation with her about it to find out where she sees herself in the Phases, and where she wants to go. If the child wants nothing to do with it, or is obstinate or a discipline problem, chances are you need to go back to Core Phase. If she really wants to progress, brainstorm together and try to understand what is blocking her. In order to follow the leadership path, every child needs a solid Core Phase, to be taught the specifics of all the Phases, to understand the consequences of both life paths, and to witness someone close to him setting an example of a great Scholar Phase. Spend time studying the additional insights and personal accounts about the Phases contained throughout this book and seeking personal inspiration in your stewardship as a parent.

*Q: How does a parent coordinate several children in different Phases?*

A: First, remember “You, not Them.” If you are clear on what you are supposed to be doing for your own education right now, today, and order your life and structure so that family life flows effectively, there is almost nothing more that needs to be said on this point. An inspired plan for personal growth and intellectual progress for the mother will almost certainly include the routines, examples, and activities that will facilitate the others in her care. Rachel comments that she cannot

count the number of mothers of large families who have expressed disbelief that smaller families can make it work. Having all the Phases active in the home is in many ways the ideal.

In cases where it does not just “fit together,” there is almost always a compelling issue that has nothing to do with coordinating the education of all the individuals. In these cases, it is not the coordination that deserves special consideration, but the resolution of the other issue(s), which might include: spouses with a differing vision of what the family’s ideal should be, a child with emotional problems stemming from abuse or other problematic relationships, a home with too much clutter; etc., etc.... When the complicating detail is resolved and the mother is following an inspired outline for routine and personal education, it is amazingly simple how the various children’s needs and interests are highlighted in a rotation that meets everyone’s needs.

It is also noteworthy that it is not just individuals who go through phases and transitions; families do it too! When a young couple in scholar phase has a couple of core phasers and a love of learner, their life has a very different pace and dynamic than a couple in mission/impact phase with a youth in scholar, pre-adolescents in transition, and other children ranging between love of learning and core phases. In the former case, the routine is very simple and the time demands are relatively low. As the large family ages, the educational culture will tend to be defined by the oldest children’s phase.

The parents that used to sit for hours reading literature to their young brood are now finding that their time is spent rather in addressing the needs of the older children. Mentoring writing projects, facilitating transportation to lessons, organizing peer-oriented learning, etc., can virtually monopolize the time of the parents of older children, and the family read takes far less time than it used to.

It is tempting to try to turn back the clock and duplicate the idyllic circumstances that marked the more simple early years of the family. Many lament that they are not giving their young children what their older ones got at their age. If it is true that the Core is being neglected, it is a worthy concern. But the conventions and methods of nurturing the Foundational Phases not only differ from one family to the next and from one child to the next, they will of necessity be different when older children become young adults in the home.

Consider what the young ones are getting that the older ones *did not* get at their age: sixteen-year-old Oliver doesn’t sing to eight-year-old Ammon every night as



Rachel did to him when he was small; he talks of religion and history and the novels he reads; he talks of the power of faith and the power of virtue being greater than any science fiction, fantasy or superhero.

Eleven-year-old Eliza doesn't have Mom by her side teaching every chore, as did Emma at her age; but she does have Emma roping her into helping her study her Latin vocabulary and Sara asking her to help her memorize lines for Shakespeare.

We don't have the same type of time or life that we did when our family was small. But in a large family, the development and security of each child is not as hinged on the parent/child relationship. The inter-sibling dynamic has an extremely powerful role. It is like a Virginia Reel of relationships, with each one having a unique value in the individual's progress. In our family there are at least forty separate relationships; this does not account for the dynamic of threesomes, etc. As parents of a large family our burden may be heavier in some ways. But it is also lighter.

*Q: What should parents do in Core and Love of Learning to prepare for Scholar?*

A: First, they should solidify the vision the spouses have of the home environment and family culture. Reading and discussing this book together is an excellent way to arouse the questions that every couple should address in order to come to a shared vision. Reading other literature that is strong on illustrating family culture (Laddie, the Little Britches series, Farmer Boy and others from the Little House series, etc.) can help develop shared vision of an ideal and provide a medium for discussing differences in approach, experience and expectation.

Second, they should begin a routine that will support communication and effective family rituals, such as Family Executive Committee, family prayer and scripture study (or study of the family's central classic).

Third, parents need to consider their own early Phases, including the lessons learned during childhood, to determine if any need to be re-negotiated to start as a family at the earliest common ground. Finally, as you begin to progress through the Phases (and progress after re-negotiating faulty lessons is really quite rapid and fluent), continue to build a family culture and home environment that supports all the Phases.

In particular, as parents you need to do a solid Scholar Phase and have a clear vision that Depth Phase is around the corner. One of the common questions parents ask at seminars is: "But I only have small children, so why should I worry

about Scholar Phase right now?” It is a common conveyor belt misconception that the teacher’s focus should be on the education of the child. Your children will learn to value education by watching you learn. While the children are in Core and Love of Learning, set the example of progression through the Phases.

*Q: What are the major predictable mistakes parents make during Transition?*

A: Parents in the Leadership Education model often look at arrival in Scholar Phase as “The Promised Land” and are hypersensitive to cues that it is time to make that move. They may tend to focus on certain signs of maturity (attention to detail, longer attention span, interest in adult conversation, a desire to spend a lot of time reading without interruptions) and at the same time neglect to acknowledge signs of unreadiness (defensiveness when ideas are challenged, unwillingness to make or keep commitments, stress or sullenness when demands are placed on them).

Sometimes parents are even tempted and attempt to push the child to get ahead, try to ensure that he keeps up with the neighbors or a pre-set “grade level,” and resort to force, manipulation or inappropriate rewards to make this happen.

Another common mistake is to over program the time of the Transitioner. Now that they are ready for lessons, we too often see parents putting them in several types of lessons, or classes, clubs, teams, etc. It takes a great deal of restraint to trust that we need not jump on every opportunity. Time will work its wonders, and one day at a time the young person’s character, experience and education will round itself out. The next biggest challenge (probably a combination of some of the foregoing) is to focus on the child’s education while ignoring your own: simultaneously pushing him too hard and not setting a positive example.

Finally, we can tend to be so enthralled with the new, more grown-up Johnny or Linda that we might communicate to them in subtle ways that we prefer them so, and not so much a child. They may begin to feel that they are not allowed to be vulnerable, needy, or dependent on you for affection or positive reinforcement.

This is a time to make a conscious plan to invite your Transitioner to sit on your lap and just watch a movie for a while, to come embrace you “‘cause I need a hug,” to hold your hand while you are riding in the car, even as you acknowledge and make mention of how fun it is to see her getting so tall, or how you love the way that she is turning into such a fun conversationalist, or how much you respect this or that quality that she exhibits in such mature proportions, etc.

Remember to reassure your budding youth that her growing independence as

an individual does not necessitate her detachment from you. It means a continually evolving, deepening relationship with you as her parent-for-life. Also remember to be explicit in your communication that you are comfortable with her being grown up on some days or in some settings, and just a kid in others and that this is natural, healthy and desirable at this time in her progress. (Most families can point out Dad as an example of this duality with marvelous results.)

*Q: What should parents do when things go wrong, when you have a teenager instead of a young adult?*

A: We are not experts on child psychology, but we highly recommend the writings of Dr. James Dobson, especially his book *On Parenting*. In a nutshell (and we agree with every point) he suggests the following eight ways of working with a youth who has gone wrong:

1. Fix yourself. Fix your selfishness, anger, pride, ambition, manipulation, controlling, ignoring, neglecting, etc.
2. Show the youth respect and dignity.
3. Verbalize conflicts and re-establish boundaries. Be firm in this. Revisit #1 above as a part of this.
4. Plan rationally, but act toward bonding.
5. Link behavior with desirable and undesirable consequences. Again, revisit #1 as a central part of this.
6. Help the youth search for identity—personality, mission, vision, lots of talking, etc.
7. Turn to spiritual, religious and community sources for help.
8. Spend some more time on #1.

Of course, there are many other questions which could be asked about Transition to Scholar. Remember that nobody is the expert on your children except you, and also that nobody does this perfectly. We certainly struggle to parent effectively in Transition and all the other phases. We find ourselves making mistakes at every stage and with every child and we learn a great deal from our mistakes. Nobody

has to be perfect in parenting; and one of the most important things our children learn from us is how we function in spite of our frailties and foibles, how we respond to problems of our own making, how we repair relationships that we have helped to injure or neglect, and how we address our own weaknesses. The fact of our imperfection is unavoidable (as is their growing awareness of it), and it is not an excuse for anyone opting out of parenting in a principled fashion.

Also remember that your children can help too, by coaching and giving suggestions about ways to improve. If they have had a solid Core Phase, they will surprise you with the wisdom they will share. For example, once we were having an intense discussion about a gap in our communication, and eleven-year-old Sara overheard and made a truly insightful and helpful comment. Oliver was so touched by it, and how much it helped, that he called in Oliver (age fourteen) and Emma (age thirteen) and asked for their help. Both of them provided very wise and relevant counsel. While we are not recommending that children be involved in every decision—they benefit neither from the burden of adult issues nor the confusion of roles—there are times when we have much to learn from them and we do well to listen.

Some children are downright obnoxious starting with Transition and into Scholar years. Many factors can exacerbate the challenges of adolescence:

- a neighborhood environment with distractions or personalities that are toxic to healthy home relationships
- poor nutrition
- lack of sleep
- too many commitments (either on the part of the parent, the youth, or both)
- too little responsibility
- undiscovered/unremedied trauma, such as sexual abuse in the recent or distant past
- marital strife, past or current
- addiction (many forms: emotional, sexual, substance, etc.)
- too little government in the home
- too much government in the home

The remedies are even more varied than the causes, but there is almost nothing

that prayer, principles and patience can't improve. Through Inventories, Purges, FEC, the Dobson list above and other ingredients well-applied, you will have done all you can do and can safely entrust your youth to Providence.

The Transition to Scholar Phase is a powerful, pivotal time in the life of a person. Your valiance, serenity, affection, acceptance, patience and vision will help to establish from this time a relationship that will endure whatever else comes along; and the growing independence, character and competence of your youth will bring you satisfaction and joy for the rest of your life.