



Father's Day Tradition – Restoration of Respect

Sunday, June 21 (2009), marked the annual father's day celebration in many parts of the world, including the United States. The day—father's day—is intended to honor fathers everywhere, and is marked by gift giving and a variety of other customs and family tradition across the world. By its very essence father's day brings focus to some degree of respect for fathers—of all ages and cultural background.

On the other hand, father's day does present an opportunity—to restore a measure of respect for a father, especially where respect has been diminished or lost in a relationship. And I am sure you will agree that there are many father-daughter and father-son relationships that are in major disrepair and could use a lot of healing.

During the summer of last year (2008) I wrote an EKTIMIS article titled, "*Habits – Good, Bad, and Mundane*", in which I discussed the importance of habits in our lives and the connection between habits and the issue of respect—refer to www.ntaiwo.com/EktimisENewsletterArchive1-Respect.htm. Today, in recognition of this year's father's day, I thought I'd suggest a new habit that anyone can adopt; one that can become a good family tradition; and one that I am absolutely sure every father, and mother for that matter, will truly appreciate. And of course it will be consistent with the primary theme of EKTIMIS—that is, respect.

But first I'd like to share a recent story with you. This true story is indeed the catalyst for the habit that I'd like to suggest. I recently attended a formal business awards dinner and I had the pleasure of meeting the mother of a friend who also happened to be attending the event. After the conclusion of the dinner and the awards presentation, while everyone mingled and networked, I ran into my friend's mother, whom I had never met before, but recognized due to the striking mother-daughter resemblance. She apparently had accompanied her daughter to the event while she was in town visiting her. I introduced myself and before long we were engaged in a very thoughtful and captivating conversation.

As we conversed I began to sense certain values—rooted in her cultural upbringing, her family tradition, and her spirituality. These values were some of the same that I had observed with my friend whom I had known now for about two years. It was clear that she had instilled some of these values in her daughter, and these values were very near and dear to her—the mother. We concluded our conversation soon before her daughter arrived as I thanked her and told her, as sincerely as I could, that her daughter was very fortunate to have a principled mother like her. In many ways she reminded me of my mother.

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The following weekend, as I reflected on the week's events, I could not help but think of how appreciated and valued many parents would feel if, once in a while, an adult son or daughter would simply thank the parents for instilling one specific value in his or her life—a value that has made a difference and has proven to be a significant asset. After all, it is the absolute desire of most parents to teach their children the right things and instill in them the right values; but some parents, unfortunately, do not succeed in this critical endeavor!

And so here is my post-father's day suggestion which can become an annual father's day tradition—a habit—in your family if you wish. Think of a value that you hold, one instilled in you by your father, and one that has served you well in your life; call your father and tell him you have a belated father's day surprise for him, and thank him for instilling this value in you, and explain how this value has served you well and continues to be an asset for you. I believe such a move would be a very strong way to show respect for your father (and in fact mother as well). You will in essence be communicating your measure of respect for him and for what he stands for. And he will never forget it.

Consider making this an annual father's day tradition—one that your father can come to expect. He will look forward to it every year and it will mean even more to him as the years go by.

I trust you all had an enjoyable and meaningful father's day. And if your father has since passed away, much like mine, or if you have lost a son or daughter, then I hope it was a good and reflective (father's) day nonetheless.

Cheers and thank you – N. Taiwo