



## How to Take the Pressure Down

### 9 Quick and Easy ways to take some pressure off yourself as a Parent

We all know that there are times when you feel stressed because of the many demands of being a parent. So give yourself permission to take some pressure off by trying these simple strategies:

- **Recognise the difference** between the things you can change and those you can't change. Don't waste time and energy worrying about things you can't change and concentrate on what you have some control over.
- **Look at concerns** or problems or issues objectively. What is the worst that could happen if you allow it or overlook it? In the "big picture" is it worth all the stress it is creating? Maybe it's not a problem at all.
- **Remember that children are not "bad"** – it's just that sometimes their behaviour is not what you would like. Congratulate yourself and your child at times when their behaviour is what you like.
- **All behaviour has meaning.** Don't just look at what the child is doing/not doing now that you're not happy with. Think about what has led up to this situation, consider your own actions and ask the child some questions. How is the child feeling? Has something happened to cause this behaviour? What does the child need? You may find that there is a pattern. In any case, it is usually easier to deal with problematic behaviour if you know what is behind it.
- **Before you react** to a situation, take a few seconds to calm yourself and think about the words you will use or the actions you will take. Consider the effect on the other person of what you are going to say and how you will say it. It's amazing how a potentially explosive situation can be diffused by 10-20 seconds of silence!
- **Simplify** your daily activities. Prioritise tasks, keeping the children's needs and your needs in mind. Does it really matter if the children's clothes don't get ironed? Do you really need to go out to the shops today? What is the most important thing for you to get done today?
- If there is a particular type of behaviour you would like to see in your children, for example, "good manners", then instead of continually reminding them about saying "Please" and "Thank-you", simply **be their role-model** and say it yourself every time. Children copy what they hear and what they see.
- **Make family social activities less stressful** by keeping them child-friendly and appropriate to the children's ages. A three-year-old is unlikely to be able to sit still in a café, theatre or restaurant for two hours. A trip to the park or children's library might be easier to manage.
- **Children are not "mini-adults"**. They don't have the same material expectations and needs as adults, and they are not capable of making decisions about everything. So remember to treat your children as children and keep it simple. They do want and need your love and guidance above all else.

Janet Powell of Mentor Maestro can help you find the answers within yourself to your parenting challenges. With Janet as your parenting coach, you will learn how a simple process can have you achieving your goals in your family more often, more calmly, with our unique programme. For more **Helpful Hints**, visit [www.mentormaestro.com](http://www.mentormaestro.com), sign up for the **free e-newsletter**, or call 9889-3991 for details of the next programme.