



# Gateway CAP Fatherhood Times

## Your Paternal Information Resource

*“Every father should remember one day his son will follow his example, not his advice.” –Charles Kettering*

### Dad Take Your Child To School!

“Dad Take Your Child To School”, is rooted in the mission of promoting father involvement in educational settings. Studies point to children benefitting when their fathers have an active role in their children’s lives. Positive paternal involvement is associated with improvements in academic performance, cognitive development, behavior, psychosocial development, health and well-being, household economics and overall parenting quality.

Below are some of the fathers and their children from our new center in Philadelphia.



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## Riddle Me This?

**Riddle:** What did the daddy tomato say to the baby tomato?

Answer: Catch up.

## Living the Protective Factors

### Positive Social Connections—Parents Need

**Friends.** These are the positive people in our lives who give us practical and emotional support and assistance. This is the community that has our back, so we can take care of our kids. It’s also the friends and family who assist us with parenting our kids. When we are isolated and alienated from others, we can get depressed. Having a strong, personal network of support helps us—and our family—stay strong.

**Brought to you by: Be Strong Families**

# New Year a New Me!



We are about to inaugurate a new year and what a great opportunity to set a new goal. Now, I know from personal experience that we can not set goals to be so big that they are unattainable. But rather we need to make sure that they are attainable goals.

As fathers, we do not have a written book on how to navigate or be a father, however, many others before us contributed to the fatherhood experience so that we may make the best of this experience.

I thought it would be a good idea to share with you a few ideas that others have set as their fatherhood goals.

### Reconnecting with our parents –

Finding time in this busy world of ours to be with your father or mother can add value to our own parental experience. As fathers, we are now able to observe life from a different lens. This allows for deeper and more meaningful

relationships between parents and their sons.

**Meditation practice** – Meditating can help us connect with divinity or self. However, we choose to hold our own meditative process is up to us. By meditating we are able to feel more focused, centered, and at peace. Our relationships with others flourish because we come from a place of understanding. Personally, I practice sound therapy and mindfulness.

**Create new traditions** – This could be as simple as writing a letter to your children, where you can express our thoughts and feelings. The letter will create a special bond between father-child. I'm sure that as they get older our children will always remember and read the letters again.

**One-on-one-time** – Creating a space where we can concentrate on one child at a time. At times we concentrate on just doing family activities, and we forget to spend time on a one-on-one basis with each of our children. This could be a once-a-month activity.

**Time for self-care** – Make sure to spend time away from the family and treat yourself to whatever you like. Often as fathers, our

focus is only on making sure that we are providers and we forget to take care of ourselves.

**A healthy lifestyle** – We can create more time to do outdoor activities and reduce screen time. We can go for walks or even start going to the gym. Whatever a healthy lifestyle for you and your family means do that.

(Francis, 2022)

We have provided you with some ideas and we are sure that you have some of your own. We want to make sure you have a supportive network of information for your own unique paternal life experience. Always feel welcomed to reach out to us for more information. We hope you join one of our Dad's Café a space created with you –dad– in mind.

## References

Francis, L. (2022, December 30). *Good New Year Resolutions for Dads*. Retrieved from Fatherly: <https://www.fatherly.com/life/good-new-years-resolutions-for-dads>

## Human Trafficking Awareness

### TRAFFICKING VS. SMUGGLING

**Human Trafficking** involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act, or in which the person performing the commercial sex act is under 18 years of age.

**Human Smuggling** is the deliberate evasion of immigration laws by bringing undocumented noncitizens into the U.S. and the unlawful transportation and harboring of undocumented noncitizens already in the U.S.

#### These are *not* interchangeable terms

**Smuggling** is transportation-based and is a crime against a border  
**Trafficking** is exploitation-based and is a crime against a person



Report Human Trafficking: 1-866-347-2423  
[www.dhs.gov/bluecampaign](http://www.dhs.gov/bluecampaign)

### IDENTIFYING HUMAN TRAFFICKING – ASK YOURSELF:

- Is the victim in possession of their own identification and travel documents?
- Is the victim coached on what to say to community members, workers, law enforcement or immigration officials? Does someone else communicate for the victim?
- Is the victim recruited for one purpose but forced to engage in other work?
- Are the victim's wages being unlawfully garnished to pay off a debt or fee? (Paying off a smuggling fee alone is not considered trafficking.)
- Is the victim forced to perform commercial sex acts?
- Has the victim or their family been threatened with harm if they attempt to leave?
- Has the victim been threatened with deportation or criminal charges?
- Has the victim been harmed, deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care, or other life necessities?
- Is the victim free to contact friends or family without being coached or monitored?
- Is the victim under the age of 18 and engaged in commercial sex?
- Is the victim living in substandard housing?

# As a Father, What is my Purpose?

So, what does purpose look like in a father's life? How can I find my purpose as a father? Questions that are worthy of our consideration as we navigate fatherhood. We understand that maybe some of us did not have a role model of a father in our lives. We probably have never considered the fact that there is a purpose in fatherhood. Maybe even started navigating fatherhood with fear and no sense of purpose. Whatever your current situation let us take a moment to consider what is my purpose.

Sooner or later we will all face the pains of fatherhood. Basically, our children will make us suffer one way or another. We will lack sleep during the first few months of their birth. Their cry will maintain us in a constant state of alertness. As they continue to grow we will face all of the different challenges that childhood, preteen, and teenage years bring along the way. To add to the turmoil, we may have to choose jobs that really are based on our children's schedules. And of course, the struggles of co-parenting and the test that come along the way of any relationship.



All of the aforementioned can be overwhelming, however, studies indicate that having a sense of purpose will help us overcome struggles. Of course, long-

term and meaningful goals as fathers. "A sense of purpose shapes day-to-day goals and behavior. Seeing a destination on the horizon helps us to lift our eyes over the dirty dishes and temper tantrums, to a future that is better than the present. Purpose makes that pile of dishes matter. It reminds us that we matter, if only to our kids. Purpose keeps us at home with them when we wish we were elsewhere." (Smith, 2020)

Your own personal purpose as a father will differ from that of my own purpose as a father. Our own lived experience will shape what that purpose is for each of us. As we compare our personal purpose to that of our father or grandfather we will notice most definitely that it has some similarities but yet it is completely different. Our world is a different world than that of our most recent ancestors. We can see that as the world has shifted society has redefined roles and no longer standards that were present in times past are acceptable. We can see that women are about 50% of the workforce and are earning income.

Men now have more time on their hands and are able to spend more time with their children. Diversity in the United States is increasing and one can observe that the immigrant population has brought forth new concepts of fatherhood. As a result, fathers now add to their traits besides being "providers" also "nurturers". Many fathers through our

support groups expressed that they want to be better than their fathers. Making sure that their children knew that they are physically and emotionally available for them throughout their lives.

We understand that defining our purpose of fatherhood may mean that we want to self-improve for our children. Having new friends that make us become a better person for our children. Gather around other fathers that can support one another.

The bottom line is that finding our own fatherhood purpose is important because we can navigate life better by looking toward that horizon in hopes of a better life for our children. Here are a few ideas on how to find your own purpose as a father.

**Join our dad's café** – when you come and join our fatherhood conversations you will be able to surround yourself with other fathers that have or are going through the same pains of fatherhood. Creating a strong network of fathers that support one another and can learn in a judgment-free zone.

**Watch a movie or read a book** – there are many fatherhood movies, one that comes to mind very recently is "Fatherhood", by Kevin Hart. When it comes to books there are many of them that will help anyone navigate fatherhood.

**Talk to your co-parents, friends, and family** – you can always look for support from those closest and dearest to you. They will help us with any of our concerns and even help us with our goals. Especially, if the goals are to be a better father.



**Look to your hurts—and turn them into healing** – There is special power that comes from within when we look at anything that has occurred in our lives. We can always use our own pain and turn it into something beautiful. When we learn to turn the darkness into the light we can become the most purpose-driven father for our children.

## References

Smith, J. A. (2020, June 18). What is your purpose as a father. Retrieved from [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu:https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what\\_is\\_your\\_purpose\\_as\\_a\\_father](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu:https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what_is_your_purpose_as_a_father)



# Money Matters

**“It’s not how much you make. It’s how much money you keep.”**



Contrary to everyone’s opinion money doesn’t solve all problems. History has shown that many wealthy people continued to have the same problems a common person experiences. So, if money doesn’t solve our problems what does? According to Robert T. Kiyosaki in his book, Rich Dad Poor Dad “Intelligence solves problems and produces money. Money without financial intelligence is money soon gone.” (Kiyosaki, 2022)

Through media, we have observed how sports players who become millionaires years down the road are poor to the point of homelessness. Or how someone hits the lottery and becomes a millionaire to later be poor once again. So, the question here should not be how to become a millionaire but rather how we make money and keep it. The answer that Kiyosaki provides for us is that of his father, “if you want to be rich, you need to be financially literate.” (Kiyosaki, 2022)

A great analogy provided by Kiyosaki is that we spend the majority of our life trying to build a mighty edifice with no foundation. No wonder we fail many times and sometimes we just stay in our comfort zone. We have not learned to master financial literacy. No one from our neighborhoods took the time to show us the way. But, in the age of instant information, there is no excuse to stay in your comfort zone. We can now invest our time in reliable information sources to learn how to master financial literacy.

Kiyosaki in “Rich Dad, Poor Dad” says **“Rule#1: You must know the difference between an asset and a liability, and buy assets.”** (Kiyosaki, 2022) A few words that you should have in your financial literacy vocabulary:

**Income** - Money earned or received such as wages or salaries, tips, commissions, contracted pay, govern-

ment transfer payments, dividends on investments, tax refunds, gifts, and inheritances.

**Expenses** – the cost one is required to spend on obtaining something.

**Liability** – Something that is a disadvantage, money owed, or debt or obligation according to law.

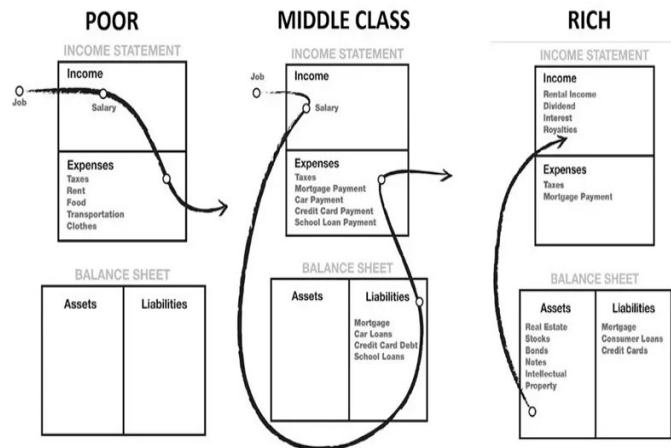
**Assets** - An item with economic value, such as stock or real estate.

**Cash Flow** - the total amount of money being transferred into and out of a business, especially as affecting liquidity.

Think about financial literacy as a way to manage your income, expenses, liability, and assets benefiting you and your family. You and your family are called the Family Business.

Kiyosaki says that each person’s class– poor, middle class, rich –has a cash flow pattern.

Here is the visual pattern



In our next newsletter, we will continue to expand on this subject. We hope that the information provided served as a tool to improve your financial literacy. If you have any questions or would like to learn more feel free to reach out to us. We are here to help you succeed.

## References

Kiyosaki, R. T. (2022). Why teach Financial Literacy? In R. T. Kiyosaki, *Rich Dad Poor Dad* (pp. 75 - 111). Scottsdale, AZ: Plata Publishing, LLC.

# What makes our Families a Family?

During the new year it is good to sit and reflect on what makes our families a family. The great thing about reflecting on this topic is that as we all answer the question we all have a different and unique perspective. Recently I read an article on Father.com by Ken Canfield, PH. D., he says “One idea is to consider the regular activities that you do together—the activities that help to develop a sense of tradition, ritual, and consistency for you and your children. It’s appropriate to consider these as you approach the holidays with your family, and they can really show up throughout the year.” (Ken Canfield, 2022)

Family rituals are a key to what makes families a family. The way that we are using the word ritual according to the Oxford dictionary is defined as follows, a series of actions or type of behavior regularly and invariably followed by someone. These actions and/or regular behaviors enacted over the years become family rituals that create in our children a sense of “belonging and security.” (Ken Canfield, 2022)

Below is a list of different family rituals and family activities that have the connotation of being special bonding family time. Many families at a minimum enjoy the following rituals commonly. However, the best advice that Canfield provided in his article was the fact that it is our own unique rituals that we enjoy as a family, that makes it special and sacred.



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**Reading** – set a special time and read a book together. Even if it means reading it a dozen times. What matters creating a unique experience for your family.

**Mealtimes** – Get back to the table and let mealtime be a screen-free zone conversation heavy. Engage with your family in conversation that leads to an entertaining time.

**Physical affections** – Have a tickle fight section or just a hug on the dad section. Make sure that there is time for physical affection as a father.

**Playing cards** – Get the children away from the video games and teach them how to play card games. Games such as rummy, war, go fish, concentration/memory, and others.

**Chores and errands** – Make it so that everyone in the family has a schedule with their weekly chores and errands. This is a good way to delegate responsibility.

**Cooking** – Share with them family cooking secrets and teach them safely how to prepare a meal. Let them help you with age-appropriate meal prep.

**Taking Pictures** – make sure to snap away at those special moments in life. Print them or get a digital frame that can show them as you create a legacy.

**Storytelling** – Make up a story and keep on adding to your unique story. Or just share your own childhood memories.

**Family Outings** – Make sure to be at your extended family events.

**Spirituals Activities** – Going to a place of worship, or having your own spiritual rituals at home.

**Helping Others** – Let them see you and have them participate by volunteering your time. Have them donate their books, toys, and clothing to the less fortunate.

I know there are many more ways to create traditions and family rituals. The options are endless and you can start at any time. You can use the suggestion provided or come up with your own. We just painted a possible roadmap toward creating something special with your children and family.

## References

Ken Canfield, P. (2022, December 13). *11 Things That Make Your Family Special*. Retrieved from Fathers.com: <https://fathers.com/blog/topics/commitment/11-things-that-make-your-family-special/>

# Communication is Key

Dads in our communities have different communication patterns with their families. We also have different cultural backgrounds, traditions, holidays, etc. To navigate the different complexities of fatherhood we use communication. Fathering becomes then a bit choppy trying to maintain all of the different family complexities. Thus, the importance of communication!

As fathers, we employ different skills to communicate with our family members. At times we have to be inspiring, cooperative, convincing, persuasive, etc., but we must keep the conversation going creating positive outcomes for the well-being of all. In reality, even during moments when the conversation becomes argumentative, our responsibility remains to make sure that our families are well.

With this thought process in mind, we are going to be sharing during this segment, key communication and people-to-people skills, to help the reader with making first impressions, establishing rapport and trust, to help dads become masters in family communication. At a minimum a tool that can help improve communication through our relationships.

## **Defuse fight-flight response**

My father always said to me that first impressions are of utter importance. I really never understood what he meant until I became an adult and started to interact with people in general. I thought the rule was only applied to a job interview. But, I came to the realization that the rule is for every time you speak to anyone. As humans, we have certain responses within ourselves that are determiners of our actions and or reactions.



Nicholas Boothman says, “The first few seconds of an initial encounter between two people are driven by instinctive reactions. Each person makes unconscious, unthinking appraisals that center around their safety: ‘I do/don’t feel safe with you,’ ‘I do/don’t trust you.’” (Boothman, 2002, 2010) Wao... that is a lot to take in. So, let’s break it down. Basically, our survival instincts kick in automatically to make sure that we are safe and not in danger. So, anything that we may have experienced or our adverse childhood experiences influence the way we are engaging in a conversation with others. As we make spontaneous judgments in our conversation we could be reading signals wrong and completely missing the mark.

How can we go beyond our instincts and defuse fight-flight response?

The way that we communicate with others in any situation is going to be the determining factor of the outcome. We observe that people are captivated by a person that shows positive energy. When you are able to come in with a positive mindset you are projecting a healthy communication approach even in a difficult situation. A positive attitude will cause the other person’s fight-flight response to change toward a favorable outcome. Boothman says, “Attitude, posture, facial expressions, and eye contact influence the energy you radiate, and people you encounter are passing judgment on what you’re putting out every second of the day.” (Boothman, 2002, 2010)

By having a positive demeanor through every aspect of your body language, facial expression, and tone of voice will help us neutralize the fight-flight response. We have to remember that our body language, facial expression, and tone of voice influence the outcome of a conversation. If we want to resolve a matter but come in with a negative mindset, our body language, facial expression, and verbal tone will communicate to the person that we are not sincere. The person enters immediately into a fight/flight response causing communication to fail.

We hope that this insight that we shared with you about communication helps you understand the communication world as a father. For more information or if you are interested in talking more about the subject join us in one of our Dad’s Café events which we hold every month.

## References

Boothman, N. (2002, 2010). Neutralize the Fight-Flight Response. In N. Boothman, *Convince Them in 90 Seconds or Less* (pp. 41 - 58). New York, NY: Workman Publishing Co., Inc.