

“WHO MAKES US US? WE DO” A dramatic parenting guide

By Jim Rogers

FAMILY JOURNAL REVIEW JANUARY 08_ “They came here to live a life. We have to help them feel good about it” is one of many simple, yet profound statements made in this dramatic video guide to basic parenting skills for parents, teachers, and other caregivers. Brief vignettes demonstrate in stark contrast the differences between positive and effective parenting skills, and negative, or ineffective parenting skills. The results and consequences of nurturing and affirming parenting are verbalized and demonstrated by children, young adults, and adults, while the effects of devaluing and demeaning parenting are poignantly expressed in a series of monologues and dramatic scenes that leave no doubt about the pain and isolation experienced by young adults and adults who grew up feeling controlled, neglected, humiliated, unloved, or unwanted.

A pediatrician and a marriage and family therapist present their professional comments surrounding the parent-child interactions and the monologues, which are disquieting and all too real. The devastating effects of shaming, yelling, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, even dishonesty on the part of a parent or caregiver will inevitably manifest in the young adult as a sense of hopelessness, a sense of the self as “worthless and filled with flaws.” Without a sense that one is lovable, that one matters, the individual “cannot find himself.” She or he may grow up in constant fear, or with deep hurt or anger that gets expressed in self-defeating, even self-destructive behavior.

Parents and other caregivers have a choice as to how they will behave, how they will respond to the children in their lives. They can choose to react and to control, to “force them into a mold of our choosing,” or they can respond and guide with love, respect, and affirmation. The video effectively demonstrates how parents, teachers, and other caregivers can show love, respect, affirmation, and forgiveness to the children in their lives. The commentary helps to underscore what love is and what it is not, what discipline is and is not, what effective communication is and is not. Our tone, our attitude, our body language, even our way of communicating with other adults in front of our children model what we believe about the innate uniqueness and special identity of every individual. Actions speak louder than words; however, words and actions combined can empower or cripple the soul.

This video, written and directed by Jim R. Rogers, a Certified Family Life Educator who has spent years helping parents and other caregivers learn new and more effective approaches to parenting and discipline, provides a valuable resource for counselors and marriage and family therapists, for teachers and other caregivers, as well as parents. The video could also be used effectively in counselor training programs as a springboard for group discussion surrounding the impact of how one’s own experience of having been parented can affect one’s approach in working with couples and families. Above all, the video provides an opportunity for personal reflection for all those who seek to help and nurture children to become nurturing and loving adults in our complex world.

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Complete scripts in English and Spanish plus a leaders guide and a promotional brochure are available upon request.

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