

# Unconditional Parenting – (Lecture Topic)

## UNCONDITIONAL PARENTING:

### Beyond Bribes and Threats

Advice for raising children typically comes in two flavors: threats (known euphemistically as “consequences”) and bribes (“positive reinforcement”). Either we make kids suffer to teach them a lesson, or we dangle goodies in front of them for doing as they’re told. Rewards and punishments are two sides of the same coin, and unfortunately, neither can buy anything more than temporary obedience. Manipulating children’s behavior – by means of time-outs, contrived praise, privileges offered and privileges taken away – can never help them to reflect on the kind of people they want to be. Instead of encouraging kids to take responsibility for their actions, it makes them dependent on rewards and punishments. Rather than promoting generosity and compassion, it leads them to focus on the consequence to themselves of pleasing the adult.

This presentation, by the author of UNCONDITIONAL PARENTING, will show why carrots and sticks are not only ineffective but actually counterproductive over the long haul. To raise children who are good learners and good people requires us to abandon strategies that do things *to* kids, in favor of an approach in which we work *with* them. And underlying those “working with” strategies is the message that children do not have to earn our approval, that we love them not for what they do but just for who they are.

[Return to Topics](#)