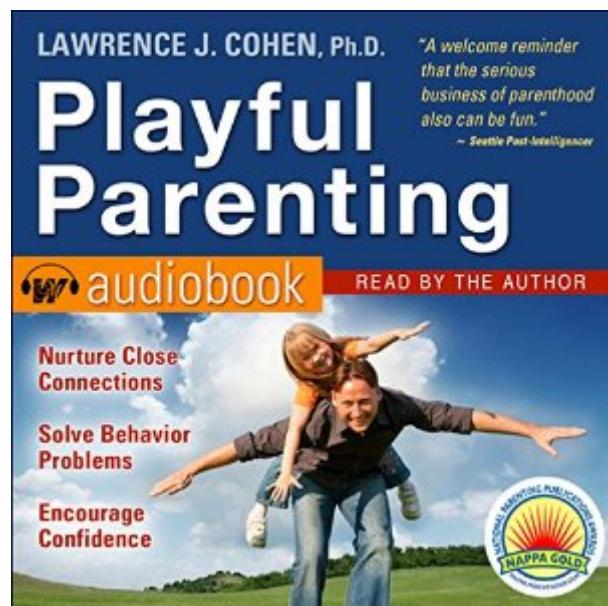


The book was found

Playful Parenting



Synopsis

Have you ever stepped back to watch what really goes on when your children play? As psychologist Lawrence J. Cohen points out, play is children's way of exploring the world, communicating deep feelings, getting close to those they care about, working through stressful situations, and simply blowing off steam. That's why "playful parenting" is so important and so successful in building strong, close bonds between parents and children. Through play we join our kids in their world "and help them to: Express and understand complex emotions; Break through shyness, anger, and fear; Empower themselves and respect diversity; Play their way through sibling rivalry; Cooperate without power struggles." From eliciting a giggle during baby's first game of peekaboo to cracking jokes with a teenager while hanging out at the mall, *Playful Parenting* is a complete guide to using play to raise confident children. Written with love and humor, brimming with good advice and revealing anecdotes, and grounded in the latest research, this book will make you laugh even as it makes you wise in the ways of being an effective, enthusiastic parent. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The premise of the book is that children need a strong connection with their parents in order to have good self-esteem, self-confidence, happiness and good behavior. The author is a play therapist that feels that the key to getting and staying connected with our children aged three through the teen years is through play. If you think your child has great behavior then following the ideas in this book will still help foster close connections and reduce the minor issues such as whining, begging, etc. The author contends that simply by spending time playing with our children with the child in control

of the nature of the play, that a strong connection can be made. Specific ideas for play "tactics" are given when the parent wants to solve some particular problem or fear. This book is not just for "problem kids" who have sought professional counseling with the author. The gist of the book is that at about age 3 and up children are in the play mode, they like to play, want to play, need to play. They also at this time live in a world where they feel powerless or isolated at least some of the time, even in the best family situations. The theory is that they have "cups" that fill with love and sometimes when feeling isolated or powerless the cups run low and need refilling. When the cup is low the negative behaviors begin. The author feels that at these ages 3 through teen years, the fastest and most effective way to fill the love cup is by playing with your children. Most of his examples are with the work he has done with his child and his patients. He tells of certain games that can be played to overcomethis or that, such as how to deal with the child who wants to play guns and shoot at the parent, how to deal with swearing, what to do when the child is hyper and aggressive, etc.

I had thought a lot about what parenting was going to mean for me and how I was going to go about it. I read a lot of different books covering all areas in great detail and discussedit with my partner. When my son arrived the experienced surpassed the greatest of expectations. Being the mother to a baby was just wonderful. BUT THEN one day, our baby was a boy who wanted to PLAY. He really showed that he needed me to get down on the floor and PLAY with him and his toys. I was totally unprepared for this. I could do it for a bit, but then after a while I was exasperated and he was restless. After some time of games like putting all the farm animals in the correct part of the plastic barn and pretend feeding them and putting them to sleep, it was just SO BORING and I couldn't think of what to do next. I felt terribly guilty about checking my watch throughout and then I felt like I was the most boring and unimaginative person ever. I felt there was obviously some wonderful world of fantasy and fun he was in which I as an adult had lost. For the first time I felt disconnected from him. After a few pages of this book, I got down on the floor with my son and played with gusto. I loved it and I could tell that my son was enjoying it. He was only one year and a half at the time. His eyes lit up and at the end of one game that same afternoon he really just looked at me into my eyes with some new curiosity and he stopped repeatedly and intermittently to give me huge hugs in a way which he had never done before. They were not the regular cuddly hugs, but more like "this is new, we're having fun together aren't we?" hugs. We'd started a new way of being together.

I'll start by saying I liked the book. I read a lot of parenting books because 1) I have a rather spirited

two year old (and an infant) and 2) I happen to find this particular genre of study fascinating. Since I read so many and am familiar with the kid-help writing style, I tend to be skeptical of any parenting book that has found "the way," even while realizing that if you are going to write a book, you might as well give your opinion with confidence (I worry more about a person who reads one book and thinks they have discovered the meaning of parenting because Dr. So and So told them all studies point this way). I can't give the book five stars because it feeds into the "you are never playing enough with or doing enough for and if you did cry it out you have scarred your children even though I have no evidence other than a hunch" theories. Let's face it, parents spend more time playing with their children today than likely any other time in human history. We are doing enough. That said, we probably aren't playing smartly, and this is where the book had great value and why I would ultimately recommend it. I've tried a couple of the techniques, like pretending to scream and making it a game when you actually really want to scream, or singing instructions, or my favorite-grabbing a toy and running when two kids won't stop fighting over it-and they all helped the mood in our family a lot. Simply by reading this book, I find myself engaging more when I play with my daughter (I'm a stay at home mom, so I have a lot of time to play). When she clings to me, I turn the tables and pretend like I can't let her go until she is the one complaining about me clinging. I would never have thought of that.

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