

**Be the hand  
that loves  
and the word  
that guides**



**When both you and I  
shout for a long time,  
we cannot hear  
each other.**

**Reconsider**



Шведска  
Sverige



UN Women  
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



# Reconsidering parental (disciplining) actions is the first step in improving them.



Parental behaviour is influenced by many things that we often do not pay attention to. Regardless of whether these are usual actions in interacting with the child, or attempts at new approaches, it is important for us to take a break, observe and consider why we do this and what effects it has on the child and ourselves.

## What sources of information about parenting do you believe the most?

Parental beliefs and behaviours are something that we largely learn from our parents, from the period of our own childhood all the way into adulthood, when grandparents can offer different pieces of advice to us as parents. We can also get useful advice from our friends who are also parents.

However, the fact that someone has experience in parenting (including ourselves) does not mean that he/she is always right. The world and knowledge are developing in every field, including the field of children's growth, development and upbringing.



## Today we know more and we can choose better.

Once, the effects of parental actions could only be assumed, while today we have many reliable pieces of evidence. Parenting is not a science, but it can be learned and improved, and it is always useful to solve one's dilemmas through oral or written advice and receive guidance from professionals.

### How to start?

Reconsideration starts by an intention and consciously paying attention to one's own and the child's concrete behaviour and feelings. The following questions may prove to be useful in this:

- What are the consequences of our parental actions for the child? How does the child feel, in what way did he/she understand the message, what did he/she learn from it and in what way does he/she (continue to) behave? For example, does he/she accept agreements and limits with understanding, or is he/she obedient only because of fear and the need to indulge us? Does he/she continue with the unacceptable behaviour in spite of everything we have tried?
- What situations concerning the child cause anxiety, unease and dissatisfaction in us as parents? What behaviours of the child do we find to be especially worrisome?
- Are there situations in which we feel powerless and cannot control our own reactions that are "stronger than us," or "just happen"?
- Do we perceive challenging behaviour by the child as a rebellion, disobedience or a lack of interest ("he won't hear me," "she has her way"), or do we think about what is behind the behaviour: what does he/she want to communicate in that way, what bothers him/her, what does he/she expect?

- Do we find a way, after a challenging and conflicting situation with the child, to (once again) become close, talk calmly and 'make peace'?
- How do we deal with admitting to potential 'mistakes' in upbringing? Do we feel shame and guilt, or do we know that mistakes do not make us a bad person or parent, but that this concrete practice can, and should, be amended and improved for the benefit of our child and ourselves?

**Reconsideration helps us recognize inadequate reactions, so that we can prevent them from happening and thus improve our parenting practice. Simultaneously, we thus create the basis for the improvement of the parental skills of future generations. Just like we have learned from our parents, our own children will learn from us.**

PROVIDE    **RECONSIDER**    AVOID    APPLY  
SEEK HELP    CHILDREN WITH DISSABILITIES    ADOLESCENTS

