

APRIL 2003 EMAIL TEXT

From: "Jskoh Softhome" <jskoh@softhome.net>
Subject: April Mailer - for the family!
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Thanks for all the positive feedback so far. It helps us to know that we are talking about topics close to your hearts and find them relevant. You are also invited to comment should you see something you don't like. We promise we will try and learn :). Also thanks to your circulation, we have now about 80 email address for circulation since we started accumulating since January 2003, not bad eh? Glory to God.

This month thought of making it lighter a bit with snippets of thoughts. We have enough of wars and SARS to dampen our spirits. So take heart, enjoy the mailer and feel free to drop us an email. If you have a topic in mind, a question, or a book review, drop us a note and we will fit that in. If we get enough book reviews, we may even put them on the web for all to enjoy and reflect.

For next month, we are considering topics related to Singapore's educational system. If you have a specific question/topic, reply to this with the details and we will see what we can include.

A list of books and course products description and price list is placed on the website under "Resources -> Products". Ordering procedures are also specified, so do check that out.

Thanks so much for your hearts to want to be Godly parents. May God honour our hearts and we remain teachable.

Jeremy and Suan Ai
on behalf of GFI Singapore
www.gfi-singapore.org

SNIPPETS OF THOUGHTS

My Mother taught me about **ANTICIPATION** ...

"Just wait until your father gets home."

(Moms – see how important you are! Dads – see what awe you can create!)

“Should good feelings precede good behaviour or good behaviour precede feelings?”

It seems obvious but it is not. We may also think one way but act another. Your thoughts?

Child-centred cure – have more babies. When we had our first baby, we visited the paediatrician. When Josiah came along, it was the GP. When Elliot came, we self-medicate with the left overs (with expiry date monitoring of course). If you have seen Elliot, he's probably the healthiest of them all!

Babies and toddlers. One of the most difficult adjustments for parents with young children below 2 years is how the weekend is spent. Going to unfamiliar places or shopping centres disrupt baby's sleep, so many just stay home and well, it can be "claustrophobic". Have you tried the neighbourhood park or even the Botanical Gardens? The evening would be nice. With toddlers, you can feed them and not worry about cleaning up (and indirectly feed the birds too) – sure beats TV! And when was the last time the two of you got together intimately since your toddler? Time to make arrangements.

Bullied by toddlers. "My toddler refuses to listen to me." Maybe it's because he was given the option to not listen to us! If we as parents are clear that this is not acceptable behaviour then we need to work out and administer the consequences. That's why it is important to reserve buying toys and keep celebrations to special occasions, if not they have so much that parents have no 'tools' to use for encouragement or discipline!

Perspective. Suan Ai used this to convince herself to stay home: "my children may still go wayward but if I have not stayed home, I may not have given my best. I would rather not have that guilt." Not all of you out there may feel the same of course and situations may change over time but listen to the promptings of God (which is through reading His word and spending quiet moments in prayer or reflection), don't ignore them. Suan Ai "implies" that if the job situation gets bad, I can be sure the home will be well taken care of and I am 'free' to take on more jobs! Mm She has a more secure job, don't you think?

Community. In many Western cultures, they are used to getting the neighbour's teens to come and baby-sit. We are not as used to that but perhaps in the people we are trying to befriend, we could find a few who can back us up? It sure could become handy especially neighbours. When we get the "GFI" community big enough, we could form "neighbourhoods" where such baby-sitting arrangements with like-minded parents can become a reality, no?

Husband and wife relationship. It is said that the number of years of marriage is apparent in the distance between the wife and the husband when they go out shopping after having kids. Have you noticed this? Food for thought in building your husband and wife relationship. Catch these at the right time and narrow the gap, yah?

When we quarrel. If we look back, many of the arguments are pretty petty. Even if I try and make up – be extra nice, buy flowers, wife can still turn a deaf ear and say, "Let's see how long that lasts!" Or I could be nasty and say, "It's going to happen again! She always digs up dirt from donkey years ago." We tend to undermine each other until we (by God's grace) both stop it and get on sensibly. When was the last time that happened to you? Take stock and laugh about it so that next time, the brakes will be applied quickly to resume the love for each other. Love is deliberate and we can choose to love. Let us not block each other's love.

Jeremy and Suan Ai
April 2003