

## JAN 2004 EMAIL TEXT

From: "GFI admin" <admin@gfi-singapore.org>  
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Clear DayDearest parents!

Wow, a brand new year. Time flies! May we take this opportunity to wish all of you a blessed New Year! The Ezzos also send their wishes and a special greeting in the attachment! We also touched on teenagers and some toddler meal time review this issue and pray that they will be helpful.

For classes - don't forget the January 9 information session - 7.30 pm Tony Buzan Centre (Goldhill). This session is to orientate all potential attendees and also to get to know each other a little before class starts. It is also a wonderful opportunity to find out more and ask all the questions you may have.

Classes will start Fridays in February (same time, same location). Please check the website out on this as there are quite a few forms we did not want to jam your emails, download from the web accordingly. There are phone numbers on the forms for you to call if you need any clarifications. Please help to spread the word around to those who may be interested. Please feel free to drop us a note any time.

Continue to send in your suggestions, questions and thoughts as we are learning as we go along. May your family be strengthened as you journey on this wonderful path prepared for you.

GFI Singapore  
log on [www.gfi-singapore.org](http://www.gfi-singapore.org) for parenting resource

## WORD FROM EZZO AND TEEN THOUGHTS

New definition:

FULL NAME: What you call your child when you're mad at him.

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Special treat from the Ezzos after their conference this issue! As we ponder over what they shared, we conclude that only loving others through respecting others can achieve this united community.

Easier said than done but let's go back to God's Word and start even within our family! Allow us to share this verse from 1 Peter 3:7:

**Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.**

Husbands, if we wonder why God never answers any of our prayers, there you go! For single parents, well, start with the immediately members. Then let this 'considerateness' spread to friends and strangers! May this be part of our 2004 resolution!

It's time to emphasize couch time again. When was your last? Good time to re-start, don't you think? Likewise a good time to review love languages for your spouse and/or children so that we can speak their language, show appreciation and strengthen the bond.

**We feel perhaps some encouragements are due for parents of pre-teens or teenage kids too.**

For those already enjoying a good family relationship, bless you. For those who are still struggling and learning, remember, parenting is for a life-time and there will always be hope because God always provides if we are ready to receive! Generally, there will be adjustments for the parents. Parents who have been lax want to tighten up while parents who have been tight usually do not know when or how to let go. Especially with daughters, there is a tendency to over-protect. Well, perhaps if we remember that we are mere guardians and the Lord is the keeper of our children that will help. Of course there will still be boundaries but that vary with families. As Samantha goes into Secondary 2, we too struggle with when to allow outings and how often. We realize also that husbands are generally more 'generous' and wives are generally more 'careful' or 'tight'. We have had quite a few 'discussions', some heated ones too but we found the differing view is a good balance though (Suan Ai relented!). We are concerned for her safety as well but we know we need to slowly let go so that she forms her own circle of friends. It is a wonderful opportunity to let her learn about responsibility too, in terms of when to come home or calling us if certain plans change. May each of us ask the Lord for wisdom.

Time must be spent doing things together, chatting, sports or preparing a meal. Discussing, nagging about studies is definitely not considered bonding! Usually bonding has to start before influencing can take place and if we are not used to this, we really need to crack our brains to find what interests our teens and carry out the activities – love languages again! It may mean doing something we parents don't like first before the teens will be willing to join us in something they don't like!

**Some thoughts on younger ones.** Due to the frustrations we get because of limited time with our children, we either over-indulge in them (especially when they are younger), or become over-strict with them (especially when they are older and has homework). For example, parents today think nothing of allowing children to eat while walking around. They may feel that there seem to be no other ways to get their kids to eat. The issue is that parents run out of ideas and as a last resort, allow them to do that against their wishes – it is not the kid's problem though. We may say that it is the kid's problem because he won't eat but it is equally the parents' problem because we ran out of ideas!

What is not apparent is that when kids get used to having their ways, handling them will become a challenge. OK, it does not always happen exactly so but we hope you won't take the chance! A structured meal time can be planned, work towards having a meal as a family (even with a two-year old) rather than let other items like walking around replace this precious moment. It is hard work, patience-trying but a good foundation for family meal times eventually. For those who are concerned because your kid is not eating, monitor (over several weeks) the weight and overall energy level of the child and if that maintains, he is probably fine. This is so that we won't be frustrated taking over an hour to feed one child. Unless it is acceptable to you to spend that time, then it's fine but usually we find parents frustrated because it simply is "unproductive" time! We remember a grandma who had eleven children. Not having too much, she manages – for meals, she usually takes a bowl of big porridge and goes round in turn. When that bowl finished, that's the end of the meal and she said it was real quick too! Mm, maybe modern times have too many distractions?

May we also invite you to pray for a prayer partner or prayer family so that you can uphold each other as your journey for this year. May this new year be the beginning of the spread of God's love all over again with everyone who crosses your path!