

A MEMO FROM YOUR CHILD

Don't forget that the purpose of your discipline is for me to learn from you.

Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it. It lets me know where I stand.

Don't use force with me, however. It teaches me that power is all that counts. I will respond more readily by being led and taught.

Don't make me feel smaller than I am. I may try to make up for it by behaving like a big shot.

Don't do things for me that I can do for myself. It makes me feel like a baby, and I may continue to put you in my service.

Don't correct me in front of people. I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.

Don't ever think that it is beneath your dignity to apologize to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm toward you.

Don't try to discuss my behavior in the heat of a conflict. For some reason my hearing is not very good at this time and my cooperation is even worse.

Don't try to preach to me. You'd be surprised how well I already know what's right and wrong.

Don't tax my honesty too much. I am easily frightened into telling lies.

Don't make promises if you may not be able to keep them. That will discourage my trust in you.

Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. I have to learn to make mistakes without feeling that I am no good.

Don't nag. If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.

Don't demand explanations for my wrong behavior. I really don't know why I did it.

Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of understanding and encouragement. I will do almost anything for your approval!

And finally, please remember that I learn more from you as a model than as a critic - and from your praise for my appropriate behavior than from your criticism for my misbehavior.

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