

# OVERCOMING SELF-DOUBT IN PARENTING

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Self-doubt in young parents about their ability to be good parents is natural, wide-spread, normal and destructive. What is normal is not necessarily good. Self-doubt is not good. It debilitates people's trust in themselves, blocks spontaneity in social interaction, blocks healthy intuitions, makes people dependent on external advice which is mostly not relevant and not helpful for their unique situation. Healthy parenting cannot evolve on the basis of parental self-doubt. For healthy parenthood to evolve, the self-doubt must be overcome. Before we try to change it, we have to understand it.

There are five major causes of parental self-doubt:

- 1) **Parenthood is a drastic change in any man and woman's reality of life.** Suddenly you find yourself totally responsible for a baby who is totally dependent on you. It immediately becomes top priority, pushing all your life engagements and interests aside. It becomes the centre of your world, you feel totally responsible for their wellbeing, entertainment and development, and no-one really ever taught you how to do it. You are not the sole centre of your own life anymore. You are the 'service department' for someone else's life, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. And there is no time-out, no weekend off, no holidays without this little being whose needs are endless. Your relationship changes drastically: the woman is not the same woman; her body is not the same body and the commitment to her man becomes not the first but the second commitment—she is totally dedicated to the child now. The sexual life has to go through a drastic transition. Work is compromised. Life will never be the same again. Who can be prepared for that? You learn on the job, and like any other learning on the job, you make many mistakes, each one of them effects the wellbeing of your child.
- 2) **Most people feel that being a good parent is the most important challenge in their life** and tend to judge themselves severely for any possible failure, real or imagined. Being a good mother and a good father is one of the highest parameters by which people evaluate their real worth as a human being. We desperately wish to be a good parent. We judge ourselves severely for every mistake. And inevitably there will be mistakes, because none of us is an angel. We find it very hard, may be impossible, to forgive ourselves the mistakes that we make in parenthood.
- 3) **There is no professional training for becoming a parent.** All professional tasks require some professional training and a period of supervision in preparation for professional task and responsibility. Not parenting. The most important responsibility in the world: being a mother and

being a father of a child that is completely dependent on you– and no one trains you how to do it. You learn on the job, you make terrible mistakes that you later realise and feel guilty about it, and, of course, as a result, your self-doubt grows.

- 4) **Most people—at least 90% in my observation—do not want to parent their children the way they were parented themselves.** That means that they *know* what they *do not* want to do to their children, but they do not know what they *do* want to do instead. They have no good role-models of parenting to follow and, as stated before, and there are no professional trainings for parenthood.
- 5) **Self-doubt is a parasite.** It is a mental disease which is so wide-spread – it is considered normal. It is normal but it is still sick and destructive. It is a part of the destructive psychological DNA of humanity, a fundamental fault in human design. It effects every human being to various degrees. If you let it control you, if you act on it– it grows in you. Beyond a certain point of severity – it may block you completely from expressing your real potential in life in *all* fields of human activity. Parental self-doubt is one serious expression of this sickness, out of many.

Self-doubt can be overcome, but it takes a conscious effort. In Psychophonetics, we developed a special, powerful process for overcoming self-doubt. The main challenge here is to make this invisible voice in you– visible. It is invisible because it comes from the *inside* of your own thinking, your own cognition. It is very difficult to catch it because it is coming from the inside. But it is possible, if you know how. In Psychophonetics, we call self-doubt '*The 3<sup>rd</sup> Beast on the Threshold*'. The two other '*Beasts on the Threshold*' are self-fear and self-hatred. We are born with these tendencies. They express themselves inside of us in different ways in different phases of our biography. *They are there to be confronted and to be overcome. They can be confronted and overcome.* When we overcome them – they make us stronger, deeper, wiser, more ourselves. But not before.

It is possible to 'catch' self-doubt through observation of its destructive effect on you. The intellect cannot catch it, because the Doubt is using the intellect as its own weapon against you. All parasites do that: using the host body against itself. But acknowledgment of one's own suffering, not with self-judgement (which is just a form of self-hatred) but with compassion, self-compassion– can force the internal parasite of self-doubt to become visible to the observer. Once you 'see' it with your inner eye– and everyone is able to do that– you can control it, you can choose to stop feeding it, you can liberate yourself from it, and then it starts to diminish in you. There is a saying in Psychophonetics: "The Doubt is real. This is the end of the Doubt".

Confronting doubt is not enough. An alternative to self-doubt has to be created and activated. What is the alternative to self-doubt? Self-Creativity. What you create yourself, what comes consciously out of you– you don't doubt it, because you created it and you know it. Creativity *is* the opposite of self-doubt.

In the case of parental self-doubt, the required creative act is *the creation of your own image and character as a mother and a father*. The past cannot guide you in that; Memory of your parents cannot guide you in that; external advice cannot guide you in that. Only your own intuition, coming from your own loving heart– can truly guide you in that act of new creation: who do you want to be as a mother and a father for your child. No external advice is helpful here. No one can teach you how to be the ideal parent that only you can be. But you can create it out of yourself, not repeating the past, not following external advice, not following anything and anyone. Creating out of your own heart commitment to the child and out of your own intuition – the true, unique parent that only you can be for that unique child. You will make mistakes and you will learn from them, because they will be *your* mistakes. You will find new surprising solutions to new challenges with your child, and they will work, because they will come from your own parental intuition and deep wisdom.

Parental self-doubt has to be confronted and neutralised. Ideal parental self-image has to be created out of one's own intuition and heart. That creative act is the end of parental self-doubt.

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