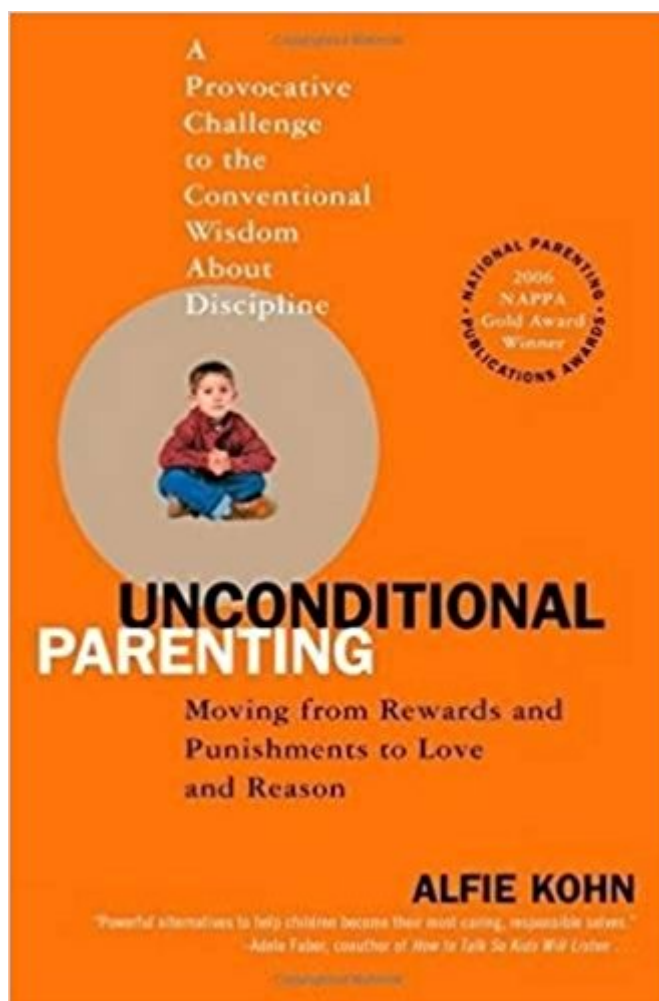


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# Unconditional Parenting: Moving From Rewards And Punishments To Love And Reason



## Synopsis

Most parenting guides begin with the question “How can we get kids to do what they’re told?” and then proceed to offer various techniques for controlling them. In this truly groundbreaking book, nationally respected educator Alfie Kohn begins instead by asking, “What do kids need?” and how can we meet those needs? What follows from that question are ideas for working with children rather than doing things to them. One basic need all children have, Kohn argues, is to be loved unconditionally, to know that they will be accepted even if they screw up or fall short. Yet conventional approaches to parenting such as punishments (including “time-outs”), rewards (including positive reinforcement), and other forms of control teach children that they are loved only when they please us or impress us. Kohn cites a body of powerful, and largely unknown, research detailing the damage caused by leading children to believe they must earn our approval. That’s precisely the message children derive from common discipline techniques, even though it’s not the message most parents intend to send. More than just another book about discipline, though, *Unconditional Parenting* addresses the ways parents think about, feel about, and act with their children. It invites them to question their most basic assumptions about raising kids while offering a wealth of practical strategies for shifting from “doing to” to “working with” parenting—including how to replace praise with the unconditional support that children need to grow into healthy, caring, responsible people. This is an eye-opening, paradigm-shattering book that will reconnect readers to their own best instincts and inspire them to become better parents.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Author of nine books, including the controversial *Punished by Rewards*, Kohn expands upon the theme of what's wrong with our society's emphasis on punishments and rewards. Kohn, the father of young children, sprinkles his text with anecdotes that shore up his well-researched hypothesis that children do best with unconditional love, respect and the opportunity to make their own choices. Kohn questions why parents and parenting literature focus on compliance and quick fixes, and points out that docility and short-term obedience are not what most parents desire of their children in the long run. He insists that "controlling parents" are actually conveying to their kids that they love them conditionally—that is, only when they achieve or behave. Tactics like time-out, bribes and threats, Kohn claims, just worsen matters. Caustic, witty and thought-provoking, Kohn's arguments challenge much of today's parenting wisdom, yet his assertion that "the way kids learn to make good decisions is by making decisions, not by following directions" rings true. Kohn suggests parents help kids solve problems; provide them with choices; and use reason, humor and, as a last resort, a restorative time away (not a punitive time-out). This lively book will surely rile parents who want to be boss. Those seeking alternative methods of raising confident, well-loved children, however, will warmly embrace Kohn's message. (Mar.) Forecast: Kohn is a controversial and popular author/speaker, well regarded by scholars and educators. This title should appeal to parents who want to explore the "whys" and not just the "hows" of raising kids. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Powerful alternatives to help children become their most caring, responsible selves." -- Adele Faber, coauthor of *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen* . . .

I bought this book when I was struggling with parenting my rebellious 7-year-old. I tried everything I thought I was supposed to be doing and nothing worked. This book totally changed how I felt about my children (and even my own parents). It has improved the relationships in my life so much that I recommend this book to everyone. I bought a few copies because it makes a great gift for new parents. Read it with an open mind because it will challenge everything you thought you knew about how to be a good parent, but if you stick with it it makes perfect sense!

As I plan to begin a family, my instincts were to either do what my parents did or do the opposite. I'm so glad I heard about this book. Although this will not be my only parenting book, I did change much of my perspective about the kind of mother I will be. The author asks the reader to question

what sort of adult you wish your child will grow into. It's an obvious but valid question!

This book is amazing. It has brought me to think so fundamentally about how I parent and what our actions really say to our children. I am so inspired by the ideas Kohn puts out there in this book. I feel inspired to find the strength to do better than what I myself have experienced, and through awareness and really contemplating what unconditional love looks/sounds/feels like, I have come to an understanding. I can see how I want to manifest unconditional love in my family, through my own actions and intentions with my child. He is truly a gem with so much to share. I wasn't head over heels for this book at the beginning, it is forthright a little dense, but once I started opening up to what he has to say my mind starting shifting and moving and growing. I think everyone, parent or not, should be asking these questions of themselves according to the kind of world they have part in creating.

This books brings up some very good points about the way children are raised and treated in North American culture. He does admit, however, that he doesn't know how to fix the issue, only that there is a problem, which he goes on to explain in depth. He gives a few guidelines on how children might be treated better (mostly to do with giving a child respect when disciplining) in order to give them a stronger upbringing which will ultimately result in more confident, self-sufficient and ego-stable people. It's hard to un-learn one's first teaching (from our parents) on how to raise children, but it's worth it. And while, Alfie doesn't know the real answers to his questions, he makes a parent think and try to figure out how to best deal with the problems.

Just ask yourself: What Would Alfie Do?

When my son was about to turn 2, he began acting up and I started to think about the issue of discipline. I read other books that focused on tips to make your child behave better, or how to deal with the outbursts. But this book addresses the overall picture and the attitude of parents toward their kids. It really changed my perspective. I went from wanting to "discipline" my child and change his behavior, to respecting him and REALLY showing unconditional love. Actions speak louder than words. I really recommend it.

I'm a new mom , so much to learn. This book describes what my parents inclined to do to parent me, it reminds me how to avoid the bad parenting style

We had heard many great things about this book. I decided to order online instead of trying to track it down at a used book store in town. The thinking and skillset offered in this book is a very different from the norm way of thinking/acting! I highly recommend this book to anyone considered to be a parent, teacher, or in a meaningful relationship! This kind of idea set would make this world a better place to be and grow if everyone could adopt this way of thinking over the "old school" ways of thinking/parenting!!

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