



QUAGLIA INSTITUTE

A PARENTING GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING AND FOSTERING CHILDREN'S ASPIRATIONS

SELF-WORTH

ASPIRATIONS AND THE 8 CONDITIONS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

When you are able to dream about your goals, and also work to reach them, you have high aspirations.

According to Dr. Russell J. Quaglia, founder and president of the Quaglia Institute for School Voice and Aspirations, "'Aspirations' is the ability to dream about the future, while being inspired in the present to reach those dreams."

Dr. Quaglia has identified 8 Conditions that Make a Difference in whether people have high or low aspirations. The 8 Conditions are: Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun & Excitement, Curiosity & Creativity, Spirit of Adventure, Leadership & Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action. Having these 8 Conditions in your life can help you reach your dreams and goals.

We want the best for our children. We want them to learn and grow, to hope and dream, to set goals and strive to reach them. We have the power and ability to help our children do all of these things. The first step is to understand and learn ways to foster our children's aspirations.

When a person of any age has high aspirations, they are able to set goals for the future and, most importantly, take steps in the present to reach those goals. When people have high aspirations, they take on new challenges, persevere through difficult tasks, and confidently take steps toward their future.

People are not born with high or low aspirations. Rather, the conditions in their lives either support and nurture their self belief, or they do not. Luckily for us, we know that there are ways we can deliberately foster our children's aspirations. Research based on the work of Dr. Russell J. Quaglia has shown that there are 8 Conditions which help promote children's aspirations. These Conditions are: Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun & Excitement, Curiosity & Creativity, Spirit of Adventure, Leadership & Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action.

Parents who learn about the 8 Conditions and choose to incorporate them into their parenting can truly help their children's hopes and dreams for the future become a reality. This guide gives parents of all types—biological parents, adoptive parents, stepparents, foster parents, and even grandparents—an opportunity to learn about aspirations and to reflect on the influential role they play in their children's lives.

There are two parts to this guide. Part I, Self-Scoring Inventory, is designed to help parents better understand their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the Self-Worth Conditions that affect aspirations. Part II, Exploring Aspirations, portrays the Self-Worth Conditions in much more detail.

Each condition is defined and then explored through a series of questions designed to generate a deeper understanding of how parents can promote aspirations. Part II also offers age-appropriate information on each condition. Parents are asked to explore each condition further and to engage their children actively in the aspirations growth process.

Keep in mind that this guide is not meant to make you judge yourself as a parent or compare yourself to other parents. Rather, the information can be used to create better relationships with your children and to foster their aspirations at home and in school.

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Self-Scoring Inventory

Read each statement in the following three sections and determine which answer best measures your response. Assign points as indicated. Answer questions as honestly as possible in order to help you better understand the impact you have on your children's aspirations. Use the chart at the end to self-assess your strengths and weaknesses.

SCORE YOURSELF ON THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS RELATED TO THE 8 CONDITIONS.

SECTION 1

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | never 0

1. I recognize my children's individual talents and strengths. _____
2. I know the names of my children's friends. _____
3. I participate with my children in their hobbies and interests. _____
4. I know my children's hopes, dreams and fears. _____
5. I allow my children to be themselves. _____
6. I work on creating trust and support between my children and me. _____
7. I take the time to know what my children are learning in school or on their own. _____
8. We have positive traditions and rituals in our family. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 2

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | never 0

1. I am a positive role model for my children. _____
2. My children seek out my advice. _____
3. Our family talks about people in the community who make a difference. _____
4. I help my children be good role models for each other and their friends. _____
5. I speak positively to my children about their teachers. _____
6. I attend my children's after-school activities. _____
7. I realize I am a hero to my children. _____
8. My children know I am proud of them. _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 3

Score yourself for each of the following statements using the scale below:

Always 4 | Most of the time 3 | Sometimes 2 | Seldom 1 | never 0

1. My children are involved in community service projects. _____
2. My children see me attempt to be my best. _____
3. I value my children's effort to learn, as much as I value test results and grades. _____
4. I help my children set goals. _____
5. I share my accomplishments with my children. _____
6. I encourage my children to persevere with challenging tasks and assignments. _____
7. I recognize my children's best efforts. _____
8. I consistently take the time to understand my children's homework assignments. _____

TOTAL _____

Self-Scoring Inventory

INTERPRETATIVE CHART

Transfer Section Scores from the previous pages to the grid below.

Section	Score	8 Conditions that Make A Difference
1		Belonging
2		Heroes
3		Sense of Accomplishment

Note your high score and celebrate that as a parent you support this condition throughout your school. Share with other parents what you do to make this your strength.

Note your low score and learn how to improve these conditions as you proceed through this guidebook.

THOUGHTS / IDEAS / INSIGHTS

[illegible]

BELONGING

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY BELONGING?

The condition of Belonging means that children feel they are a valued member of the family, while still maintaining their uniqueness. It is a relationship between two or more persons characterized by a sense of connection and support. A sense of Belonging is a necessary condition for children's feelings of well-being, social engagement, and competence. Belonging creates an atmosphere that welcomes and connects all children to their family. The condition of Belonging increases children's confidence in their abilities and their strengths, since Belonging encompasses acceptance and support.

As a parent, you have the opportunity to establish an atmosphere of Belonging in your family, one that promotes your children's sense of well-being, connection, and self-belief.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN A FAMILY HAS A SENSE OF BELONGING?

- Children feel valued for their unique skills and talents
- Children are able to express their ideas, hopes and concerns
- Children feel safe and secure with their family
- Family members know each others' strengths and how to help each other improve
- Parents know their children's friends, hobbies, skills, hopes and fears

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I show my children I value their unique skills and talents?

How do I listen to my children's ideas, thoughts and opinions?

How do I help my children display tolerance and empathy towards others?

How do I show my children I am interested in their schoolwork and extracurricular activities?

Making a Difference: Belonging

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Belonging, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

14-18 YEAR-OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They need reassurance about the decisions they are making
- They need the safety and security that comes with family traditions
- They still want to fit in and be accepted
- They are becoming their own person

DO TOGETHER

- Become actively involved in your children's interests
- Help your children explore their strengths as related to careers and post-secondary education
- Help your children think about issues of tolerance and acceptance on an adult level
- Spend time with your children's friends and peers

TALK ABOUT

- Their academic and personal strengths
- What it feels like to be valued and accepted
- Whether they can be truly who they want to be with their friends and family
- What they can do to make others feel more accepted

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE BELONGING

now that you have reflected on the ways to promote the condition of Belonging for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of belonging, I will...

HEROES

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HEROES?

Heroes are everyday people – friends, family, coaches, teachers, and parents – in a child’s life who inspire him or her to excel and to make positive changes in attitudes and lifestyles. Heroes are individuals your children can connect with regularly, who have a positive influence on them, and who listen to and value their ideas. Heroes build trust in others and belief in oneself.

As a parent you are a Hero to your children. They look up to you as someone to learn from and communicate with about many things. Building better relationships with your children through support, guidance, encouragement, and love enables them to become more self-confident in their life and school.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS ARE HEROES TO THEIR CHILDREN?

- Children trust the adults in their lives
- Children feel they are unconditionally supported and loved
- Children feel connected
- Parents listen to their children
- Parents spend time with their children

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How am I a positive role model for my children?

How do I let my children know that I am here for them?

How do I help my children be positive role models to others?

How do I share who my Heroes and role models are with my children?

Making a Difference: Heroes

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Heroes, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

14-18 YEAR-OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They are often caught between making adult choices and feeling like a child
- They are susceptible to negative adult role models
- They are trying to create their own identity independent of their parents
- They need many adult role models to support and guide them

DO TOGETHER

- Try to meet people in professions your children admire
- Take a fun class, play on a sports team or learn to play an instrument together
- Attend school functions, even if you do not sit together
- Help with school assignments and continue to show interest in their academics

TALK ABOUT

- Difficult decisions you had to make when you were their age
- Positive and negative people in the news
- How they can make a decision to be an everyday Hero
- Ways to develop traits they admire in other people

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE HEROES

now that you have reflected on the ways to promote the condition of Heroes for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of heroes, I will...

SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Sense of Accomplishment recognizes effort, perseverance, and citizenship as signs of a child's success. Parents often use a narrow view of accomplishment that refers to academic achievement or innate ability. Sense of Accomplishment, however, is viewed in terms of personal growth and effort, not just measurable outcomes and countable successes.

As a parent you have the opportunity to celebrate all of your children's accomplishments. Taking time to recognize and support your children's efforts will result in children who are motivated to persevere through difficult tasks and to create a healthy family through hard work, dedication, and love.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE WHEN PARENTS SUPPORT SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT?

- Children feel proud putting forth effort
- Children try their best, even if they don't receive top grades in all they do
- Children participate in community service initiatives
- Parents recognize and praise their children's efforts and accomplishments
- Parents value effort and perseverance as much if not more than the end product



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I show my children I value their efforts?

How do I help my children persevere at difficult tasks?

How do I model perseverance for my children?

How do I involve my children in activities that promote citizenship?

Making a Difference: Sense of Accomplishment

This section provides you with a chance to better understand your children's developmental needs as they relate to the condition of Sense of Accomplishment, and includes age-appropriate activities and discussion points to further your children's awareness of this condition.

14-18 YEAR-OLDS

KEEP IN MIND

- They have already experienced failures and successes
- They need to be acknowledged for their hard work
- They often equate success and happiness with money and material objects
- They might not know how to work harder and do better

DO TOGETHER

- Pursue activities where your children put forth much effort
- Set personal and academic/career goals
- Make a timeline of past accomplishments and future dreams
- Share struggles and frustrations you have had in your efforts to accomplish something personally or professionally

TALK ABOUT

- All the successes they have experienced
- Future goals and ways to achieve those goals
- What it feels like to try hard and still not be successful
- Important skills employers' desire

NOTES:

SETTING A GOAL TO PROMOTE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

now that you have reflected on the ways to promote the condition of Sense of Accomplishment for your children, take some time to set a specific goal for enhancing the condition in your children's lives.

To better promote the condition of Sense of Accomplishment, I will...

The 8 Conditions That Make a Difference

BELONGING:

Feeling like you are an important part of a group, while knowing you are special for who you are.

HEROES:

An everyday person who encourages you to do your best. Someone you look up to and who you can turn to for help when you need it.

SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Being recognized for many different types of success, including hard work and being a good person.

FUN & EXCITEMENT:

Enjoying what you are doing — whether at work, school, or play.

CURIOSITY & CREATIVITY:

Asking “why?” and “why not?” about the world around you.

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE:

Being excited to try things even when you are not sure if you will be good at them.

LEADERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY:

Making your own decisions and accepting responsibility for those choices

CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ACTION:

Setting goals and taking the steps you need to reach them.