

FEBRUARY

# WINNING YOUR CHILD'S HEART

PRIMER



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MARRIAGE & FAMILY MENTORING MEMBERSHIP

Sometimes we're so busy being a parent to our kids that we neglect to find effective ways to connect with their hearts.

It can be hard to tell when this disconnection is occurring.

Our kids often lack the emotional maturity to express the pain of this disconnection.

And if our parents failed to win our hearts as children we may have developed walls against this feeling of disconnection. Those same walls that protected us when we were children can work to keep our kids on the outside as well.

So I found it helpful to regularly ask my heart a simple question about each one of my kids.



**On a scale of 1-10 how deeply do I feel connected to him or her at a heart level?**

This protects my relationship with my kids from heart drift.

Heart drift is normal and inevitable in a family.

This is when the subtle disconnection starts to happen and we wake up one day to find that our heart is disconnected. This is when it's time to begin a process of winning back our child's heart.

But before we dive into the tools that help to make this happen it's important to know why heart connection is so important.

Heart connections are the pathway of love and we were made to be loved.

What does love connected look like? When it comes to parental love I really resonate with this description by Tim Keller:

**To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything.**

Connected love is to feel fully known and fully loved at the same time.

This looks different at each stage of our child's life but the result is the same. This creates in the heart of our child deep inner peace. Shalom. To know you are fully known and fully loved is to feel deep stable roots that give our kids the freedom to grow into who God has made them to be.

So let's take a few minutes to make an honest assessment at how this connection is going with each of our kids:

- How connected do you feel at a heart level with each of your kids on a scale of 1-10?
- How does the strength or weakness of that connection impact your child? You? Your relationship?
- How was your heart connection with your parents growing up? Are there any strategies you've developed against heart connections that might be interfering with the depth of the connection with your kids? Describe that to your spouse.