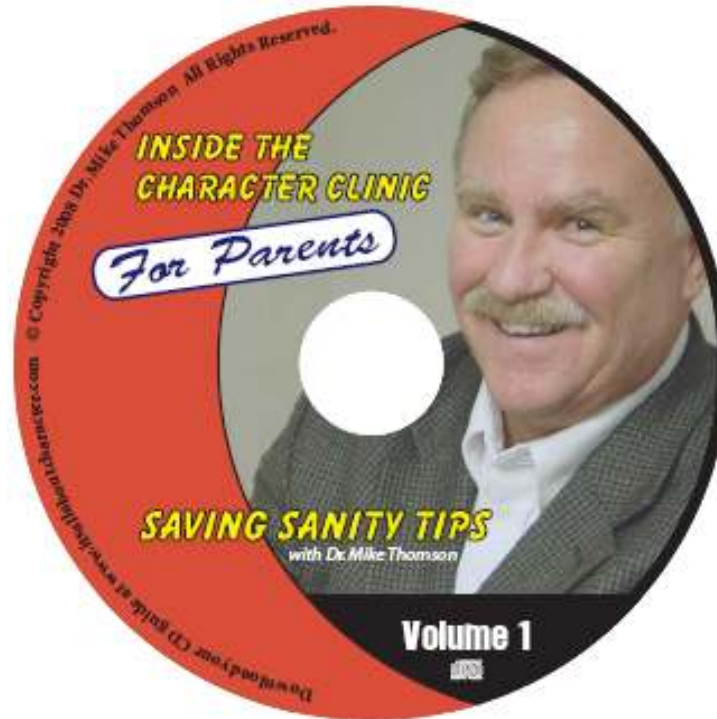


The Best Of Dr. Mike's 90-Second Tips For Parents

<http://www.itsallaboutcharacter.com>



about the author:

As a nationally known speaker and author, Dr. Michael Thomson, Ph.D. ("Dr. Mike") has been working with schools, businesses, and individuals on matters of Good Character and Ethics for over 25-years. Dr. Mike is the host of the Award Winning PBS Series "*In Search of Character*[™]" and co-host of "*The Learning Lunchbox*," a DVD and Family Guide for 66,000 K-8 schools throughout the country. Dr. Mike has offered practical advice through his "*Strategies For Saving Your Sanity*[™]" principles and workshops for business owners, managers and employees as well as K-12 educators, students, coaches and parents.

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A BRIEF MESSAGE FROM DR. MIKE...

First of all, the examples and direction that you set as a parent are very important. It is no newsflash that it is a huge responsibility being a parent and one that you need to take seriously. The conversations you have with your son or daughter can be some of the most influential dialogue during their growing up years. What you are listening to in my audio package can give you some great information to start dialoguing with your kids.

I want you to think about something for a moment – your leadership and direction as a parent will affect what goes on in your son or daughter’s classroom, hallways, lunchroom, locker room, at one of their friends homes, parties and whenever and wherever you might not be watching. And whenever and wherever you might not be watching is critical decision time for your kids. Your messages and the behavior you model can change the culture and climate in those locations as well as your son or daughter’s choices they make in those areas in an instant!

As a parent, your kids will look to you for positive direction, guidance, support and leadership in all areas of their life. Your son or daughter’s school administrators, teachers, coaches and advisors will look to you for leadership and direction. Even community members will perceive your role as one of leadership and direction. You can see that “all eyes will be on you” as a parent. You will also see that because of these higher expectations and pressure, you will be expected to lead by example, foresee potential problems and deal with them, to be positive in your decisions, to have a strong belief system and good moral character.

As you can see, being a parent is a reward but also a burden of sorts. I know that your leadership as a parent does not happen magically. I know that your leadership skills and your personal character as a parent will be tested from time to time. But I also know that you did not get to where you are today without hard work, dedication, or perseverance. And I also know that you did not get to where you are at right now without some guidance from someone around you. And this is where I will come in – I will be your guide and teacher in the leadership and character areas.

I truly believe that there has never been a better time for learning the skills of what good character and leadership really is. I also believe that the daily activities that your son or daughter might be involved with provides a wonderful backdrop to emphasize the importance of good character choices. But I want to also emphasize that effective character and leadership education is not something that is done to young people. It is something in which they actively participate. As Aristotle said, *“the best way to teach morality is to make it a habit with young people.”* With that said, the intended message in this audio package is to

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not just talk about what it means to do the right thing - but create opportunities for your son or daughter to apply the lessons in life by:

- Increasing their ethical commitment, consciousness, and competency in everyday life situations.
- Improving their ethical quality of individual decision-making and conduct both in school, on the playing surface if they participate in sports, at home and in the community.
- Stimulating moral aspirations, reinforcing motivation, and enhancing their ability to do the right thing – even when no one is watching, which is the true test of one’s character.

The audio package you will listen to will provide good advice, inspiration, guidelines and teachable moments in the areas of leadership and character. I have even provided reflection and sharing questions in an effort to not only internalize these messages but also put them into action. As a parent you will be able to easily infuse this information into discussions with your son or daughter. In fact, I encourage you to let your kids listen to this audio package and set up a time where you both can reflect, share and discuss what everyone is listening to. If you do as I’m suggesting here, I guarantee that your family will be one step beyond where you were yesterday.

If you have questions, problems or concerns, be assured that a good parent-leader knows that it is okay to ask for help and guidance from their son or daughters school administrators, teachers, coaches or advisors or even from “Dr. Mike.” You are only a click or phone call away from others that will help you.

Last but not least - Congratulations for not only being a parent but also a key person who will be influencing your boys to become young men and your girls to become young ladies through the program materials you have purchased from me. Your influence as a parent is tremendous and for that I “*Thank You*” in advance. Good luck!

Dr. Mike Thomson

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GENERAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO PONDER...

1. What were the major ideas presented in each message you listened to?
2. Do you agree/disagree with anything presented and why?
3. How can what was listened to help you as a parent? How can it help your son or daughter if they listen to it?
4. As a result of what was listened to, how might your choices change in the future?
5. Based on what was learned, what do you and your son or daughter need to work on in order to help each other out?
6. Based on what was learned, what does the information presented have to do with the quality of a person's character?

Track 1 - Kids Privacy?

1. To what degree should we allow personal freedoms?
2. In what ways can we allow our kids to make their own choices and learn from their mistakes and successes?
3. When have you stepped-up to the plate and swiftly corrected the behavior of your child? Was there a time when you should you have done that but did not? What were the consequences with both choices on your part?
4. Do you allow your child to demonstrate good decisions? Do they gain more personal freedom when they do? Do they see the connection between their choices and the personal freedom they earn as a result?

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Track 2 - You Are Blame Free!

1. How have you become sucked in to believing over the years that *“You put your kids to bed early,” “You grounded them,” “You took away their toys, their car, their stereo,” “Their teacher gave them a bad grade.” “Their teacher put them in detention or in-school-suspension,” “The cop gave them a ticket.” “Their boss fired them.” “Their coach kicked them off the team?”*
2. How can you use the age old excuse of *“Everybody else was doing it, it was peer pressure”* as a wonderful opportunity to teach your kids to stop blaming their choices on someone or something *“out there?”*
3. In what ways will your stress go down in your life when you begin informing your kids that you and others they come in contact with will never ground them, take things away from them, or put them places they don’t want to be - their poor choices will do that for them?

Track 3 - That's Not Fair!

1. How can you now make the phrase **“THAT’S NOT FAIR”** a wonderful learning opportunity for you and your kids?
2. When kids don’t take care of their responsibilities, parents get upset – voices get louder, and arguments run rampant! In what ways are you going to remind yourself to step-back, take a deep breath and rethink about **“Who Really Owns The Problem?”**

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3. How can you lay out to your kids that they have a “choice” to keep their room clean, get their schoolwork done, help out around the house as well as other chores or expectations you might have and if they “choose” to make these and other “good choices,” that they might earn more freedom for themselves?

Track 4 – Who Owns The Problem?

1. In what ways might thinking about the phrase “Who Owns The Problem?” keep you more sane and on track as a parent?
2. As a parent how have you taken on problems created by your children – problems created because of their poor choices, not yours? What are the prices you are paying for that choice?
3. What are some “problem” areas that you can turn over to your kids and let them “Own the Problem and The Choices?”

Track 5 - Three Types of People

1. In what ways have you yourself fallen victim to thinking that you have had “no choice” when in reality you did have a choice? How could you turn that example into a great learning opportunity for you and your kids?
2. Who do you know that sees themselves as being stuck, as having no choices, as having no control and one who chooses to quit and leave the problem

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- situation? What can we learn from this type of person that will help us in life?
3. Who do you know that chooses to stay stuck and wait for the world around them to change – the whiners, the pouters, the complainers, and the ain't-it-awful group? What can we learn from this type of person that will help not only us but also our kids?
 4. Who do you know that steps back and rethinks, turn problems into opportunities, focuses on choices they have control over, and understands that life has a multitude of choices to be made? What can we learn from this type of person that will help us in life?

Track 6 - Setting Expectations

1. What do you think Dr. Glasser was trying to teach us when he said *“Children find in the eyes of their parents the mirrors in which they define themselves within the relationship. Fill them with nothing - they become nothing. They have a tremendous ability to live down to the lowest expectations in any environment?”*
2. Do you set low expectations or do you set high or reasonable expectations for your kids? In what ways will your children learn to program themselves from the messages they receive from you and others?
3. If kid’s attitudes about themselves develop from the experiences they have, including the messages they receive from us as parents and others,

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everything you do or say to your kids, intentionally or not, will have an effect on them. *Who has control over those messages? Who has control over providing information to them?*

Track 7 - Rethinking Control

1. If the biggest issue that comes up in any relationship is the issue of control, how is it that the more you attempt to control your children's thoughts, actions or feelings, the more out of control you actually become?
2. It was stated that there isn't a child in the world that cares how much you know, until they know how much you care. In what ways do you demonstrate caring to your child? What are the benefits in doing this on a regular basis?
3. It was also stated that if you truly want to influence your child's decisions – then stop thinking about being in “control” of your child, and focus on the “relationship” you have with your child. What specifically are you doing to build your relationship with your child? What can you do to build on that relationship?

Track 8 - But I'm Only Human!

1. How can we learn from people who use statements such as “But I'm only human,” “OK, I made a mistake” or “I'm not perfect?” How can we teach this to our kids as a way NOT to live life?
2. In what ways can we help our kids to not fall into the trap of condoning the excuse of “I'm not so bad, there are others that are worse than me?”

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3. It was stated “you have the power and the control to make better choices and be better than those around you. You should always demand better from yourself and others. People of good character know the ultimate test of character is the willingness to do the right thing - regardless of the cost or risk. They do it simply because it is the right thing to do.” Why is this an important message to teach and model to our kids?

Track 9 - Ethics In Action

1. If good character is simply ethics in action and good character is making good choices **EVEN** when no one is watching, how can we teach this to our kids? What examples can we provide to them and what might the impact be with them?
2. How would teaching our kids to make the right choice **EVEN** when it might be costly or risky be a message that is important to them to learn now and in the future?
3. It was stated that anyone that really matters in your life will always judge you by your character - not by where you live, how you look, how smart you are, or how popular you are. How will this message help our kids?

Track 10 - Right & Wrong

1. In what ways do all the talk shows, dime store shrinks and tabloids we read, listen to or watch keep people off of personal responsibility for the choices

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- that they alone are responsible for making? How can we pass this along to our kids?
2. How can we use people who use “outside sources” as just excuses for their own choices as a wonderful teaching opportunity with our kids?
 3. How does each person have internal free will? Why do some hate to believe this?

Track 11 - Attitude And Choice

1. Why is it important for you to understand that all you really have complete control over in relationships with other people is demonstrating caring, asking questions, making statements, and providing alternative choices?
2. How will your caring come through loud and clear through your tone of voice?
3. It was stated that when people CHOOSE to use words like, “*I give up,*” “*It’s too hard,*” “*Why even try?*” it’s because they’re frustrated and see the solution to a problem as overwhelming. How can you kick it into high gear and teach your child to RETHINK that they’re never stuck unless they CHOOSE to think, act or feel stuck?

Track 12 - An Opportunity To Rethink

1. It was stated that passive-aggressive behavior, like refusing to talk, rolling the eyes, walking away, and the like, are all “flags or flares” in the air. What

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- are these telling us as parents? How can we learn to not “react” from the majority of these?
2. Why is it important for us to take an inventory in our homes on how we are providing an opportunity for our kids to: 1) talk openly; 2) demonstrate trustworthiness; 3) allow for the expression of feelings; and 4) allow for demonstrate of loyalty to the family structure? Would your kids say you pass or fail in these areas?
 3. In what ways will doing this reap great rewards in our relationship with our kids?

Track 13 - Who You Hanging Around With?

1. In what ways have you noticed that people who are in a negative funk about something draw people toward them that are also in a funk? Is it because misery loves company? How can you use this message to help your kids “how NOT to be” in life?
2. In what ways can we teach our kids that when “you” decide to take on the world with zest and vigor, you attract the same kind of people?
3. What kind of people do you attract? What kind of people do your kids attract?

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Track 14 - No More Yelling!

1. In what ways is yelling, screaming, raising voices excessively, going nuts, arguing and threatening kids actually creating more problems for parents and not less?
2. It was stated that when we choose to react, the problem, whatever it is or whomever it involves...has got you! Your focus is on “out there.” You just lost control. Do you agree or disagree? What examples apply here?
3. How can choosing to step back and rethink about what YOU have 100% control over in the problem situation you’re dealing with help you with a strategy to save your sanity?

Track 15 - The Power of Choice

1. Why is the phrase: “Good Choice, Poor Choice, My Choice,” such an incredibly powerful phrase—for your kids, and for you as a parent?
2. Why is it important to create a vision in our kids’ head that in most of life they have the power of choice?
3. In what ways can we use everyday examples of how people make some really poor choices “at the time” and help our kids understand how that same person could consider making better choices next time?



Thanks for listening and remember to visit:

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