



# - FAMILY -

DARE TO STOP THE TRAIN

# **DARE to STOP THE TRAIN**

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Rev: 08/28/16

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# ALONE, AT LAST?

By Jerry McIntosh  
Rev: 05/15/14

Is it not true that little girls become wise  
by absorbing the lessons of the ages  
from their mothers?

Do not little boys gain understanding  
by listening to how "it is done"  
from their fathers?

Is it not incumbent upon our elders to  
synthesize and distill their experience, their pain  
and their success into easily adaptable  
"Grips" of life?

Must we continually spin, circle and reinvent  
the same old pain, sorrow and joy ...  
"The Wisdom of the Ages"?

Where are our Dads? What is this allure of success  
that takes our Moms away from their homes?  
Who will teach us the "Wisdom of the Ages",  
guide us into paths of fulfillment  
and help us teach and protect our children?

Has our culture become so successful  
that now we are alone?

# BIOLOGICAL AND CHOSEN FAMILIES

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 08/10/16

When one is born into a family the biological event carries certain expectations of responsibility and friendship.

When two or more people come together a “family of choice” can be developed and it, too, carries an expectation of responsibility and friendship.

I have always believed that my family was an amalgamation of those biologically and those chosen.

To my surprise (and pain) I see that the biological family is (with exceptions) “what it is” and the chosen family is “what you make it”.

One can hope that the two will become one.

# FAMILY MATURATION

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 11/22/14

In a young family,  
Christmas morning brings  
early-rising children,  
and tired parents.

In a mature family,  
Christmas morning brings  
early-rising parents,  
and tired children.

# FIVE GENERATION CYCLE

By Jerry McIntosh

& thoughts from my friend, Peter Greene, Senior Tax Advisor

Rev: 01/16/14

## First Generation:

Family struggles to survive and is missing work ethic, education or morality.

## Second Generation:

Family sees the value of work ethic, education and morality and sacrifices to acquire them.

## Third Generation:

Family succeeds beyond their wildest dreams and passes on the production of the work ethic, education and morality but is remiss in teaching values.

## Fourth Generation:

Family dissipates the success of the Third Generation, often with drugs, alcohol and unwise spending.

## Fifth Generation:

Family returns to First Generation status.

## Moral

In the end, a strong work ethic, education and morality will not be permanent without teaching.

# GENERATIONAL EMPTINESS

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/08/11

Is it possible for successive generations of parents to Love but not Like their children?

Being constantly critical of their children...  
producing, instead, children sensing they're not good enough?  
Children always trying to prove something...fighting a gnawing emptiness?  
Do these children grow into parents who are never satisfied?

Where is the balance between healthy growth and never ending expectations?

Why is it so hard to build healthy, happy children  
by searching out positive, rewarding growth?

With balanced expectation and acceptance  
we can break "Generational Emptiness" and  
Love as well as Like our children.



# GRANDMA'S COMING

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 07/28/14

Christmas is coming, I'm so excited!  
There are delicious smells and familiar sounds.  
The stores are brightly decorated and  
I'm anxiously awaiting the arrival of friends and family, including Grandma.  
Grandma is gracious, helpful, a good cook, but mostly -- wise.

## Grandma's Coming

There are lists to make and lists to complete.  
Food to bake and food to eat,  
but mostly I want to walk on the trail with Grandma  
and look into her eyes and listen to her wisdom.  
However, there is shopping to do and parties to attend.

## Grandma's Waiting

Christmas is over and the presents are exchanged.  
The closets are reordered and the new stuff has been stored.  
The football games have been watched and the house has been cleaned.  
At the airport I hold Grandma tightly and look into her moist, sad eyes;  
eyes that hold wisdom and love never expressed.  
I just didn't have time.

## Grandma's Gone

Could Grandma be your next door neighbor, recently divorced and alone?

Could Grandma be someone at work who never fits in?

Could Grandma be a little girl whose father never comes home anymore?

How about the battered wife, the recently jobless, the homeless?

Christmas may be gone, but Grandma is not.

# K.I.S.S.

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 05/23/13

Have you ever tried to put a business plan together? It's complex, isn't it? How many people do you know that refer to their business plans before making the next important decision? It is tantamount to getting your tooth pulled, right?!

Now, let's be honest. Do you really have a family budget that is thought out completely, and you adhere to it?

How about raising your kids? Have you formulated what it takes to grow kids that are healthy - physically, psychologically and spiritually?

Have you and your spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend figured out how to be there for, thoughtful of each other, gentle and loving when the time is appropriate?

It seems that all of us spend tremendous amounts of time trying to solve the complexities of life, or at least worrying about why we fail to control those annoying complexities. Sometimes we try to make the simple issues complex!

Maybe we should introduce some balance. What if we focused our composite attitudes, assets and capabilities toward a single hurdle, conquered it, and then rested?

Keep it simple...how does it go!

# LIFE CYCLE

By: Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/06/14

The curiosity of our childish growth,  
the excitement of a completed education,  
the anxiety of an unknown future,  
the uncertainty at locating the perfect mate,  
the bewilderment at a child's birth,  
the involvement of a family's maturation,  
the joy and pain of the giving of children in marriage,  
the hope of new birth.

# MARITAL BALANCE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 05/11/12

Marriage is a kind of homeostatic process  
with a series of emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual  
dipole's that must be solved.

For example:

One partner moves toward order and the other partner...disorder;

One partner is exploratory and the other partner is not -  
religion, politics, vacation, discipline...etc.;

However, since the world changes around us and we change,  
marriage can never be perfect, never fixed  
but always approaching balance...living...changing...

# MOTHERS

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 05/10/12

It is with awe that I consider a mother's nurture  
and protection of her young (born and unborn).

It is with pain that I observe a mother's requirement  
to relinquish eventual control of her offspring.

But a mother's ultimate responsibility  
is to cheer from the stadia of life,  
as her beloved carry their burdens  
through the fields of sorrow and pain.

For a child forever coddled,  
is a child forever crippled;  
while a child forever cheered and encouraged,  
is a child forever strong.

# MY SILENT PRIDE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 03/20/13

In the "Age of Quick" we feast on thirty-minute sit-coms,  
political sound bites, fast foods, book summaries, fancy disposables and  
wonder at our empty relationships.

You see, the "Age of Quick" has a twin called the "Age of Empty".  
So we seek out new toys, new cars, new politicians, new TV shows...  
always hoping - with some desperation - that we can run the "Age of Empty" off while cleverly retaining  
the "Age of Quick".

We want more and we want it now.

Somehow,  
we have lost the "Age of Restraint" and its twin, the "Age of Meaning".

We have gained "time" at the expense of intimacy.

Why not take a moment to marvel...

So, as the gentle morning rays silently  
envelope your sleeping face, dear wife,  
I feel pride.

Your hidden talents and gifts of yesteryear have,  
with coaxing and the nurture of marital safety,  
flowered into fruits of great beauty.

I wonder what pleasant surprises and  
gifts of great value yet await their call to expression.

I wonder, even more, the change this world would see if  
ALL were to commit to the safety of nurturing hidden talents and  
special abilities of every member of their home.

What if every business and every church  
could become a place of exploration of hidden abilities?

Would not an explosion of goodness, wonder, enrichment,  
excitement, newness, invention and freedom take place?

I think so!

# NOISE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/13/14

The noise of a newborn ...  
a cry in the night tightens my chest.

The noise of a toddler ...  
is it anger or jest?

The noise of a pre-teen ...  
Nintendo, skateboards and foul language we barred.

The noise of a teenager ...  
the blare of rock music and the roar of cars.

The noise of absence (to school or marriage) ...  
the quiet so loud that it hurts.

But, the noise of our child's youthful return  
makes my heart leap right out of my shirt!

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# NON-MEMORIES

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 05/24/13

Today we left my parents in a nursing home. That's right --- where people sit in wheelchairs or walk slowly in bodies made up of worn out parts. Apparently all are assigned a special "look" that says, "We are no longer useful, our memories are fading and we should be quiet as we watch for death."

My parents fought, each in his or her own way, spurts of anger, tears, occasional memories, but no laughter and no jokes. My mother wouldn't even come to say good-bye to her refuge of 32 years. The dark shadow of failing health had silently slipped in, proclaimed an end to their dreams and stolen their cherished independence.

As we signed the contract to sell the house, consolidated the bank accounts, talked to the doctors and social workers, arranged for Medicare, executed the Power-of-Attorney, planned the estate sale and bought the storage boxes, we avoided reality, each other, the inevitable future...and the pressure grew.

But finally it was time to take apart the family engine, the security of a home that was "always there". So down came the pictures, the family collages and the clocks. Out came the silver (three generations of it still waiting for special occasions), the plates, the trinkets (from a thousand vacations) and the albums. My eyes scanned the furniture and settled lovingly on the piano, the site of many tears; tears of joy, tears of frustration, tears of anger, and tears of sorrow, a responsive friend to my fingers of emotion. Memories came tumbling out, good and bad, great and small. In the middle, my brother and my father reconciled years of pain of separation, but it was my mother who said it best, "Isn't it strange, we have this urge to spend our whole lives collecting and with a slight wind of ill health, all these things become nothing?"

As the dumpster arrived and the family took what was important, it occurred to me that something was missing. It has always been more important to me to create memories, good or bad, than to collect material goods, but somehow I was confronted with "non-memories". All the stories were 30 years old. Why weren't there any younger stories?

NON-MEMORIES (continued)



## NON-MEMORIES (continued)

Sitting one last time in this old home with the rain dripping on the aluminum patio cover like nature's clock reminding me of the unstoppable march of age, I am reminded of a parent's role:

- Raise your children with love and care
- Give them tools to gainfully till the soil of life
- Turn them loose to expand their roots
- Watch from afar ... with pride of their accomplishments and pain in their separation.

But what of the children's role? It's true, we have homes to build, children to raise, bills to pay (oh, those bills), clubs to join and business to transact. We want to demonstrate our success, especially to our parents, go go go, no time to stop, call, write or visit. Besides, Mom and Dad have friends, they have an RV, they have money, they have time. With their time, they were waiting for my call, my letter, my visit, my explanation of life, **my memories**. When we did not create any new memories together, they quietly lived in the old ones ... but now we are saying good-bye to the old memories as my parents take their place on the silent watch at the nursing home.

Today I am wiser than yesterday. My parents will work through advancing infirmity, that's their job, but they won't understand neglect, that's my job. We can't fill in 30 years of lost opportunity or take them to Europe, but I can share my hopes, my pain, my success, my failure (and what I learned with the failure). After all, they never wanted anything more than to know if they gave me the right tools, to create new memories.

# PARENT-CHILD DEVELOPMENTAL CYCLE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 03/12/15

A vibrant parent-child partnership; an exquisite gift! A gift to the parent ... to the child ... to the extended family ... to the community.

How is such a gift fashioned? Is it an accident? Does it require extensive training? Allow a few thoughts on the relative simplicity of rich family rewards, goodness that must emanate first from a parent that puts the needs of a healthy child above all else; a Mom or Dad willing to expend physical, mental and spiritual effort, accountable and responsible to this child of great value. A Mom or Dad, who, by giving, will certainly receive. A Mom or Dad who, one day, will become a child again needing care from their child ... now the responsible parent.

To understand this exciting challenge is to perceive two spinning wheels, each spinning separately, but in the same direction at the same speed and at the same time --- the child's wheel and the parent's wheel. The child's wheel consists of three stages, DEPENDENCE, INDEPENDENCE and INTERDEPENDENCE while the parent's wheel also consists of three stages: RESPONSIBILITY, TRUST and finally INTERDEPENDENCE.

A child is born completely helpless, completely dependent. The need of warmth, food and security is so great that only the physical needs can be addressed in the beginning with the equally powerful mental and spiritual needs left for later development. What perfect timing than for the parent to demonstrate RESPONSIBILITY for the delivery of warmth, food and security and what anticipation to partner in the delivery of MENTAL and SPIRITUAL warmth, food and security.

The deliverables of stage one are simple: The parent responsibly and lovingly gives warmth, food and security and the child dependently and gratefully accepts. The second stage is more complex. The child must exercise INDEPENDENCE while the parent must exercise TRUST. By definition, independence requires testing; testing of what we have learned, testing of our bodies, thoughts, even testing of possibility. So the child must begin to test. The ultimate test of independence is the ability to repudiate all learning that does not have personal value or relevance to the independent thinker. This is a time of great fear and often great pain for any parent, but the wise parent must also exercise the second stage of the parent wheel: TRUST. In the beginning, trust is arranging for the child to take excursions within safe boundaries. For example, we might send the child to the store for a loaf of bread, but call the storekeeper ahead to provide a little help with the transaction. A sort of "responsibility at a distance". However, at some point we must send our children away with only the tools of our training and trust --- trust them, trust ourselves (perhaps a parent's darkest moment ... or brightest).

**PARENT-CHILD DEVELOPMENTAL CYCLE (continued)**

## PARENT-CHILD DEVELOPMENTAL CYCLE (continued)

The deliverables of stage two are exceedingly difficult: The parent must teach and then trust...the child must learn and then act ... independent, alone.

The third stage is exhilarating: The INTERDEPENDENT child is now the knowing possessor of a new and unique set of talents, gifts and abilities; a contributor now ready to give back as a grateful equal to the parent. The parent, meanwhile, is the benefactor of years of observation and contemplation; observations of other spinning wheels, other cultures, other traditions. The healthy parent and the healthy child can rejoice in the special abilities of each and begin to ask, "Is it possible that we might assist each other to enjoy more warmth, food and security?" They have both chosen INTERDEPENDENCE, the ability to request assistance of each other.

The deliverables of stage three: The parent and child share ... each other.

It has been my sad observation that if either spinning wheel, parent or child, stops spinning or begins to spin at a different speed, a sad illness begins to emerge. Without warmth, food and security delivered in a responsible and trusting manner, it appears that symptoms of this illness abound in both parent and child. We see symptoms such as selfishness, manipulation, hostility, unnatural fear --- the list is extensive.

There is a fourth stage: Senility. As the parent begins to absorb the inevitabilities of age, there is again a need for a parent and a child. What a joy, then, for the child to hold the head of the parent, a wise and loving head looking into the eyes of the child ... now the parent, ready to deliver: that's right --- warmth, food and security.

# PERFECT PARENTS

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/11/14

## **Do you fear not being a Perfect Parent?**

Is there one who has not said, "I will never raise my children like my parents raised me", or "I fear my children will say the same about me?" We all want our children to turn out "right", meaning turning out with our values, our habits, our career (for them), our choice of spouse, our church, and even our own unreached aspirations. If we probe way down deep, our final validation as a parent/person rides on how our kids "turn out". But the downside to this position is painful. The harder some parents try, the more their kids rebel. Manipulation and control create dependence (or rebels) not freedom. By our rules, even God wasn't a perfect parent, if you look at His kids.

## **Let's search for the perfect parent.**

When we look at our own past and the motives created by our past, who can say that we really understand the freedom and responsibility of perfect love? Does anyone really want to provide so much "direction" to their kids that they overwhelm their kids' freedom to make choices? And if they force their kids to fit a pre-designed pattern, don't they deny them uniqueness? Even God draws a line between caring for us and managing us. He empowers us to make good choices rather than preventing us from making bad ones. Forced obedience without choice produces initial conformity laced with latent rebellion. Let's also understand that the world our kids face is far different than the one we faced. Am I so arrogant as to pass on my incomplete value system when my generation taught that people not of my color were inferior, women were subordinate to men, environmental decay was O.K., Third World financial disasters and AIDS were somebody else's problems? We need to set our kids free to embrace better ideals than the ones which we embraced.

## **So what is a perfect parent?**

It is my belief that we need to teach morality and choice in an atmosphere of forgiveness. It is said that the major difference between the normal mind and the criminal mind is the deterrent of morality. We need to openly discuss right and wrong at the dinner table and as we walk or ride with our kids. We need to give our kids choices, even when our kids are very young and allow them to make the "wrong" choice.

PERFECT PARENTS (continued)

## PERFECT PARENTS (continued)

Forgiveness. What a wonderful asset possessed by so few. When we have failed to live up to our own expectations or those of our "significant others", there is nothing as healing as free flowing forgiveness, is there? Forgiveness provides the emotional safety for our inner parts to heal. After all, what is more important --- that we parents be right and in control or that our children make us proud because of their strong choices? It is terrific when our kids know we are proud of them even when they make a wrong choice.

Who knows? Maybe if we can learn to forgive our kids, we might even learn to forgive ourselves!

Special thanks to:

Dick Winn

"Signs of the Times", Sept. 1991

Special Agent Roy Hazelgood

# REACHING IN

By Jerry McIntosh  
Rev: 09/12/10

A critical Spouse searches for acceptance.

An insightful Spouse understands beyond criticism.

A vulnerable Spouse accepts responsibility (for perpetrating a hurt).

Oh, for humility to accept (my Spouse), when I don't understand.

# SCARCITY AND ABUNDANCE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/12/16

Often, children raised with a belief in a  
Scarcity of Material things (real or imagined)  
become adults driven by fear of unexpected cataclysmic loss  
given to irrational hoarding and defensive behaviors.

While children raised with a belief in an  
Abundance of Material things (real or imagined)  
become adults driven by natural gifts of love and charity  
allowing for the comfortable joy of rewarding relationships.

Is it possible that perceived Scarcity  
(of safety, extended family, intellectual pursuit)  
leads to adult anti-social behavior?

Is it also possible to capture the positiveness of an  
Abundant Belief structure and negate Scarcity Behaviors  
within the same Person?

# THAT'S LIFE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/10/14

As children we are undisciplined;

As youth we are misdirected;

As young adults we become focused,

But when we finally get polished ...

... We die!

Maybe there is a "fate better than death" ...

... I shall again become undisciplined.



# THE CHILD

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 03/01/13

It is with intense trepidation and expectation that we receive a Child, newborn or adopted.

It is with anxiety and hope that we open the door of a new Business.

Aren't both the Child and the Business our Children? Both are dependent upon our genetics, learning...our worldview.

The Child and the Business will not only learn from us but will also teach us.

There will be triumphs and failures for both...those twin teachers.

There are no "Magic Bullets" or "Secrets" to raising our Children...only work...hard work.

But it is the exhilaration of the triumphs and the pain of the failures – the twins – that provide the growth for our children...no short cuts.

Is it any wonder then that in the giving away of our children in marriage to another we have more trepidation, expectation, anxiety and hope?

We should rejoice in their continual growth, learning, pain and sorrow as they develop their worldview.

Sometimes I see Parents and Business owners not let loose of their Children when they should. I am sad because this Child or Business will remain less than it could be.

So, the magic elixir of life that brings joy, goodness and a job well done is "hard work."

Hard work, love and learning will promote the Child and the Business into maturity... and the Circle of Life continues.

# THE CRIPPLING EFFECT OF THE ONE-WAY GIFT

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 03/15/13

The need, even urge, to do good...one human to another...is innate. Only the most pathological has experienced the extinction of this most important characteristic of humanness. However, if this need is exploited to the point of the recipient of "goodness" having no way to reciprocate, than the "need to do good" is thwarted.

When parents shower goodness on their children, the goodness the parents never had, without the children returning goodness within their capacity, the children may feel unequal, then worthless, even hostile.

When welfare recipients receive goodness from the formal welfare system, churches or non-profits through no effort of their own, they may sense that they have nothing to offer...that they are useless.

When countries (particularly the U.S.) give goodness to other nations requiring nothing in return, is it any wonder we are so hated?

There is a theme that is becoming transparent...and a cure. Borrowing from Dr. Edgar Cahn's theory of Co-Production, healing this malady is absolutely possible. The "giver" and "receiver" of goodness must team-up to establish accomplishment that leads to the joy-of-change. Change that is substantial, long lasting and requires the contribution of both.

There is joy that emanates from families of children giving back to parents (including the elderly). There is excitement and success in business where employees' are expected to join with management and are celebrated for contributing their talents and gifts. There are welfare recipients who want to contribute, rather than extract from society, if given the opportunity to use their skills and gifts. There are countries (cultures) who would become strong political allies if only the U.S. would see them as equal partners in solving global issues.

# THE FAMILY

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 01/15/13

Is not the challenge of a gracious Family Character  
of greater value than the glory  
of an enduring Family Name?

... or, in the final counting,  
are they not the same?

# THE FINAL VICTORY

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/10/14

Is there a more intimate or precious gift than that of a child's trust? What joy comes to a mother as the child, feeling safe, closes its sleep-filled eyes in its mother's lap. What amazement a father feels as a child leaps with total trust from a bed into his arms.

Oh what a tragedy when parents turn their childhood pain into physical, emotional or sexual violence upon the very child who extended this most precious of gifts. Oh what a tragedy, when the child quickly gathers up this special gift of trust and hides it deeply in hidden corners of its heart.

As children grow in this dangerous world, many begin another cycle of damaging decisions. There are a few children, however, who for reasons not clearly understood, begin to make positive choices --- choices that allow them to transcend beyond their damaged beginnings. The fundamental tool of safety (control of one's environment) must be exchanged for the tool of trust. Damaged children have great need to control their environment, but for there to be final peace for a damaged child who has become an adult, control must, on occasion, be turned over to children, spouses or work associates. Comfort in life requires trust --- that most precious gift tucked so deeply in the heart.

How do we learn to trust in a world of untrustworthy people in order to see a brighter world populated by people who trust us because we trust them? I propose that we return to children. For it is the children that have this unbelievable, untainted gift of trust. Let us be trustworthy to the children so that we may begin to trust others. Gullible? Maybe, but let us trust even the untrustworthy, with boundaries, so that they may begin to trust themselves. And our world that is so difficult to control may become controllable --- as we let go --- the final victory.

# THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/10/14

Humankind! How do we search for our youth?  
Oh, we wish to grasp the hands of the "clock of years"  
for a return to a younger life.  
Do we not search for our "Fountain of Youth"  
with attention to vitamins for physiology and creams for physiognomy?

As with many imponderables,  
an answer lies close to our souls ... the next generation.  
While we absorb a physical decline and yet assume a mental and spiritual seasoning,  
our Youth look to us as travelers --- and hope for direction.

But if we become self-absorbed --- our Youth wait.  
If we demand position and respect --- our Youth ridicule.  
How fruitless!

If we would transfer our attention  
from weakness (physical decline)  
to strength (mental and spiritual understanding),  
would we not experience simultaneously, awe and humility?

If we were to compile our new "understandings" into useful transmissions  
and hold them before our Youth in humble anticipation,  
would they not hold us in positions of respect?

If our Youth were to accept and build upon our "understandings",  
would we not feel the joy of life?

Indeed, we would forego the sorrow of physical decline  
and rejoice in having found our "Fountain of Youth", the next generation!

# THE HEALTHY FAMILY

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 03/27/11

**Control** may very well be the single most, sought after commodity in every human being's life --- control of one's environment, future, family, friends, jobs and internal compulsions.

**Decreased Control** that facilitates the growth of those closest to you is long term and healthy.

**Control** that exerts manipulation of your friends, coworkers and family is short term and unhealthy.

One of the many tools of short term, unhealthy control is **guilt**, the offspring of two horrible progenitors --- fear and rejection.

Parents who exercise unhealthy **control** of children frequently resort to the many faces of **guilt**.

The immediate result of control/guilt is apparent cooperation from our children, but the long term affect leads them to have low self-esteem.

We learn the expertise of **guilt** from our parents and pass it to our children; hence, the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generations.

Is there an antidote? With much relief, I suggest **accountability**.

**Accountability** is the expectation that results from **explanation** of our needs; **planning** of our dreams; **implementation** of our ideas; and **discipline** of agreed upon results. There is an inverse relationship between **accountability** and **guilt**. Where there is decreased **accountability**, there is increased **guilt**. And, conversely, where there is increased **accountability**, there is decreased **guilt**; hence, the healthy family.

# THE PERFECT FATHER

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 01/14/13

A father is a quiet security  
who insists on your growth,  
rather than his own.

For if he demands that his children  
become his followers,  
then they will not become  
their children's leaders.

# THE TALE OF TWO FATHER'S

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 05/26/12

A young son once had a father he loved so much,  
but in time the father went away  
leaving such an ache.

In time another father came  
who loved the young son so.  
However, the ache remained.

As time passed, the young son had two sons of his own  
whom he loved so.  
But the ache? ...it still lurked.

At night, as the son looked lovingly at his two sons  
he thought of his two fathers.  
One, father he loved as he loved his own sons,  
but the other...the ache still lurked.



# THE WISE PARENT

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/12/16

If it is easier for a parent to give money to a child than wisdom,  
than where will the child find wisdom?  
Wisdom is the product of pain earned at the feet of disappointment.

It is more important that family wisdom,  
rather than family possessions,  
be passed from one generation to the next.  
The Wise Parent should be a partner of the child during those times of learning.

Families are torn apart by Greed,  
that ever-lurking destroyer!  
But who ever heard of one family member  
suing another for more wisdom?

# TWO SONS

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/12/16

A young mother held her firstborn in her arms,  
smiled and thought, "Whatever will he become?"

As the years flew by and he showed streaks of selfishness,  
she smiled and said, "This too shall pass."

Another young mother held her firstborn in her arms,  
smiled and thought, "Whatever will he become?"

As the years flew by and he showed streaks of selfishness,  
she corrected him and said, "This is not acceptable."

Both sons are known to me – the first has been arrested for extreme vandalism,  
while the second is a caregiver of people.

Both mothers are also known to me -- the first clutches her heart at night in pain; the second clutches  
her heart with joy.

You see, the first mother loved her son only in the present, while the second mother loved her son, in  
the present, as well as the future.

# VALUABLES

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 05/25/13

Driving along a freeway, my eye spotted a man running toward me. The effort with which he ran indicated extreme urgency. At once, noticing his car in the distance, a small brown bag sitting between the freeway lanes and the frantic look on his face gave a clear picture; the man was attempting to retrieve “something of value” before it was too late. Just as he reached a point parallel to the bag, a Jeep Cherokee, oblivious to the drama, caught the edge of the bag with the left rear tire causing a sudden explosion of multi-colored objects all over the freeway. The man threw up his arms in desperation and the suddenness of defeat was excruciating on his face.

As I drove on, I could not help reflecting upon the possibility of sudden and unexpected loss of things of value in our lives today. Why do we not show our appreciation, affection, warmth and love to those we value? Are we too busy, too bored, too hurt or too tired? Do we assume these “valuables” will be with us forever?

Why not call our spouse or special friend right now to arrange for a candlelight dinner to tell of their importance to us?

Why not turn the television off tonight, pop popcorn, set the kids in a circle on the floor and listen to them? I mean really listen.

Why not call a “shut-in” and take them to see a special play this weekend?

Why not be a surrogate parent to a hurting child or a good listener to a friend in trouble as soon as you notice the pain?

Why not treat yourself to an evening at “The Alley”, an Amtrak ride to Galveston or a personal day to see the Bayou Mansion just because you are special and need some alone time?

My mother owns a beautiful set of China with complimentary silver and gold place settings, which could only be used at very special times because of their great value. But, you know, they were so valuable we almost never used them, so where was the value?

Take hold of those you value, now.

# WAIT . . . . . THERE'S HOPE

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 02/12/10

How deep is a father's sorrow  
when he offers Direction to a wandering child,  
Hope to his beloved spouse,  
Guidance to deeply cared for friends and  
they all respectfully say, "No, come back another day"?

Do they understand his love, his pain, his sense of urgency?  
Do they not perceive that their aimless search has a solution?  
How does he extend his heart without intruding, overpowering or manipulating?  
When does a Dad get to be a Dad?

I guess a Dad must hone his God-given insights through sorrow and  
wait to give Direction to his child,  
wait to give Hope to his spouse,  
wait to give Guidance to his friends,  
wait, wait, . . . . .  
Oh, dear God, how long must I wait?

# WHAT I WOULD ASK

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/10/14

If my precious daughter were to bring home the young man of her dreams, I would ask him how he cared for his mother. Does he understand how much his mother loves him, nurtured him, guided him and longs for him to be near, yet understands that she must let him go so that he can become all she dreamed for him to be? As he cares for his mother, he will care for my daughter.

I would ask him if he respected his father. Does he know of his father's dreams for him and the quiet disappointment deep in his father's chest when neither father nor son measured up to those dreams? Does he understand that the advice and direction from his father was the result of much careful distillation of his father's successes and failures and that the advice was painfully crafted to be just right for the son of his hopes, his own life's extension? As he respects his father, he will respect his father's God.

I would ask how he solved problems with his siblings and did he hold any grudges for things done long ago? As he solves issues with his siblings, he will solve issues with his fellow sojourners in life.

I would ask him if he loves nature, walks in it and listens to it, observes its movement and interaction without manipulating it. I would ask him if he left it better than he found it and if he would fight for it. I would also ask if he had any special stories about his pets. For if we understand nature, we gain direction from God and balance in life.

I would ask him if he was curious. Is he interested in why things work, why people are angry, happy, sad, lonely, energetic, failures, and successes? For as we pursue our curiosity, we find God's paths of healing for those times when we have been wronged.

I must reflect over the eventful years with my own children and ask myself...

- Did I teach my son, my daughter to care for, love, and respect their mother, my beloved wife?
- Did I show consistency so that my children would have gained respect for me and hence, my God?
- Did I teach my children to solve problems and release old hurts so that they may work as lifelong productive co-workers?

WHAT I WOULD ASK (continued)

### WHAT I WOULD ASK (continued)

- Did I show my children how to love nature and its lessons and do they now feel safe enough to retreat to nature when their lives are out of balance?

And last of all, dear God, I would ask, please fill my children with curiosity to make up for all those times when I was immature, imperfect and thoughtless as a dad. Teach them how to forgive, for I love them so.

# WHERE IS MY PAIN?

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 02/12/10

My father died this morning. Where is my pain? This father who gave me my home, my name, one half of my genetic frame. He gave me history and with my past, a future. He also gave me unnecessary anxieties, needless concerns of the future and fear of an explosive temper.

When I attempted to demonstrate that I was a quality son by lovingly providing for him in his old age, he rebuffed me, was difficult and ultimately when I attempted to reorder his finances to his benefit, he ordered me out of his life, telling me I was not someone he could trust.

Where was the father that never had time to play "catch" with me, guide me, talk to me, be my friend? Where was the father that always needed me to solve his marital problems and sort out his medical bills in his time of need? So why am I confused at his death? I guess I do have pain, not the pain that comes in the loss of "what was" but the pain that comes from the absence of "what could have been" and now will never be.

I do miss you, Dad, as I always have.

# WHOEVER AM I?

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 09/12/16

A Child is born and the parents say,  
“...oh, what is the future?”

A Dream is envisioned and the parents say,  
“...wouldn't it be wonderful if he ...”

Growth is nurtured and the parents say,  
“...he must be prepared.”

A Youth is produced and the parents say,  
“...he is nearing his goal.”

An Adult is confused and the parents say,  
“...whatever is wrong?”

The Parents are troubled when the Adult says,  
“...I want to think for myself.”

The Future appears and the Adult says,  
“... whoever am I?”



# WHY?

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 08/07/17

Have you ever wondered why –

so many people hate?

cultures are hostile one to another?

young people disdain old people?

employees distrust employers?

non church-goers believe church-goers are hypocrites?

students vandalize schools?

the poor resent the rich  
and the rich show disgust for the poor?

we ridicule politicians and bureaucrats?

Have we inadvertently taught our children to hate  
by the stories, opinions and pronouncements  
we have made in the privacy of our homes?

What is the nature of our dinner conversation?  
When we talk, do our stories build up or  
destroy other people, cultures or institutions?

Do we talk of rape, robbery and deceit or  
support, courage and determination?

Is it important to place ourselves above another, or  
have we found the joy and peace of serving others?

What kind of heritage are you passing on  
to those who look to you for direction and guidance?

# WHY DO GROWN CHILDREN CALL HOME?

By Jerry McIntosh

Rev: 07/01/13

Some, it would seem, call home  
out of a sense of duty or obligation.

My heart breaks for the parents, now aged,  
who feel the loss of open exchange.

Some call home with triumphs of life,  
looking for approval  
that never seemed present during childhood.

My heart breaks for the children, now grown,  
who never felt acceptance.

Some call home to exchange ideas and dreams  
with parents who have become "safe" friends and confidants.  
My heart bounds with joy for both parents and children.

WHY DO YOU CALL HOME?