

One Blogger's Thoughtful Commentary on TCS

Submitted by TCS on 7 July, 2003 - 11:53

I (Sarah Fitz-Claridge) was quite cheered to read [this \(http://www.supenn.com/genius/000060.html\)](http://www.supenn.com/genius/000060.html) interesting and thoughtful take on **TCS** from someone who had first heard about us when she read a decidedly unsympathetic article in a parenting magazine.

In that magazine article, the writer made up a quote (attributed to me),

and when called upon to give the details of where I had supposedly said this thing I would never say, she was ~~unable~~ unwilling to do so. She also claimed that I would not make myself available for an interview, but that is absolutely false, and I still have copies of messages promptly replying to both the writer and the editor/publisher saying that I was willing to be interviewed.

Well I suppose it makes a change from being accused of being too eager for publicity, as I have been by my legions of fans* on anti-something-or-other.com.

If you spot any commentary about TCS, I'd love to hear about it.

* I use the term somewhat loosely.

to post comments

Comments

Selling TCS

Submitted by a TCS reader (not verified) on 9 July, 2003 - 20:38

Of course, people commenting on TCS rarely have the first idea about what it actually is. It's a bit like referring to the Roman Catholic church as, "that bunch of child-respecting, liberal free-thinking, pro-abortion atheists," half the time.

On the other hand, it's difficult to put all the ideas we associate with the title "TCS" into one phrase that newbies can understand.

"It's possible and desirable to bring children up entirely without doing things to them against their will..." (but then again, we don't believe in neglectful parenting either, and we recognise that sometimes coercion happens from outside, which is sometimes due to parental safety-failure, and we don't have enough knowledge yet to keep kids happy 100% of the time, and then of course there's fallibility and...)

Not saying I've got an easy answer. "Don't coerce" as a handy catch-phrase is probably how most newbies think of TCS, but as a whole approach to parenting, it's badly lacking... and a whole approach to parenting in one handy phrase is what people want. That's what the other parenting schools offer, after all.

Marketplaces can be cruel, even (especially) ideas marketplaces. I wonder how Posh Spice deals with this kind of thing?

to post comments

"Don't coerce"

Submitted by Jenny on 25 July, 2003 - 09:32

"Don't coerce" can mean so many things. What parents take it to mean don't hurt your kids, that's one thing, but when they take it to mean don't say what you want, don't tell them when they've done something wrong, don't tell them when there's danger, don't show your real feelings, don't be a human being, don't have needs of your own, it's frightening. I don't know why, but plenty of parents don't get that there are other options apart from coercing or saying nothing.

to post comments

Definition of Coercion

Submitted by Elliot Temple on 25 July, 2003 - 18:29

TCS has a glossary with a specific definition of coerce so that it's not ambiguous. It's here:

<http://tcs.ac/FAQ/FAQShortGlossary.html#Coercion>

-- Elliot Temple <http://curi.blogspot.com/> (<http://curi.blogspot.com/>).

to post comments

That definition is ok as far ...

Submitted by Jess Woodside on 26 July, 2003 - 11:54

That definition is ok as far as it goes but it's hard figuring out how it translates into practice sometimes. Am I coercing if I offer my 2 y o an old book to draw on in place of the one I've just bought? Am I coercing if I show him words and tell him what they say? Am I coercing if when he's playing I say "Let's go pick up your pappa from work now"? It kinda depends, right?

to post comments

Re: The definition is ok as far

Now in any of those examples you could either be coercing, or not be coercing the 2 y o. The distinction between coercion and non-coercion is not something that you can read from them, even though it is very important one.

What about looking at some other things instead. Does the 2 y o get distressed, if you try to switch the book? Or is se happy to draw to the book you switch for him. If latter, you are not coercing him, but if you force him to the old book, even though he clearly objects, you are definitely coercing him.

The same goes for reading and going to get papa and a myriad of other solutions to daily problems. There is no mechanical criterion that tells which action is coercive and which is not. The true criterion is whether everyone (especially the child) is happy about the solution.

to post comments

More articles

- [But if we don't make her do maths...](#)
- [Supporting a Child's Choice to Go to School](#)
- [Does Your Child Love Visiting The Dentist?](#)
- [Requiring Children To Do Chores](#)
- [Waste Not, Want Not](#)
- [Choosing to go to school or Iraq](#)
- [Is Your Child Worried About Death?](#)
- [Medical Emergencies](#)