Intentional Fathering

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY Malaysia

7 STRATEGIES TO
BE MORE INTENTIONAL IN
YOUR FATHERHOOD JOURNEY

LEE WEE MIN

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7 Strategies To Be More Intentional
In Your Fatherhood Journey

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Introduction

As I reflect on being the father of three children whose ages total 84 years (my son is 32, my two daughters are 28 and 24 at the time I am writing this book in 2020), I realise I have been a father longer than I have lived. It has been quite a while and every moment has been memorable – not necessarily all fond memories as there were many challenging ones as well, but they all add up to being worth it. I have learned much, enjoyed much, and also have been troubled by many experiences. I am certainly still a work in progress.

I also remember my father who was 96 years old when he passed away and he too had three children (I am the youngest) whose combined age would have been 178 years when my father passed away. Wow! That is a lot of fathering experience.

My father led a life worthy of our praise and I followed many of the good modelling he provided - some of which I will be sharing in this book. For me, my experience is not only in being a father but I also had the privilege of watching my father be a father to his three children.

Even with my vast experience observing so many fathers who are family members and close friends, I realise that fathering is still a

"road less travelled" by so many. Many are abdicating their role as fathers and many are struggling in carrying out that role. Many do not know how and prefer to ignore it and hope that the school and social systems will bring up their children for them. Unfortunately, this would be rare as the role of a father including his intentional commitment and being involved in the life of his children cannot be out-sourced nor can it be over-emphasized.

We often take our role as a father for granted and intentionally or otherwise abdicate from that role which is so important and crucial for the wholesome and positive development of our children - physical, emotional, social, intellectual, moral, and spiritual.

I sold my Civil Engineering business to a publicly-listed company in the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange in 1995. Two years later, I felt a deep sense within me (a sense of calling you may call it) to serve families and the community by starting the Malaysian chapter of "Focus on the Family". The vision is to help families thrive and not just survive. If family units are strong and stable, society will also be strong and stable, which will eventually lead to a strong and stable nation.

After being in this non-profit organisation for 22 years, I have had the privilege as well as the opportunity to interact with many fathers of different ages, races, and religions. Our programmes are primarily created for parents and children. We call these our bonding programs and include father and son, father and daughter, mother and son, and mother and daughter. These programmes are experience tailored as opposed to where we just teach the parents. These programmes involve children together with their parents. Through teaching and activities, both parents and children are guided to strengthen their bond and begin a life journey closely together.

Through these interactions, I realized that many fathers are not only struggling but are at wit's end on how to play their role effectively and be a positive role model. Many fail to recognise that being called "Daddy" is a privilege. It is a role that we can learn to enjoy and find fulfilling and satisfying. Sadly, many fathers are in a state of dismay, distress, and dissatisfaction, wishing they could do better as a father or to turn back the clock to redo things they think they could have done better or not at all. Having said that, many fathers I have met want to be a better dad - better in terms of being more available, more intentional, and more equipped in their role as fathers and to enjoy that role.

None of us attended a college or a university before we assumed the role of a father but all of us would have been "served" a nine-month notice that we would soon be a father. The question is: how many of us take sufficient interest in this "notice" and take the nine months to prepare ourselves for that role? I suspect many of us would have procrastinated in being prepared for this role even though, in this day and age, there are numerous parenting seminars to attend, a book on fatherhood to read, a TED talk to listen to, or a relative or a friend to talk to about this impending role of father.

In as much as most fathers would celebrate the new addition to the family, many also tremble and get "cold feet" as they do not know what to expect of the situation or themselves. A very close friend called me while waiting for his wife to give birth to their first child and he was in a state of panic as to how to play the role of a father. I am glad that I was able to talk to him and today, he is very happy and successful fathering two children and enjoys his role as a husband and father.

My desire to write this book came about not because I have been very successful as a father (as we never would reach that state because we are always learning) but because I was reminiscing about having three adult children. I realise that fathering is a life with so much joy as well as the occasional spate of heartbreaks, which are necessary to remind us to be humble and continue learning.

Every stage of development of each child is different and calls for a different response from the parent. There's a saying "Different strokes for different folks" and I guess this principle applies to fathering our children as well. This book is my humble attempt to share my journey and experiences with fathering my three children. I have also been putting together my thoughts by reading books about parenting and in particular, fathering, as well as lessons I have learned through my interaction with other fathers regarding positive fathering.

I hope this book will help fathers enjoy their role and discover satisfaction and fulfillment in the pivotal role in the life of their children and family. I had the privilege and benefit of observing my father for more than 60 years of being a father. I was 30 years old when my wife and I had our first child, so I have been a father for 32 years.

With my experiences and observations as well as the interactions with many fathers, I want to share some key areas about the role of a father. I intend that those who read this book will be reminded that they do not have to be the perfect father but to continue to learn along the way. That is part of the joy and excitement in fathering. In my earlier book, *Parenting: A Roller Coaster Experience*, it was highlighted that this is a journey that has its "Ups" and "Downs" that cannot be avoided but we can learn to enjoy every moment. Inevitably, there will be joys and heartaches as we carry out our role

as fathers. I believe the joys are to inspire and affirm us while the heartaches are to mould and hone us to be better.

The key areas which I am sharing in this book can be considered as essential ingredients to our role as a father. With these "ingredients", we are off to a great start and then we can add to improve, improvise, and impart a more enjoyable relationship with our children. It is amazing that when the relationships at home with our wife as well as with our child or children are fun, sound, and stable, we can become more productive in our work and other relationships.

In reality, there are great benefits if we invest in building strong relationships at home. The relationship between husband and wife and between parent and children is essential for the well-being of individuals, which will result in the well-being of society. Helping families thrive should become parts of every individual's life - willingly, intentionally, and enthusiastically.

Chapter 1

Discover Yourself

After working for two years at Mobil Oil Malaysia as an Operation Clerk, I wanted to venture into the field of aeronautics. I thought it would be great to be a pilot. I was 22 years old then and an opportunity arose when Singapore Airlines posted a need for trainee pilots. I jumped on that opportunity and applied. To me, it seemed to be such an exciting, engaging, and rewarding job - the thrill and glamour of flying, travel around the world, stay in luxury hotels, wear nice uniforms, people calling me Captain, good salary, and of course, no traffic jams. The persona of a pilot and being the Captain of a plane captured my attention and immense interest at that stage of my life.

Not long after my application was sent, I received an offer to report to Singapore for training at the Singapore Airline training school. That was when the rubber hit the road! Is this who I am and what I want as a career? Was I prepared to leave my family and friends, move to a new place, and be away from home a large part of my working life?

Being a young man and knowing that I needed wise counsel, I decided to contact my ex-headmaster, Mr. David Boler who was the

Headmaster of the Bukit Bintang Boys' Secondary School where I studied. I recognised the wisdom of this man during my secondary school years and I respected him. He also happened to be a leader of the church I attended. I gave Mr. Boler a phone call and he graciously agreed to meet with me. We spent a couple of hours discussing this matter and I felt quite guilty for taking so much of his time.

However, during those 2 hours, he helped me have a glimpse of who I am and to understand some of my personality traits. Mr. Boler was helpful and, based on the discovery of my likes and dislikes, my personality, and my view of family togetherness being very important to me, he advised me to reconsider the offer. He did not at any point say that being a pilot is not a great job and I must admit it was not easy for me to make any decision. After much consideration and reconsideration together with lots of prayers, I decided to turn down the offer of pilot training with Singapore Airlines.

The discovery of my personality traits, what I look forward to in life, and family, came about when I consulted a more mature person. He had the wisdom and experience to help me "have a look" at who I am and if my plans were flowing with the grain of who I am or moving against the grain. The ability to look at myself through the "lens" of another person was both helpful and objective because it removed my "biased vision".

I discovered that I am a person who enjoys working with others. I would enjoy meeting and interacting with people in my work as opposed to sitting and flying a plane on a day-to-day basis. Even at that age of 22, I was talking about the need and importance of being together with my family as much as possible to develop closeness and bonding. (Please don't get me wrong - I do know some pilot friends who are super committed to their family.) During the discussion

with Mr. Boler, I realised that I would struggle if I were away from my family for long periods due to the nature of the job. It goes against my nature and, therefore, I would soon find it a struggle as I would be missing out on many family events, birthday celebrations, anniversaries, etc. Instead of being able to get home after work each day, I would probably be spending my free time in a hotel room. It would be similar to asking an overtly social person to do a job that involves being alone and solving problems without the input of others. It would be working against the grain.

I guess we also need to understand ourselves, discover our personality, what our likes and dislikes are, what our value system is, what causes us to tick and get excited, and what turns us off and agitates us - and the list goes on.

Having discovered and understood ourselves would then lead us to want to understand others including our family members. Understanding and acceptance can help resolve many conflicts and misunderstandings that exist within a family.

Discovery and Acceptance of Ourselves

One thing that all of us can do better is to try to understand why we respond to things in a certain way. It is okay if we are not like our parents or others who socialises naturally. It is okay if we tend to be more anxious over small things than others who are constantly cool and calm. It is also okay if we find that we are unable to do things that others seem to be able to do effortlessly.

We need to realise that others are probably looking at us feeling they are like us. Human beings are all different and that is the beautiful

part of being human. We are all fearfully and wonderfully made – each is an original. What is important and beneficial to us is that as we begin to discover and understand ourselves and learn to accept ourselves rather than try to be who we are not. When we try to be someone else, we often end up feeling completely frustrated and sometimes defeated. Each of us has a unique personality and unique character traits and different and unique capabilities. We need to learn and rejoice at the gift that God has given us. When we begin to accept ourselves for who we are and the gifts and talents we have been given, it is then we begin to learn to appreciate others and accept other people for their differences – and even their idiosyncrasies. Recognising the uniqueness and differences of every person is important so that we can appreciate how God has created and wired us. He makes no mistakes. We are all unique.

As fathers, we need to understand ourselves in the area of our social heritage. What kind of social environment did we grow up in? How did we learn to interact with our family and our community?

We also need to understand our emotional heritage. What was the emotional climate in the home we grew up in? Was it a climate filled with shouting and tension or was it filled with calm? Was one emotion matched with a similar emotion, for example, was happiness greeted with happiness and when there was an occasion of sadness, was it met with empathy and care?

The third area is our spiritual heritage. I grew up in a home where my mother brought us up in the Christian faith and that spiritual element was important for me to see beyond the present. It helped me recognise that there is hope and reason when I encounter the blessings and the challenges in life. There may be other areas that we need to discover about ourselves but these three areas of heritage

are a good start to discovering and understanding to help us set the tone on what kind of heritage we would like to pass to our children.

Acceptance is a very important ingredient in any relationship. In a relationship between husband and wife as well as between parents and children, we can sometimes unconsciously be dictating how we want others to behave and fail to accept others for who they are. If one person does not have confidence in who he or she is, this can result in not accepting others and it can create conflict in a relationship. Hence acceptance is not just accepting yourself but also accepting those around you. Having said this, I am not referring to negative traits and characteristics. If one takes some time to think through issues before making decisions while another is capable of making decisions spontaneously, then there must be an element of acceptance of one another to make an acceptable decision eventually, and there are other examples. I shall talk more about the acceptance of others later.

Acceptance of ourselves is not being proud or arrogant but recognising our limitations as well as how we are wired. When we begin to accept ourselves, our children are also watching us and will begin to do the same. You would be amazed at how such an important value is being caught rather than taught. Our children are constantly observing us and many times not so much on what we say but what we do and how we respond to situations and circumstances.

Social Heritage

These days, many of us are confined to the three screens, namely, the mobile/tablet screen, the computer screen, and the television screen. As a result, our social interaction could be much compromised. Many are so used to being in solitary activities that when it comes to being

face-to-face with others, they feel awkward and uncomfortable. They have no problem communicating online and through the Internet but when it comes to having a dialogue or discussion with eye to eye contact, some feel rather uncomfortable. I have heard conversations where one person is telling the other person, "I don't know how to tell you in person, let me send you a WhatsApp message". We may think it is strange and funny but some people are so used to using devices to communicate that having to do so face-to-face can be difficult. This is sad.

"No man is an island" as the saying goes and therefore, all of us must interact with others and socialise. Many times, when we have difficulties, challenges or struggles, it is the sharing of it with others and the simple advice given face-to-face by a physical person that provides us the calmness or the peace we need. It is the feeling that someone understands and is there for you.

As human beings, we resonate with other human beings and not with a screen. We sometimes need "A Shoulder to Cry On" as the 1988 song by Tommy Page describes. A screen may distract us, which it does in every sense of the word, but it cannot empathise nor sympathise with us - it has no feelings or emotions to connect with us.

One of the greatest gifts my parents gave me is the awareness of the need to reach out to others. I grew up in a home where our relatives and friends were always free to drop by or to even spend a night if there was a need. When we celebrated Christmas, mum would be busy cooking, and dad would make all the physical arrangements. Then towards the evening, people just came. Many times I remember asking my mum if she knew who was coming and how many people were coming and she would say "Not sure" and there would always be enough food and fun to go round.

Similarly, on weekends and Sundays after church service, mum would take her children along to visit some relatives or friends just to encourage, be encouraged, or just to have some social interaction and fellowship to provide support and encouragement to one another. It was unhurried, casual, and many times, there was no agenda - just being together.

A social heritage is giving the child the insight and positive social skills for cultivating healthy, stable relationships. I have seen and experienced this from both my mother and father. I saw my mum interacting with the people who sold food in the market as well as with the neighbours. I saw how the relationships were mutually respectful and encouraging. Similarly, I saw my father interacting with his colleagues and with his siblings. I saw mutual care and concern and a deepening of relationships.

The building blocks for a positive social heritage involves respect, responsibility, love, acceptance, and boundaries. Respect begins within each individual and works its way out to others. Respect then leads to responsibilities. We can impart responsibility to our children by teaching them respect for themselves and others by assigning them duties within the family.

As parents, we need to sometimes allow our children to face the consequences of irresponsible and inappropriate behaviour. This teaches them both respect and responsibility. We need to balance unconditional love with conditional acceptance of the behaviour. It is said that "Open rebuke is better than secret love".

Finally, setting boundaries is not just helpful for positive relationships; it is essential for the social well-being of our children. They need to understand and recognise that there are boundaries that need to be

protected and cannot be crossed. Social boundaries include how we relate to authority, to peers, to the environment, and their siblings. Boundaries must be set for children to grow, feel secure, and have direction. We need to discover what kind of social environment we grew up in and what are we familiar with. With these understandings, we will be more intentional in passing on a positive social heritage to our children.

Emotional Heritage

Most parents and teachers have, for a long time, been talking about the importance of having a high IQ (Intelligence Quotient), but today, many are turning their focus to the importance of a high EQ (Emotional quotient). It is true that many parents are so involved and determined to build the mental capability and capacity of their children that they forget about building a child's ability to be emotionally attuned to others, the environment, and their surroundings.

A good illustration of parents building the IQs of children is through the nursery rhyme entitled "Humpty Dumpty". Having a big head made it impossible for all the king's horses and all the king's men to put him back together again. It goes on to say " all the king's horses and all the king's men could not put Humpty Dumpty together again". During a time of crisis and challenges, we can either bend or break. With a strong emotional quotient, we can bend rather than break. We can respond in such a way as to cope and overcome the situation rather than to break and to feel overwhelmed.

An emotional heritage that is strong is having an enduring sense of security and emotional stability that is nurtured in an environment of safety and love. It is likened to the stabiliser bar of a racing car. A

race car driver can throw his car into a dangerous curve on the racing track with the back end fishtailing and other cars hurling toward him at more than 200km per hour. This is because somewhere on the sophisticated suspension of a racing car is a vital part called a stabiliser bar which keeps the car from swaying excessively while leaning into a horseshoe turn. It keeps the car manageable and keeps both sets of wheels firmly on the road. The emotional element is like the racing car stabiliser bar keeping us composed, calm, and stable rather than generating irrational thinking and actions. Many relationships have been lost because of unstable, irrational, and aggressive emotions.

My family has a regular family doctor who is a physician of internal medicine. Being a diabetic myself (Type 2), I visit him every few months to ensure my blood sugar is under control and I am managing my lifestyle in terms of food intake and regular exercise. Recently, I asked him what are the common illnesses he observes nowadays. He told me that more and more people are being diagnosed with diabetes and then the next most common is emotional problems leading to depression. He said many are unable to handle emotional stress either due to work, family, or relationships with others.

This is not very encouraging as more people seem to have problems with emotional stress and do not have the emotional tenacity to cope when challenges and crises happen. It is therefore important that we as fathers be intentional and spend time building the emotional strength of our children so they are equipped with an enduring sense of security and emotional stability and nurtured in an environment of safety and love. This may be natural to some fathers who grew up in such a positive environment. But for others, more work and effort would be needed if they grew up in more challenging and turbulent situations where there was constant emotional turmoil and distress.

Some may even have to consult a counsellor to help overcome some of the "family baggage" encountered while growing up.

It is important to pass on a strong and positive emotional heritage to our children. And unless we can overcome our emotional scars and hurts, we would find it difficult to assist someone under our care and others whom we love – especially our spouses and children.

Spiritual Heritage

I am eternally grateful for the spiritual guidance I received as a young boy from my mother who was a devout and practicing Christian. She firmly believed in the joy of loving, caring, and sharing as well as living a life where she knew her final destination was to be with her Lord and Master. This gave her a great sense of purpose even when she was stricken with pancreatic cancer at a very young age of 47. She was sad and grieved over the situation but not as one grieving without hope. Her exemplary life was an encouragement as well as a life lesson for her three children and many others as well. Mum was simply an amazing woman of character.

A spiritual heritage is a process whereby parents model and reinforce the unseen realities of the spiritual world. It is a process and not an event. It is when parents spend years of consistent, sacrificial, and committed efforts in bringing up their children. Spiritual realities are more often caught rather than taught; the child observes their parents' lives and sees the truth of their spiritual life in action.

My mother was the one who introduced us to Sunday School and often talked about the importance of faith and trust in God. This was evident to us when she was stricken with pancreatic cancer. She was

in pain and questioned why it had to happen to her at a fairly young age, yet she was at peace. As a Christian, she knew that even though the disease was terminal, her final destination was to be with her Lord and Saviour. She believed that she was a pilgrim on a journey on this earth. She is now absent in body but she is very much in the presence of her Lord and Saviour.

Her sadness was because she would not be with us. That was both human and expected because of her love and commitment to her family. However, she knew that life on earth is temporary and she constantly reminded and encouraged us to remain strong, firm, and serious in our faith. Her life perspective was also different - this was reflected in her love and care for people and also her willingness to forgive and forget rather than to hold a grudge and keep things in the heart. My mother modelled a life of faith, faithfulness, and unwavering trust in her God.

My mother was a strict disciplinarian when it came to our attitude, our studies, and the importance of respect and honour. She encouraged the importance of faith and trust in God that was constantly modelled by her rather than mandated or commanded. When it came to values of respect, honesty, and integrity she ensured we did not compromise in these areas. She would emphasise the importance of faith and made sure we were exposed to it by taking us to Sunday School and church. She knew that modelling faith was far more effective than mandating it.

Having a strong spiritual heritage is not just attending places of worship and reading holy books or performing rituals. It is not how regular we attend places of worship. It is how we practice our faith in our everyday life. It is how we deal with people, our attitudes, and our responses during times of celebrations and times of difficulties and

crises. Some of us may have a strong and positive spiritual upbringing but others may not. It is necessary for our children to be brought up with faith and trust in God and to acknowledge that there is a greater Being and a better destiny.

Blaise Pascal stated, "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the creator".

Discovering and Accepting Others

I believe human beings are the most complex, intricate, and, at the same time, the most interesting and loving creations with whom we can have a relationship. We are all different individuals with a different thumbprint, a different DNA, and many times, it is the differences that bring us together in a relationship. Ironically, it is also the differences that separate us and cause us to be distant from another person. Someone once said, "The more I know you, the more I distance from you." I guess this is because when we discover the pleasant and unpleasant traits of another person, we consciously or unconsciously allow the unpleasant part to separate us. It is sad but true. Therefore, acceptance is an important ingredient and is pivotal in forming a strong and meaningful relationship.

I am thankful to God for the gift of my wife and our three wonderful children. To say that they are perfect would be a blatant lie but yet they are the ones who have taught me the importance of acceptance and affirmation. My eldest son, Joel, is a fairly compliant person and is very warm and kindhearted - even towards the ants on the floor. When he was a young boy, he would protect the path of the ants so that we did not step on them. I remember during his fifth birthday

celebration after cutting his birthday cake, he served his parents, grandpa, aunties, and uncles first before taking some for himself. That is Joel. He appreciates affirmation for things done right rather than for people to take it for granted. Discovering his personality type helps us to accept and affirm him and speak his "love language".

I am thankful that over the years, I have had various and different working experiences. Among them, I have been tasked to manage a company that dealt with construction chemicals. I had the opportunity to start my own company in specialist contracting and now I serve in a non-profit organisation to help families thrive. In all these experiences, there were myriads of occasions and opportunities to deal with different people with different personalities - some at the management level and some at the subordinate level.

I remember I used to work with a sales engineer who was trained in accounts and who was outgoing, flamboyant, and, at times, could be offensive and arrogant. However, he was very comfortable in a meeting, dealing, and interacting with people. He took to that job like a duck to water. I felt that he could contribute much to the business with his outgoing personality. My task was to hone his traits into positive attributes and use them for his benefit as well as the benefit of the business. One of the key components in doing that was to accept him for who he was and affirm the positive aspects of his personality. After a while, I was able to build his trust and friendship and then I carefully and progressively highlighted some of the offensive and aggressive aspects that he accepted readily and made efforts to change and improve. At the same time, the positive aspects were also groomed and enhanced so that his customers felt easy and comfortable with him.

I believe the same principle can be employed in dealing with our children. If we have more than one child, we cannot expect our children to have the same personality and characteristic traits. More often they are different or very different. Whether we have one child or a few children, we must discover and understand their personalities. Some may be very compliant and some may be excessively strong-willed and many would be in between. Understanding is the first step and probably the easier one. The next step is to accept them for who they are and affirm their strong points and then gently and lovingly instruct them to work on overcoming the weak and negative ones. We need to build and strengthen our relationships first because, as the saying goes, "rules without relationship leads to rebellion".

Acceptance of others is a crucial element in building relationships and this attribute of acceptance is often modelled rather than mandated. Do we convey an attitude of acceptance and affirmation in our dealings with people around us (including difficult personalities) so that our children can "catch" the value we are trying to teach? Or does our speech and action contravene what we are trying to teach? I just like to put a caveat here; we need to know what are positive and healthy values and what are negative ones. Once again, above all else, we need to focus on building and strengthening the relationship first before diving in to address the negative values and characteristics of our children. This requires time as well as patience.

Your Attitude is Important

We often hear people complaining about a bad encounter with another person and that the person has an attitude problem. This would usually be the case when someone experiences rudeness,

disrespect, indifference, lack of initiative, untruthfulness, etc. Such attitudes can cause other people to become irritated and often leads to an angry feeling.

One's attitude is an important personality trait and we need to work on developing a positive and healthy attitude for the way we interact with people and how we deal with life situations and circumstances. However, this is an ongoing process of learning and often it comes with time, maturity, and experience.

As fathers, we need to be intentional in allocating time, energy, and resources to cultivate a strong, positive, and pleasant attitude in our children. I am of the view that this would be one of the best gifts we could give our children for them to live a life with much fulfillment and satisfaction. Many times, it is not the wealth nor the physical health but the attitude that gives us peace of mind and calmness of heart in facing our daily life's pleasantness or unpleasantness. This does not just happen overnight but it is a process that begins during the formative stage of our children's development. We should teach children when they are young so that when they grow older, they will not depart from the teachings.

I recall an incident that happened a few years ago while I was queuing at an airline boarding gate while returning home after an overseas assignment in China. When all the passengers were about to board the plane, everyone was queuing in an orderly fashion. Suddenly a man just walked straight towards the front and made his way to the front of the queue. This was annoying to the people behind him but he ignored them. There were signs and comments made by the other passengers but he blatantly ignored every gesture and every word. I was too far behind to make any sign or comment but there was a lady who was about five persons behind this "poor attitude" man and she

decided to walk up to him and requested that he go to the back of the queue but he ignored her. Short of manhandling him (which was quite difficult as he was a man of large and rough built), no one was able to get this man to go to his rightful position in the queue and the airline officers were few and too busy trying their best to board the passengers. It was a classic case of poor attitude and total disrespect of people, rule, and order.

In my family, I am quite firm about the attitude of respect and I am convinced that respect should be taught and implemented in the home and it should begin when our child or children are young. If we do not teach them respect while they are young, they would grow up disrespecting people and authority, and sometimes even their property. Teaching the attitude of respect will lead to the ability and ease for parents to be able to teach and model other attitudes and values that are positive and healthy. If the man with the "poor attitude" had had the value of respect, he would have recognised that all the passengers were queuing and respected others instead of being self-centred and conceited and jumping the queue so that he could get on the plane first (I don't understand what such people are thinking because the plane could NOT take off even if he was onboard first!).

Developing healthy and positive attitudes in our children takes time and is a process and not an event. As fathers, we must invest the time and the processes needed to cultivate positive attitudes in our children. We have that role and responsibility to do so. It is an investment that would generate "dividends" that money cannot buy. When our children begin to respect us and people around them it would not only benefit us but it would also be a very strong advantage to them when they begin to interact with others and

later when they seek employment or the opportunity to start their own business. Who would employ someone with a poor attitude and who would like to deal with people who are disrespectful and self- centred?