Are we prepared for our children’s success and failure?

In life we often face challenges, where we have to be responsible for our own behaviors and efforts. We look forward to the final result, and whether we are successful or not, we also have to manage our feelings and the consequences at the end. We are used to this and learn from our own experiences as individuals as we mature and develop. But how do we fare when managing someone else’s successes and failures? And when that someone is your most beloved child, do we act or feel the same way?

The first important question to ask ourselves is: What defines Success or Failure? From the development of a child, parents naturally come to the conclusion based on notable achievements such as; when the child takes their first steps alone, when they learn the alphabet; when they can recite a Chinese poem, when they receive trophies and awards from tournaments, and many more. These are of course clear, measurable goals where the child can be evaluated upon their potential and development, where parents can most readily refer to when they talk about their children’s progress. These are great experiences for the child, when they learn to work towards a milestone, and when they can achieve the goal they gain confidence at the same time by receiving
acknowledgement from their parents. Is this the only thing meaningful from these experiences? Is there anything else for the child and the parents to take away from these experiences? Are we as parents, ready to receive the results?

To the child, success might mean simply a smile or a hug from parents, perhaps sometimes with an acknowledgement of doing something well by a gift or toy. All the staging, trophies and certifications might not mean anything for them. Those are what parents use to measure success.

From our experience, we have learnt that success is not only measured by what we receive, but how can we manage our failures in the correct manner. How do we as parents teach our children to define as well as handle various kinds of successes and failures? Sometimes we forget about circumstances which are out of our control, we only focus on the winning part. If there was an expectation of winning it will not be something easy to let go. It is sometimes too natural for anyone of us to place the responsibility solely on the child. We seldom remember as parents and mentors, that we play an instrumental role in the whole act, and we are equally responsible, if not more. As much as we might be unwilling to see or simply unaware of this relationship, we do share the same responsibility in the child’s
successful or failed endeavors. In essence, the parents and child should be together as one team, be it good times or bad times. Let us not forget that, as parents, it is a very important lesson for our children to learn how to fall down and be able to stand up and go forward again, rather than thinking of only welcoming success. Our children will only handle success and failure in life as good by seeing how their parents behave under such circumstances. If they see us giving up on them, they will only give up on themselves and stop trying. We should choose to show them that we are positive; encouraging him to continue his best efforts for his future attempts, and will always be there by his side to show our support and love. We also tell ourselves to take no conditions for granted, and as responsible parents, we also need to give our best efforts to help and support our child’s development. We now look forward as a family and team, to face the next challenge together.

Writer: Eddie Tsui
Aidan Tsui (Lower Orange)