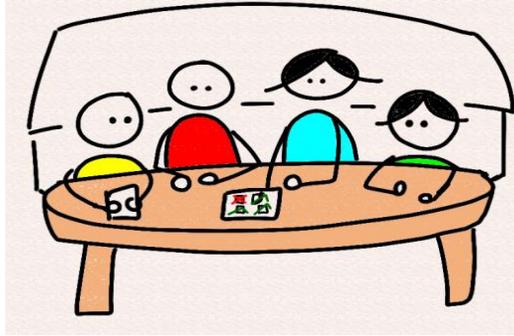


Step 6



How can a family reduce stress during this time of uncertainty? What can help keep or bring happiness to your family during the COVID-19 crisis or anytime?

In the fifth post in this series, I shared what the important Weekly Family Planning Meeting (WFPM) is and does. We talked about the three parts of the WFPM, retrospective, allowance and planning but focused on the retrospective piece. In today's step 6 post, we will talk about the allowance and planning steps of the WFPM.

After the intensity of the retrospective step, the family takes a break for **allowance**. The time spent paying allowance is used for a mental shift point from retrospective to planning phases.

Allowance is not tied to anything in the family process. Each child receives \$1 for every year old they are, and then is required to work out the Give, Invest, and Spend formula for themselves.

- a. Give: a minimum of 10% of all allowances are contributed to the communal charity jar. This is donated bi-annually by the kids to a charity of their choice.
- b. Invest: A minimum of 10% must be put into a savings account, from which funds can be accessed to make stock or other investment purchases.
- c. Spend: The remainder of the money is for discretionary funds. This may seem like a lot of money but the children are expected to cover many of their own expenses with their own money. They buy all their own gifts for friends and family, pay 10% of any sport or activity they are involved in, and pay for their own movies, junk food or video games.

You will be amazed at how they no longer want Dairy Queen when it comes out of their own pocket!

The next part is the **Planning** part of the WFPM. During planning, any new calendar events are added, the task boards are reset for the week and all shared chores are rotated to the next person. During this time, parents can add any deliverables they may have coming up during the week. The kids may also add their deliverables such as a report due in school or shopping for a birthday gift for an upcoming party.

***For parents** it is important to use a "continuous flow" model which enables plans to change to meet the reality of life. The "promised" queue is limited to 3 items in progress at any one time and each item must be able to be completed in 2 days. Parents also have daily task lists that are able to be explained to the kids. During the nightly stand up, kids can withhold daily points if the parent fails to complete promised tasks.*

***For the kids** it's important because of the weekly rotation of tasks and the individual check lists for daily chores. They can add the occasional ad-hoc item such as "make an awesome birthday cake for mom." It's important for kids to remain engaged and it teaches them decision making skills. Usually, early on, kids will save all of their chores until the end. This makes for very boring Saturdays and Sundays for them. It won't take them long to begin spreading out their deliverables throughout the week.*

Stay tuned for step 7, the last in the series. I will share what works well as well as potential struggles to watch out for.