

# Healthy Rhythms

My name is John Hunsberger, if I haven't had the pleasure of meeting you, I am Lifegate's Pastor of Marriage and Parenting. I have spent the past 7 years working with hundreds of couples over thousands of hours. Moreover, I have four boys age 9,8,5, and 3! I am excited to be able to address parents today with a message I hope you find encouraging. Each of us is faced with unique challenges right now. Many of us are working from home, some of us are wondering about what work will look like, or how we will provide. Let me say with full honesty and sincerity that I know God will provide.

We are all faced with a very real challenge of parenting our children differently at this time! Whether your children are not in school yet, in public school, in private education, or home-schooled, social distancing is affecting us all.

Recently, Pastor Les spoke on how God's path is narrow and difficult, but also rewarding! My dad used to tell me the same thing in a different way, and I have found it to be profoundly true. "If something is worth doing, it is worth doing well." Doing something well takes more time, is more difficult, and more taxing. This is true for work, exercise, mental health, but also Parenting! Today, I want to focus on what this means as far as technology is concerned.

As we practice social distancing, we are forced to be even more reliant on technology. While this has incredible advantages, it also has serious consequences. While it is certainly easier to put kids in front of movies, video games, tv shows, etc. as we try to work from home, Research continues to show that screen time has a negative effect on kids. I think this a practical opportunity to put our dependence on God. If we are wise we will put our dependence and security in trusting God. He has shown Himself faithful for thousands of years in much worse situations than Covid-19. Practicing that kind of faith and dependence is difficult. As a counselor, I often encourage people to make decisions with information they know and things they can control, rather than on fear, worry, resentment, or guesswork. We cannot control the virus, our work schedule, or the economy, but we can be present as parents. I AM NOT SAYING DON'T EVER LET THEM WATCH MOVIES! But, our pace of life has been so full it is unsustainable! This is the opportunity we have been looking for to get precious moments with our children.

Lifegate teaches your children to read their Bible, Pray, make friends with other Christians, and respect authority. How are you doing in these areas? Have you modeled these well for your kids? Did you wish you just had a few extra moments so you could prioritize spending intentional time with the people you love the most? This is that opportunity! Try reading, playing a game, or taking your kids on a walk outside. Discover things with them! Pray and do a family devotion with them. If this is new, and it will be for many of us, expect it will be uncomfortable. There is a learning curve and parenting "muscles" to be built. Nevertheless, I promise, it will be worth it! I look forward to sharing with you in the weeks and months to come!

God bless!



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