

Reflections

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Bringing Light Into a World of Darkness

Where Can We Find Truth Today

Secret Addictive Drug Children Are Receiving

When Was the Last Time You Opened Your Bible

The Garden of Gethsemane

*****THOUGHT FOR TODAY*****

The life we are given will have ups and downs. But remember that love is what life is all about. Sharing and helping others will make your life happier and more at peace. If you hold on to unforgiveness against those who have hurt you, you are causing yourself to lose joy. Joy is a feeling of being at peace and to realize that God forgave you and therefore you should do the same. If you recite the Our Father prayer, that Jesus taught, you will find that God will forgive you "as you forgive others." Many Christians overlook this prayer and its true meaning.



By: Richard Pickard
Blessings to All:

TRUTH...Where can you find it today?

In America, and in most of the world, the moral tone has gradually changed over the years. And around the world people are being fed partial or no truth about things.

Beginning in the 1950's and 1960's we began to see the plan to alter "truth". The compromised media throughout the world and corrupt politicians have slowly fed people small bits of lies, comingled with "truth".

As the popularity of television grew, we found ourselves believing whatever was shown to us. If it was being reported on TV, then it must be the truth. From the food we eat, the medicines prescribed, to the politicians who get rich in government telling us to believe what they are telling us. We have become slaves to technology and the voices of corrupt politicians.

Nowadays, society throughout the world is completely consumed by technology every minute of the day. People and children are glued to their cell phones, their favorite television shows, and every exploit of their favorite celebrities. Whether subliminal or obvious, morals and values are being taught to today's generation through the compromised media and supported by morally corrupt politicians and individuals of wealth.

In the past, parents were the primary teachers of morals and values. Now we see wealthy individuals using large sums of money to elect immoral politicians who abolish God in all aspects of our lives. They are telling us and our children what is morally acceptable. They sugar coat the lie by using celebrities and clever ads of women acting lustful in ads and in movies. The message is "it's okay." 'Go ahead and do this or that. Everyone else is.' Our children are getting their morals from watching commercials,

movies, even cartoons which show immoral content. Even in our schools, it is not uncommon to find books in the school libraries, which show explicit photos of men and women engaged in sexual position including homosexual photos.

We have seen the Ten Commandments being taken out of schools and government buildings by these helpers of Satan. We have seen parents ridiculed and shouted down at school board meetings when they voice their disapproval for boys being allowed in girls bathrooms and more.

We see cleverly done ads to entice teens to live immoral lives or change their sex gender. The media & immoral politicians in most of the world feed "*their truth*" each day to people, in the attempt to completely abolish moral law. The value of parental guidance in the family is being attacked throughout the world. Satan's helpers continue to diminish parental rights and God's moral law.

What can we do to find the Truth and God's Moral Law? Christians all over the world "have" the answer. Read your bible. Listen to the words that Jesus said and the things he taught. Get back to the basic strength of the family unit. Eat dinner together and put away all cell phones and electronics. Parents should put their foot down when kids won't obey and shout at the parent for not letting them have their cell phones at the dinner table.

Obey the Ten Commandments. Go to church on Sunday. Pray for guidance each day and pray for the safety and well-being of your family.

Trust in Jesus. Teach the value of following Jesus to your children. Let your actions of goodness and morality be examples to others. Don't settle for the lies but find the Truth. For Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." John 14:6

Although This Article is not about Religion, Parents Should Take Note of How Your Child Becomes Addicted to iPhones.

The Secret Drug Your Children Are Being Feed Each Day. Your Children Are Being Targeted and Here's the Reason

By: Michaeleen Doucleff, Health News From NPR

¹Dopamine is part of an ancient neural pathway that ensures human survival. It is also part of the reason it is so hard to stop playing a video game or pass up a cupcake.

Back when my daughter was a toddler, I would make a joke about my phone: "It's a drug for her," I'd say to my husband. "You can't even show it to her without causing a tantrum."

She had the same reaction to cupcakes and ice cream at birthday parties. And as she grew older, another craving set in for cartoons on my computer.

Every night, when it was time to turn off the screen and get ready for bed, I would hear an endless stream of "But Mamas." "But Mama, just five more minutes. But Mama, after this one show ... but Mama ... but Mama ... but Mama."

Given these intense reactions to screens and sweets, I assumed that my daughter loves them. Like, really loves them. I assumed that they brought her immense joy and pleasure. And thus, I felt really guilty about taking these pleasures away from her. (To be honest, I feel the same way about my own "addictions," like checking social media and email more than a hundred times a day. I do that because they give me pleasure, right?)

But what if those assumptions are wrong? What if my daughter's reactions aren't a sign of loving the activity or the food? And that,

¹ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2023/06/12/1180867083/tips-to-outsmart-dopamine-unhook-kids-from-screens-sweets>

in fact, over time she may even come to dislike these activities despite her pleas to continue?

In the past few years, neuroscientists have started to better understand what's going on in kids' brains (and adult brains, too) while they're streaming cartoons, playing video games, scrolling through social media, and eating rich, sugar-laden foods. And that understanding offers powerful insights into how parents can better manage and limit these activities. Personally, I call the strategy "anti-dopamine parenting" because the ideas come from learning how to counter a tiny, powerful molecule that's essential to nearly everything we do.

Turns out, smartphones and sugary foods do have something in common with drugs: They trigger surges of a neurotransmitter deep inside your brain called dopamine.

Although drugs cause much bigger spikes of dopamine than, say, social media or an ice cream cone, these smaller spikes still influence our behavior, especially in the long run. They shape our habits, our diets, our mental health and how we spend our free time. They can also cause much conflict between parents and children.

For decades, scientists thought dopamine drew us to these vital needs by providing us with something that's not as critical: pleasure.

"There's this idea, especially in the popular media, that dopamine increases pleasure. That, when dopamine levels increase, you feel the sensation of 'liking' whatever you're doing and savoring this pleasure,"

But over the past decade, research indicates dopamine does not make you feel happy. "In fact, there's a lot of data to refute the idea that dopamine is mediating pleasure."

Studies now show that dopamine primarily generates another

feeling: desire. "Dopamine makes you want things." A surge of dopamine in your brain makes you seek out something. Or continue doing what you're doing. It's all about motivation.

And it goes even further: Dopamine tells your brain to pay particular attention to whatever triggers the surge.

And here's the surprising part: You might not even like the activity that triggers the dopamine surge. It might not be pleasurable. "That's relatively irrelevant to dopamine."

In fact, studies show that over time, people can end up not liking the activities that trigger big surges in dopamine. "If you talk to people who spend a lot of time shopping online or going through social media, they don't necessarily feel good after doing it. In fact, there's a lot of evidence that it's quite the opposite, that you end up feeling worse after than before."

A hijacked neural pathway

What does this all mean for your kids? Say my daughter, who's now 7 years old, is watching cartoons after dinner. While she's staring into the technicolor images, her brain experiences spikes in dopamine, over and over again. Those spikes keep her watching (even if she's actually really tired and wants to go to bed).

Then I come into the room and say, "Time's up, Rosy. Close the app and get ready for bed." And although I'm ready for Rosy to quit watching, her brain isn't. It's telling her the opposite.

"The dopamine levels are still high. And what does dopamine do? It tells you something important is happening, and there's a need somewhere that you have to answer."

And what am I doing? I'm preventing her from fulfilling this need, which her brain may elevate as being critical to her survival. In other words, a neural pathway made to ensure humans go seek

out water when they're thirsty is now being used to keep my 7-year-old watching yet another episode of a cartoon.

Because the spike in dopamine holds a child's attention so strongly, parents are setting themselves up for a fight when they try to get them to do any other activity that triggers smaller spikes, such as helping parents clean up after dinner, finishing homework or playing outside.

Screens and sweets are, in and of themselves, alluring and potentially intoxicating.

"So, I tell parents, 'It's not you versus your child, but rather it's you versus a hijacked neural pathway. It's the dopamine you're fighting."

Armed with this knowledge, parents have more power to reduce the stress and negative consequences of these dopamine-surging activities. Here are some strategies to do that.

Tip 1: Wait 5 minutes.

Dopamine surges are potent, says neuroscientist Kent Berridge at the University of Michigan, but they are fast. "They have a short half-life," he says.

"If you take away the cue [triggering the dopamine] and you can wait two to five minutes, a lot of the urge usually goes away," says Berridge, who's been instrumental in deciphering dopamine's role in the brain.

In other words, when you stop the cartoons at 30 minutes or cut off the cake at one slice, you may hear a bunch of whining, protest and tears, but that reaction will likely be brief.

But here's the key. You have to put the dopamine trigger out of sight, says Lembke at Stanford. Because seeing the laptop or extra leftover cake can start the cycle of wanting over again.

Tip 2: Look for the "Goldilocks" activities.

Of course, not all of these activities and foods will be as enticing or intoxicating to every child, Lembke explains. "Our brains are all wired a little bit differently from one individual to the next."

And remember, dopamine motivates children to act and stay focused. The key, she says, is to figure out which activities give your child the right amount of dopamine. Not too little and not too much — the Goldilocks amount. **And to do that, she says, pay attention to how your kid feels after the activity stops.**

For example, my daughter doesn't have (much of) a problem turning off audiobooks or putting away art projects. Same goes for video-calling with friends, coloring, reading and, of course, playing outside with friends. These activities make her behavior better afterward, not worse.

What about the opposite — when a child feels worse after an activity or snack, and their behavior declines? Then, there's a high risk that the activity **could hook the child into a compulsive loop.** "Once they start engaging often and for long periods of time, they may really lose control."

"People have this idea that, 'Oh, well, if I let my kid play as many video games as they want or be on social media as much as they want, they'll get tired of it.' And in fact, the opposite happens."

Tip 3: Make microenvironments.

Create places in your home where the child can't access or see problematic devices. For example, have only one room in the house where children can use the phone or tablet. Keep these devices out of bedrooms, the kitchen, the dining room and the car.

At the same time, create times in your schedule where the child cannot see or access this device. Narrow down usage to only a small time each day, if possible. Or take a weekly "tech Sabbath,"

where everyone in the family takes a 24-hour break from their phones and tablets.

Tip 4: Try a habit makeover.

Instead of cutting out an activity altogether, look for a version that's more purposeful, says neuroscientist Yevgenia Kozorovitskiy at Northwestern University.

Kozorovitskiy, who has two teen boys, ages 11 and 12, says prohibiting video games altogether isn't realistic for her family. But she does think carefully about which games they're playing. "They will sometimes want to play this adventure game that's really complex and cognitively wonderful," she explains. "It requires exploration, discovery and strategy. And they play it together, physically. They're speaking about strategy, exchanging plans and using advanced social and language skills."

I tried this strategy with my daughter. One night we switched the cartoons for a language learning app. I told her that having an activity that's more purposeful will actually be more pleasurable.

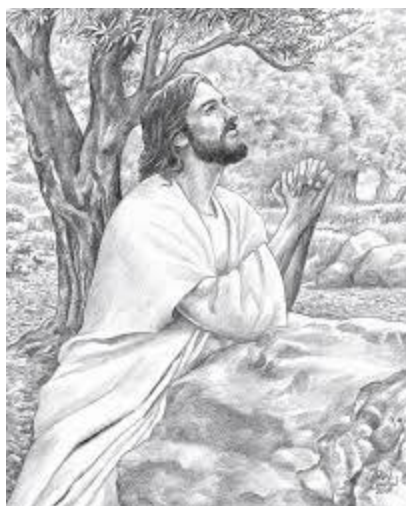
And yes, she expressed great disappointment in this swap out, with tears and "But Mamas." But I stayed strong and calm, and I waited. After a few minutes, just as Kent Berridge said, the craving seemed to pass even more quickly than I expected. She easily switched gears to learning a bit of Spanish each night — with very little fuss.

And guess what happened? After using the language app for a few weeks, she lost interest in the screens altogether. She hasn't watched a cartoon since.

But I'll tell you this: I will think very carefully before introducing a new app, device or even a new dessert into our lives. The battle against dopamine is just too hard for me to fight. Help your children from becoming slaves to games and apps. The makers of

these know that they can be addictive. Their end game is to make money and your child will be their guaranty of success. Be informed. Be proactive. Be a Parent. Your child is counting on you.

The Garden of Gethsemane Jesus Was Given an Angel



Some of you reading this Newsletter suffer anguish and worry due to family issues or past sins.

Stress and anguish cannot be avoided sometimes. Family fights, or drug problems or past sins you committed that you cannot forgive yourself for can cause high stress. How you handle the stress is important.

I recall the stress and anguish that Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had all the sins that would ever be committed, and all the worries of the world being put upon his heart, mind and body. So much so, that the bible tells us that his sweat became like blood. This was caused by extreme levels of stress.



His Father in heaven was counting on him to put the whole of creation right again and to give us salvation. He also knew of the agonizing death that awaited him on the cross.

His human nature was stressed to the maximum, so much so, that God the Father sent him an angel to comfort him. When you experience stress and worry and your heart is breaking and your mind is tormented, turn to Jesus and ask for his help. He knows about stress and worry. He knows about your sins

and is ready to forgive you. Talk to him and tell him what the cause of your anguish is. Let him help you.

You have a guardian angel. Just like God gave His son Jesus an angel to comfort him. So will Jesus instruct your angel to comfort you.

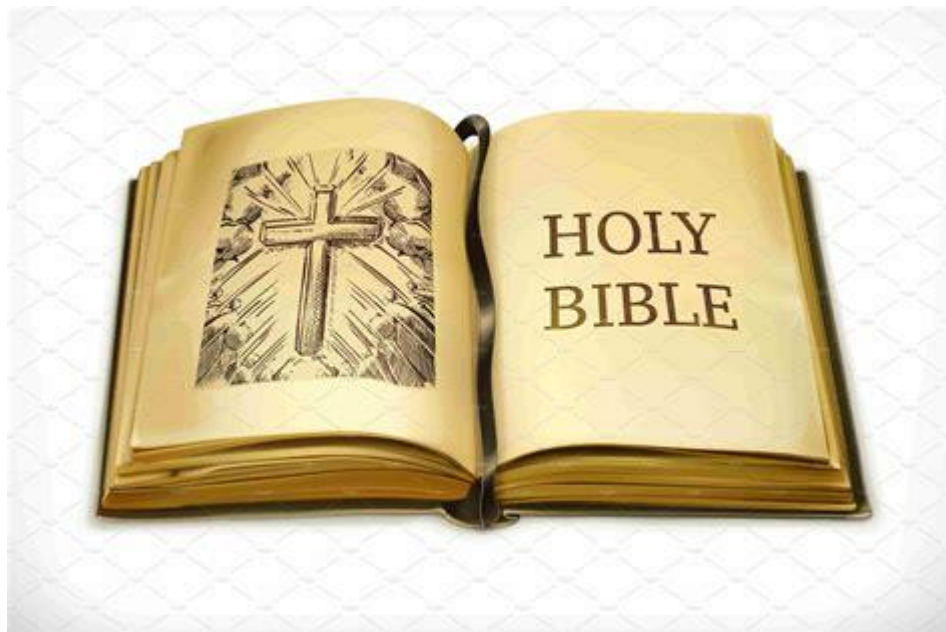
When Was The Last Time You Opened Your Bible

Many Christians today are reported to have bibles, but seldom open them.

Your spiritual life needs to be fed. Start reading and receive God's word in your life. You can trust God. He tells the "TRUTH."

In a world full of Lies, the Bible is the place to receive the Truth.

Your spiritual life will be raised with God's word in you. Read your bible each day, even if it is just a passage or two.



Prepare for Battle Against Satan and All His Helpers

So take up the Sword of GOD. The Shied of the Holy Spirit & The Blood of Jesus to defend us protect us & save us in our battle against Lucifer & all his demonic demons & evil doers. Amen 🕊️🙏❤️🇺🇸



Franklin Graham 🌐

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"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:10-13)





**The International Catholic Family Newsletter
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Our mission statement is to motivate people to pray and to be Christian examples in their work, home and with others, for those needing the Light in a world of Darkness.



The Rosary is the 'weapon' for these times. – St. Padre Pio

St. Paul Ministry

<https://www.catholicfamilynewsletter.com>