

## **Micromanaging, Delegating and Letting Go: By Debi Silber, MS, RD, WHC**

Feeling a sense of control is important to your health, self esteem and well being. It helps us feel strong, empowered and in charge of our lives and the way it's unfolding. While a sense of control is beneficial, too much control often leaves us micromanaging everything and everyone in our path. Are you micromanaging? Do you need to oversee everything and make sure it's all done your way? Is it unsettling for you when things aren't done to your exact specifications? Besides taking on an enormous amount of extra stress, you're probably making things more difficult for everyone in your path. If this sounds like you, it's time to stop micromanaging, learn to delegate and let it go. First of all, consider it from your children's perspective.

Let's say you ask them to make their bed. The cover may be pulled up but it's not tucked in with military precision by any means. You've asked them to handle the bed making task, it doesn't meet your approval so you decide to remake their bed. What message are your children receiving while you're satisfying your need for a perfect house? They're probably feeling like their efforts aren't good enough which discourages them from trying harder while diminishing their self esteem. Here's another example.

You've asked your husband or partner to go food shopping in an effort to share the workload. So far, this is a great plan. He comes home with every concoction of sugary, fatty junk food that can be found on the supermarket shelves. What do you do? Maybe you decide that he simply can't get it right so it's yet another job you'll have to do. Who are you punishing here? Yes you'll bring home some healthier options, but how about providing him with a specific list and hoping for the best? Your first option only leaves you with more work, frustration and unhappiness while he's off the hook and wishing you could simply ask for what you want.

This next example is something way too many moms can relate to. What happens when your child comes home with a complicated project that's due in a few days? Is it really their project, or has it become yours? Of course you want your child's project to be completed, nicely done and timely but many moms feel that if their child's work will be seen in or outside the classroom, it needs their decorating touch. There are a few things going on here.

The first thing worth mentioning is how does your "involvement" affect your child? Sure the project may look award winning by the time you're through but consider the long term consequences. Your child will be doing hundreds of projects during their school career. As they grow, the time involved, difficulty and requirements will only increase. If they've never had an opportunity to take full responsibility for their work, their effort and their time, how will it affect them later on? Picture your child in college. If he or she never had to take responsibility for their own assignments during school because you were always on hand to help, think about how this abrupt change of events will affect him or her now. Chances are, it will be a rude and uncomfortable awakening, leaving your child frustrated, overwhelmed and anxious.

Next, take a look at how it affects you. First of all, if you have more than one child, multiply the extra project time by how many children you have. If you have a few children, you've just given yourself a part time job!

The trick with ending micromanaging is to delegate the task and then let it go! Sure it may not be perfect or exactly the way you want it. But try to ask yourself this very deep, spiritual and philosophical question which can only be answered after careful thought and consideration. Ready, the question is.....who cares? Chances are, no one cares but you. So for your health, well being and sanity, stop micromanaging; learn to delegate then let it go. Not only will you be happier, but so will everyone else.

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