

# Dumb! Dumber! Bad!



At some point, immaturity becomes dumb; left unchecked it becomes dumber leading to outright bad.

Is there any greater gauge of immaturity, no matter the age, than saying: “I don’t feel like it!”? A major part of training and disciplining children is replaying thousands of time: “I don’t care if you feel like it – do it!”

Unless properly trained these cute children become teenagers, when asked “Why” say, “I don’t know” (dumber). Then further aging, without the proper training/discipline, we find when asked why they are doing something that they obviously should not be doing, “Because I feel like it!”

Correct *discipline* (verb) is to teach *discipline* (noun) – sometimes with punishment; and when required, the punishment should be appropriate to train the child of the consequences for a lack of discipline. There can, and should be, a gain in discipline without any pain of punishment – the two are NOT synonymous! The old adage, “No pain. No gain.” is foolishness! In most instances disciplines are won largely by setting aside the necessary time rather than using it for less important matters.

## An Important Example of Discipline and Its Great Profit

An immature view of love: “I want him/her to do X because they feel like doing it – I don’t want them to feel like they have to do it.” Yet very quickly, when cooped up with each other for a while, they begin to say: “I don’t care whether he/she feels like doing X, Y AND Z or not; if he/she loves me they will do them!”

Mature love – feelings that have been trained by good disciplines. Love leapfrogs feelings to do (in maturity) what needs/should be done to deepen/improve feelings long-term. Disciplines are the only foundation upon which feelings can reasonably rest – when, in contrast, feelings are the foundation, the relationship is built on sand.

Several basic and key spouse disciplines (No! Not a discipline of or for your spouse, but self-disciplines in relation to your spouse! To begin to act in a discipline of love toward your spouse.):

- Thankfulness for and verbalizing this thanks – rather than taking your spouse for granted.
- Setting priorities in a deliberate and cooperative way – instead of allowing less important things and people to cannibalize the time, energy and emotions that rightly belong to your marriage. Work, as one illustration, is important, but not in any stretch as important as a marriage!
- Looking for ways (even, and especially, “little” ways) to bless your spouse – as opposed to measuring carefully your 50% and going no further!

Or as Paul succinctly summed it up in the 3rd Chapter of *Colossians*:

Wives, submit to your husbands [as a discipline – not a feeling!], as is fitting in the Lord.  
Husbands, love your wives [as a discipline of a disciple – even, and most importantly, when you do not feel like it!] and do not be harsh with them.

Unfortunately, and unnecessarily, most spouse disciplines – (like other disciplines) wait for and start from and with a crisis; the initial passion (often within weeks or months) is gradually replaced by taking the other person for granted . . . then waking up (or being woken up) to an awareness of what was very important having been “lost” . . . then, normally in a shotgun ad hoc approach, seeking ways to repair the damage (rather than disciplines that will have a lasting impact). Unless and until the relationship has

gone over the cliff of destruction many marriages go through this state of crisis several times –in cycles and circles without ever developing deep and lasting spouse disciplines.

All discipline is not love (for example, the habit of criticizing your spouse) but all deep, lasting love will have associated disciplines – doing, especially when we don't "feel like it," what we know will build love and future feelings. Feeling, as a life driver, lead to the broad road of destruction while disciplines provide a narrow way and channel for feelings.

## There is no merit in discipline for the sake of discipline

... in fact, wrong disciplines will simply speed one into error and quicker destruction! God is not pleased with disciplines other than those that better us now with a view to eternity:

So we make it our **goal** to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. <sup>2Co 5:9</sup>

I press on toward the **goal** to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus <sup>Phil 3:14</sup>

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the **goal** of your faith, the salvation of your souls. <sup>1Pe 1:8 - 9</sup>

Time is short; we would wisely focus its end – the beginning of eternity. In the last paragraph of *Matthew* we find:

Then the eleven **disciples** went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and **make disciples** [people of Christ-like disciplines] of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." <sup>Mt 28:16 - 20</sup>

Jesus could have used the term believer, follower, lover, giver, attendee, crusader or confessor – He carefully chose **disciple**. The seal, stamp and only hope and assurance that anyone is a true Christian is that they are a disciple (one increasing in the Christian disciplines):

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? <sup>2Co 13:5</sup>

Hopefully, as we age, we will hear less and less: "I don't care if you feel like it – do it!" because, instead, we will seek and learn effective disciplines to do what is right and good! Learning *discipline* (noun) is the only way to minimize the inevitable punishment that comes without them – teeth rot, bodies deteriorate, relationships suffer . . .

The first step in a discipline is the decision to do what is appropriate, in the face of possible feelings otherwise, because it is good and right. The difficulty of accomplish disciplines vary, but they do become easier and easier with time and practice until, generally, little or no through has to be devoted to them with the benefits continuing to accrue day by day.

There are two options in life: 1) Live an ad hoc life based on feelings or 2) See and seek disciplines as friends to develop habits of doing what is right and good. There is a short-term effort required to develop a new discipline into a good habit; then, however, we have the on-going benefits at almost no cost!

Discipline – THE means through which we get from where we are to where we want to be!

# 2007 - The Year for Seeking

## Success Through Developing Key Disciplines

Physical <sup>Body</sup>	Spiritual	Financial	Physical <sup>Possessions</sup>	Relational <sup>Personal</sup>	Relational <sup>Work</sup>	Mental	
Proper Rest	Proper Rest	Live within means - start paying down debt	Dispose of clutter	Be Thankful!	Proper Rest	Be Thankful!	
Dedicate Time	Dedicate Time		Clean/maintain what you keep	Dedicate Time	Be Thankful!	Proper Rest	
Exercise	Seek 1st <sup>Mt 6:25-33</sup>			Take Sunday off!	Take Sunday off!	Dedicate Time	
Be Thankful! <sup>Key for good attitude</sup>	Be Thankful!	Be Thankful!	Be Thankful!	Every day have a "devotional" time	Every day have a "devotional" time	Exercise	
	Take Sunday off!	Clean/maintain physical possessions				Dispose of clutter	
Floss your Teeth!	Every day have a "devotional" time			Start/increase giving <sup>rather than seeking "entitlements"</sup>	Start/increase giving <sup>rather than seeking "entitlements"</sup>	Take Sunday off!	
Take Sunday off!						Start/increase giving <sup>rather than seeking "entitlements"</sup>	
Every day have a "devotional" time	Start/increase giving <sup>rather than seeking "entitlements"</sup>	Exercise <sup>Even if there is no immediate impact, in the long run this is the best financial investment a person can make</sup>			Be THE person, in the office, that has the best attitude <sup>Encourage others</sup>		Start/increase giving <sup>rather than seeking "entitlements"</sup>
						Seek 1st <sup>Mt 6:25-33</sup>	
						Every day have a "devotional" time	
		Take Sunday off!					
		Start/increase giving <sup>rather than seeking "entitlements"</sup>			Challenge yourself with new tasks	Challenge yourself with new tasks	