

Simply stated: “Empathy” is the ability to share another person’s emotions. Empathy must be taught; it does not come naturally to a young child. However, teaching empathy is essential, now more than ever, because of the heavy impact new hand held devices, iPhones, iPads, etc. are having on our young people.

Many young children, not all, but many, are not learning the basic value obtained by developing genuine empathetic relationships. Bottom line, relationships result from experiencing empathy. Relationships are the only true value our humanity can enjoy. Anything else, including empathy, only contributes to the value of enjoying genuine relationships.

As stated in other articles, all genuine relationships will include three major components, (1) Mutual agape type love, a verb, not just our emotional feelings, (2) Mutual need and then (3) Mutual joy. Remember this though, emotions make wonderful servants for us, however, they should never become too involved while we’re making our major decisions in life.

Remember our Lord Created His humanity to enjoy relationships (Exodus 34:14b plus several others). Relationships require our “free choice.” Otherwise we would all be robotically programmed to behave instinctively without faith. True relationships with our Lord or with each other would not be possible.

Genuine relationships cannot properly develop when a young child spends too many hours of their life using portable devices to communicate with others.

Selfishness never needs a teacher; it is very natural to all of us, especially young children. When we counsel, we must always explore our mentee’s childhood, regardless of their current age.

Remember we were born after the fall described in chapter 3 in Genesis. That’s when “fear” replaced agape “love” and became the beginning of the sin nature we were born into. As stated many times, all sinful behavior has its origin in fear.

Now, don’t misunderstand me. Modern technology is not wrong, however allowing it to consume our children’s value system can be very destructive.

Please, if you are in a position where you have influence over young children, help them develop positive relationships. These are, as stated earlier, the only real value we all experience in life!!!