

Joyful Toddlers and Preschoolers: Create a Life That You and Your Child Both Love

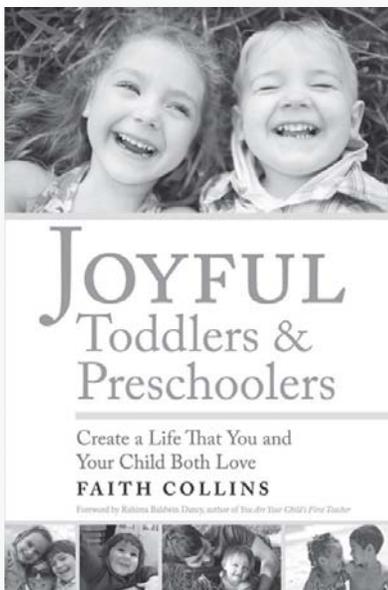
By Faith Collins

Hohm Press, 2017

Reviewed by Nancy Blanning

Faith Collins, experienced toddler teacher in Waldorf and LifeWays settings, LifeWays parent educator, and researcher, has produced a book that can be a good resource and recommendation to mainstream-oriented parents of very young children and toddlers. So many parenting books recommend reasoning logically and speaking about feelings with the young child. Faith points out that this is usually fruitless. Little children are not developmentally or cognitively capable of responding in a logical, reasonable way. She states as a Key Point: “When to Explain and Convince? ***Avoid it!*** It is not effective: you don’t change emotion through logic, especially for someone with an immature brain” (p. 98). What fundamentally matters is the relationship (which Faith calls “connection”) between the child and parent. When this is fleeting and cannot be relied upon, opposition and unattractive behaviors will be inevitable with the child.

This book makes a strong and healthy argument that children will respond well to our expectations and requests if it is appropriate to the child’s developmental



stage. Most appreciated is the author’s emphasis upon understanding child development so that we set our expectations fairly and reasonably for the little child. Every time this is stated, it is a blessing toward young children.

Parallel to this insight, Faith gives abundant suggestions for employing humor and laughter, rhymes and songs, stories and pictorial (rather than literal) vocabulary to inspire the child’s cooperation and enjoyment in daily tasks. Collins’s guiding points

are clear and well developed in a step-by-step presentation that the logical adult mind appreciates and that a harried parent can hold on to. The book’s insights are supported by mainstream research that validates her points and supports her statements. This volume may be a beacon of sanity to distressed, befuddled parents. Waldorf principles are implicit in the book’s recommendations. The reviewer hopes that this volume may also be a bridge from the logic-driven parenting world to the world of Waldorf early childhood education. ♦