

## More Parent Guilt –Part II

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Core Values Integrity  
Jewish Values Enrichment

In the first part of this column last week, I introduced Laura Callisen's list of *6 Parenting Sins to Avoid*. At the risk of continuing the discomfort, the following are the rest of the "sins":

3) **Discounting their emotions.** How would you feel if you told your spouse of a great fear or anxiety and the response was: "Oh don't be silly, that's nothing!"? Why should a young adult feel any differently? No one wants to be told that there is no validity to their feelings. Such a response is likely to add more stress to a child's emotions.

4) **Public shaming as punishment.** Many outrageous parents have taken to social media to post humiliating videos of their children. Yet parents who fault such excesses should examine their own practices to determine if they are prone to embarrassing their children in front of friends or relatives.

5) **Not letting them do things for themselves.** In order for children to grow to be responsible, self-assured, positively assertive adults, they must be allowed to make their own decisions, and whenever possible, to make mistakes as well. In the long run, failing at a task is the best way to eventually achieving success.

6) **Not having conversations with them.** When I teach my fourth grade students step # 2 in my *mentschhood* class ("*You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall correct your fellow man and not bear a sin because of him*"), I tell them that one sure way to fail this admonishment is to lecture the person you wish to correct. As I say, no one, including adults wants to be lectured to. Parents must refine the art of discussing issues with their children by jointly articulating the problem and determining the best possible approaches to its solution. These conversations in and of themselves are strong relationship building experiences between parent and child.

The good thing about feeling guilty regarding some aspects of our parenting is that it means we are all already on the road to correcting ourselves.