

## The Present Parent Handbook: 26 Simple Tools to Discover that This Moment, This Action, This Thought, This Feeling is Exactly Why I'm Here

**Timothy Dukes**

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*These mindfulness practices can bring flourishing to every family.*

*The Present Parent Handbook*, by Timothy Dukes, presents a step-by-step approach to mindfully raising children.

Dukes calls parents back to the heart of their desire—being—and breaks down the monumental topic of parental identity and presence into twenty-six brief ideas. These practices invite parents to re-envision the roles that they play in bringing up happy, emotionally healthy kids.

Each practice aligns with a letter of the alphabet. This A-to-Z approach is simple and will be easy to remember during the tumultuous days of parenting. Most are verb phrases, but they focus on mind-sets rather than tasks.

The ideas build as the alphabet continues: “Keep the *Balance*” is essential to later entries like “*Hold the Pieces Together*” and “*Witness their Wonder*.” This learn-as-you-go approach is crucial because, while most of the practices sound inviting, some of them seem downright daunting, such as “*Gently Coax*” and “*Experience the Wounds*.”

Along the way, Dukes shares tips and practical ways to put the learning into practice; this is particularly helpful to parents who are new to the practice of mindfulness. Dukes’s calm, positive voice makes contemplative living accessible to parents of many personalities.

The promise of the subtitle—discovering “exactly why I am here”—is bold, but it answers the cry of a parent’s heart in the mundane and frustrating moments of ushering a child from infancy to adulthood. Page by page, Dukes shows parents that they really can develop and maintain relationships that are open and honest, and that are built on mutual wisdom, care, and trust.

This book will help parents with children of all ages to see themselves in new ways, but will be particularly powerful for parents of very young children who are just setting the course of their families. Dukes’s hope for parents never relents; he diligently asserts that even after years of living and parenting another way, these practices can bring flourishing to every family.

*The Present Parent Handbook* offers parents a guilt-free fresh start, today and every day.

MELISSA WUSKE (July/August 2017)

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