

The Turning: Why the State of the Family Matters, and What the World Can Do about It

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Facts, figures, and compelling anecdotes combine to bolster the Eyres' argument for strengthening home life in order to cure society's ailments.

There are many problems in society today and most, if not all of them, can be traced back to the erosion of the family structure. That's the premise for Richard and Linda Eyre's book, *The Turning: Why the State of the Family Matters and What the World Can Do about It*.

The family is the essential microstructure of society, and families today are in a state of turmoil and crisis, they say. The crises are caused by divorce, common-law partnerships, abortions, and single parenting, among other things. And the effects of the degradation of family life are widespread, including violence in schools, promiscuity and teen pregnancy, substance abuse, poverty, and depression, sometimes leading to suicide. "Solid family life, far from being a luxury, is the only way to flourish and the only meaningful and lasting way to help society survive," the authors write.

The Eyres support their theory with many facts and figures, and quotes from respected organizations, journalists, and researchers, as well as with their own anecdotes from their family and friends. They make a compelling argument, and their book forces readers into reflection on their own family life— what might be wrong with it, and how to improve it. Chapter 9, titled "The Cure," offers ideas for strengthening the family structure, including heartfelt commitment, balance and time management, better communication, and the creation of identity, security, and motivation for children through family. Each idea is elucidated with examples and suggestions of how it could be implemented at home and what its effects might be. In the communication section, the Eyres suggest parents take one-on-one trips with a child so they can simply enjoy being together and having the time to talk. "Keep trying, look for opportunities and make time together," they write. "Do whatever it takes to open up the channels."

The Turning is written on the basis of deep religious faith, but religion isn't required to see the book's intrinsic value. Well researched and thought out, this book prompts reflection and a new way of looking at the source of the world's sorrows and the problems that fester at home. Moreover, its suggestions to fix those problems are pragmatic, interesting, and easy to implement.

LAUREN KRAMER (Winter 2015)

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