

DISCOVERIES

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Corbett, Bill

LOVE, LIMITS, & LESSONS

Cooperative Kids (214 pp.)

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A thoroughly readable and thoughtfully written guide to raising happy, cooperative and responsible children.

Lecturer Corbett, founder of the organization called Cooperative Kids, developed a parent-education class called “Love, Limits, & Lessons” upon which this book is based. Combining the teachings of psychiatrists Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs, the author has developed his own philosophy and approach to disciplining and nurturing children. The book doesn’t contain heady discussions of the physical or cognitive development of children—instead it contains simple and straightforward ways for parents to use techniques to modify their children’s behavior. Corbett believes that in order to discipline children parents must first understand why the child is misbehaving, and that the discipline administered must always be fair and respectful. One of his techniques is “Living Out Loud,” which goes beyond learning by example. Here, he advises parents to actually narrate their positive behavior for the child to see and hear, such as “I need to finish the laundry so we have clean clothes to wear.” The author also admonishes parents who give too much praise, for he feels that excessive compliments can guide children into unhealthy external motivations—such as a desire to please others—instead of creating positive internal motivations and feelings of accomplishment and pride. Instead Corbett advises parents to use encouragement. The book provides advice for parenting children from preschool age to the teenage years, and each chapter conveniently addressing a particular topic, making it simple for parents to find quick help with a specific problem or question. Among the many topics he covers are encouraging children to read, handling power struggles, setting boundaries and teaching gratitude. Corbett writes with warmth and humor, using stories from his workshops as well as his experiences in raising three children.

A fresh, intelligent look at teaching children to be respectful, self-sufficient and happily help them find their place in the world.

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