

## NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES\*

### I. DEFINITIONS

#### A. Natural Consequences:

The natural results of ill-advised acts. The unavoidable consequences of the deeds which they follow. The inevitable reactions entitled by the child's actions whether or not the adult is present. Example clothes not in the laundry do not get washed.

#### B. Logical Consequences:

The consequence has a logical relationship to the misdeed. It is in effect arranged by the adult rather than being solely the result of the child's own acts. A choice is given between two or more alternatives. If a misjudgment is made the child rather than the adult accepts the responsibility for the consequences. Example the child or the parent can pick up the child's clothes. The person who picks them up, however, decides what will be done with them (the parent may decide to put them in the attic for a while.) Always provide a choice, child must decide.

#### C. Punishment:

A method by which a "superior" enforces his demands upon his "inferior". Punishment is retaliatory, illogical, and arbitrary rather than corrective. Example "You are bad to have such a messy room with clothes all over the floor. Therefore I am not going to let you watch TV for 3 weeks."

### II. Differences between Logical or Natural Consequences and Punishment:

<u>CONSEQUENCES</u>	<u>PUNISHMENT</u>
1. Expresses the reality of the social order or the situation—not of the person—Democratic.	* Expresses the power of a personal authority—Authoritarian.
2. Logically related to the misbehavior.	* Not logical, only an arbitrary connection between misbehavior and consequences.
3. Involves no element of moral judgments.	* Inevitably involves some moral judgment.
4. Concerned only with what will happen now.	* Deals with the past.
5. The relationship and atmosphere are friendly. Resentment is minimized.	* Often anger is present either overtly or covertly. Resentment is frequent.
6. Develops intrinsic motivation and self-discipline.	* Depends on extrinsic motivation.
7. No submission or humiliation.	* Often requires submission or humiliation.
8. Freedom of choice within limits.	* No alternative or choice.

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| 9.  | Consequences are acceptable.   | * Punishment is at best only tolerable.  |
| 10. | Thoughtful and deliberate.   | * Often impulsive.   |
| 11. | Child feels important.   | * Child feels belittled.   |
| 12. | Choice given once only.  | * Often involves endless nagging.  |
| 13. | Uses Action.   | * Uses talking and coercion.   |
| 14. | The child accepts responsibility for his own actions.                  | * The adult takes responsibility for the child's actions.  |
| 15. | The adult is disengaged from negative involvement with the child.      | * Involvement is always negative.  |
| 16. | Based on the concept of equality of worth between children and adults. | * Based on superior-inferior-superior relationship between children and adults—fear of punishment. |
| 17. | Implies that the child can work out his own problems.                  | * Implies that only an adult is capable of solving the child's problem.                            |

### III. Problems in the Use of Natural and Logical Consequences:

1. A logical consequences may be viewed as punishment by a powerful or revengeful child particularly if the adult also exhibits powerful behavior.
2. For logical consequences to work well there is a need for a good relationship to be developed between the child and the adult. The relationship and friendliness must be genuine. If the adult feels personally involved, threatened or defeated, it will be difficult to apply logical consequences. The adult's tone of voice is a crucial indication of his attitude toward this child.
3. There is a need for constructive and supportive training of the child to be conducted in conjunction with the use of logical consequences. This training should be conducted at the non-conflict time.
4. Encouragement is needed at the time when corrective action is being taken. As an adult withdraws from negative involvement with children there is a greater need for positive involvement.