



## CHAPTER 4

### MODEL YOUR PURPOSE FOR YOUR CHILD

#### YOU IN YOUR CHILD'S EYES

- 🕒 **Suggested Time to Complete:** Thirty minutes.
- ✔️ **When you complete this exercise,** you will have a True Vision of how you want your future relationship with your child(ren) to look. That vision will inform the actions you should take today to make it happen.
- ⊗ **If you skip this exercise,** you miss an opportunity to set—or at least evaluate—the foundations for your future relationship with your child(ren) and priorities for your family time.

How do you want to be seen in the eyes of your child or children? Caution: This is not where you simply say, “I want to be best friends with my child once they are an adult.” This is deep work. It’s time to get intentional about the important lessons you want your child to learn *and how you want them to see you as a parent and role model*. Your answers to these questions should represent your Ideal State, or the relationship you would *like* to have with your child. Let’s jump in!

#### **Step 1: Create time and space for this exercise.**

What you put into this exercise will determine what you get out of it. Reserve twenty to thirty minutes to answer the following questions. Permit yourself to spend more time on the exercise if you find it speaks to you.

#### **Step 2: Envision your almost-adult child.**

Think about what your child will be like when they are a senior in high school, on the cusp of adulthood, and, perhaps, leaving the nest for their next stage in what will be a bright life. Ask yourself:

- Do they enjoy school and learning? How would their teachers, coaches, or tutors describe them?
- What will the next few years of their life bring? Will they go to college or trade school, enter the workforce, or take a gap year?
- What do they like to do with their friends? Do they enjoy spending time with their family?
- What are the traditions and rituals that form the cornerstones of your life as a family?

### Step 3: What would they say about you?

Are you feeling incredibly proud of the almost-adult child you envisioned in Step 2? With that image in mind, it's time to turn your attention back to you. In this step, you will look at yourself through your child's eyes. What would they say about you, your career, and your family? Remember, your answers should describe your Ideal State, or the relationship you would *ideally* have with your child.

- How would your child describe the work that you do? Do they see you enjoying your work and feeling good about your impact on the world?
- How much time do you spend together? Chances are, your teen will have a packed schedule between school, extracurricular activities, and their social life. What is the time you spend together like? How are you present and holding space for your child?
- What are your conversations with your child like? Do they speak openly with you and seek your guidance? Or do conflicts overshadow your relationship?

### Step 4: Roadmap your relationship.

The Ideal State from Steps 2 and 3 is your destination. To arrive there, you will need to set the correct trajectory for your parenting *now*. First, look at your answers from the previous steps and honestly assess your current state.

For example, if you'd like your child to say, someday: "My family always made time to connect, even when things were busy. Sunday mornings were sacred: We always had breakfast together around the table and just talk and joke around. If I had a friend sleep over, they were always welcome and included, too," then you need to create this ritual *now*. For example, if you have a parenting partner, you would come together to create this family ritual of a weekly Sunday breakfast. Similarly, you would set the intention to have a welcoming household where your child's friends feel comfortable and like members of the family.

If you want your child to have a love of reading, now is the time to read to them regularly and let them see *you* reading for pleasure.

If you want your child to see you as a passionate entrepreneur who prioritizes their family, it's time to start reading the next chapter!

To finish this exercise:

- Write down a short statement of your True Vision, if you haven't already;
- Write down three to five things that you will do *now* to support this vision; and
- Schedule time to make it happen. Set up recurring appointments and reminders so that you follow through on the tasks and rituals that will support your vision.

**⌚ FAST FIVE:** Pick *one* thing that you want your future almost-adult child to say about you. This could be about how you made them feel celebrated, how you showed up in the ways that mattered most, or a family tradition that was important to them. Take a moment to write down what you will do *now* to create this future and when you will do it.