



Parental Wisdom Emails

Today's Modern Villages Are Needed to Raise a Child

Not too long ago, I was presenting a parenting seminar at a local mom's group. At the end of the discussion a very pretty and very pregnant mom raised her hand. "Does it get any easier?" In unison, all the moms in the room said, "Yes!"

It turned out this teary, exhausted mom was two weeks away from having her fourth child and busy caring for her five-year-old, three-year old, and 18-month old children, with no help.

I knew this community, and interestingly part of the town's name was 'the village' so helping was second nature to them. Going out on a limb, I asked this mom if she had ever been on the 'giving' side. She nodded and explained how she had run a program at church that helped members in need.

Why is it easy to help others, yet difficult to ask for help?

As the African proverb suggests, it does take a village to raise a child. Today's villages use modern tools such as Google Calendar. Volunteers sign up to make meals, coordinate trips to doctors and guarantee sufficient coverage. For families dealing with family illnesses, or financial struggles the situations are tough, but not insurmountable. They are in temporary need of help and fortunately, people rally to their aid.

Other families that need help are high profile such as ['Jon and Kate plus 8'](#) and next we'll meet The Hayes Family on TLC's ['Table for Twelve'](#) but collectively we like these families, and as a result they get help from sponsor companies providing vans, homes, diapers, juice, clothes, etc.

Compare that to Octomom, where simple math meets complex issues.

The simple math is:

- 0 job for the sole breadwinner
- 1 single mother
- 6 siblings
- 8 newborns
- 14 children in total
- 15 minutes of fame

The complex issues are:

- Should someone lacking the financial means have 14 children?
- Who was a right to say how many children someone can have?
- Should a potentially dangerous medical situation be allowed?
- What about everyone else who would love to have more children, but feels financially restricted have to pay for someone else's decision to have 14 children?
- When and how often should a child advocacy agency step in to check on the care the children are getting?
- Who are we to judge?

For now, I hope the surrounding community and sponsor companies help, despite the fact that Nadya Suleman is hardly an ideal spokesperson. It's not about her; it's about the babies, and their needed care. Much like a teenage pregnancy, the situation is not ideal.

The controversy and questions will go on, and babies will do what they always do, grow and thrive while the adults are busy talking. We have to realize even though we seriously question her state of mind, and her ability to handle this tremendously difficult situation, she is after all, their mother.

Be kind for everyone you meet if fighting a hard battle. - Plato