



DR. TIMOTHY DUKES

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Take the Risk of Self-Disclosure



Be the Father You Are,
Not the Father,
You Think You Should Be



Our feelings affect how we treat our children, so we often need help addressing whatever has been left unexamined and what we may be displacing into our relationship.

There are many opportunities:

- If you are fortunate enough to have a partner in parenting, speak to them. Let them know how you feel and what is challenging. Remember that it is normal for things to come up as you face your children! Children can accept who you are if you do the work to recognize yourself and simply hold yourself accountable.
- Spend time with other men in such a way that you talk about fathering. Just bring it up. Every male has numerous thoughts and feelings about being a father. We just need permission and experience talking about it.
- Read anything on fathering that feels right to you. My advice? Don't force yourself to read anything that doesn't feel right. Pass the book on and forget about it. However, sometimes we pick up a book and it is so familiar that it is just too painful to read. I have a number of books like this that I place on the shelf and peek at from time to time. Sometimes just the title is enough.
- Spend time alone thinking. It could be that you choose an early morning walk and bring the whole experience of fathering to mind.
- Spend time with your father. This may or may not be easy to do if he is alive. Call him up, take him out for dinner, schedule a trip, simply watch TV or go to a game together. Be willing to feel and to allow those feelings to inform you. Get to know them intimately so that when you are with your child, you do not project your feelings into your relationship.
- Consider writing in a journal. This could be in your computer or a notebook that you carry with you. I work with a man who carries a beautifully bound, black journal in his



briefcase so that when he has a thought, a memory, or an idea, or if he reads something interesting, he has a sacred place to record it.

- If the demons are just too feisty, don't be afraid to seek therapy. Choose someone you respect and trust and with whom you feel something good about yourself, every time you meet. Therapy at its best is like a clear mirror allowing you to become more intimately acquainted with your reflection while learning how to make choices in the world that display and enhance who it is you really are.
- Consider seeking out a mentor or teacher and build a restorative relationship with them. It doesn't have to be about fathering; it can be about anything from car mechanics to playing guitar. Seek a context where you are held and where you recover and discover something new and wonderful about yourself.
- Become a mentor or teacher for someone so that as you support them in their self-discovery, you recognize who you are and what part you play in their process.
- Consider meditation, yoga, exercise, any active endeavor in which you move directly and consciously into relationship with your body and mind.
- Spend time in the natural world. There is abundant life everywhere you go, and if you listen deeply, you will recognize that you are recognized for who you are and what you offer. Nature's beauty is medicine for the soul.
- And finally, the best fathering support is found in relationship to your children. Do not ask or expect them to understand or to recognize you. Everything you feel when you are with them provides an opportunity to recognize the roots of who you are. Your willingness to receive the complexity of this experience increases your capacity for presence. "For better or worse" applies to every moment we spend with our children. Your movement toward the "better" is what is important.

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The Tim Dukes Method provides an opportunity for self-reflective individuals to cultivate the capacity to receive into consciousness hidden aspects of the self, claiming your unique gifts – ensuring that today’s brilliance successfully transitions into tomorrow’s wisdom. The Tim Dukes Method is designed and implemented by Dr. Timothy Dukes for determined creatives to ensure long-term viability — as a continuing investment in the well-being of yourself, family, organizations, culture, society, and the Earth itself.