

Spanking is Hitting, Period

I have heard many cases in defense of spanking your children, and I have addressed ten of them in this article that I wrote a while back.

They are all exhausting, but the one that baffles me the most is when people try to claim that **hitting and spanking are not the same thing**. Which is basically like saying pushing and shoving are not the same thing.

Let's look at the definition of spanking:

spank

/spaNGk/ 

verb

1. slap with one's open hand or a flat object, especially on the buttocks as a punishment.
"she was spanked for spilling ink on the carpet"
synonyms: smack, slap, hit, cuff, More

*see synonyms

Now, let's look at the definition of hitting:

hit

/hit/ 

verb

1. bring one's hand or a tool or weapon into contact with (someone or something) quickly and forcefully.
"the woman hit the mugger with her umbrella"
synonyms: strike, slap, smack, spank, cuff, punch, thump, SWAT; More

*see synonyms

I want to drive this home right now. It will be harsh, but it needs to be.

When you spank your child...

YOU ARE HITTING YOUR CHILD.

YOU ARE HURTING YOUR CHILD.

YOU ARE HUMILIATING YOUR CHILD.

YOU ARE USING PHYSICAL FORCE AGAINST YOUR CHILD

YOU ARE COMMITTING AN ACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST YOUR CHILD.

Got it?

I know we like to lessen the intensity of reality by coming up with cutesie euphemisms, but in the case of spanking kids, we can no longer afford to do that.

It doesn't matter where on the body you use force. It doesn't matter whether or not you leave physical wounds. It doesn't matter if you were "calm and happy" when you did it. It doesn't even matter that you managed to cease the unwanted behavior by doing so. *You hit your child.* Period.

Because let's try to turn this around.

What if your child hit you?

What if your husband hit you?

What if your friend hit you?

Are any of these okay so long as it didn't leave a mark?

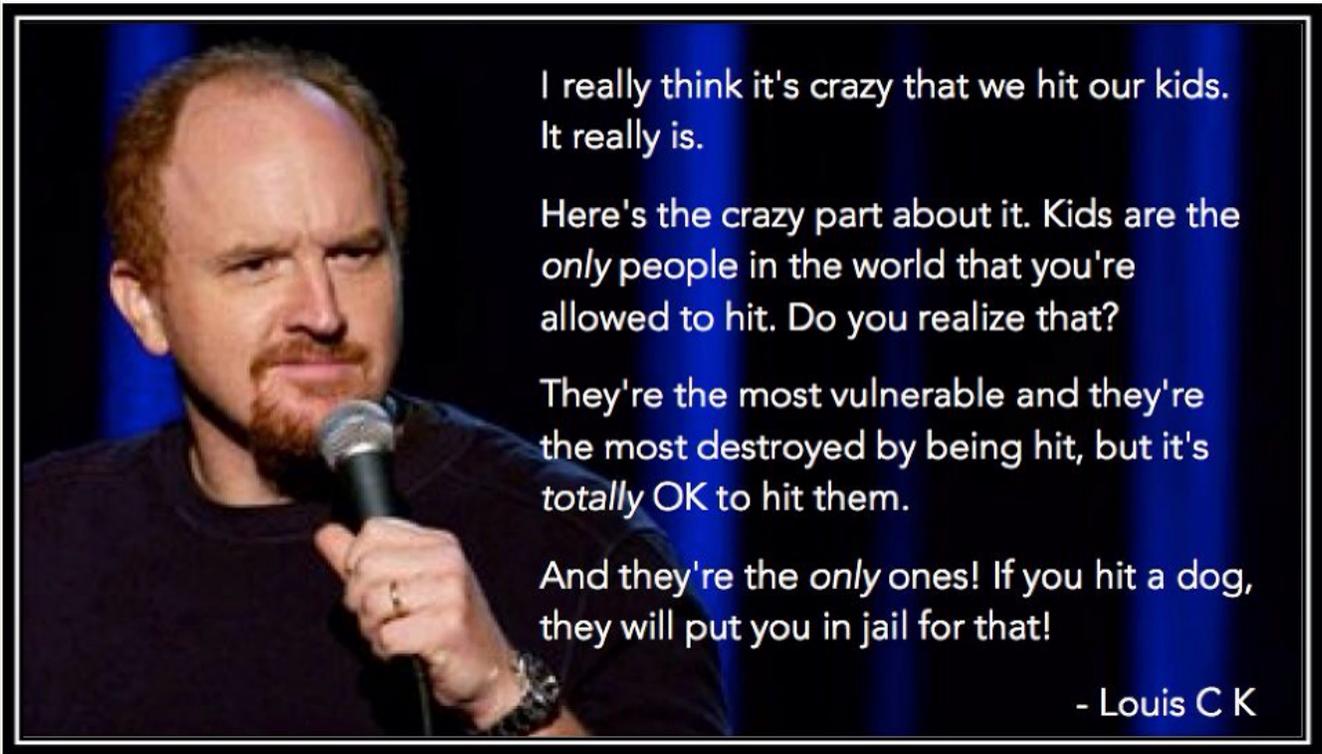
Or so long as they told you were going to do it before they did it?

What if your husband hit you, and he came to his own defense and said, "well it's not like I beat you black and blue!"

Does that make it ok? No. You know the answer is no.

You also know that it isn't ok to ever hit anyone. Not even animals. You probably even tell your children that hitting is not okay.

So HOW did children become the ONLY beings we are allowed to hit? And yes, the ONLY reason you think it is okay to hit children and no one else is because of societal conditioning. Society generally accepts this behavior from adults. You know you will not get in trouble so you think it must be ok. But 52 countries know this isn't true, which is why they have prohibited spanking.



If you believe for one second that small children (or anyone for that matter) need to be hit in order to do good and learn respect...then that is the saddest thing I have ever heard. What type of reality must one live in to believe people need to be hurt to be good? It is a reality I am so glad I don't buy into. Humans are so much better than that, trust me. Children learn things like respect when they see the people they look up to being respectful. That includes being respectful to them. They learn what *you* model. React to them how you want them to react to others. Makes sense, right?

And before you come at me saying that I need to mind my own business and let people parent how they want to parent, I want to tell you that *hitting is not parenting*.

"Let people parent how they want to parent" is for things like what time your kids go to bed. You cannot say that when you are being violent to children. And I will say this one more time. *Hitting anyone is violent*. I will defend the right of children over your assumed "right" to hurt them. If someone starves their child of food, do you protest, "let people parent how they want to parent?!"

No. Because at some point we recognize that parental freedom ends when the child is at risk of physical, emotional, and/or psychological harm. Hence why in 52 countries there are laws in place to protect the rights of children.

Maybe (hopefully) by now something has gotten through to you. If not, then maybe nothing will and I feel sad that you feel so adamant to hurt the people you love.

But if you feel the fog lifting a little, I think I know where you might be right now:

“Well then what do I do?!” If I am not spanking them, then how will they listen to me, is what you might be thinking.

This process of unlearning doesn't happen overnight. Your entire paradigm around children and parenting will have to shift.

- Connection will have to be your priority above all else.
- You will have to have a deep understanding for child development and how their brains work.
- You will have to look at your own trauma that has you choosing to hit your children, and work to heal that.
- You might have to make decisions that totally rearrange your life in order to make life a more conducive environment for connection and peace.
- You will have to put “vulnerability” in your parenting toolbox.

Not using any form of punishment to raise humans is totally foreign to those who have never seen it done, or who were not raised that way themselves. It is literally not a foundation of this society. Treating children like humans is, unfortunately, a revolutionary act in this day and age. But it is the most beautiful thing to witness if you just trust the process and trust children.

Three things you can do to begin your journey into becoming a more peaceful and connectable parent:

1. Read blogs such as Racheous, Janet Lansbury, Alfie Kohn, and Aha Parenting.
2. Make not hitting your bottom line. No matter what, you will not hit. Time-outs will only be for you to take a deep breath when feeling overwhelmed. You will actively seek any kind of support you need (friends, childcare, therapy, etc.) to become a more peaceful parent.
3. Read books! There are many good ones here.

Lastly, I offer my parenting mentor services to anyone who finds not hitting/yelling/punishing, etc to be difficult. Please contact me for a no cost initial session if you wish to have a deeper understanding of yourself and your children.