

## Parenting a Lying Child, Part 2 | how to catch a liar

### I. The Person

- **If the individual is spiritually dead or spiritually immature, they will lie to you.**
  - I John 2:4; Luke 16:10; John 8:44; Colossians 3:9; proverbs 6:16-19
  - Since what comes out of the mouth has its genesis in our spirits, liars lie out of the sinfulness of their hearts. Therefore, if a person is untrustworthy in other areas of spiritual maturity, we need to be wary of blindly accepting everything they have to say, especially if there's a chance that the individual may view covering the truth as way to protect themselves.
  - Remember, all sin has their thinking and their speaking and acting informed by untruths.
- **If the individual deceives themselves, they will deceive you.**
  - A self-deceived person is going to try to convince you of their deception at some point or another. They may not be deliberately trying to lie to you, but it won't change the fact that what they're saying is untrue.
- **If the individual makes promises they don't keep, they already have a habit of speaking falsehoods.**
  - Whether they deliberately promise something they know they won't fulfill or are too immature to realize that they won't be able to keep their promise, this person is lying.
  - Someone who does this on a regular basis is someone who has practice in lying, and the more they do it, the less trustworthy they become.

### II. The Truth

- The best way to determine if someone is telling the truth is to determine what the truth really is. Instead of staring at the counterfeit and making a decision based off how convincing it looks, we need to find the real-deal and compare the counterfeit to it.
- **Investigation**
  - Romans 3:4
  - **Finding the Truth in Self-Deception**
    - When it comes to self-deception, often times the deception will be revealed by comparing what they believe to Scripture. Self-deception is often theoretical, and the roots of our accepted falsehoods clearly contradict the Scriptures on multiple points.
    - But sometimes a person's self-deception is more practical. Though often their conclusion is based on faulty logic, assumptions, and misinterpretations, it's still so important to bring the Bible to bear on their delusion
  - **Finding the Truth in Deliberate Deception**
    - Liars never have the upper hand when they go toe-to-toe with truth. You might not have the truth in front of you right now, but the more information, the more facts, the more evidence you can get collect, the better.
    - We're arrogant fools if we believe we know everything about everything. We need to be humble. But humility is never going to roll over and play dead. Humility is going to acknowledge that truth glorifies God, I don't have the truth, therefore, I need to do my best to make sure my kids and I know the truth.
- **Discernment**
  - I John 4:1; Hebrews 5:14; Romans 12:2
  - Even when it comes to spiritual beings we are not to blithely believe everything we hear.
  - We need to be trained to tell whether something is good or evil.
  - For the Christian parent, we need to utilize Theo-logic to rightly discern a matter

- **Trust**
  - Trust whom? Trust the potential liar? Trust ourselves? No.
  - We need to trust God to do what we can't do, know what we can't know, and help us as we cannot help ourselves.
  - Sometimes we just need to let it go. If we can't prove there's a lie, it would be unwise to give a consequence for lying. We can trust God that we will know everything we need to know, and we don't have to be afraid if we've done our due diligence.

### III. The Potential Cues

- It's absolutely essential that you must have a *baseline* for determining if the cues should be there or not. None of this is going to help detect lying if you don't know the person with whom you're speaking and have an idea of how they communicate.
- **Potential Verbal Cues**
  - **Content** — watch for . . .
    - Identifiably false statements
    - Answering a question with a question
    - Repeating questions before answering
    - Irregular vocal clutter
    - Trying to convince you that they're telling the truth
    - Seeming to answer a question without actually answering it
  - **Tone** — watch for . . .
    - Unusual rising or lowering of tone
    - Extreme volume changes
  - **Patterns** — watch for . . .
    - Unusual vocabulary, idioms, and sentence structure
    - Taking too long to answer questions,
    - Ceasing to use contractions
    - Speaking in fragments
  - **Quantity** — watch for . . .
    - Talking more than usual or less than usual
- **Potential Physical Cues**
  - **The Legs** — watch for . . .
    - Bouncing legs and tapping feet
    - Shuffling and pacing
  - **The Torso** — watch for . . .
    - Rocking back and forth
    - Turning their body away to the left or right
    - Hugging themselves with their arms
    - Breathing changes
  - **The Hands** — watch for . . .
    - Covering the eyes or mouth, touching the neck,
    - Excessive fidgeting and/or playing with hair
    - A lot of scratching and rubbing
    - Two-handed gesturing
    - Finger pointing
    - Non-congruent gesturing

- **The Skin** — watch for . . .
  - Sweating
  - Blanching and flushing
- **The Head** — watch for . . .
  - Abnormally cocking one's head to the side
  - Gesturing with head (potentially toward the object about which they're lying)
- **The Face** — watch for . . .
  - Microexpressions which run contrary to what's being said
  - Microexpressions which betray true feelings
- **The Mouth** — watch for . . .
  - Fake smiles
  - Dry mouth and lip licking
  - Rolling the lips back to reveal the teeth and pursing the lips
- **The Eyes** — watch for . . .
  - Intense staring
  - An inability to hold a gaze or looking toward the object about which they're lying
  - Excessive blinking or squinting
  - Lateral Eye Movement
    - For Research has revealed that when people look straight ahead but seem to dilate or unfocus, they're quickly accessing sensory information.
    - For right-handers, when the eyes drift to their left, they are remembering something. Up and left is usually remembering something visual, straight left tends to be remembering sounds, whereas down and left reflects inner dialogue.
    - Drifting right accompanies fictionalized, falsified, constructed ideas. Up and right is constructed imagery, straight to the right identifies constructed sounds, whereas down and right is usually constructed tactile or visceral feelings.
    - Many left-handers reverse the above cues.
    - If you are facing your right-handed child, and their eyes drift to *your* left, then just remember "Left is Lying." However, if they're left-handed, it may help to remember, "Right is Wrong."
- **Potential Cues and Habitual Liars**
  - Because habituated liars practice lying and are able to short-circuit the natural discomfort of the body, it's important to ask questions that "disrupt" the liar.
  - To disrupt is to insert ideas into the conversation for which the liar was not prepared. The more disruptions and the bigger the disruptions, the easier it will be for the potential cues to come out.
  - **Ask feelings-related questions.**
    - Most liars haven't concocted a lie about how they felt in the moment about which they're lying. They tend to stick to concrete ideas.
  - **Ask the child to tell you the events of the situation in reverse order.**
    - It's not the they can't do it, but since it's incredibly more difficult, the cues become more obvious as they focus their effort on trying to tell the falsified story backwards. It's a huge disruption.
    - Someone telling the truth would struggle to do this as well, but none of the verbal or physical cues will likely slip out because they're not in trouble, and they're telling the truth.

- **Ask for more and more specific detail.**
  - Most liars haven't imagined every possible detail that would have to have been in place for their story to be true.
  - Asking more and more detailed questions about the situation will often reveal holes in the story, incongruities, or — if nothing else — increase the stress the liar is under thereby allowing the potential cues to be more obvious.
- **Don't give the liar any more information than they need.**
  - This often frustrates the conscious liars because they really want to know that you're believing them. They also really want as much information as possible so they can jive that with their story.
  - Before they answer your question about what happened they may ask clarifying questions in order to make sure their version of the events was actually plausible with the facts you already possess.
  - When you ask them more and more detailed questions, they may ask things like, "You believe me don't you?" because they want to gauge their success. The key is not to satiate their curiosity.
  - The need to be believed rarely occurs when someone is comfortable in the truth. Generally speaking, they're not even considering the fact that they won't be believed.

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