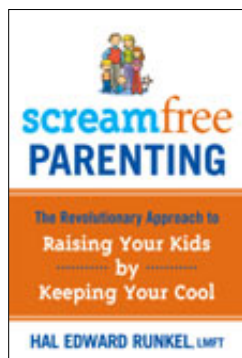


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Parents CAN Behave—Even When Their Kids Don’t!

Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX—Hal Runkel, a licensed marriage and family therapist and a former pastor, is America’s newest parenting expert. With a powerful, biblical, and revolutionary approach to parenting, he has produced remarkable results for the many thousands of children and parents he has counseled in his breakthrough clinical work. He has also influenced thousands of families through



countless media appearances and through his seminars and workshops at companies, schools, and churches of all faiths throughout the U.S. His new book, ***ScreamFree™ Parenting***, equips parents with all that they need to handle the 21st century child—without resorting to coercion, force, fear, begging, bribery, or screaming. It is changing lives everywhere.

Runkel exposes a pivotal truth: *No one*, not even your kids, can *make* you feel or do anything. They can’t push you over the edge. They are not that powerful. Your emotional responses are entirely up to you. “Parenting is not about kids. *It’s about parents*,” declares Runkel. “The greatest thing we can do for our kids is learn to focus on ourselves. The only way to retain a position of influence with our children is to regain a position of control over ourselves.”

Being ScreamFree creates a fundamental change in your objective as a parent. To truly be in charge means having the power to create lasting and continued growth, not just exerting power or demanding obedience. It’s inspiring your children to motivate themselves. A ScreamFree™ Parent learns to let go of the need to be “the perfect parent” with the perfect techniques to raising perfect kids. “The truth is that you don’t have to know all the right answers at all the right times in order to be the parent you’ve always wanted to be; you just have to learn to calm down,” says Runkel. It really is that simple. ***ScreamFree™ Parenting*** demonstrates:

- What to do when you feel overwhelmed—and how not to flip out
- How to give your kids peace of mind—and not a piece of your mind
- How to create physical and emotional space—and place—for your children
- Rules to keeping your sanity when it comes to disciplining your children
- How to give your kids enough freedom to make mistakes, or even hate you

ScreamFree™ Parents make a radical shift, from merely controlling their kids’ behavior to influencing their decisions from a biblical perspective. As a result, they can reach the ultimate goal of every parent—to launch their child into adulthood where he or she is a self-directed, decisive, and responsible person.

***ScreamFree Parenting: Raising Your Kids by Keeping Your Cool* by Hal Edward Runkel**

Waterbrook Press, September 2007

ISBN-13: 978-1-4000-7372-6/Hardcover/256 pages/\$21.95 US/\$27.95 CAN

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Suggested Interview Questions

1. How did you come to develop ScreamFree™ Parenting?
2. Why does this work well for Christians? Haven't there already been enough Christian parenting books written?
3. You say "emotional reactivity" as a parent can be our biggest enemy. Please explain what it is and where it comes from.
4. What biblical responsibilities do parents have to each of their children?
5. Why do you say the greatest thing a parent can do for their child is to focus on themselves, rather than the child? Doesn't this conflict with scripture?
6. What do you see as the paradox of parenting?
7. What should parents do when their child is seemingly out of control?
8. So how do you bring yourself under control when your kid seems to be out of control? How do you calm down?

**For more information contact
The B & B Media Group, Inc.
800-927-1517**

Q & A with Hal Runkel **Author of *ScreamFree Parenting***

Q: How did you come to develop ScreamFree™ Parenting?

A: Back in graduate school I became amazed at the level of existing knowledge on how relationships and family systems really work. But most of this great knowledge was couched in academic language and available only to the most educated therapists. So, as I learned to work with families and began to raise my own kids, I searched for ways to capture the best theoretical concepts and effective biblical principles into the working language of real families and organizations. I then began to see that any truly helpful teaching would have to begin with calming our emotional reactivity. “Emotional Reactivity-Free Parenting” sounded too academic, so ScreamFree Parenting was born.

Q: You say “emotional reactivity” as a parent can be our biggest enemy. Please explain what it is and where it comes from.

A: Emotional reactivity is the driving force behind every bad decision, bad pattern, and bad relationship. It is the opposite of responding according to our highest principles; it is reacting out of our deepest fears. Emotional reactivity is what happens when our anxiety gets the best of us, and we act in ways that are actually contrary to our intentions.

Q: What responsibilities do parents have to each of their children?

A: We’re called to launch our children into adulthood with the best foundation for living an effective life. We are meant to help them become self-directed adults, capable of discerning the factors that shape their lives, deciding the direction to take, and living with the consequences of their decisions. That means *our main responsibility to them is to not be responsible for them*. They cannot become responsible for themselves as long as we consider ourselves responsible for their life and their choices. We are only responsible for our own lives and choices, how we manage our own emotions and relationships, and how we take care of ourselves. Our primary responsibility is to create a Christian home that nurtures their self-direction.

Q: Why do you say the greatest thing a parent can do for their child is to focus on themselves, rather than the child?

A: As long as I am focused on my children, orbiting my whole life around them, then I am putting all of my emotional responses into their hands. I become dependent upon the least mature persons in the family to actually lead the family. This is simply backwards. Children are not given to us to become our whole world. They are here to become self-directed, contributing adults. Our calling is to create an environment that helps them do that. This means focusing more on what we’re doing and less on them. How am I going to behave, regardless of their behavior? I have to focus on me because I am the only one I can ultimately control.

Q: What do you see as the paradox of parenting?

A: We know that parents are a critical element in shaping the future of kids’ lives. And yet we also know that for kids to lead the most effective lives, they have to grow themselves into the most critical element in shaping the future of their lives. So, we have a paradox: Parents shape kids, and kids shape themselves. This is why we have so much confusion about the

childhood roots of adult dysfunction. Are you a victim of your parents' bad choices? Yes, we all are. Are you yet responsible for your own choices? Yes, we all are. Both are true, and that creates the paradox. The only way out is to begin with yourself, right now. How do you want to relate with your kids, regardless of your past influences and their present behavior?

Q: What should parents do when their child is seemingly out of control?

A: Maintain the most possible control of themselves. So often we focus so much on the child that we lose control of our emotions, making things even worse. This can occur with the toddler's tantrum in the restaurant or the teen's struggles with promiscuity. Once we've brought ourselves under control, however, then it becomes much easier to respond to our child with wisdom and principled decisions. Then we can set and enforce consequences and gain a better understanding of what's emotionally behind our child's behavior. Most importantly, we then can see our own role in contributing to our child's situation.

Q: So how do you bring yourself under control when your kid seems to be out of control? How do you calm down?

A: Heavy medication (just kidding). If we wait until the heat of the moment, without making some serious changes to our thinking and our patterns, then there's little hope of creating lasting change. We'll just have to resort to pale anger management techniques, like counting to ten or snapping a rubber band. The *ScreamFree* way is about making some revolutionary shifts. And choosing to focus on ourselves is the first and most important shift. And when it comes to making such a shift, people do not need a "how to" as much as they need a "why to." My hope is to provide enough vision to prompt people to truly investigate the "whys" behind their parenting choices, well before the heat of the moment.

About Hal Runkel

Author of *ScreamFree Parenting*



Hal Edward Runkel is a licensed marriage and family therapist, relationship coach, teacher, seminar leader, and author of the groundbreaking ScreamFree Living book series. He has been leading students, teachers, parents, and families in his ScreamFree Relationship methods since the very early years of his training. His latest book, *ScreamFree Parenting: Raising Your Kids by Keeping Your Cool*, is scheduled for release in September 2007.

Through thousands of hours of family and child therapy, Hal has incorporated the most advanced approaches to family relationship theory to develop a revolutionary new methodology he has coined “ScreamFree Living.” This fresh approach has the power to revitalize relationships and bring a renewed sense of joy, love, and caring to families all across America. Hal now presents the ScreamFree relationship programs to audiences nationwide through teleconferences, web seminars, newsletters, training classes, and through the ScreamFree Living book series.

Hal has spoken before the Christian Association for Psychological Studies, the Texas Association for Marriage & Family Therapy Annual Conference, and other leading organizations and events. He is a member of the Family Firm Institute, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and the Georgia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Before starting ScreamFree Living, Inc., Hal served as a staff therapist and director of education for the Covenant Counseling Institute in Snellville, Georgia.

A native of Houston, Hal earned his master’s degree in Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) in August 2000 from Abilene Christian University. His M.S. in Theological Studies was awarded in 1998. He and his wife, Jenny, have been married for 12 years and enjoy ScreamFree parenting with their two wonderful children, Hannah and Brandon. Hal and the ScreamFree Corporate Headquarters are located just outside Atlanta, Georgia.

Talking Points

- What kids need
- Emotional reactivity as a parent’s biggest enemy
- Understanding “the paradox of parenting”
- Giving your kids “place and space”

What people are saying about ScreamFree Parenting...

“*ScreamFree Parenting* changes lives. It is the absolute best material on practical parenting I have found in 20+ years of ministry. In raising five children ages 15 to 21, my wife and I are sold on the wonderful impact of the principles taught in *ScreamFree*. The program material is revolutionary and the delivery is unsurpassed. As a Senior Minister, if I could urge you to consider one program to take on this year, this would be it. The rewards for you and your church will be immediate and measurable.”

-Don McLaughlin, Senior Minister
North Atlanta Church of Christ

“As a family minister and a marriage and family therapist, I have read many books on parenting—some good, some not so good, a few fantastic. Hal, thanks for writing the one I’ve been looking for! I will be re-reading it regularly and recommending it frequently to my clients and my church. In a word: revolutionary.”

-Roger Butner, PhD, LMFT, Director, Christian Family Therapy
S. Baton Rouge Church of Christ

“The phrase I keep hearing when it comes to *ScreamFree Parenting* is ‘life changing.’ If more parents—Christian parents especially—would incorporate this material into their lives, we would move towards becoming the kind of winsome people God wants us to be.”

-John Alan Turner,
FamilyWise ,co-author of *How Now Shall We Live As Parents?*

“The genius of the ScreamFree philosophy is its simplicity.”

-Heather Louis
Northbrook UMC MOPS Coordinator

“Hal Edward Runkel does a fantastic job... I found myself nodding and knowing exactly what he meant with his stories and problems. He offers great, doable advice. He really seems to understand how most parents feel, and even makes you understand that some of the feelings you have that you thought were terrible are NORMAL. I think every parent should have this.”

-iParenting