



Spiritual Parenting

Energy alchemist, **Natalie Fee** explores inner strength and how to increase your own and your children's reserves

I try to see the world around me as my mirror, using life's ups, downs and in-betweens as guides to the state of my inner world. If I'm feeling relaxed and happy, regardless of what's going on around me, this reflects certain strengths in my energy field. If I'm troubled by conflict, this reflects parts of my energy field that needs strengthening in some way. Given that we're together most days, my relationship with my son is perhaps the most telling of all the mirrors. With me as his primary care-giver, he's acquired rather a lot of my habits and characteristics - some of which, I must admit, are less than brilliant. So not only does the relationship show me how my energy's doing, it also highlights many of my own issues. At times, this is quite disconcerting, especially when I realise I'm telling Elliot off for something I still do myself. If I'm to help him with his behaviour, I have to look at mine first; there's no sense polishing the mirror if I'm going to keep on making it grubby!

Recently, after a succession of mutual over-reactions and emotional meltdowns, I began to wonder why we weren't dealing very well with life's challenges. Why is it that some people are able to take life's ups and downs in their stride, while others wobble out at the mere mention of change? Fortunately, through my energy awareness, I've learned to perceive the presence of stresses in my own and others' energy fields. So I looked at my energy body, noticing weakness at my navel, the same in Elliot. We were both lacking in one of life's essential ingredients - inner strength ki.

Inner strength is what makes us feel okay even when things aren't going the way we'd like them to. The more of it we have the less reactive we are - and the more we keep our cool in stressful situations. And it's obvious that both myself and Elliot need more of it! This observation of my energy led me to realise that my view of myself as a relaxed and easy-going person is somewhat distorted. I get stressed if Elliot's stressed, I get upset if someone says something unkind, I squirm and resist if things aren't going 'my way'. It's a similar story for Elliot. He's a confident, articulate and bright kid, yet when things don't go his way he'll have a reaction, preferring to walk away from a challenge than face it. My awareness of this has grown steadily over the years - until it became clear that this low level anxiety, this lack of inner strength, was in my power to change.

Unfortunately, inner strength doesn't come in a bottle. To get more of it, it has to be cultivated like a plant, patiently helping it grow until it becomes an integral part of who we are. In a similar way to identifying a mineral deficiency, then taking the necessary supplements, through my energy awareness I've begun to apply the right kind of 'remedy' - involving certain life practices and weaves (moving meditations that work on specific parts of the energy body). Already I'm starting to notice the difference. However, getting a five year old to commit to life disciplines and practice weaves every day is another matter. I knew what I needed to do for Elliot, I just wasn't sure it would come soon enough for the current challenge we were facing!

Recently, Elliot needed to go



“Inner strength doesn't come in a bottle, it has to be cultivated patiently like a plant until it begins to grow.”

to hospital for dental treatment. His inability to relax or calm down when under stress, coupled with a 'fear the worst' attitude, meant that no dentist could get near him. So after a few months of failed filling attempts, he was admitted to hospital to have some teeth out under a general anaesthetic. What could have been a simple procedure at the dentist's had turned into a major operation. I know the issue runs deeper than 'just dentists'. As a parent, I feel it's my duty and responsibility to nurture him and help him grow into a well-rounded happy adult. And according to the saying, "Give me a child until he's seven, and I'll show you the man," I've got two more years to help him work this one out!

I took a deeper look at my parenting methods and saw I needed to stop doing certain things, like giving him so many choices and using bribes as a means of getting him to do something. This took some getting used to for both of us, but already seems to have improved Elliot's behaviour. But there was still something else I needed to do. Counselling seemed too 'serious' - I didn't want to make it into a big

deal for him. Fortunately, in the magical world of energy, the wheels were already in motion, for within a few days I received an email about a new book entitled Building Emotional Intelligence - Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children (Sounds True Publishing). I was delighted at how clearly the universe had responded. I ordered a copy of the book.

It's based on the idea that through practising certain meditations and mindfulness exercises, children will experience more inner strength, which helps them cope more effectively with challenges. I'm not expecting a sudden change, but both Elliot and I love it.

And, for me, it's not so much about where we're going, but how we get there. For now, at least, we seem to be managing. Me, by day, with my weaves and life practices, and with Elliot by night - tucked up in bed with his portable CD player, one earphone each, and a deep sense of participating in something truly magnificent. ■

For personal sessions, energy products and blog, visit everydayalchemist.com or call 01458 831116.

ILLUSTRATION SANDRA HOWGATE