Laying Down the Rails

"The effort of decision is the greatest effort of life."—Charlotte Mason Good habits are like railroad tracks. "The mother who takes pains to endow her children with good habits secures for herself smooth and easy days; while she who lets their habits take care of themselves has a weary life of endless friction with the children."—Charlotte Mason Tips for Cultivating a Good Habit 1. Concentrate on forming one habit at a time, keeping watch over those habits already formed. 2. Repetition 3. Motivation

Charlotte Mason Habits

Decency and Propriety Habits

Cleanliness Courtesy Kindness Manners

Modesty and Purity

Neatness Order Regularity

(Mentioned only)

Candor
Courage
Diligence
Fortitude
Generosity
Gentleness
Meekness
Patience
Respect
Temperance
Thrift

Mental Habits

Attention
Imagining
Meditation
Memorizing
Mental Effort
Observation
Perfect Execution
Reading for Instruction
Remembering
Thinking

(Mentioned only)

Accuracy Concentration Reflection Thoroughness

Moral Habits

Integrity

Priorities
Finishing
Use of Time
Borrowed Property

Obedience

Personal Initiative

Reverence Self-Control

Sweet, Even Temper

Truthfulness Usefulness

Physical Habits

Alertness to Seize Opportunities

Fortitude Health

Managing One's Own Body

Music

Outdoor Life

Quick Perception of Senses Self-Control in Emergencies Self-Discipline in Habits Self-Restraint in Indulgences Training the Ear and Voice

Religious Habits

Regularity in Devotions

Prayer

Reading the Bible

Praise

Reverent Attitude Sunday-Keeping Thanksgiving Thought of God

The Top Three

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- 1. Start with short lessons.
- 2. Vary the order of lessons.
- 3. Don't repeat yourself.
- 4. Set time limits that assume full attention.
- 5. Play games that foster attention.

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- 1. Expect obedience.
- 2. Never give a command that you don't intend to see fully carried out.
- 3. Don't pester your child with excessive or continual commands.
- 4. When possible, plan ahead for transition times.

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- 1. Require exact facts without omission or exaggeration.
- 2. Avoid qualifying statements with "I think" or "perhaps"; be sure!
- 3. Don't use excessive language for common situations.
- 4. If needed, have daily lessons in truthful reporting.

"Just as it is on the whole easier for the locomotive to pursue its way on the rails than to take a disastrous run off them, so it is easier for the child to follow lines of habit carefully laid down than to run off these lines at his peril. It follows that this business of laying down lines towards the unexplored country of the child's future is a very serious and responsible one for the parent. It rests with him to consider well the tracks over which the child should travel with profit and pleasure; and, along these tracks, to lay down lines so invitingly smooth and easy that the little traveller is going upon them at full speed without stopping to consider whether or no he chooses to go that way."— Charlotte Mason