

October 2005 as seen in Canadian Living and MSN Online

How to give your family a wellness makeover

Lessons from a life coach on how to embark on a total family transformation.

By Cassandra L. Gierden



[Read about one family's wellness journey with Canadian Living Magazine and a dream team of coaches, including life coach Cassandra L. Gierden.](#)

In this day of cell phones, pagers, blackberry's and emails you think it wouldn't be hard to reach someone in your family but the truth is it is more challenging than ever... to reach them in a way that keeps you connected. So, how do you stay connected? How can you turn the abundance of quantity in to quality time? How can you give your family a 'makeover' in a meaningful way as if you just showed up to your favorite spa for a few hours of a meditative makeover?

In order to begin giving your family this makeover it will be important to take inventory (like a shopping list) of what's important to each of you now and what you would like more of in your lives to help determine what core values can be built upon for each individual and the family. Finding out what's important of missing whether it's time, communication, attention, playfulness, community will help.... Remember to keep it fun, simple and energetic.

Here's one tool and a creative idea of a place to start as it will be important to choose activities that are interesting and stimulating for all ages and personalities.

Creative Idea #1 - Creating a Theme with Your Family

Pick something to apply to your theme to before you get started. Use this as an opening discussion with each family member- will it be for a weekend away, 3 month goal, or the whole year long. Create an exercise where as a family you all can spend some time together exploring the following questions... doing this together can help stimulate others, giving them ideas.

It is important that before choosing a goal for your life, it is essential that you are clear on what it is that you want to BE, and that you create goals that include the whole of your life. These questions will assist you in assuring that your are setting goals that truly come from your heart and not just from your head – the surefire way of creating lasting success.

1. Write a list of everything that you achieved in the last year.

Include everything, no matter how big or small, in all areas of your life. Your relationships, your work, your home life and especially things that you did for others in your life. Many times the theme that we want for our lives appears in patterns in our lives that we are unaware of.

2. What would you like to add to your life this year?

Example: spending more time with your children or friends, allowing more time for your relationship, or enhancing your skills by taking a course or reading a book, donate some money to your charity, etc.

3. Are there any issues from last year that you would like to change this year?

Some examples may be less time listening or spreading gossip, cutting down on involvement with committees, wasting time, watching less TV or living with less stress.

4. Choose a word that would best describe what it is that you would like to BE this year.

Some words that may help you could include BEING more Peaceful, Successful, Happy, Tranquil, Loving, Kind, Generous of Spirit, Adventurous, Intimacy, Abundance, Joyful, etc. As you are writing, say the word over and over to yourself. Choose a word that would best describe the theme you would like to live your life by – one word, one step at a time.

5. How can you incorporate that them into all areas of your life?

Relationships, children, work, finances, family, your health and your body. Take each section of your life and ask yourself what's one step you can take to create your theme in that area.

Included below are some creative tips to consider as ways to make sure this activities fits with your families uniqueness.

Tip #1

In discovering the THEME or WORD ask others what they might have heard as important to their father or sister, sometimes others can help us see things for ourselves

Tip #2

Especially for children draft up some words on cardboard paper and turn them over at the end of answering the questions together. See what words they are drawn to and let their intuition guide them to their THEME word.

Tip#3

Great for young children to help them express more in pictures than just words and this is especially great for adults to tap back into the youthful artistic side.

Tip#4

Ask what each person is taking away from the moment as a 'gem' which can be an idea, new thought, activity, or discovery. This will not only connect them with what they are taking away as worthwhile but it will also give you a clear idea of what is important to them.

Tip#5

Make it feel like a makeover with relaxing music, favorite snacks and beverages, warm setting.

Tip#6

Find an ally in any activity to Give Your Family a Makeover whether your partner, daughter or another family.

Now look back at the objective of the Creating a Theme exercise did you achieve what you hoped? What are things that happened that you may not have expected? How can you create support to introducing these activities and outcomes into other areas of your life? Creating a Theme can be a great activity to revisit and create new themes.

Makeover activities help build a strong foundation for you, your family and also for those around us and in preparing us and our children for the future challenge that will lie ahead. The more we become empowered in ways to stay connected to what is truly important the more we'll find positive things showing up in our life, effortlessly. There is good reason why the THEME of Family First rings true for many of us today.

Remember keep it simple and it doesn't cost anything to give your family a makeover just some time, thoughtfulness, good intentions and love. It can cost a lot more to put it off for a rainy day.

So print these off today and sit down tonight after dinner.