



How to be an almost okay dad

ALMOST USEFUL LIFE HACKS



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Life is tough. There is so much to worry about that you worry which one to worry about first. Global warming, US-China trade wars raising prices for fancy phones, air pollution and Kanye West's fumbling career. But none of it comes close to worrying about kids. I have two. And it is often the scariest thing in the world. Right up there with spiders that suddenly discover how to make armour.

I constantly worry that I am the worst dad in the world right after Ted Bundy

and Donald Trump. I have come to terms with not being the best. But I have also devised a few simple rules on how to become an almost okay dad. You too can become one, whether you are a dad by choice or not.

You're the taxi-driver butler mom

This is your role in life. You take them where they need to be. My father always drove me mostly because my mother was terrible at driving. And because he really loved his cars. You are also the Alfred to the Batkid. Fetch the water, measure the temperature, get vomited on at 3 am in the winter. It sounds like a very mom thing to do and it is. It is an exact mom thing to do. Bottom-line, you need to be present like a mom. You can't be a mom because that is way too much work for a man brain to fully comprehend without shutting down.

Don't tell mom

Speaking of moms, don't tell mom. Not everything. There are times your kids will do something terrible like break the vase, paint the dog or drop an entire bowl of chicken curry on mom's new clothes. You keep quiet because sometimes you need to let it go. Often, mostly because you were supposed to put the curry back in the fridge where the toddler cannot reach. Also, moms ask questions like where were you, The Dad, when the kid carried the curry across and dropped it on clothes left to be folded. It is all hypothetical.

You are the pun and only

What used to be known as corny jokes are now labelled Dad Jokes. But be careful who your audience are. Some people will consider you to be old like the dinosaurs who made 'Dino-mite' jokes just before the asteroid wiped them out. Wives are often the killer asteroid. Last time she was mad at me, I told her she was literally my Wi(fe)-Fi because she would go off without warning. But your kids will have no choice but to groan as you feed them rice and say, 'You better eat all of it or no more Mr. Rice-Guy.'

Fairness is having more than half the ice cream

My wife in her infinite wisdom (contractually obligated to mention it once a week) once said, 'kids learn from you not by what you say but by what you

do.' This was right after she caught my one-year-old daughter using everything as a hammer even after I told her not to. Apparently, it was because I took the little one with me as I went around the house fixing things with a hammer. I was quick to deflect the situation by pointing out that the girl also drops food on the floor and licks it up like our dog. That is something I never do. I pick up food from the floor with my hand to eat it.

Which brings me to ice cream. I demonstrate fairness by eating most of my eight-year-old son's while he's having it. This shows that life is going to be difficult and you have to fight for it. Now he eats all my ice cream when I am not there. I may have taught him too well.

Get a fast car

This is a highly controversial idea but it works. Kids love cars. Every baby and toddler I've taken on a car ride loves it when I floor it and take turns where they roll around on the seat because of momentum. Children love cars till they grow up and some of them start worrying about the environment. Or worse, they have parents who think cars are 'meh' or at best a status symbol. Don't be that parent.

Never show a kid that a car is a status symbol or else they will grow up to be rappers like 50 Cent, broke and worried. A fast car is something you will be looking forward to drive and each time will be a super special moment because in Dhaka, having free roads to drive is rare. And you use those moments to bond with your kid. It is how I deal with my adolescent son who is starting to develop weird moods. We drive and we talk and stop to pat street dogs. Only thing left for me to do is make my car fast. But then I start worrying all over again about future college bills versus building a fast car.

Being a dad is not easy at all. Ask moms. But worrying constantly that you are not doing enough is very normal. It is how you verify you are an almost okay dad. So as much as your child throws tantrums, eventually it will all work out. Unlike Game Of Thrones season finale. That was a disaster.

Happy Father's Day especially if you are receiving another tie.

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