

## Too Many Things

Written by Madisyn Taylor

Thursday, 01 September 2011 00:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 27 August 2013 14:43

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When you spoil your children with material goods, is the motivation coming from your own inner child?

One of the greatest things about children is that they have the ability to entertain themselves for long periods of time with something as simple as a cardboard box or a set of measuring spoons. It makes you wonder why we feel the need to buy them so many toys—so many that they won't even have time to play with them all before they grow out of them. Often, if we take the time to question our compulsion to constantly give our children new toys and clothes, and to spoil them with food that is not even good for them, we will find that we are trying to fill up the space to avoid our own difficult feelings and pain. If you feel yourself wanting to spoil your child with material possessions, take a moment and see if you can feel where your motivation is coming from.

We may be inundating our children with things they don't need out of a desire to create a feeling of abundance that our own childhoods lacked. Or perhaps it's out of a need to feel liked by our children. Both of these motives tend to be unconscious, stemming from unresolved issues from our own upbringing or even our adult life. These unresolved feelings naturally come up when we find ourselves in the role of a parent, often as our child reaches the age we were when these traumas were most pronounced.

But spoiling your children will not save you or make your pain disappear. Only acknowledging and working on your emotional issues can do that. What our children really need is for us to provide both a sense of safety and a sense of freedom and love, of which there can never be too much. If we are able to do this well, material possessions need not take center stage.

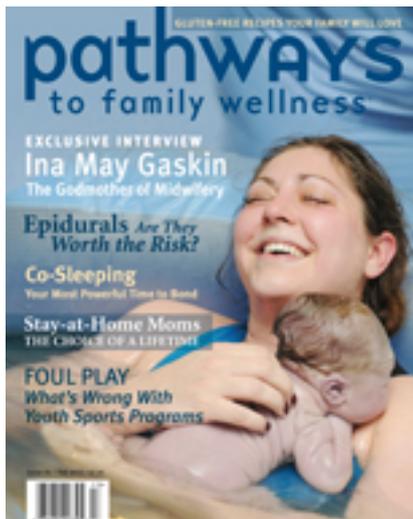
We all want to provide our children with a good and happy life. But most of us know, deep down, that material possessions play a very small role in that. We confuse our children when we seek to make them happy through buying them things. When we do this, they take our cue that happiness comes in the form of toys and treats, rather than in the joy of being alive and surrounded by love, free to explore the world.

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