

# Wallpaper

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The founding premise of the author of another new book on Sex Education for children seemed to be the opinion that sex should be **like wallpaper** in the life of a child. Always there in the background, never being remembered as to when they first knew about it.

As this article has simmered on the backburner of my mind I have come to see that my issue with this opinion was not so much the premise of wallpaper in the background, but the wallpaper design itself.

There are different types of wallpaper.

There is **the sort that complements** the rest of the room and there is the **garish, crude and overly detailed sort** (thought of as art) in the Drawing Room of “Mrs Katherine DeBurgh” in the otherwise G rated new version of “Pride and Prejudice”.

While those who are comfortable being fed on an MA or R rated film diet may have barely noticed that background, those with a more G rated conscience (or desire for restoration of a G rated conscience) notice.

Hollywood makes no errors in product placement or set design.

And the breadth and dilution of our rating system is once again evidence that anything can eventually be considered normal given a conducive environment and enough time.

That which is common, becomes that which is considered normal which becomes expected and is eventually considered healthy. G. Ezzo.

**Some years ago one of our children stated I had never told him anything about sex. So as not to offend his minor outrage I kept my chuckle to myself and instead explained that for his whole life long we had indeed been teaching him.**

I began by asking him to remember some of the times we had pulled over while driving in the car to watch an amazing sunset or rainbow. “What about the time we saw a rainbow around the moon?” While I never said “right kids, this is a beauty appreciation lesson” it didn’t change that that’s what it was – it just didn’t need a label. In fact a label would have distracted and detracted from the teachability and timing of the moment.

I also explained that learning about sex is so much more than what the world presents it as... that it is something like being given puzzle pieces, one or a few at a time. As you grow you get to see portions of the picture as more and more pieces connect. And just like piecing together a puzzle is easier when

you start with the borders, there is an order to the information and understanding needed when you belong to God.

This doesn't necessarily mean God's rules of governance as being the borders that come first, that is thinking too small. I will try and demonstrate...

Just some of the puzzle pieces we see as important follow, but let me say too, that as a couple growing in God and knowing both Him and each other better, the overall image is still not complete. In understanding better but not completely after 20 years together more of intimacy, I wonder if we've yet scratched the surface of all God really intended. Perhaps we are intended to put pieces together our whole lives long?! While the body and mind may decline... the spirit can grow stronger... this is intimacy with God—the essence I think, of what marriage is to represent and give a taste of.

Some of our family 'border pieces' for childhood include...

From **tiny tots** onwards...

Innocent **image free** information...

Discussions on God's plan and design for all things of life. How beautiful He made things. How amazingly well things work when not interfered with or interrupted by man.

Discussions and dissections of flowers... daddy parts and mummy parts, the flower womb and flower babies!

Bees and birds and pollination from one plant to another.

**For context...**

Early childhood **obedience**... if a child cannot obey their parent who they can see, how will they obey a God who they cannot?

When little ones learn privacy at tub time, they learn modesty that can transfer into other matters of life. When one sibling grants privacy to another, they demonstrate **respect for the other**. When one insists on their own privacy, they demonstrate **self respect**.

When children wait for dinner without sampling beforehand, they learn patience and restraint. This can be the beginning of **delayed gratification**.

When the TV is turned off or over - due to less than God's value being placed on marriage and sexuality, they learn to **separate themselves** from that which is unholy.

When parents and children refuse to ogle the human form on display from one with no shame, they learn to **grant dignity** where none is required.

When children care for one another they learn **concern**.

When children can share their toys and after-party lolly bags, they can set a **pattern of sharing**.

If children see parents **argue**, they should see them **restore**... how to make up not break up. This is **commitment**. This is **unconditional love**.

When children see parents shut their bedroom door and emerge in different clothes they see **appropriate togetherness** modelled.

When children see a tired wife rub her tired husbands shoulders at the end of a day they see **'preferring one another'**.

When children see a tired husband rub his pregnant wife's feet, they see **tenderness** and **compassion**.

If children see between their parents a twinkling eye and a pat on the rear, they learn **playfulness is part of relationship too**.

When husbands and wives laugh at each others jokes, children see **friends**.

Of course all these things are desirable in most relationships – yes?

Yes!

The sexual aspect of marriage is not an entity in itself  
divorced from the character traits above!  
It is precisely WHEN we separate sexuality  
—information or practise —  
from morality and character, wonder and tenderness  
- that we get into trouble!

When we stop for a sunset or rainbow, we give opportunity to marvel at **God's creative genius!**

When we let the butterfly go again after inspecting it for a while, we plant seeds of **respect for life**.

When children see Mum take the smaller portion at dinner they see **sacrifice**.

When children visit a doctor for a more personal need, they learn about **appropriate people**.

When Mum answers kids at the cash register that she will explain how babies are born later at home, they learn about **appropriate places and timing** as well as appropriate people!

When we teach toddlers what else to do with their hands at nappy time we begin the process of learning **self control**.

When children want to understand why Uncle So and So is a Daddy but not married, they can learn about **grace, mercy, starting points, God's best, Jesus own mission and commission to us His Bride**.

There was a time I took an Arum lily and pressed the petal hard between my thumb and finger. The bruise did not show up till the next day when we talked about defilement of purity... that when damage is done, it may not show right away but a thing of beauty becomes disfigured. This was to teach **self responsibility**.

Conversely, when we watch a graze heal, we see how God is able to repair... to make new from old and take away the pain in His time. **This is restoration**.

When the border is in place we better see the scope of what the picture within is to be, understanding the placement of more and more pieces.

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I remember the moment I finally 'got' fractions.

For weeks I had puzzled over these random numbers, when one day the pattern and sense of it leapt off the page and into my understanding!

This was not an information problem. This had not been a teaching problem. I had been given the information I needed – not too much, not too little... evidenced by the fact it took no extra teaching on the day I finally understood... a connection was made in my head and I saw it!

A natural progression in my 'mathematical development' had taken place!

**Information**

Learning to count  
Understanding the relevance of numbers  
Knowing that fractions indeed have a use!

**Curiosity**

Why can't I do this?  
How does this work?  
What don't I get?

**Comparative / Comprehension**

Ah ha!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
Now I get it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

*(Concept known as the Progressive Laws, from Reflections of Moral Innocence. A study in the proactive indirect method of sex education  
G & AM Ezzo)*

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The **old version** of the film “**Yours Mine and Ours**” with Henry Fonda and Lucille Ball is about a couple who marry after both are widowed... one with 8 children and the other with 10! It's a story of rivalry, acceptance and eventual love between the siblings as much as it is a story of the couple. There is much hilarity and confusion - culminating in the closing scenes of the film where the mother has woken in the night having contractions as their 'first' child begins it's arrival. The whole house is woken, this one cries, that one needs to go to the bathroom, the oldest son is having fisticuffs downstairs with the oldest daughters date who has been pressuring her. Someone reverses the car out of the garage and over the motorbike of the boyfriend, the contractions come closer and closer and the oldest daughter “need to talk” after the exchange with her date!

While he carries a little one who wants to go back to bed up the stairs and returning with his labouring wife back down the stairs, the girl asks her step Dad “Am I being ridiculous and old fashioned? Larry says I don't love him”.

His answer was this:

**“I've got a message for Larry... this** (nodding around him to the house, the children, the confusion, his wife in labour), **this is what it's all about. This is the real happening. If you want to know what love really is, take a look around you... take a look at your mother. It's giving life that counts! Until you're ready for it, everything else is a fraud. Life isn't a love-in, it's the dishes and the orthodontist and the shoe repair man and ground beef instead of roast beef. And I'll tell you something else—it's not going to bed with a man that proves you love him, it's getting up in the morning and facing the drab, miserable, wonderful everyday world with him that counts”**

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Wallpaper. Well OK.

What design?