Techniques for Living Peacefully with Change

Agile Families

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What is it?

How my family manages itself and its responsibilities while fostering a supportive culture of learning and improvement.
NOT

• Religion or faith based
• Bringing work home
• An exact recipe or formula
• The same for all families
Q: What has this practice meant for you?

People actually do the things that need to get done. Parents don’t yell at us because we’re taking care of the house.  
- Cutter

The house is cleaner and the cat isn’t starving.  
- Isabelle

We work as a team in the kitchen. I don’t like it.  
- Bowman

If we didn’t have the boards we pretty much wouldn’t do stuff.  
- Bowman

It keeps me on track and lets me know what I have to do every day.  
- Cutter

Things are more organized, and it’s easier than mom always telling me to do stuff.  
- Mason
Why We Do This

• Create and maintain a happy, healthy family
• Create independent and capable adults
• More peace, less chaos

• Promote a culture of learning and improving
• Provide consistent safety feelings
• Stay in sync with each other and reality
Truly agile teams do these things

- Embrace what is, rather than what should be
- Reflect on their own performance and practices
- Succeed or fail as a team
- Collaborate
- Inspect work as it is done

We want these things for our family
First Principles

- Change is inevitable
  - Admit it
  - Use it

- Planning matters more than the plan

- Everyone wants to do well

- We are stronger and smarter than me
Family Roles
Family Member Responsibilities

• Be present

• Participate with sincerity

• Help each other

• Be fair

• Accommodate Reality
Parent Responsibilities

• Facilitation
  – Key life skill
  – Children learn and practice

• Coach and support

• Dictate Benevolently
  – Use consensus when possible
  – Throw the occasional trump card
Tasks:
- Vacuum Stairs
- Clean kid toilet
- Clean kid bath floor
- Sweep front porch
- Kitchen/Bath garbage
- Recycle
- Vacuum a car

Access:
- Family
- Hobbies
- Skateboard
- Computer
- Music
- Screen

Done
Loop
Yes
No

Warning

Comply

Direction

Yes
No

Job
The Family Meeting
Our Weekly Family Meeting

1 hour time box

Planning

Retrospective

S M T W Th F S
Weekly Family Meeting

Retrospective $ Planning
Retrospective

The single most important family conversation.

- Family reflects upon itself
- Find actionable improvements
- Discover how we can help each other
- Refine or expand Done criteria
- Commit to new behaviors or standards
Retrospective

• Our job is to improve the family

• Not a complaint session

Experiment!
Try things!
Make it fun

Play games!
Focus on the family, not individuals

Retrospective

1. What went well this week?
2. What could be improved from this week?
3. What are we willing to commit to next week?
4. What will we do to help each other?
Planning

GOALS REMINDERS COMMITMENTS
APPOINTMENTS NUMBERS PROJECTS
Goals & Commitments
Shared Family Goals

- Do not change mid-week

- One always exists
  - bar can be low
  - keep trying
  - really. always.

- Do-overs encouraged
  - until the goal is met
  - until there is general agreement to move on

- Ideally agreed upon by consensus

- May be benevolently dictated by parents

- Selected during Weekly Planning
  - one is enough
  - usually

We commit to behaviors in support of a goal
Past Starr Family Weekly Goals

be kind

- refocus on the morning list
- help someone each day this week
- learn and practice more formal table manners
- peer review all chores
- fewer conversation interruptions (less blurting)
- less yelling in the house
Planning the Week

• Select a Goal
• Formulate commitments
• Visit the calendar for the coming week
• Update Family HQ
• Signal Done
The Daily Huddle
Daily Huddle Rules

• The daily conversation

• Everyone can explain today’s plan

• Sometimes, okay, often a broadcast

Ideally, everyone participates together

Accommodate reality

No one gets left after lacrosse practice for 2 hours
Quickly Consider and Share

1. How are we doing so far this week?

2. How am I doing so far this week?

3. What will we do today?

4. What will I need to succeed today?
   – Help from someone else
   – Transportation
   – Money
   – My homework actually turned in

How can I help you?
CLASH – Curved Likelihood of Age that Skips Huddle

% Likelihood of Attending


Attend Likelihood, 100
Daily Huddle Tips

• Don’t overthink it

• The point is to improve the day
  – Not a status report
  – Not issue instructions

• Facilitate discussion,
don’t demand it
Essential Information
Family vNext : Family HQ
Family HQ

- The location of the plan
- The source of truth
- Updated constantly
- Ambiently available to all
- Fully stocked with supplies
Current Family Goal

Supplies to add more content

Shared Calendar

Today’s chores and responsibilities

Individual Goals, Commitments, and Reminders

Family Backlog
On Adaptation - Walking the Path

Here

There
On Adaptation - Walking the Path

Here

There
Even when you are only this big

You are in integral part of something much bigger than yourself.
Agile Families: Techniques for Living with Change

Learn everything about Family vNext, the framework based on agile methods the Starr family has

THE HANSELMINUTES PODCAST
Fresh Air for Developers

Agile Families: Techniques for Living with Change with David Starr

Show #422 May 09 2014  Comments (7) plus show notes

What happens when you apply agile practices to managing your family life? Is Scrum a good way to manage kids and their busy schedules? Agile expert David Starr from Scrum.org talks to Scott about implementing agile in his family.
Thank You!

1. Schedule a family meeting
2. Reflect and plan
3. Post expectations for all to see

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