

# THE HEART CRY OF EVERY KID

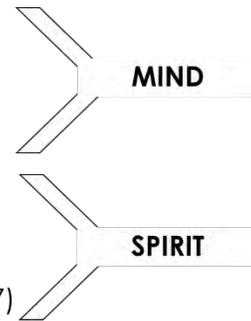
## Eight Core Desires that Demand Attention

Jackie E. Perry  
 www.jackieperry.net  
 ccc.jperry@gmail.com

### The heart defined.

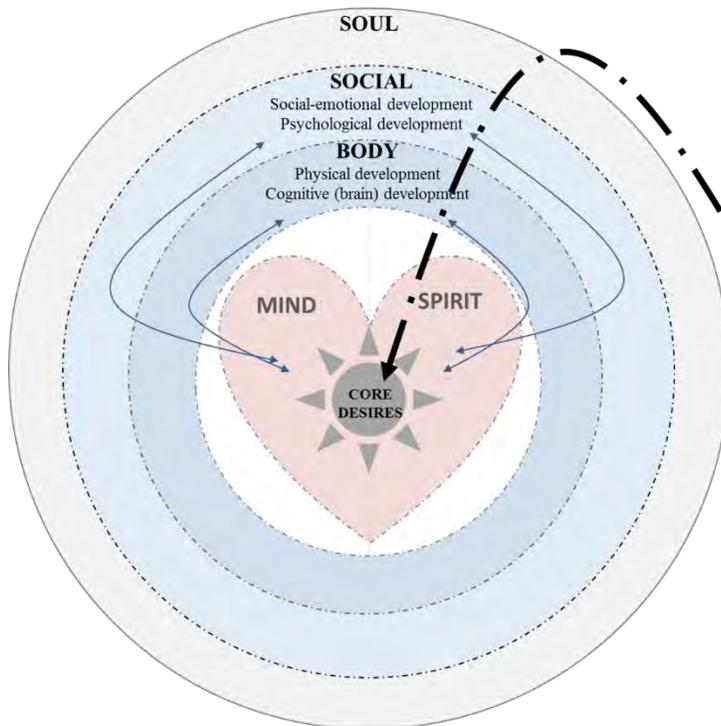


Thought & Reason  
 (Lk. 2:19; Mt. 9:4)  
 Emotions & Sentiment  
 (Ps. 4:7, Pr. 4:23)  
 Will & Actions  
 (Dn. 10:12; Gn. 6:6)  
 Moral Conscience  
 (Acts 2:37; Mt. 22:37)



**MIND + SPIRIT = HEART**

### Heart core desires.



**HEAR ME!**  
 I long to be heard & understood.

**AFFIRM ME!**  
 I wonder what I am worth.

**BEFRIEND ME!**  
 I crave relationships & community.

**NOTICE ME!**  
 I long to be seen, selected & set apart.

**ALLOW ME!**  
 I want to produce & be competent.

**TOUCH ME!**  
 I desire & require physical contact.

**PROTECT ME!**  
 I long to be safe.

**REMEMBER ME!**  
 I yearn to impact others.

Key developmental shifts taking place in the OUTER PERSON (social + body)  
**DISRUPT** the state of the INNER PERSON (mind + spirit = heart) causing  
**HEART CORE DESIRES** to emerge with force.

*What we hunger for perhaps more than anything else is to be known in our full humanness, and yet that is often just what we also fear more than anything else. Frederick Buechner.*

**HEART CORE** desires, which arise out of this deep desire to be known, propel our kids toward people and ideally toward God as they seek out relationships that will satisfy these relentless longings. Only through a relationship with Christ and by living in community will each of these be fully satisfied. Parents can help our kids understand this and help them acknowledge and address the longings of the hidden heart by...

**Recognizing the Cry** – Notice the actions & attitudes (positive and negative) that may be linked to a heart core desire. These become entry ways for conversation, commentary and deeper connection.

**Responding in a Helpful Manner** – Reflect the Great Shepherd by satisfying this desire within our kids through intentional and spontaneous interactions with them.

**Relaying Critical Truths** – Apply the Gospel as kids display or discuss desires that remain unsatisfied in their relationships. Talk about your own heart and how these are linked to what you do/don't do. We aren't meant to be the one who fully satisfies these. Instead, the tension that arises in us and in our kids is meant to draw each of us toward the feet of Christ. Throughout Scripture each desire is addressed and fully satisfied by Him. *Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. Jn 4:13-14*

---

## **Hear me! I long to be heard and understood.**

---

Made in God's image, we are born with an innate desire to communicate. Speaking, expressing ourselves through nonverbal behaviors and outlets facilitates our being known.

### **Recognize the Cry**

Increased volume. Decreased volume. Overdependence on social media & technology. Engaged in atypical, aggressive, harmful behaviors. Reliance on creative outlets. (journals, books, music, poems, art, theatre, etc)

### **Respond in a Helpful Manner**

- Resist the temptation to disconnect.
- Ask more. Talk less. (Jesus asked over 300 questions and answered only a few.)
- Temper your emotions.
- Own and confess your imperfections. This models vulnerable and humble and repentant communication.
- Prompt conversation about and during ordinary events.
- Shift out of problem solving mode. Listen, validate and comfort. Most kids prefer this over a rescue.

### **Relay Critical Truths**

Our kids crave what Adam and Eve experienced in the garden – unhindered and uninhibited communication with their Maker. Ordinary and extraordinary conversation.

- God listens to the voices of His children. (Ps. 139, Ps. 34:4, Ps. 55:16-17)
- Because you were created to be heard, you will always long for people (community) to hear your heart. Healthy relationships allow this to happen. Our kids first learn what this looks like from home.

*The call of the Word is clear. With hearts filled with Gospel hope, we will question and probe, listen and consider, plead and encourage, admonish and warn, and instruct and pray. We will awake every day with a sense of mission, knowing that God has given us a high calling. We are walls of protection that God has lovingly placed around our teenagers. We are the eyes that he has given that they might see. So, we converse and converse and converse. Paul D. Tripp, Age of Opportunity, p. 226*

## **Affirm me! I wonder what I am worth.**

---

While every kid wants to know if they are valuable, they also want to know why. Our culture will lure them to base their worth on some standard (possessions, appearance, accomplishments, etc) instead of the value bestowed to them by their Creator.

### **Recognize the Cry.**

Obsessed with appearance. Fixated on accomplishments. Consumed by possessions. Mastered by morality.

### **Respond in a Helpful Manner.**

- Balance complements with the day-to-day commands, corrections, criticisms given.
- Affirm inner beauty & character over outward appearance.
- Use disappointments to discuss and defeat voices of shame.
- Create mantras or short statements to resist lies.
- Simplify instead of multiply. Resist the urge to buy into buying the next big thing.

### **Relay Critical Truths.**

- Because they were formed by God and made in His image, our kids are valuable. (Gn. 1:27, Ps 139:14, Ps. 8:5) Only IN Christ can their position change from unworthy and undeserving to worthy, righteous and beloved.
- Most people can be placed into one of two groups: those who respect and build you up and those who deflate and devalue you. Help your kids detect the difference from friends in their chosen community.

Because of *justification*, you are completely forgiven and fully pleasing to God. You no longer have to fear failure. Because of *reconciliation*, you are totally accepted by God. You no longer have to fear rejection. Because of *propitiation*, you are deeply loved by God. You no longer have to fear punishment, nor do you have to punish others. Because of *regeneration*, you have been made brand new, complete in Christ. You no longer need to experience the pain of shame. Robert McGee, *The Complete Search for Significance*, p. 116

## **Notice me! I want to be seen, selected and set apart.**

---

Our kids are searching for the look from someone else that would remind them of their true selves and assure them of their special status. They are looking for someone whose eyes, expression and actions, say, "I see you" and "I choose you."

### **Recognize the Cry.**

Stepping out, stepping on, or standing out. Flirting through flaunting or displaying private areas of the body. Social media dependence, abuse. Tolerating abuse.

### **Respond in a Helpful Manner.**

- See them – acknowledge their presence.
- Select them.
- Separate your pain from their pain.
- Separate your desires from theirs.
- Invite your kids to grieve when they are rejected.
- When they get noticed, help them give God the glory.
- Lead them to notice others.

### Relay Critical Truths.

- The Creator of the Universe – their Father in heaven – always sees them. (Ps. 33:13-15, Gn. 16:13)
- His followers are holy and set apart. (Eph. 1:3-4, Ps. 4:3)

*Every [child] comes into the world looking for someone looking for her.* Curt Thompson, *The Soul of Shame*

*Deceit slithered along and spoke in the garden and drew the eyes of those first children away from the Parent-gaze, the gaze that had guarded them entirely and reflected back their honest, love-consumed beings.*

*Erika Morrison Bandersnatch: An Invitation to Explore Your Unconventional Soul*

---

## Allow me! I want to produce and be competent.

---

God created our kids to partner with Him to bear fruit. The ordinary and extraordinary work of our lives must be viewed in the context of God's command to produce – to co-create for the benefit of the community and the glory of God. The enemy of their hearts, however, will use cultural norms, past failures, diagnostic labels, academic or behavioral shortcomings, comparisons to others, feelings of hopelessness, uselessness and defeat to diminish or extinguish this desire.

### Recognize the Cry.

Producing, performing or creating through school-related pursuits. Being good at doing no good. Allowing past difficulties to shape beliefs about competence. Checking out by using substances.

### Respond in a Helpful Manner.

- Point out the gifts, talents, and passions you see in them.
- Require your kids to contribute around the house, community.
- Use assessments to help uncover gifts, talents.
- Discourage activities chosen solely for the sake of the college resume.
- Require older teens to work and/or volunteer.

### Relay Critical Truths.

- An individual's abilities, gifts, talents, and resources come from God and are meant for Him. (Js. 1:17, 2 Co. 3:5b, 1 Pe. 4:10)
- God will direct their paths and supply their needs for whatever He calls them to do. (Ph. 4:19, Jn.15:4-5)

*Without the gospel of Jesus, we will have to toil not for the joy of serving others, nor the satisfaction of a job well done, but to make a name for ourselves.* Tim Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*.

### What makes one kid choose a destructive path in pursuit of heart core desires while another chooses a relatively low risk path? Key determinant and deterrents.

- **Pain and Wounds:** Protective mechanisms (denial, disconnection, destruction, distraction) → cuts off the heart, disguises the heart → limits or obstructs deep satisfaction from healthy relationships
- **Sin, Self-rule or Surrender:** Whether a kid has a relationship with God and is daily yielded to Him and dependent upon Him will impact the way they acknowledge and address desires.
- **The pursuit and practice of shepherds:** People who model what it looks like to be vulnerable, dependent upon Christ and community to satisfy their hearts.

As our kids relate to us, they watch and wonder what we do with the eight desires that exist within our own hearts. By daily leaning into Him and applying the gospel to our own struggles, we have the opportunity to offer a living example of what a vulnerable and yielded heart looks like in relationship with God and community.