

# Understanding the dynamics of order in a



What does it mean to be Jones? If I were a part of the Jones, I am sure, the more I ponder that question the more I would see traits of uniqueness in my family that makes us what we are. These traits are not only influenced by the number of children, personalities of each family member, cultural backgrounds, personal experiences and so forth, but also by my personal experiences of growing up in a family.

Order is defined as “The arrangement or disposition of people or things in relation to each other according to a particular sequence, pattern, or method” in the Oxford dictionary

Why is it necessary to understand these dynamics (called order) in the family?

James Stenson says (<http://www.parentleadership.com/vision.html>) *“The real mission for parents is to raise their children toward responsible adulthood. All the dynamics of family life lead to this: what kind of men and women the children will grow to be. No challenge is more important than this, and so great parents emerge in family life as real leaders”.*

Hence understanding the dynamics of order at work in the family helps us to positively influence the way members in our family behave, and to point children and young adults in the right direction.

What are your traits of order, Commanding, Requesting, Conforming....?

Noun Synonyms	Verb Synonyms
Ordering	Place things or people in certain order
Order of magnitude	Bring order to
A legally binding command	Assign a rank/rating to someone or something
A command given by a superior	Make a request for someone or to something
A request for something to be made or served	Give instructions to someone
Logical arrangement of items	Use of command/authority
A condition of regular arrangement	Bring something or someone into conformity

## Group Dynamics:

Discussions between couples

There are three goals to be achieved in this session (or in your own time).

1. Order - What is it? What does it mean? What does it mean to your children?
  - With the virtue of order in mind, think about your own upbringing, culture, environment and birth order and how they have influenced your character?
  - How has this subsequently influenced the way you raise your own family? As Linda Blair says (Clinical Psychologist, as cited in the Daily Telegraph and The Western Australian 1-2 August 2015. "Environmental factors influence personality development ... the attitudes and rules of the culture we grow up in, the way we are parented, and our birth order position".
  - What is your school of thought? Is it better practice to have order in the home from an early age, or to "free range children"
  - Some believe that schools can teach order - they have our kids for 6 hours/day, 5 days/week, and 40 weeks/year! Parents have their kids for 12 weeks/year plus evenings and weekends. Schools have the structure- Pre-Kindy - Year 12 they often arrange kids in alphabetical order, height order, etc
  - Yet another thought is that kids are best to 'free range,' be free-spirited and not to be constrained with any order. In my personal teaching experience, there are primary and high schools that share this philosophy.
  - What is best for your family? This probably depends on who you are, what is *your* character, what is your background, what career you had before children, what roles you have now... But certainly, if you do all things with LOVE as your main precept, you cannot go wrong.

Points for further discussion.

- Every child is unique.
- Children are influenced by those around them.
- "No" is a loving word.
- If a family has structure and routine then order is a natural by product.
- If we are ordered, we exhibit order; the opposite is also true.
- Routines create "what, when, in what order and how" for children.

2. Spend some time together as a couple discussing what elements of order you want for your family, so that you have unity of intent in your home.
- Remember “the love, unity and formation of the couple translates into effective and strong parenting”. Example and words go together.
  - Is there a place for rules?

Rules can enhance order:

1. Daily routines
2. Safety

Effective rules are positive statements about what the family wants for itself:

1. Politeness
2. Sit down to eat and the table for each meal

Rules can help family life to be more peaceful:

1. Be gentle with each other
2. Share

Parents can implement rules to guide behaviours in a positive way by word and example.

1. Some rules have no room for negotiation (wearing seatbelts)
2. Some rules apply to children in specific situations (visiting another’s home)

What do you want for your family in relation to rules to enhance order?

Maybe it is to have happiness and a peaceful home, for the domestic scene is a predictor of the society. St Augustine describes true peace as "tranquillity in order" (St Augustine, The City of God,9,13)

3. Regularly, set aside some time to talk about your children; to share knowledge about your children; to determine what virtue to focus on for each of your children according to age.

Order is the first ‘virtue by age’ that children can readily attain.

- What ‘order’ do you see in your child?
- How can it be improved?
- How could that child assist another member of the family attain that virtue?

James Stenson's Character Traits and Formative Years is a good guide to go by when discussing virtues by age -

