

The Multiplier Rule



By Cara Day, M.A., C.E.C.

DAYCHILD.ORG

The Multiplier Rule

Table of Contents

Page

1	The Multiplier Rule
8	Multiplier Rule Worksheet
9	More resources available at Daychild

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The Multiplier Rule

There's a saying that "One is none, and two is ten." This is what it can feel like to go from having one child to having two. Having even one child can be very frustrating at times, and can seem to multiply exponentially with the birth of each child. Here's two super fun rules I created to help make life with children more fun. They also help kids become people that other people want to have around.



Both rules naturally help children increase their skills with:

1. Basic Manners
2. Awareness of social feedback
3. Self-regulation

The rules are:

The Multiplier Rule and The Divider Rule

These rules have helped my children and the children I work with to become more aware of themselves and how they affect those around them. I also use them on myself, because, well, we can all use a little coaching sometimes.

One question that's great for children and adults alike who are wanting to increase their levels of self-awareness in social situations, is to ask themselves, "What is life like for the people interacting with me right now?" The Multiplier and Divider Rules help you answer that important question!



Some of us are less aware of social feedback than others and tend to keep doing what we are doing even if negative feedback has been shared by those around us. Social feedback can be verbal, such as someone actually saying, "Please stop!" or, as is more often the case, non-verbal, which might mean someone moves away from you or gives you a negative look. Or, stops being around you at all.



The Multiplier Rule

Since your child's ability to accomplish their goals and dreams in life is going to be based to a large degree on the personal and professional relationships they are able to create and maintain, monitoring social feedback and self-regulation are critical life skills.

When children are little, parents make the playdates for their children. Parents get together with other parents, and the kids play. When school

starts, parents still determine the invite list. They invite their child's class over for a birthday party, or they invite the children of their friends over for a get-together, or to go to a movie.

But typically beginning around age 10, invitations are no longer generated through a child's parents. Usually, at this point, it shifts to being based on how well your child is liked by others.



**RELATIONSHIP
IS EVERYTHING**

As a parent, educational therapist, and life coach, this is something I have watched occur many, many times with the children and families I have coached and taught, over the past 20 years. That is, watching children enjoy the benefits of having established strong, basic manners and social skills, and seeing the pain that is suffered by those who have not. For children who have not, this is a very difficult experience that has lasting, even life-changing effects. Within a year or two, these children may be frequently left out, and at this point, it's something they become painfully aware of.



Their parents become helpless, too, because there is nothing that can be done to force others to invite their child. Not getting invitations, and not getting repeat invitations, is incredibly painful for children. And, of course, this can lead to being socially ostracized and isolated as an adult. Whenever my children go somewhere, or we are going somewhere as a family, I say, "Remember, it's great to be invited, but set an intention to be your best self, to be fun and well-mannered, because what you really want is the repeat invitation. And remember the Multiplier and Divider Rules."



With my own children, and the children I coach, I emphasize that it's the repeat invitation that is most important. I'll say, "It's great to be invited this time. But, remember, it's your manners and behavior that will

determine whether or not you get invited next time, too." I will also remind them, "Sometimes a friend may only be able to invite one or two people to something. You want to be someone that your friend might invite if they could only invite a small group. You also want to be someone that their parents would want to have around in a small group. Think about that today when you're using all your best manners."

**REPEAT
INVITATION**

The Multiplier Rule

By speaking this way, you can set your child up for success, and gently remind them that social connection is not a given, it's created through our manners and behavior. Also, we never want children to carry a victim energy, and to think or say,

"Nobody likes me! People are so mean!"

Rather, we want them to take responsibility for themselves and to think,

"What have I done, or what am I doing, that isn't working for me?"

Children should always know they hold the power to create their lives. No one can take away that power without their permission. And, we can give them the tools to do it. Children are born with an empty tool box. It's our job to actively fill it.



The great news is that children can learn to pay more attention to social feedback and can learn to self-monitor pretty quickly with these two important,



One last point is that these rules are especially designed and effective for behaviors which are not inherently wrong in any way. Rather, it's the situation, either what is happening or where you are, or both, that causes the behavior to be inappropriate. So, instead of your child thinking or even saying back to you, "I'm not doing anything wrong!" they are asked to figure out why their otherwise perfectly ok behavior choice is not working in the current situation.

The rules themselves are formulated as empowering questions. This is because one of the foundations of Daychild is to not take away opportunities for children to develop the essential skill of thinking for themselves, something that is often done with many parenting and teaching methods. And, when you calmly ask your child to consider either the Multiplier or the Divider Rule, depending on which one is appropriate for the situation, you save your parental energy which is always the ultimate goal.

Why is this the goal of Daychild parenting methods? Saving your parental energy is the goal because you want to have all the energy you can for the the times you are loving and playing with your children.



The Multiplier Rule

Let's get started with The Multiplier Rule.

THE MULTIPLIER RULE IS:
"WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE IF EVERYONE WAS DOING WHAT I'M DOING RIGHT NOW?"

The Multiplier Rule applies when your child is engaged in a behavior that:

- Doesn't support the greater good
- Could cause harm to oneself or others

This might mean your child is tapping their foot on the ground, bouncing a ball again and again, or practicing their burping. It could mean they are singing, or talking at an inappropriate time. It might mean they are touching something that is fragile or not theirs. It might mean they are running, either in or out of doors, at time or place that is not right for running.



If your child was by themselves, or if they had only done it once, any one of these behaviors might not be inappropriate. Again, it's just who is present in the room, or the persistence with which they are doing it, that makes it inappropriate at the moment--not for all time.



When I taught this rule to the children in my private school, I would sometimes use the example of when a child finds a cute little caterpillar. First, I acknowledge that it seems like great fun to touch a cute little caterpillar. But, then the Multiplier Rule comes in. What would it be like for the caterpillar if all of us touched it?

Immediately the kids are able to start generating responses, including, "It might die." "It might feel scared." "It might not turn into a butterfly."



Acknowledging children, and then letting them come up with the possible negative outcomes is key to getting buy-in on the Multiplier Rule.

The Multiplier Rule



This next scenario happened with a family I coached for a few years. One night, the family of five was driving home in their car. The youngest sister was singing her favorite song, over and over, in a lovely, lively voice.

The oldest boy was being driven bonkers from listening to his younger sister's verbal exuberance and wanted her to stop.

He said he had a headache from his soccer practice and wanted quiet. He started saying this, over and over, getting more upset as her singing continued. It's important to notice that if the mom and her little girl were in the car alone together, her singing might have been just fine, and, of course, singing out of sheer joy is certainly not a behavior you would ever want to discourage in your child.

In this case, the parents did not ask their little singer to stop singing. Rather, they told the older boy that she was able to sing, and that he should cover his ears. The events of the evening escalated into not fun times.



When they called me about it, I offered up the Multiplier Rule instead, and they were quickly able to see why and how this might have worked out better. I explained that, at this point, with everyone in the car altogether, Mom or Dad could say to their daughter, "Your singing is lovely and I'd like to hear more of it later, but, "What would the Multiplier Rule say right now?" Had the Multiplier Rule been part of her family culture, her reply would be, "It would be very loud in the car if we were all singing."

Then Mom or Dad can reply, "Yes, thank you for understanding. You can sing some more when we get home, or tomorrow when I am driving you to swim. You are really helping our family right now by being quiet."

At this point, the radio could be put on at a low level, with no one singing, or the family could agree to silence for this car ride, or another idea. Many people are sound sensitive to the point that singing in a car by a person or the radio is very troubling. In these situations, that should be honored and explained to others as needed. Or, they might not usually be sound sensitive, but may have a headache or have some other reason they would prefer it to be quiet.

**YOU ARE REALLY
HELPING OUR FAMILY
RIGHT NOW
BY BEING
QUIET**

The Multiplier Rule

Now, let's pretend the daughter could not think of the answer to The Multiplier Rule. In this case, the parent can coach the child to the answer by asking empowering questions such as, "What would it be like if I was singing my favorite song, and Dad was singing his, and so and so was singing his, and so and so was singing hers?"

At this point, she would figure out that it would be quite loud and not pleasant to listen to, and would either verbalize, or, at a minimum, affirm that.



If she still didn't get it, you could go so far as to try it out--and

have a little fun with it--by letting everyone sing their own song at the same time for a few seconds. Unless you're the Jackson Five, everyone would clearly see how unpleasant this might be.

You could also decide to try this at the dinner table the next night, so as not to further upset the one who is wanting quiet at the current moment.

The family felt relieved to have gained a strategy that would honor both of their children going forward.



The Multiplier Rule

Children come into our world as beautiful, unconditioned lights. We want them to remain this way. Yet, we also want them to gain the social awareness they need to achieve their dreams within the social culture we've created and are choosing to live in.

It's a delicate balance, indeed. It's understandable that young children in particular often don't see why their behavior doesn't work for those around them at a particular moment--because it is working just fine for them!

The Multiplier Rule removes any shaming that might otherwise occur and empowers the child to become a helpful member of the family because they want to help the greater good.

The parental energy you frontload into this type of teaching builds respect between all family members and sets the parent up for further success in life's teachable moments.



EXCELLENT PARENTING IS A DECISION

It's much more powerful and long-lasting than a sharp, "Be quiet!" or "Stop singing!" or, worse, "Shut up!"

It's excellent parenting at its best.

When you use the The Multiplier Rule with your children throughout childhood, it gets quietly incorporated into their social repertoire and will serve them well, their whole lives through.

In the description of this video, there is a link to a pdf of a blank Multiplier Rule worksheet that you can use with your child or classroom to help teach this strategy. There is also a completed sample for your reference.

MULTIPLIER RULE	
WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE IF EVERYONE WAS DOING WHAT I'M DOING RIGHT NOW?	
WHAT I'M DOING	IF EVERYONE WAS DOING IT...
WHAT I'M DOING	IF EVERYONE WAS DOING IT...
WHAT I'M DOING	IF EVERYONE WAS DOING IT...

Members can watch The Multiplier Rule's important sister--The Divider Rule. Members can also download an e-book of The Divider Rule. This free e-book is courtesy of our paying members who make our work possible. We appreciate you!

Annual membership is introductory priced at "super cheap" so we hope you will decide to become a member, today!



Thank you!

MULTIPLIER RULE

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE IF EVERYONE WAS DOING WHAT I'M DOING RIGHT NOW?

WHAT I'M DOING	IF EVERYONE WAS DOING IT...
WHAT I'M DOING	IF EVERYONE WAS DOING IT...
WHAT I'M DOING	IF EVERYONE WAS DOING IT...

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Some other videos, e-books, and articles available at Daychild:

Videos and e-books:

The Choice Chart Behavior Management System: Parts 1 - 6

The Multiplier and Divider Rules: Tools for Self-Regulation and Basic Manners

Rapid-Behavior Shapers: Parts 1 - 4

E-books:

The Chit-Chat: A communication tool

Winning Ways to Speak

I Am a Happy Kid

Integrity Lessons, 1- 10: Character Development for All Ages

Resources:

Ten Ways to Trick Yourself into Exercising Everyday

How to Anchor Two People

Ten Reasons Your Stepchild Doesn't Like You, And 10 Winning Ways to Respond

There are many Free and Member videos, e-books, and resources available at Daychild.org. Annual membership is introductory-priced at Super Cheap! Sign-up now to enjoy this special rate. Your membership helps us make more videos, e-books, and resources for you, and we appreciate YOU!