



### **Does Happiness Require a Different Type of Learning?**

By Jan Wilton, Homeschool Representative

Does it seem there are more children with special educational needs now? We look back in history and learn about how Thomas Edison struggled in school, so his mother decided to teach him at home. Children who have a difficult time in a traditional school often thrive in a homeschool environment. Happiness in your home may be found in homeschooling.

#### **A Difficult Choice**

George's (fictitious name) parents spent many months working with their local school, and they found it was not a good fit for their child. The unique set of sensory issues, social needs, and assistance was not being addressed by the teachers. There were daily calls that George had been sent to the principal's office due to an angry meltdown in the classroom. The parents were asked to take him home, or the school would have to consider his suspension because of continued misbehavior. For many children with special needs, the public school works well. However, in George's case, public school was not the answer.

His parents talked to the classroom teacher. She said, "I am not able to give him the time and help he needs. He needs to be more independent!" The special education teacher said, "George does not come to me when he is scheduled. He needs to be independent and come on his own." George was a second-grade child who needed to be included and guided. God's plan was for him to receive assistance in becoming who he was created to be. It was an extremely stressful time for his parents. They saw potential in their child. They reached out to the homeschool community and received the answer. Children with autism can thrive and learn life skills at home.

Does this sound familiar? Your child was not thriving in school and was in trouble every day. Your child did not get to move his/her clip to the top of the chart; it was always at the bottom. Children did not want to interact with your child. He/She was lonely, depressed, and labeled as the one who cried and was angry. Do not feel discouraged! Your child was uniquely created by God.

Psalm 139:13-16, The Message, says:

*Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;  
you formed me in my mother's womb.  
I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!  
Body and soul, I am marvelously made!  
I worship in adoration—what a creation!  
You know me inside and out,  
you know every bone in my body;  
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,  
how I was sculpted from nothing into something.  
Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;  
all the stages of my life were spread out before you,  
The days of my life all prepared  
before I'd even lived one day.*

Nothing about your child is a surprise to God! Your child has the potential to thrive!

### **What Do You Do Now?**

You have made the choice to homeschool. Where do you begin? Begin to search online for homeschooling children in your area with needs like those of your child. Find a group on social media. You will find a wealth of information. Then outline a plan for your child and family. George's parents knew their child functions best with a set schedule. They created a daily schedule that includes all the school activities: math, reading, science, social studies, music, and art. Do not forget physical education, recess, and lunch! George made sure those were included!

Has it been easy every day? No, you will have some bad days, and you may be tempted to quit. Do not quit. Take a short break, regroup, and start again. Therapies and doctor appointments may interrupt your schedule. Illness in the family happens, and holidays may disrupt the schedule. Parents of autistic children have learned that when the plan is not followed, especially during the holidays, negative behavior occurs sometimes. When this happens, get back on schedule as soon as possible so happiness in the home returns.

### **Happiness Is a Choice**

Happiness is a choice, a choice of the child and a choice of the parent. Happiness is seeing a beacon of hope. It is taking time to love, laugh, play, and comfort while remembering that your child ultimately

belongs to the Lord. He knows and cares for your child. Spend time with the Creator and allow Him to guide you in teaching your child.

Nazarene Educators Worldwide is here for you, a homeschool educator. We are available to encourage, resource, and pray with and for you and your family.

If you have questions, comments, or want to share your experience, please contact me at [revjan2008@gmail.com](mailto:revjan2008@gmail.com). If you would like to write an article about this subject, contact Beula Postlewait at [bpostlewait@kc.rr.com](mailto:bpostlewait@kc.rr.com).

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