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### **“MEMO FROM A CHILD TO HIS PARENTS”\***

- Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all I ask for--I'm only testing you.
- Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it; it makes me feel secure.
- Don't let me form bad habits. I have to rely on you to detect them in the early stages.
- Don't make me feel smaller than I am. It only makes me behave stupidly "big".
- Don't correct me in front of people if you can help it.
- Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. It upsets my sense of values.
- Don't protect me from consequences. I need to learn the painful way sometimes.
- Don't be too upset when I say, "I hate you." It isn't you I hate but your power to thwart me.
- Don't take too much notice of my small ailments. Sometimes they get me the attention I need.
- Don't nag me. If you do, I'll protect myself by appearing deaf.
- Don't forget that I cannot explain myself as well as I would like. That is why I'm not always accurate.
- Don't put me off when I ask questions. If you do, you will find I stop asking and seek information elsewhere.
- Don't be inconsistent. That confuses me and makes me lose faith in you.
- Don't tell me my fears are silly. They are real to me, and you can do much to reassure me if you try to understand.
- Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It hurts and disappoints me when I learn that you are neither.
- Don't ever think that it is beneath your dignity to apologize to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm toward you.
- Don't forget I love experimenting. I couldn't get along without it; so please put up with it, within limits.
- Don't forget how quickly I am growing up. It must be very difficult for you to keep pace with me, but please try.
- Don't forget that I don't thrive without lots of love and understanding.
- Please keep yourself fit and healthy. I need you and I love you.

\* From an advertisement, author unknown, in the New York Times  
March 26, 1988 (section A, page 4)