**A life without stickers! Are you kidding me?**

Linda Ranson Jacobs

<http://blog.dc4k.org> or [www.hlp4.com](http://www.hlp4.com)

Questions to ask yourself

* Is there life after stickers/candy?
* Is it possible to have a class where kids are in control and function without rewards?
* Is memorization & contributing possible without rewards?

Yes, there is life after stickers

* Enjoyment
* Peace of mind
* Relationship building
* General sense the world is okay
* Your class is an okay place to be

Are there negatives to rewards? What is the down side to reward systems

* Same kids don’t get the reward
* Sweet little Suzie is devastated
* Inner voice berates some children
* External not internal
* Rewards have to get bigger
* Is anyone always on their best behavior

We should want kids to do something because

* Of the intrinsic value
* It feels good under the skin
* It gives the heart a warm fuzzy feeling
* It feels natural

Rewards create “other” control

* Rewards are based on adult’s judgment
* Thinking skills are affected
* Child learns it’s more important to please others – all the time
* May think, “Why try?”

Rewards work for

* Mundane task
* Short-term moment
* Some special needs

Rewards don’t work

* When there might be a family crisis
* When there is trauma
* Children are stressed
* Long-term

Rewards can create a flawed imagine of God

* Learn God’s love is conditional
* Children should learn
  + About forgiveness
  + Should learn about grace
  + Learn about mercy
  + Christ died for their sins
* God is emotionally distant
* God’s friendship can’t be earned – it’s free but bribes contradict that reality
* God’s love is a vending machine
  + *Insert good behavior – receive blessing*
  + *Insert poor behavior – receive curses*

Punishment and reward systems for discipline

* Don’t teach the what happens as a result of their behavior
* Don’t teach self-control
* Rewards focus on what the adult wants
* Kids don’t learn from mistakes
* Learn, “how do I please everyone”

Dr. Becky Bailey ([www.consciencediscipline.com](http://www.consciencediscipline.com))

* Loss of optimal brain functioning
* Reduction in long-term performance
* Reduced ability to develop caring, respect
* Reduced self-confidence
* Reduction in inner drive, intrinsic motivation

We should want kids to do things because

1. Intrinsic value
2. Feels good under the skin
3. Feels natural
4. Feels like it is right

It is okay to **CELEBRATE!** Celebrations are

* Fun
* Festive
* A party of sorts
* Way to praise accomplishments
* They are NOT announced before hand

Celebrations bring joy and happiness to the group, not intimidation to some children because they *can’t be good enough.*