

The Emotional Bank Account

-- Secrets of Happy Families

by Stephen R. Covey

The Emotional Bank Account is like a financial bank account in one way: you can make "deposits" -- actions that build trust -- or you can make "withdrawals" that decrease it. It represents the quality of the relationship you have with other people. If you have a high balance, then communication is open and free.

Let me share ideas for "deposits" you can make in your family:

感情储蓄和金融储蓄在某个方面是相似:你既可以"存款"增加信用,也可以"取款"削弱信用。它代表着你和其他人之间的关系质量。如果你帐户上余额很高,那么你同亲友交往就可以无话不谈,无拘无束。

下面介绍一下我对家庭感情储蓄的一些观点:

### 1. Cultivate Kindness / 培养爱心

Many years ago I spent an evening out with two of my sons. In the middle of the movie, Sean, then four, fell asleep. His older brother Stephen, six, stayed awake, and we watched the rest of the movie together. When it was over, I carried Sean to the car. It was cold, so I took off my coat and gently put it over him. When we arrived home, I carried Sean in, then lay down next to Stephen to talk. Suddenly he asked, "Daddy, if I were cold, would you put your coat around me, too?"

Of all the events of our night out together, the most important was a little act of kindness -- a showing of love to his brother.

许多年以前,我和我的两个儿子在外面过了一个愉快的夜晚。在看电影的过程中,当时4岁的肖恩睡着了。他6岁的哥哥斯蒂芬没有睡,和我一起看完了电影的后半部分。电影看完后,我将肖恩抱上汽车。那时天气很凉,我把外衣脱下来轻轻地盖在了肖恩的身上。当我们到家时,我把肖恩抱进房间,然后躺在斯蒂芬旁边和他说起话来。突然,他问道:"爸爸,如果我很冷,你也会用你的外衣给我盖上吗?"

那天晚上我们外出做了不少事,可留给斯蒂芬最重要的事竟然是一个极为平常的举动,一个对他弟弟表现爱心的举动。

In relationships, the little things are the big things. They go a long way toward building trust and unconditional love. Just think about the impact in your family of using words of courtesy such as thank you and please. Or unexpected acts of service, such as taking children shopping for something that's important to them. Or finding little ways to express love, such as leaving a note in a lunch box or briefcase.

声明:本资料由[听力课堂](http://www.tingclass.com)网站收集整理,仅供英语爱好者学习使用,资料版权属于原作者。

在人际关系中，小事情就是大事情。它们对建立信任和培养无条件的关爱作用很大。想一想家庭中使用像"谢谢"和"劳驾"这类礼貌用语的效果吧。或者是为家人做些他们意想不到的事情，比如带孩子们去买对他们来说很重要的东西，或者想出一些表示爱的小点子，比如在午饭盒里或是公文包里留个条子等。

### 2. Earn an "A": apologize / 学会一个"A": 即道歉

Perhaps nothing tests our capacity to initiate change as much as saying "I'm sorry I embarrassed you in front of your friends. That was wrong of me."

"Sweetheart, I apologize for cutting you off. I was so rude. Please forgive me."

Sometimes apologizing is incredibly hard, but the effort says, "Our relationship is very important to me." And that kind of communication builds the Emotional Bank Account.

最能检验我们打破僵局的才能，莫过于说一句："很抱歉，我不应该在你的朋友面前使你难堪，我错了。"

"亲爱的，我非常抱歉打断你，我太粗鲁了，请原谅。"

有时道歉是难以想象的困难，但是这种努力表明："我们之间的关系对我来说很重要。" 这种交流能够增加感情储蓄。

### 3. Learn loyalty / 学会忠诚

Next to apologizing, one of the most important deposits a person can make is to be loyal to family members when they are not present.

In other words, talk about others as if they were there. That doesn't mean you're unaware of their weaknesses. It means, rather, that you focus on the positive -- and that if you do talk about weaknesses, you do it in such a way that you wouldn't be ashamed to have the person overhear it.

在家庭成员不在场时，不要对他们说三道四，这种重要的感情投资仅次于道歉。换言之，谈论他人的时候，就仿佛觉得他们也在场。这并不意味着你对他们的弱点一无所知。相反，这意味着你看重他们的优点。即使谈起他们的缺点时，也要让他们听到之后你也无须感到内疚。

A friend had an 18-year-old son whose habits annoyed his brothers and sisters. When the boy wasn't there, the family often talked about him. At one point, this friend decided to follow the principle of being loyal to those not present. When such conversations developed, he gently interrupted and said something good that he had observed his son doing. Soon the conversation would shift to more interesting subjects.

Our friend said he soon felt that the others began to connect with this principle of family loyalty.

声明：本资料由[听力课堂](http://TingClass.com)网站收集整理，仅供英语爱好者学习使用，资料版权属于原作者。

## 学英语，练听力，上听力课堂！

They realized that he'd also defend them if they were not present. And in some unexplainable manner -- perhaps because he started seeing his son differently -- this change improved his Emotional Bank Account.

我有一朋友，他有个 18 岁的儿子，他的行为习惯惹得他的兄弟姐妹都讨厌。当那个男孩不在家时，家里人经常谈论他。一次，我的朋友决定遵循忠于不在场人的原则。当再出现这种议论时，他委婉地打断话题，讲叙他亲眼看见儿子做的一些好事。很快，话题转到更有趣的问题。

我的朋友说，不久他的家人都开始遵循家庭中互相忠诚的原则。他们认识到有人议论他们的缺点时，他也会为他们说话。说不清这是怎么回事，也许是由于他开始从不同的角度来看他的那个儿子，这一变化增加了他的情感储蓄。

### 4. Make -- and keep -- promises / 做出承诺并兑现

Over the years people have asked if I had one simple idea that would help others cope with problem, seize opportunities and make their lives successful. I gave a four-word answer: "make and keep promises."

My daughter, Cynthia, recalls something that happened when she was 12 years old: Dad promised to take me with him on a business trip to San Francisco. We talked about the trip for months. After his meeting, we planned to take a cab to Chinatown and have our favorite food and see a movie, I was dying with expectation."

多少年来，人们一直问我是不是有能帮他人处理问题、抓住机遇或是生活幸福美满的简单良策。我的回答是 4 个字："承诺,兑现"

我的女儿辛西娅回忆起她 12 岁时发生的一件事："爸爸答应带我和他一起到旧金山出差。关于这次旅行，我们谈论了好几个月。在他开完了会之后，我们计划坐出租车去唐人街，吃我们最爱吃的东西，然后去看一场电影。我特别盼望这次旅行。"

"The day finally arrived. The hours dragged by as I waited for Dad to finish work. At about 6:30, he arrived with an influential business acquaintance who wanted to take us to dinner. My disappointment was bigger than life."

"I will never forget Dad saying to him, 'I'd love to see you, but this is a special time with my girl. We've got it planned to the minute.' We did everything. That was just about the happiest time of my life. I don't think any young girl ever loved her father as much as I loved mine that night."

I'm convinced that you would be hard pressed to come up with a deposit that has more impact in the family than making and keeping promises.

"这一天终于来到了。我一直等了好几个小时，直到爸爸工作结束。大约 6:30 分，他回来了，这时一位很有影响的、生意上的熟人想请我们共赴晚宴。我当时失望极了。"

声明：本资料由[听力课堂](http://www.tingclass.com)网站收集整理，仅供英语爱好者学习使用，资料版权属于原作者。

"我永远也忘不了当时爸爸对他说的话：'见到你很高兴，但是今天对于我的女儿来说非同寻常，我们已经做了详细的安排'。那天我们玩了个痛快。那是我一生中最快乐的时光。我想，任何女儿都没有像我在那天晚上那样爱我的爸爸。"

我深信比起遵守诺言来说，很难再找到对于家庭来说更大的感情投资的了。

### 5. Don't forget to forgive / 记住要宽恕别人

For many, the ultimate deposit to the Emotional Bank Account comes in forgiving.

When you forgive, you open the channels for trust and unconditional love. You cleanse your heart. You also remove a major obstacle that keeps others from changing -- because when you don't forgive, you put yourself between people and their conscience. Instead of spending their energy on work with their own conscience, they spend it defending and justifying their behavior to you.

In everything you do for your family, keep in mind the miracle of the Chinese bamboo. After the seed is planted, new, taller shoots appear until the bamboo reaches full height. But the most dramatic growth is underground, where the roots grow very strong. With this support, the bamboo can reach a height of 120 feet!

The Emotional Bank Account can be like that. As you begin to make deposits, you may see positive results immediately. More often it will take weeks, months, even years. But results will come, and you will be astonished at the change.

对许多人来说，感情储蓄中最重要的投入是宽恕。

宽恕别人，就打开了信任和无条件关爱的渠道，静化了自己的心灵。同样，还排除了阴碍别人改正错误的巨大障碍。如果你不肯原谅别人，其实是阻碍人们认识的错误，这就会使他们总在为自己的不对找出种种理由，进行辩护，而不去想想自己是否有不对之处。

在你为家人做每一件事时，请记住中国毛竹这个奇妙之物，它们的种子种下之后，就会长出新的、比种子更高的竹笋，一直长到成竹。但是最戏剧性的变化发生在地下，生长在地下的竹根长得很壮。有这样的竹根支撑，竹子竟能长到 120 英尺高！

感情储蓄也是如此，一旦开始投入，你即刻就可以看到良效。虽然多数情况下需要数周、数月、乃至数年的努力。但是，一定会有成果，而且你也一定会对这些成果所带来的变化感到惊奇。