

# Back to Basics. What Are They?

*By Barrington H. Brennen, October 3, 2003*

I have never heard a statement used more often in recent times than “let’s go back to basics.” It comes from concerned citizens who are fed up with the state of our families and society. It speaks of the colossal effect of the great number of people in society who do not have the fundamental skills needed for healthy nation building.

The basics of life are first and best transmitted from parents to children. No school, church, society can function as parents. The basic individual values needed to build healthy families and society are: literacy, industriousness, faithfulness, selflessness, integrity and honesty, reliability, loyalty, friendliness, community, sobriety, equality, justice, mercy, and righteousness. I have formulated ten basic principles of family life that affect nation building. I am anxious to hear your views on our families and nation building.

## **RATING OUR NATION’S HEALTH**

The goal is to encourage readers to rate your family and our your country’s ability to apply these basic values to build positive families and your nation (RATE BOTH). In order to have your voice heard on how well we apply these basic values, place a number from 1 to ten (range) under FAMILY and under NATION on the questionnaire. 1 = extremely poor to 10 = excellent.

How did you rate our families? How do your rate our ability to apply these basic values to our (your) Nation? If our families are weak in any or all of them, then make it your decision to change and learn the needed skills so that our nation can be healthy. If you rate the nation as unhealthy, then you must do something to change it. Note carefully that this is not intended to be a scientific study but a simple format to encourage thinking and change in our society.

# Ten Basic Principles of Family Life that Affect Nation Building

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By using numbers 1 through 10 write in the blanks the number that you feel best describes the skill level of our nation's families for each of the statements below. Number 1 equaling extremely poor to number 10 equaling excellent ability to apply the basic principles of positive family life and nation building. RATE BOTH.

1. Family members and neighbors treat each other with respect and honor. Gentleness and kindness are normal family behavior patterns. In other words, they live by the old adage: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  2. Both parents (*married or single*) value spending time with their children. They provide positive reinforcement and encouragement through kind words and affection (hugs, kisses, laughter, fun time, etc).  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  3. Parents (*most often the mother*) remain at home during the early years of their children's lives, providing the needed guidance, nurture, support, and early education that only a parent can provide.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  4. Both mother and father are happily married and sexually and emotionally faithful to their marriage vows.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  5. Children are taught the value of sexual purity and sexual abstinence before marriage, and are encouraged to remain sexually pure through the attitude and consistent lifestyle of their parents.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  6. The entire family goes to church regularly and makes valuable contributions to the development of the community. The adults in the family do not destroy community and church leaders through idle gossip and cheap talk.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  7. Parents set a good example in their own lifestyle and behavior by not smoking, drinking alcohol, or using illegal drugs.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  8. Children see their parents reading the newspaper, informative literature, the Bible, good books or magazines, and are encouraged by their parents to do the same.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  9. Parents build wise social, spiritual, and emotional boundaries, avoiding threats and intimidations. They teach their children how to govern their own lives and to think critically (*able to reason from cause to effect*) and to think and act independently. They help their children to have internal principles of life that can stand the test of time.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
  10. Parents have good work ethics at home and in the work place. They are open and honest, punctual, trustworthy, dependable, friendly, and non argumentative, thus making it easier for their children to be likewise.  
I rate this statement: Nation [ ] Family [ ]
- My total scores are: Nation [ ] Family [ ]

Mail the questionnaire to Back to Basics, P.O. Box N-896, Nassau, Bahamas or email to [encouragement@coralwave.com](mailto:encouragement@coralwave.com). Or call in you results to 393 2818

## **Basic Individual Values Needed for Healthy Nation Building**

*By Barrington & Annick Brennen*

1. **Literacy** -The ability to read and write with full comprehension, to interpret, transfer and apply knowledge to new situations.
2. **Community** - A spirit of togetherness. "No man is an island."
3. **Equality** - Fairness, the equal treatment of people regardless of color, race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and physical status.
4. **Faithfulness** - The quality of being steadfast. Can be depended upon in all relationships through bad and good times.
5. **Friendliness** - Warm, welcoming, and respectful to all with whom we come into contact.
6. **Industriousness** - Steady attention and effort to one's occupation. Seizing opportunities for growth and change. Creativity.
7. **Integrity and honesty** - Moral or ethical strength. The quality of being honest, transparent, and consistent. No sneaking around.
8. **Loyalty** - Faithfulness or devotion to a person, a cause, obligations, or duties popular or unpopular.
9. **Justice** - The state of being just and unbiased. The principle of treating all persons equally. Dealing with problems in all spheres of life with equity.
10. **Mercy** - Kind, forgiving, or compassionate treatment of, or disposition towards others, even in unjust situations.
11. **Reliability** - Capable of being depended upon, no matter what.
12. **Selflessness** - Putting others above self.
13. **Sobriety** --Temperance. Abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. Moderation in the amount of food one consumes.
14. **Righteousness** - Being morally sound and taking courses of action because one is connected to The Higher Power.

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