# **Why do parents never grow out of parenthood?**

**Source: OSHO**

The trouble with the family is that children grow out of childhood, but parents never grow out of their parenthood. Man has not even yet learnt that parenthood is not something that you have to cling to forever. When the child is a grown-up person your parenthood is finished. The child needed it – he was helpless. He needed the mother, the father, their protection; but when the child can stand on his own, the parents have to learn how to withdraw from the life of the child. And because parents never withdraw from the life of the child, they remain a constant anxiety to themselves and to the children. They destroy, they create guilt; they don’t help beyond a certain limit.

To be a parent is a great art. To give birth to children is nothing – any animal can do it; it is a natural, biological, instinctive process. But to be a parent is something extraordinary; very few people are really capable of being parents.And the criterion is that the real parents will give freedom. They will not impose themselves upon the child, they will not encroach upon his space. From the very beginning their effort will be to help the child to be himself. They are to support, strengthen, nourish but not to impose their ideas. They are not to create slaves.

But that’s what parents all over the world go on doing: their whole effort is to fulfil their ambitions through the child. Of course, nobody has been ever able to fulfil his ambitions, so every parent is in a turmoil. He knows death is coming closer every day. He is perfectly aware that he will die empty handed – just the way he had come.Now his whole effort is how to implant his ambitions into the child. What he has not been able to do, the child will be able to do. At least through the child he will fulfil certain dreams.

It is not going to happen. The child will remain unfulfilled as the parent and the child will go on doing the same to his children. This goes on and on from one generation to another generation.

It is a very strange world! You don’t know people’s real lives; all that you know is their masks. You see them in the churches, you see them in the clubs, in the hotels, in the dancing halls, and it seems everybody is rejoicing, everybody is living a heavenly life, except you, of course, because you know how miserable you are within. And the same is the case with everybody else. They are all wearing masks, deceiving everybody, but how can you deceive yourself? You know that the mask is not your original face.

But the parents go on pretending before their children, go on deceiving their own children. They are not even authentic with their own children! They will not confess that their life has been a failure; on the contrary, they will pretend that they have been very successful. And they would like the children also to live in the same way as they have lived.