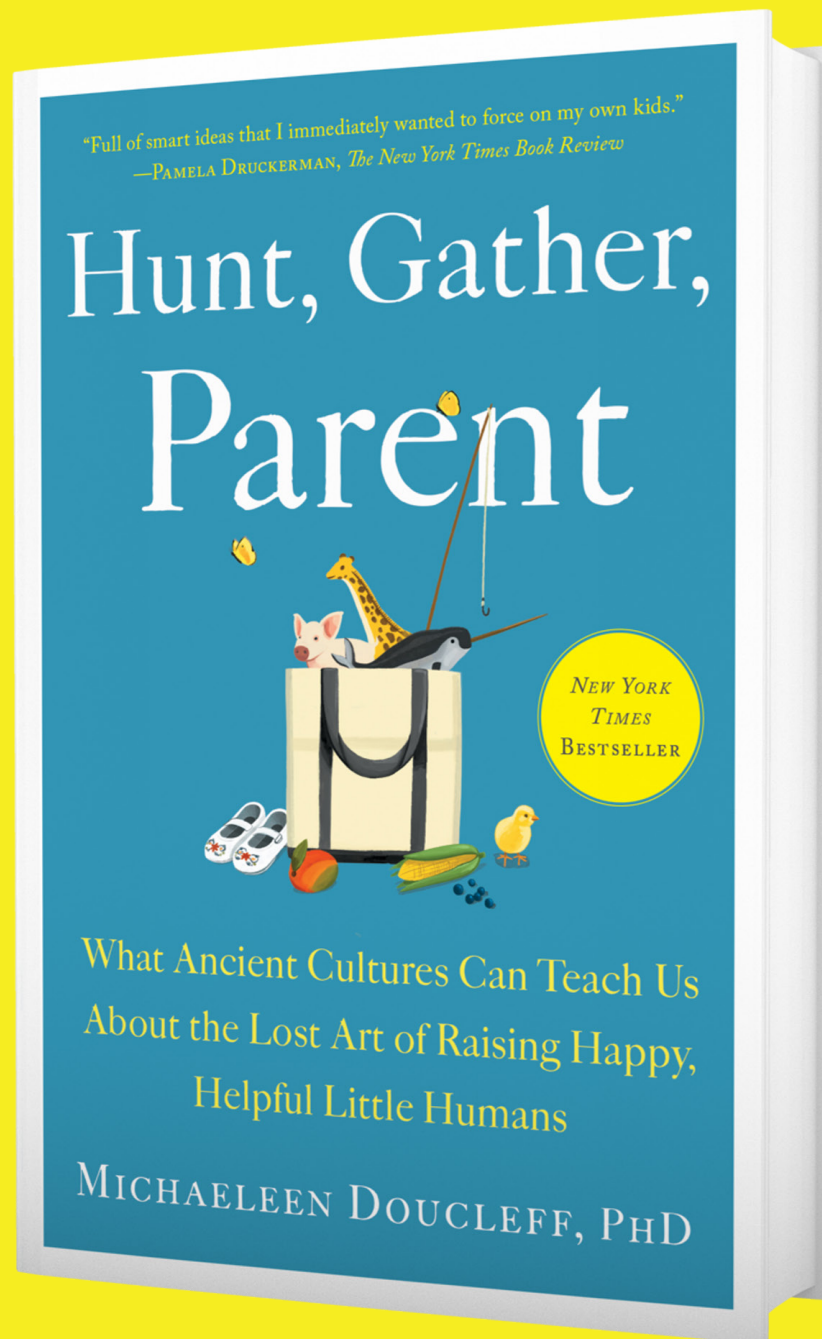




Reading Group Guide

Introduction

In the years since its publication, Michaela Douclev's **Hunt, Gather, Parent: What Ancient Cultures Can Teach Us About the Lost Art of Raising Happy, Helpful Little Humans**, the revolutionary book has transformed parenting in Western culture and has become only more relevant. In its pages, Douclev shares the ups and downs (especially the downs) of her own parenting experience and brings readers along on an exciting journey to learn from three cultures that mastered the art of parenting long ago. Along with her daughter, Rosy, Douclev visits Maya, Inuit, and Hadzabe villages and, blending her observations with research, shows how these cultures offer cures to the most common parenting ailments. **Hunt, Gather, Parent** includes tips and practices for you to apply to your own parenting and is at once wise, heartfelt, entertaining, and groundbreaking.



Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the author chose to open with her own vulnerable account of parenting struggles? Did this change how you received the rest of the book?
2. Why do you think Western psychology has so heavily ignored Eastern cultures?
3. Early in the book, the author says that the major problem in parenting today is that we are “looking at the parenting landscape through a tiny keyhole,” of the Western perspective, which makes kids “more anxious and also less prepared for the unpredictable” (pages 6–7). Does this explain some of what you have observed in modern parenting and why you felt the need to read such a book in the first place?
4. How might a chore chart inhibit a child from learning the Maya concept of *acomedido*?
5. What are the three steps to teaching anything?
(See chapter 4, on Maya parenting.).
6. Why do you think Western parents often underestimate how capable a young child can be at helping the family?
7. Look at the graphic on page 149. Can you think of specific moments when you have inadvertently modeled anger for your child? What about moments when your own parents modeled anger for you?
8. The author encourages adults to develop a habit of calmly walking away when angry with their children. How is this different from suppressing anger?





Discussion Questions

9. In what ways does “the look,” popularly used in Inuit cultures, communicate more clearly to children than frustrated words?
10. What is the gift economy, and how does it relate to the Hadzabe approach to parenting?
11. What is the difference between independence and autonomy, as observed in Hadzabe parenting? How would you describe the differences between Hadzabe and Western parents?
12. How does Benjamin Reiss’s discovery about sleep in Western culture pertain to your own parenting habits (and how you might refine them)?
13. How does minimal interference reduce conflict? And in what small ways can you begin practicing it with your children?
14. After reading *Hunt, Gather, Parent*, do you feel more empowered as a parent? Do you believe the author successfully helped give the power back to the parents (and out of the hands of male doctors and other outdated sources of parenting advice, for example)?
15. Was there a particular section of the book—focused on one specific culture’s parenting—that you found most surprising? Why? What does this say about your own parenting? Discuss as a group.
16. The author claims that Western cultures struggling so much with parenting because they “go against the natural instincts of children” (page 25). After reading the book, can you name examples of going against these instincts in the author’s parenting of Rosie? What about your own parenting?



Activities

1. Try keeping a weekly or otherwise periodic TEAM chart to fill out with examples of when you practiced each of the four concepts in your own parenting. Reflect on this practice and experience as a group and discuss what may have changed over time.
2. Have everyone in your book club spend a short amount of time researching parenting in another culture (not your own and not the three observed in this book). Come back together and share three to four interesting and useful facts you learned that you can try applying to your own parenting.
3. Write a letter addressed to each one of your children. Express your challenges and struggles together, as well as your hopes and dreams for their development. Put a date on it and place it somewhere you will remember. In six months, then again in a year, return to the letter(s). Do you observe any changes in yourself or in your interactions? Were any challenges minimized, even a little bit, or did any goals inch closer to fulfillment? Discuss.

