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Ask the Expert Educator Edition

Teaching Grit, Perseverance and Frustration Tolerance to Students with ADHD



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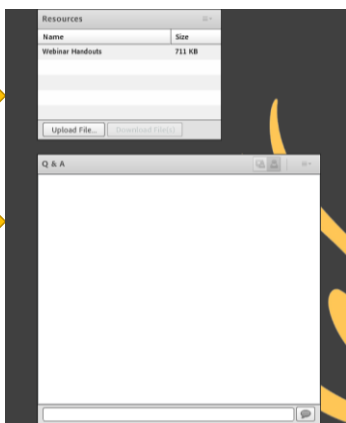
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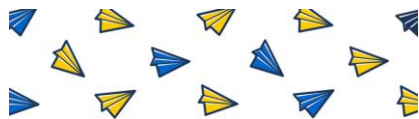
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1-800-233-4050
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- ADHD Parent Coach Trainer
- Speaker, Writer, Advocate and Avid Learner



I thank each of you for being here today.



“He won’t try things that he can’t do right away. I tell him all the time that he is so smart he can do anything, but it doesn’t work.”

Before learning can happen, one must believe they have the ability to learn!

Challenges to learning...

- Kids sometimes lack Motivation
- Kids sometimes avoid challenge
- Kids sometimes breakdown when the work gets Hard

What can we do to help kids WANT to learn?

HOW DO THEY VIEW THEMSELVES?

- What is the voice inside their head saying?
- Are they worried about failure, being judged, being left out or cut out?
- Are they focused on looking smart, competent, etc.
- What are the messages they are getting from those around them?
 - Teachers?
 - Peers?
 - Family Members?

A Student's response to a challenge arises from his or her beliefs about their intelligence.

Puzzle Task

Based on the work of Carol Dweck

"You must be smart at this."

"You must have worked really hard."

Praised for Intelligence

Praised for Effort

- Result: Kids focused on "looking smart"
- As puzzles got more difficult, they showed lower levels of confidence, motivation and performance.
- They were more likely to lie about how they did.
- They became more risk averse

- Result: Kids focused on learning the task.
- Their level of confidence, motivation and performance increased.
- They were more willing to try new, more difficult tasks

The Importance of Mindset

Fixed Mindset

Growth Mindset

- Intelligence and Expertise are based on fixed, unchangeable traits and/or abilities: some people are smart, some are not
- View effort as fruitless or worse, either you get it or you don't
- Avoid challenge, give up easily, use negative self-talk
- View criticism and the success of others as threatening and judgmental

- Intelligence and Expertise can be developed through Effort and Instruction
- Demonstrate a desire to learn
- Recognize that brain and talent are just the starting points. Effort is path to mastery.
- Embrace challenge, persevere, use self-motivating language
- View criticism and lessons of others as inspiration and helpful feedback

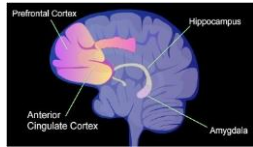
How do you impact Mindset

- Teach students how learning happens
- Help students be aware of their Self-Talk
- Insure that students know HOW they can improve
- Give them positive role models of people with a growth mindset
- Focus on Learning more than Performance

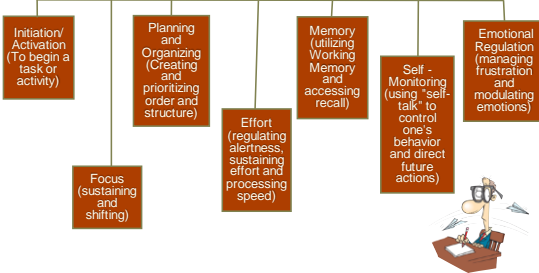
Create a Growth Mindset culture
Help kids believe that the CAN learn

Explicitly Teach about the Brain

- **Prefrontal Cortex:** The **Thinking** brain - process and reflect on information
 - This is where your **Executive Functions** are
- **Limbic System**
 - **Hippocampus:** Links new sensory input to form, store and process **Memory**
 - **Amygdala:** involved with the experiencing of **Emotions**



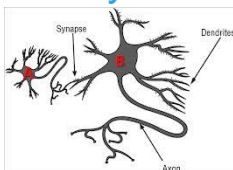
Executive Function: The Board of Directors that helps you Do what you Decide to Do



Neuroplasticity

- Our brains change physically when learning new things and having experiences.
- Every time you learn something new, your brain forms new connections

- The more you **PRACTICE** and **REVIEW**, the stronger your neuron connections become.
- Neurons that **FIRE** together **WIRE** together
- Weaker connections are "**PRUNED**" away as we do with plants and trees
- So use it or lose it...



Dendrites bring information to the cell body.
Axons take information away from the cell body.
 Information from one neuron flows to another across a **synapse** (space) via chemicals called **neurotransmitters**.

Carol Dweck's research on 7th grade students clearly showed that those who explicitly had training in a **Growth Mindset** and basic education about **the Brain** showed **significantly greater improvement academically** when compare to those students who just learned study skills for subject material.

"Many of the student's reported using the image of their *neurons making new connections* to motivate themselves in school, saying that they pictured their neurons forming new connections when they paid attention in class and that **when tempted to not study, they rejected that idea** on the grounds that new connections would not be formed."

We just gave a kid a REASON to Study!

YOUR BRAIN:

IT'S YOUR MOST IMPORTANT MUSCLE!

THE MORE YOU USE IT, THE STRONGER THE NEURON

CONNECTIONS BECOME!



About those Grades...



"Emphasizing **natural intelligence** takes it out of the child's control, and it provides no good recipe for responding to a failure."

"Emphasizing **effort** gives a child a variable that they can control. They come to see themselves as in control of their success."

Carol Dweck

Be creative about what and how you grade:

- Effort to organize and/or plan
- Number of different solutions or attempts
- Following the plan
- Allow for alternate ways to show mastery of material (oral, pictorial, role play the concepts/functions, etc.)
- Demonstrate how the information applies to real life

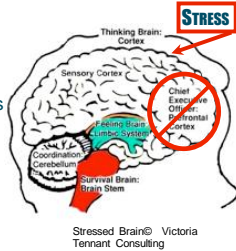


What else Impacts Behavior?

STRESS: THE GATE KEEPER TO LEARNING

Negative emotions (stress, pressure, anxiety, etc.) increases hormone cortisol which dulls cognition.

The **PreFrontal Cortex** turns off and the reflexive, rapid, responses of the **Amygdala** turn on.



The brain goes into **Survival Mode.**

What happens when the Brain is in Survival Mode?

- ❖ Fight
- ❖ Flight
- ❖ Freeze



No learning can take place...
 No problems can be solved...
 Empathy for others becomes difficult...

Goal: Help kids FACE frustration

By helping students SAFELY experience struggle and frustration, we can help them become aware of their Self - Talk and challenge it if necessary.

Provide them with a variety of structured activities and let them know that your intention is to help them develop their GRIT and PERSEVERANCE.

“Today we are going to test our limits, our determination, and our patience. Let’s see the messages our brains send us and how we can help ourselves succeed.”

Perseverance: A valuable asset that helps us achieve what we want in life.

Tenacity **Determination**
Stick-to-itiveness **Stamina**
Staying Power **Endurance**
Grit

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BRAIN WHEN YOU LEARN?

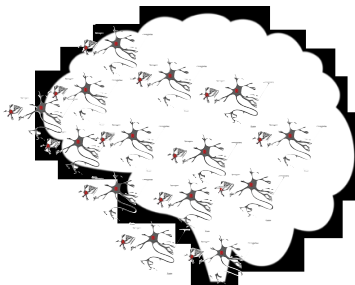
Learning changes the brain.
Practice and Effort grows the Muscles in the Brain

More Connections
Bigger Connections
Stronger Connections



STRONGER BRAINS
=
STRONGER MINDS

See yourself learning



What do you want to get better at?

What are 3 things you can do to make more Neurons Fire??

FAILURE is DATA

- It tells you where you need to learn
- It tells you where you need to strengthen your neuron connections
- It tells you where you need different strategies

First Attempt In Learning

Even in failure we must feel we still have an Opportunity to SUCCEED if we are to maintain Resiliency and Grit

Effort Thermometer



- Exceptional effort! I worked hard on this! I gave it my all!
- Great effort, I think I could do one think to make it even better
- Okay effort, I know I could do more though!
- Some effort. I completed the task, but I may have rushed through it
- Little effort, but I did not finish
- Zero effort, I didn't really try

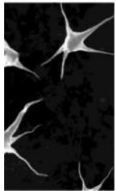
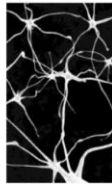
"Continuous effort is the key to unlocking our potential." Winston Churchill

"It's not that I'm smart.
It's that I stay with problems longer."
Albert Einstein

Create Stress Free Fun Challenges

- Choose games and activities that will be challenging and where there is a learning curve
 - Examples: Rebus puzzles, Toothpick puzzles
- Remind them: I will not be grading you – I want you to take risks and be willing to make mistakes.
- Ask them to think about the strategies they use to come up with new approaches, to not give up, and to measure there progress EVEN when they did not succeed.

SOMETHING YOU KNOW WELL



SOMETHING YOU ARE LEARNING

YOUR BRAIN CAN REWIRE ITSELF!

What's your Mindset?

Resist the temptation to put students in categories and expect them to stay there.

In response to 7th graders who did poorly on first Math quiz of the year:

- Fixed Mindset: "Don't worry, not everyone can be good at math."
- Growth Mindset: "I know that you can do better. Let's see what happened and how you can prepare differently next time."

Impact of Praise

- Children under age 7 take praise at face value, after that they become suspicious of it
- By age 12, children believe that praise from a teacher is not a sign that they did well, rather that they lack ability and the teacher thinks they need extra encouragement
- Once teens, they believe it is teacher's criticism, not praise, that conveys a positive believe in a student's aptitude.

Impact of test scores???

Praise with Impact

- **Notice** your student doing and/or feeling something positive
- **Name** what you have noticed and the Value in what you see.
- **Nourish** your student with warmth - appreciate them in the moment

"Jarod, I see you are really working at that math problem. I notice you have tried a few times without quitting. That shows me you don't give up easily - good for you!"

"Sara, I think you are really trying, but I think maybe the strategies you are using or the strategies I am teaching aren't working for you."

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Thank you for your attention!

Please be in touch if I can support you through discussion, collaboration, or resources.

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