

Calm, Compassionate Parenting: Keeping Your Cool When Your Child Is Losing Theirs

Nashoba Regional School District
March 27, 2023

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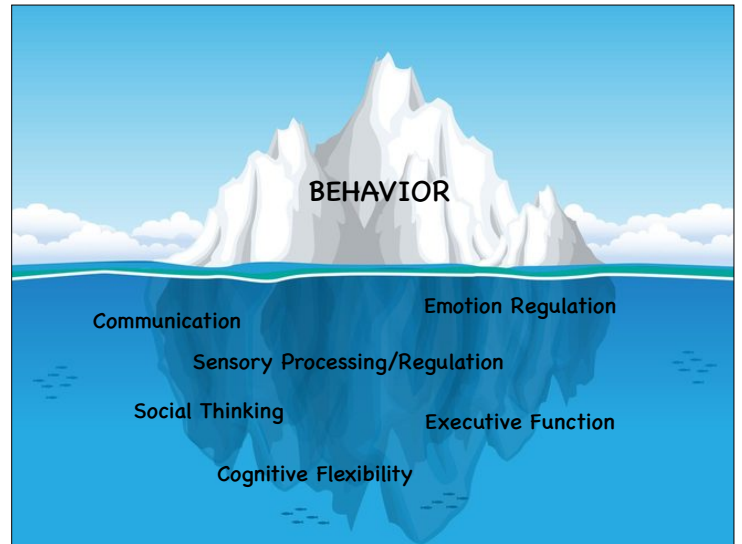
Problematic Behaviors

- Tantrums/Meltdowns
- Whining/Crying
- Physical Aggression (hitting, kicking, etc.)
- Verbal Aggression (threatening, cursing, etc.)
- Defiance/Refusal
- Shutting Down
- Running/Bolting
- Reflexive Negativity

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Common Social-Emotional Skills

- Communication
 - Labeling feelings
 - Expressing needs
- Emotion Regulation
 - Thinking rationally when frustrated
 - Managing anxiety, sadness, etc.
- Sensory Processing/Regulation
 - Managing sensory input
 - Adjusting arousal level to meet the demands of the situation

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Common Social-Emotional Skills

- Executive Function
 - Working memory
 - Forecasting
 - Planning/Organizing/Sequencing
 - Processing speed
 - Shifting gears
 - Impulse Control

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Common Social-Emotional Skills

- ⦿ Social Thinking
 - ⦿ Reading social cues
 - ⦿ Taking another's perspective
- ⦿ Cognitive Flexibility
 - ⦿ Thinking in specific, rather than "all-or-nothing" terms
 - ⦿ Perceiving information accurately
 - ⦿ Shifting mental set

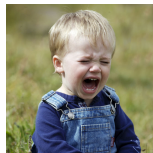
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Thinking of a child as "behaving badly" disposes you to think of punishment.

Thinking of a child as "struggling to handle something difficult" encourages you to help them through their distress.

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"My child is not giving me a hard time, my child is having a hard time."



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What do you want your child to do instead?

- ⦿ Communication
 - ⦿ Give your child the words.
- ⦿ Emotion Regulation
 - ⦿ Model and facilitate calming strategies.
- ⦿ Sensory Processing/Regulation
 - ⦿ Engage proprioceptive input.

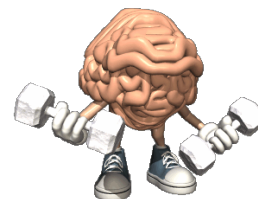
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What do you want your child to do instead?

- ⦿ Executive Function
 - ⦿ Provide visual supports, guides, and organizers
- ⦿ Social Thinking
 - ⦿ Articulate what others might be thinking
- ⦿ Cognitive Flexibility
 - ⦿ Test hypotheses (DON'T tell your child they are wrong.)
 - ⦿ Ask questions to move toward specificity.

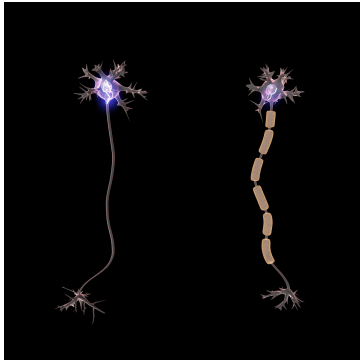
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Skill-building takes many, many "reps."



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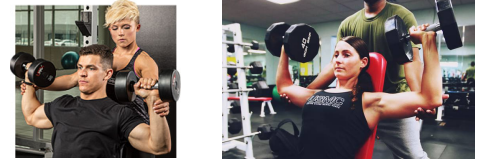
Saltatory Conduction



By Dr. Jana - <http://docjana.com/saltatory-conduction/>

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Your job is to be the spotter.



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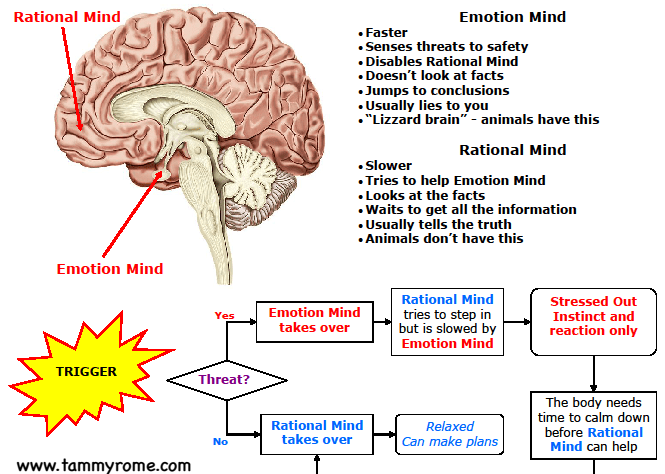
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Use the
21/90
Rule:
It takes 21 days to create a habit,
90 days to create a lifestyle.

@DanVolcan

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Anatomy of an "Emotional Hijacking"



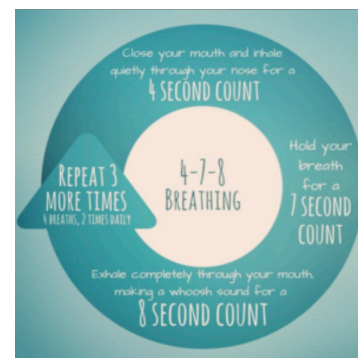
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Responding to the fire...

- ⊗ Adding fuel to the fire
- ⊗ Letting the fire die out on it's own
- ⊗ Pouring water on the fire



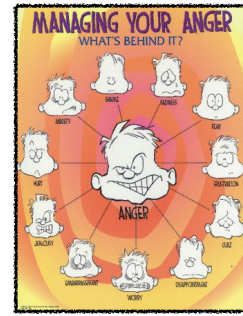
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Breathe in

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Articulate the likely underlying emotion

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Validation and Hope	Toxic Positivity
This is hard. You've done hard things before and I believe in you.	You'll get over it!
I know there's a lot that could go wrong. What could go right?	Just be positive!
All vibes are welcome here.	Good vibes only!
It's pretty normal to have some negativity in this situation.	Stop being so negative!
It's probably pretty hard to be positive right now. I'm putting out good energy into the world for you.	Think happy thoughts!
Sometimes giving up is ok. What is your ideal outcome?	Never give up!
It's never fun to feel like that. Is there something we can do today that you'd enjoy?	Just be happy!
It's probably really hard to see any good in this situation. We'll make sense of it.	See the good in everything.

Toxic Positivity?

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Grounding Exercise

For use during a panic attack, when you need to stay calm, or anytime you feel "disconnected" from your body.

Look around you. Identify + name:

- 5 things you **see**
- 4 things you **feel**
- 3 things you **hear**
- 2 things you **smell**
- 1 thing you **taste**

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A dysregulated adult cannot regulate a dysregulated child.

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Stay calm to help calm (P.O.V.)

- Pause - Take a breath
- Orient - My child is not giving me a hard time, my child is having a hard time
- Validate - Acknowledge and label your child's emotional experience

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Using Declaratives to Reduce Problematic Behavioral Responses

- Do not make comments/statements
- Don't demand/insist
- I vs. You

Rather than: "You need to put your dishes in the sink!"

Try: "I'm noticing that your dishes are still at the table."

<http://www.peerprojectstherapyfromtheheart.com/blog/declarative-language>

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Proprioceptive input...

- Heavy work to the muscles and joints
- Bottom-up processing (easier than top-down)
- Can calm when over-aroused. Can engage when under-aroused.

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Dealing with Non-Compliance: Changing the conversation



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Things to consider:

- Non-compliance is typically a response to an unmet (and often unstated) need on the part of the child.
- Efforts to force your child to comply often backfire and further agitate him/her.
- In order to change this dynamic, we need to change the goal of the conversation.

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Moving from Compliance to Competency

Skills Necessary for Compliance

- Knowing what you need
- Thinking flexibly about how to get what you need
- Forecasting the potential implications of how you get your need met

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Remember: Everyone's decisions make perfect sense from their point of view

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How to change the conversation

- Have the conversation before the situation comes up again
- Listen more than talk (and avoid lecturing)
- Ask questions designed to facilitate thinking
- Provide possible alternatives if your child is unable to think of any
- Remind child that your goal is not to force a specific choice but rather to help them think about ways to get their need met (win-win)

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Be curious,
not
judgmental

- Walt Whitman



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Resources

- understood.org (All things learning)
- livesinthebalance.org (Collaborative and Proactive Solutions - Originally Collaborative Problem Solving)
- efpractice.com (Sarah Ward - Executive Function Resources)
- funandfunction.com (Sensory toys and tools)

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So often, children are punished for being *human*. Children are not allowed to have grumpy moods, bad days, disrespectful tones, or bad attitudes, yet we adults have them all the time. None of us are perfect, and we must stop holding our children to a higher standard of perfection than we can attain ourselves.



-Rebecca Eanes
The Newbie's Guide
to Positive Parenting

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finish each day and be done with it. you have done what you could. some blunders and absurdities have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. tomorrow is a new day. you shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.

-emerson

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