RESILIENT FAMILIES: EVERY DAY STRATEGIES

TOM BRUNZELL, Berry Street Victoria
WHAT do YOU want for our kids?

What life-competencies do you want them to have?

Which frustrations do you want them to handle better?
Amygdala
- Emotional core
- Fear

Locus Ceruleus
- Anxiety Response

Hippocampus
- Memory centre
- Stores raw emotion
- Cortisol activation

Cortisol
Adrenaline
Consider a way that STRESS is *GOOD* for you.

- We all clear our cortisol at different rates
- Learning to use that ‘heightened’ feeling
WHICH ONE ARE YOU?
or
Plan A
Plan C
Plan B

- KEEP KID THINKING
  - Ask questions
  - Stay curious
  - Brainstorm choices
  - Only choices that YOU are good with

(Greene, 2014)
PRESERVE SELF-CONCEPT
If arguing or resistance continues...

BRAINDEAD

And buy time.
And keep yourself thinking.
LOCK IN

EMPATHY

PREVENT

FIGHT OR FLIGHT.

OPEN THE HEART AND MIND TO LEARNING
“This sucks. I don’t feel like doing it.”
If arguing or resistance continues...

BRAIN DEAD
I like you
I love you
I respect you

TOO MUCH TO ARGUE.
AREN’T YOU GLAD THAT I DON’T BELIEVE THAT?

😊 (sarcasm alert!)

Then TURN away 🖤
Ohhh.
This is so sad.
Nice try.

(MUST HAVE GENUINE ☺️)
I know.

- Empathy—not sympathy.
- No further arousal! We have to be careful with tone.
AREN’TYOU GLAD THAT I DON’T BELIEVE THAT?

😊

(sarcasm alert!)
THE GOOD NEWS is that I’m still going to love and support you no matter what happened today.
I’m going to have to do something about this. Not now. Later.

*** (Buy yourself time!)
What next?

- Offer choices that YOU are ok with.
- Beware of the double-bind choice.
- Maintain the logical consequence every time.
GRIT:

Passion + Persistence

Grit beats IQ every time in high performers
STAMINA

- Developmental stamina
- One minute at a time for developmental independence
- Realistic and accurate
WHO on your teams or in your family represents STAMINA?

- What are their first responses to adversity?
- What strategies do they have to NEVER GIVE UP?
- Who do they seek help from to keep going?
Stamina is about exploding long held myths

I am dumb.
Things don’t come easy for me at first.

I am smart.
I work hard.
FIXED vs. GROWTH MINDSET

- Control group got study skills
- Other group got study skills + one-pager article that said that effort is key.
- Positive Praise is detrimental?

(Dweck, 2006)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FIXED mindset</th>
<th>GROWTH mindset</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivated to:</td>
<td>Prove themselves</td>
<td>Learn from experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges:</td>
<td>Avoid</td>
<td>Embrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles:</td>
<td>Give up easily</td>
<td>Persist in face of setbacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort:</td>
<td>See effort as pointless</td>
<td>See effort as path to mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism:</td>
<td>Ignore feedback</td>
<td>Learns from feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success of others:</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>Inspired and learns</td>
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You are really good at sports.
I was told that I could do anything I set my mind to.
FIXED OR GROWTH?

- Your intelligence is something that you can’t change very much.
- I like it when people tell me how to improve.
- The boys in our family are not good at maths.
- I am no good at studying and never have been.
- I get really nervous when facing a challenge, but I dive in anyway.
- If I can’t do something, it’s really embarrassing.
- “NO” is a question!!
YOUR TEAM?

Your parents?

Your kids?
THE VOCABULARY of Resiliency
ABCD:

“MY TEACHER HATES ME!”

ACTION + BELIEF = CHANGE & FLIP

CONSEQUENCES (FEELINGS)

D!
Listening and Labelling

SELF TALK

- Personal
- Permanent
- Pervasive
BEWARE OF DOG

ALWAYS NEVER
## Active Constructive Responding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Constructive</th>
<th>Destructive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amplify</td>
<td>Deflate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stall</td>
<td>Steal</td>
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</table>

- **Active**
- **Passive**

- Genuine Interest
- Amplifies the experience
- Deflates good news
- Raises alarm
- Understated support
- Conversation stalls
- Ignores the event
- Steals the conversation

**Notes:**
- ACTIVE: Engages the conversation actively.
- PASSIVE: Responds passively or does not respond at all.
- CONSTRUCTIVE: Positively contributes to the discussion.
- DESTRUCTIVE: Negatively influences the discussion.
ENFORCEABLE STATEMENTS

We are NOT telling kids how to live their lives.

We are telling them what WE are going to do.

What is the difference?
ENFORCEABLE STATEMENTS

You need to lower your voice.

I would like you to get back to work now.

You need to finish this assignment before lunch.
GOLDEN STATEMENTS
(can’t argue with that!)

- I teach when there are no distractions
- I listen when people don’t interrupt each other.
- I’ll listen when your voice is calm.
- I transition students who are ready.
- I listen to one person at a time.
- I listen to students who raise their hands.
- I’m going to have to do something about this. We’ll talk later.
- I will like you regardless of how well or how poorly you do in my class. I’m going to have to do something about this. We’ll talk later.
What does NOT work

- Dangling rewards
- Anger, threats, lectures
- Arguing back and forth with kids
- Isolation—“You’re on your own!”
Ahhh, the teenager...

- Do NOT want to be embarrassed in front of their friends.
- Do NOT want to be put on the spot
- Do NOT want adults to like the same things they do.
- Teens don’t want you in their business.
- Want you when they want you, and then want to be left alone

RESPECTFULLY: TELL TEENS insight about themselves. “I’ve noticed, that you are the kind of person who...”
RESILIENT FAMILIES:

• Build GRIT and STAMINA for developmental perseverance

• Spot RESILIENT language

• Capitalise on positive NEWS

• DE-ESCALATE with EMPATHY