

Notes for Learning about Learning Discussion

If At First You Don't Succeed . . . Encouraging Resilience and Perseverance

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Learning to fail successfully . . .

- Nephew learning to ride a bike
- Resilience: being able to learn from failure
 - Piaget and 11 year-olds
- Modeling resilience/perseverance
 - First response to confusion/difficulty?
 - Acknowledging our own mistakes
 - Following through just because
- Learning to fail a crucial learning skill
 - Poker chips and learning

What's Really Happening?

- Temperament
 - Insatiability
 - Impulsivity
 - Shyness/Fearfulness
 - Difficulty experiencing joy
- Other possible factors
 - Misunderstood/misguided expectations
 - Depression

- Repeated, unmanaged failure
- Emotionally charged home/classroom

Perfectionism vs. Excellence

- Working toward/never arriving
 - Like “north”
 - Mistakes important in pursuing excellence
 - Mistakes threatening to pursuit of perfectionism
 - Other signs of perfectionism
- How does your family define excellence?
 - What happens at success/failure?
 - The language of praise
 - Celebrating the process as well as the outcome
 - Does your definition debilitate or motivate?

When is stress good? And when is praise bad?

When does stress motivate and when does it paralyze?

- Distinguishing between things we can control and things we cannot
- Choose one thing you can control and take one small step to help alleviate that stress

When does praise motivate and when does it paralyze?

- Children being praised for modest work reinforces a fixed mindset
- They don't believe it even when it's real
- Watch your words

Self-esteem vs. Self Respect

Self-esteem: thinking highly of oneself

- Research says causes problems
- Built by successful experiences
- Often unrealistic view of oneself (verse)

Self-respect: having a true view of oneself

- Knowing one's learning style and islands of competence
- Built by successful and unsuccessful experiences
- Embracing strengths and weaknesses
- Begins by having respect for others

Beware the "wind-aided run"

The Lessons of Choice

Parenting in the present

- Every situation an opportunity
- What it looks like to parent in the past or in the future

Difficulties making choices

- Reluctance to take risks
- Limit the options
- Communicate the options
- Celebrate the choice

Laws of sowing and reaping

- Encourage perseverance
- Be willing to follow through
- What are my options?

Teaching/Conveying Empathy

Empathy vs. sympathy

- “I understand”, not “Oh, you poor thing”
- Not enabling, just communicating
- Don’t have to approve of behavior

Facilitates communication

- Rewriting negative scripts
 - Anger clouds effective communication
- Starting with empathetic inquiry
 - Helps children feel comfortable learning from their mistakes

Teaching our children empathy

- Modeling empathy the best teacher
- “How do you think . . .?” “I would feel . . . “

Taking Healthy Risks

Risk-taking essential to the learning process:

- Remember the poker chips
- Setting realistic goals
- Modeling coping strategies and problem solving

Effective interpersonal skills

- Able to ask for help when needed
- Knowing when it’s safe to take a risk

Nurturing “islands of competence”

- Accepting God’s design for our children
- Generalists vs. specialists

The Mindset of the Parent Who Fosters Resilience in Children

1. Be empathetic but not necessarily sympathetic.
2. Communicate effectively and listening actively.
3. Change the “negative scripts”.
4. Actively appreciate your children.
5. Help your children to set challenging but reasonable goals
6. Help your children see their “islands of competence”.
7. Talk about how mistakes can help you learn.
8. Provide your children opportunities to contribute.
9. Let them solve problems and make decisions.

10. Discipline in a way that promotes self-discipline and self-respect.

Recommended Reading

- *Raising Resilient Children* by Robert Brooks
- *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child* by John Gottman
- *Raising Emotionally Intelligent Teenagers* by Maurice Elias, Steven Tobias and Brian Friedlander
- *Nurturing Resilience in Our Children* by Robert Brooks and Sam Goldstein