Preparing for College: What You Can Do NOW

February 2020
Agenda

➢ Skills or Motivation?
➢ Problem Solving & Motivation
➢ Learned Optimism
➢ Interdependence
➢ Self-Efficacy
➢ Growth Mindset
➢ Self-Advocacy
Skills or Motivation?
People Do Well If They Can™

When this becomes our guiding philosophy, we can begin to TEACH and SUPPORT others, rather than simply try to MOTIVATE them.

Changeable: How Collaborative Problem Solving Changes Lives at Home, at School, and at Work, by Stuart Ablon

Also Jane Nelsen, Ed.D. Positive Discipline series, online and books
What Fosters Intrinsic Motivation? (Self-Determination Theory)

Meeting Three Basic Human Needs

- **Competence**: Humans need to deal effectively with their environment.
- **Autonomy**: Humans need to control the course of their lives.
- **Relatedness**: Humans need to have close, affectionate relationships with others.

http://selfdeterminationtheory.org/theory/
Bonus from Collaborative Problem Solving™

Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) is research-based!

It improves:
• Executive Functioning Skills
• Cognitive Flexibility
• Frustration Tolerance
• Problem-Solving Skills

In both people having the conversation!
The more you do it, the better it works!!
Learned Helplessness vs. Learned Optimism
Learned Helplessness

Martin E.P. Seligman, Ph.D.

“Nothing I do matters.”

We can unknowingly teach this to our children.

Pessimists are more susceptible!

Teaching people the trait of optimism helps to guard them against learned helplessness, depression, and physical illness.
Research Studies in Nursing Homes, Homeless Shelters, Prisons

CONFORMITY, PASSIVITY

Health problems
Revolts and refusals
Depression
Lethargy

CHOICE, RESPONSIBILITY

Better health
Cooperation
Seek gainful occupation
Positive outlook
Allow Choice and Responsibility...

instead of doing things for your student or controlling their actions.
Modeling Optimism

*How we view events shapes our thoughts*

**PESSIMISTIC: BAD EVENTS**
- Permanent
- Cause is pervasive
- Blames self (general self-blame)

**OPTIMISTIC: BAD EVENTS**
- Temporary
- Cause is specific
- Places blame realistically, and considers solutions (behavioral self-blame)

*Bad Event: I had a low score on the assessment exam.*

https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/
Modeling Optimism

Adversity: what is the difficulty?

Beliefs: what is your belief about it?

Consequences: how do you feel as a result of your belief?

from “The Optimistic Child” by Martin E.P. Seligman, Ph.D., see also “Learned Optimism” by the same author
Explanatory style is as much a predictor of success as SATs or IQ tests.
Independence

freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others

http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/independence
freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others.

- Friends
- Family
- Co-workers, Boss
- Civil Servants
- Media
- Services: Mechanic, Dry Cleaner, Carpet Cleaner, Dog Groomer, Hairstylist, Furnace Repair...
Interdependence

the quality or condition of being interdependent, or mutually reliant on each other

http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/interdependence
How can students contribute at home? Chores, and...

Information from school, decision-making, appointments, academics, study habits, organization, self-regulation, social involvement, responsibilities around the house, projects
Teamwork
Agree on goals / milestones
Establish tasks to be completed
Communicate / monitor progress
Solve problems
Interpret results
Agree on completion of project

Individual work
Work on tasks
Work on new / revised tasks
Research / development
Networking
Your family is your first team!

As a family, discuss what it will take to:

- Agree on goals / milestones
- Establish tasks to be completed
- Communicate / monitor progress
- Solve problems
- Interpret results
- Agree on completion of project
What is Self-Efficacy?

**Definition:** Self-efficacy is a person’s belief in their ability to succeed in a particular situation.

1. Mastery Experiences
2. Observing Others
3. Direct Persuasion by Others
4. Mood
Mastery

Performing a task successfully strengthens our sense of self-efficacy.

However, failing to adequately deal with a task or challenge can undermine and weaken self-efficacy.
Observing Others

"Seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises observers' beliefs that they too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities to succeed."

--Albert Bandura
Direct Persuasion by Others

Getting verbal encouragement from others helps people overcome self-doubt and instead focus on giving their best effort to the task at hand.

Use “Process Praise” to enforce the message.

What message should students internalize?

1. “Great job, you got an A!”
2. “You work really hard on your schoolwork. I see that you’re reading your textbooks and looking up the class information every day. It’s reflected in your grades, too. That type of hard-working ethic will take you far in your career some day!”
3. “Not again! Last time we talked, you said you would do this! You never do it!”
Mood

By learning how to minimize stress and elevate mood when facing difficult or challenging tasks, people can improve their sense of self-efficacy.
Growth Mindset

The Power of Believing You Can Improve, Carol Dweck
**Fixed Mindset**

Intelligence is static. Leads to a desire to LOOK SMART and therefore a tendency to:

- Avoid challenges
- Give up easily due to obstacles
- See effort as fruitless
- Ignore useful feedback
- Be threatened by others’ success

**Growth Mindset**

Intelligence can be developed. Leads to a desire to LEARN and therefore a tendency to:

- Embrace challenges
- Persist despite obstacles
- See effort as path to mastery
- Learn from criticism
- Be inspired by others’ success

Carol Dweck
Steps to Self-Advocacy

1. Know Yourself
   - Self-knowledge is the first step towards advocating for your rights. You need to know your strengths, needs, and interests before you can begin to advocate.

2. Know What You Need
   - What interventions, accommodations or modifications will help you?

3. Know How To Get What You Need
   - Who to ask, how to ask, what to do, how to do it.
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Neurodiversity Navigators: www.facebook.com/ASNavigators