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1. WELCOME

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MONTHLY QUOTE:

Our thoughts help wire our brain. These thoughts determine how we perceive. And it is our perceptions that largely determines the quality of our lives.

Do you perceive a situation as a "problem" or as "challenge"?

"Tips for Promoting Responsibility with Young People" is my newest inexpensive publication.

This \$4.97 printable e-book contains 25 specific recommendations for promoting responsibility with young people from the ages two years on. Each page contains one specific technique that will show you how to have young people become more responsible while at the same time reduce your stress, help you become more effective, and improve your relationships.\

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2. PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITY

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William McKinley, the 25th U.S. president, once had to choose between two equally qualified men for a key job. He puzzled over the choice until he remembered a long-ago incident.

On a rainy night, McKinley had boarded a crowded streetcar. One of the men he was now considering had also been aboard though he didn't see McKinley. An old woman carrying a basket of laundry struggled into the car, looking in vain for a seat. The job candidate pretended not to see her and kept his seat. McKinley gave up his seat to help her.

Remembering the episode, which he called "this little omission of kindness," McKinley decided against the man on the streetcar.

Our decisions--even the small, fleeting ones--tell a lot about us and our responsibility and courty to others.

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3. INCREASING EFFECTIVENESS

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The March 7, 2011 issue of Newsweek Magazine contained an interesting article entitled, "I CAN'T THINK," with the subheading, "The Twitterization of our culture has revolutionized our lives, but with an unintended consequence--our overloaded brains freeze when we have to make decisions."

Following are few points from the article.

With too much information, people's decisions make less and less sense. Trying to drink from a firehose of information has harmful cognitive effects. And nowhere are those effects clearer and more worrying than in our ability to make smart, creative, successful decisions.

The science of decision making has shown that more information can lead to poorer choices and to choices that people come to regret. Decisions requiring creativity benefit from letting the problem incubate below the level of awareness, something that becomes ever more difficult when information never stops arriving.

Every bit of incoming information presents a choice: whether to pay attention, whether to reply, and/or whether to factor it into an impending decision. Decision science has shown that people faced with a plethora of choices are apt to make no decision at all. Although we say we prefer more information, in fact more can be debilitating.

A key reason for information's diminishing or even negative returns is the limited capacity of the brain's working memory. It can hold roughly seven items which is why seven-digit phone numbers were a great idea. Anything more must be processed into long-term memory. That takes conscious effort as the brain struggles to figure out what to keep and what to disregard.

It isn't only the quantity of information that knocks the brain for a loop; it's the rate. The ceaseless influx trains us to respond instantly, sacrificing accuracy and thoughtfulness. We are conditioned to give greater weight to what is latest, not what is more important or more interesting.

We're fooled by immediacy and quantity and think it's quality. What starts driving decision is the urgent, rather than the important.

Especially online, it is so much easier to look for more and more information rather than sit back and think about how it fits together.

The article just adds another reason that the practice of REFLECTION in the Discipline Without Stress Teaching Model is so important.

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4. IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS
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I was brought up on the principle my mother instilled in me:
"If you can't say anything nice about a person, then don't
say anything at all."

I extended this admonition to refer to my own self-talk. I
continually said to myself, "If I can't say something nice
to myself about myself, then don't say anything at
all--unless I turn it around to positive self-talk.

This approach found its way into the first practice of the
Discipline Without Stress Teaching Model: POSITIVITY. The
opposite, of course, is negativity. In building
relationships, this is the biggest enemy.

My suggestion is not to allow negative ideas that pop into
your mind to direct your thoughts, not to allow them in your
residence, and don't perceive it in your environment. Don't
allow negativism for those who may work for you, your
friends, or your associates. Don't have anything to do with
it. When you see or hear it, turn it and leave it be--or ask
yourself, "How can I turn that negative thought around so
that it will not effect me in a negative way.

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5. PROMOTING LEARNING
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Booker T. Washington said, "If you want to lift yourself up,
lift up someone else."

A modification of Washington's idea for teaching is that if
you want to lift someone up, lower yourself.

A teacher said that if you want children to believe you're
really listening to them, kneel down. If they have to look
up at you, they'll be reluctant to share their innermost
thoughts because it's threatening to reveal themselves to
someone who towers over them. They'll never believe you
understand how they feel because you're literary and
figuratively not on their level.

If you hunker down so you can see things eye to eye, they'll
share more freely because they'll know intuitively you're
seeing things from their perspective.

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6. PARENTING
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The following is about an interchange regarding teenagers.

My responses are in CAPITAL LETTERS.

I finished your discipline book and am working my way
through your parenting book. I know it will be similar but I
need to read through your material again anyway.

My 15-year-old son is really starting to change. He's come
up with excellent consequences for not putting his things
away and I'm working very hard on not saying, "Good job!"
I'm trying to say things like, "Wow, you're learning how to
govern yourself." Is that O.K. or is that still a value
judgment?

YES IT IS O.K. AND YES, IT'S ALSO A VALUE JUDGEMENT. THIS TYPE OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT IS EMPOWERING AND OF GREAT BENEFIT TO YOUNG PEOPLE. IT PROMPTS THEM TO REFLECT--IN CONTRAST TO A FEELING OF DOING SOMETHING TO PLEASE YOU, AS IN "I'M SO PROUD OF YOU."

What I need some help with is asking for the level of behavior. Both of my kids got a little irritated when they were bickering and I asked for a level of behavior.

WITH TEENAGERS, DO NOT "ASK "FOR THE LEVEL. IT IS NATURAL FOR THEM TO CONSIDER IT COERCIVE. INSTEAD, PROMPT THEM TO REFLECT BY JUST SAYING, "PLEASE REFLECT ON THE LEVEL YOU ARE CHOOSING AND DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO CONTINUE IT."

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF EXAMPLES AND SUGGESTIONS THAT YOU WILL READ IN THE PARENTING BOOK ABOUT HOW TO DEAL WITH SIBLING SQUABBLES.

ALSO, THE "HIERARCHY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT" REFERS TO LEVELS--NOT NECESSARILY BEHAVIORS. ALTHOUGH LEVELS A AND B CAN BE CONSIDERED LEVELS OF BEHAVIORS LEVELS C AND D ARE LEVELS OF MOTIVATION.

PLEASE REVIEW
http://www.MarvinMarshall.com/pdf/hierarchy_significant_points.pdf

Even though I was worried about starting later in life at 49, your tools are helping to assuage my fears about classroom management.

THANK YOU. LINK TO
http://www.marvinmarshall.com/classroom_management.html

Finally, I have to share that I frequently substitute for 7th - 12th graders. Friday I subbed for 7th grade math and I caught myself saying "Great," "Good job" and "Excellent Work" at least 45 times that day. I had to work really hard to say things like, "You solved it" and "You figured it out" and just leave it at that. Truly a skill that needs a lot of practice.

YOU HAVE DISCOVERED THE REASON THAT THE APPROACH IS SIMPLE BUT ONLY BECOMES EASY AFTER REPEATED PRACTICE. AWARENESS MUST BE CONTINUAL.

THANKS FOR SHARING AND KEEP THE TEACHING MODEL HANDY:
http://www.marvinmarshall.com/teaching_model.html

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7. DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS (DWS)
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The following is from a post at
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DisciplineWithoutStress/>

I have a rather difficult first grade. Since I teach music to them once a week, it is a much longer process to teach them personal responsibility when the school has adopted a PBIS system that gives tangible rewards for every little thing.

PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports) is a Skinnarian motivation approach that RELIES SOLELY ON

EXTERNAL REWARDS TO REINFORCE DESIRED BEHAVIORS. It was designed for special education students but is now imposed on all students in many local and state school districts in the U.S.)

I was having a particularly difficult day with them, and decided to give in and give "caught being good" points. I didn't tell the kids who I was catching, but every time they saw me grab the paper I was recording the points on, they straightened up. At the end of class, I asked the few kids that were caught being good the most what kind of reward would be appropriate. They wanted positive calls home, which was great! The parents loved it, the kids loved it, it seemed like all was well.

Then I had the class the next week. Before we even sat down, the kids were asking if I was going to call their mom or if there would be a different reward. They could care less what we were doing in music. The whole concept of personal responsibility was completely thrown out the window in that one hour. It's hard enough when the other teachers are giving out rewards and I don't, but some days it just seems like it would be so much easier. However in the long run, I know it won't.

Here is a post that followed from Kerry:

It's important to know what people mean when they say that something "works." It would depend on the adult's goal. If the goal is to get kids to behave in the moment, then rewards often "work." If the goal is to help children become self-disciplined and internally focused as they grow older, then rewards most often just get in the way.

In my experience, when people say rewards work with very young children, it's because young kids are easy to please. They will jump through hoops to get a pencil or a sticker. As kids grow wise to these tricks--usually as they grow older--it takes more to get them to jump through the same hoops. As the rewards become more costly, teachers realize they simply no longer can afford to buy the rewards that would motivate older students in the same way that stickers and pencils motivate younger kids.

Kerry refers to Alfie Kohn--especially his classic tome on the subject, "PUNISHED BY REWARDS: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise, and Other Bribes."

More of Kerry's posts are at <http://disciplineanswers.com/>

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8. TESTIMONIALS/RESEARCH
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Thank you for your newsletters. I am a special education teacher working in the Resource Specialist Program and am constantly getting new students from the general education classes. I have applied your recommendations and it works wonderfully.

For example, I have a student who is ADHD and is not on

medication. He was having a terrible time in his general education class; his teacher was really frustrated and only expected bad behavior from this student.

I used your recommendations with him, paying attention to the positive and acknowledging his good behavior. He is doing much better academically and behaviorally during the time he is in my classroom. What I didn't know was that he was doing the same in his general education classroom. His general education teacher told me that he is behaving and paying attention to the lesson. She said, "What did you do to him that made this miracle?"

I said, "Nothing" but after thinking about it I realized that I am actually using your recommendations, but since I do it with the whole class, it became so natural that I didn't realize it.

Maria Luisa Gonzalez
Santa Ana, California

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I hope you will find this free monthly newsletter valuable enough to share it with others. Marv Marshall