

PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITY & LEARNING
Marvin Marshall's Monthly Newsletter
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Marvin Marshall has presented in 44 of the United States
and in 16 countries on five continents.
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1. WELCOME
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MONTHLY QUOTES:

"We had taken the central premise of learning theory--that learning occurs only when a response produces a reward or a punishment--and proved it wrong." . . . "Here were two callow graduate students telling the great B.F. Skinner, guru of behaviorism, and all his disciples that they were wrong in their most basic premise."

--Martin Seligman, "LEARNED OPTIMISM: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life," Vantage Books, 2006, page 23.

"Another surprise involves the use of behavior management techniques. Although my own training in psychology (under the pioneering behavioral psychologist B.F. Skinner) suggests the sound behavior management--providing lots of reinforcement of good behavior--is essential for good parenting, our new study casts doubt on this idea. Behavior management ranked low across the board. It was a poor predictor of good outcomes with children, parents scored relatively poorly in this skill area, and our experts ranked it low in our list of competencies."

--Robert Epstein, "WHAT MAKES A GOOD PARENT? A scientific analysis ranks the 10 most effective child-rearing practices" Scientific American Mind, November/December 2010, p. 49.

(The list of 10 is in the parenting section below.)

Free DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS books for U.S. Schools:

The application process for schools whose teachers who want to try DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS, the TOTALLY NONCOERCIVE (but not permissive)approach, has been made easier.

NOTE: Although all teachers need to know about the approach, ONLY INTERESTED TEACHERS NEED TO PARTICIPATE.

ADDITIONAL BONUS: Participating schools can receive the parenting book, "PARENTING WITHOUT STRESS: How to Raise Responsible Kids While Keeping a Life of Your Own" at a 50% discount.

The application process is online at <http://www.DisciplineWithoutStress.org/>

The multiple award-winning book PARENTING WITHOUT STRESS is now available in the following formats: hardbound book, e-book, unabridged audio disc set, and in SPANISH as a paperback. See <http://ParentingWithoutStress.com/>

Listen to the introduction and an example from the audio, at http://www.marvinmarshall.com/resources/parenting_audio_book.htm

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2. PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITY

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I was notified of the following song on <http://www.squidoo.com/behavior>
(Unfortunately, the link to the music was not available.)

This is a goofy "rap" song that I wrote for our school. It uses some of the characteristics of behavior that one would use while on level D. I recorded the song myself in GarageBand.

Lyrics:

I'm proud of the way I behave at school.
Without being told I use the Golden Rule.
I'm nice, I'm kind, I do the right thing.
I treat others with respect and so
Now I can sing....

(Chorus)
Democracy for you and me
Allstars know, that's the way to be!
Democracy for me and you
We do the right thing
Because it's the right thing to do!

I follow directions. I know all the rules.

If we all do this, we'll have an awesome school.
We'll work together everyday.
We'll work together, so now we can say...

(Repeat Chorus)

We're proud of the way we behave at school.
Without being told, we use the Golden Rule.
We're nice, we're kind, we do the right thing.
We treat others with respect and so
Now we can sing...

(repeat chorus)

Democracy is the way to be!
Democracy is the way to be!

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3. INCREASING EFFECTIVENESS
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OPTIMISM IS POWERFUL MEDICINE

I've always suspected that patients who "look on the bright side" tend to handle medical problems better than others. A recent issue of the journal "CIRCULATION" provides hard evidence that optimism and health are connected. The conclusion? Optimism is good for you.

Being an optimist also has been associated with a healthier immune system and an ability to better cope with physical pain. Still other studies have connected a positive attitude to a quicker recovery from heart surgery and a reduced likelihood of re-hospitalization, as well as to a superior ability to handle the emotional upheaval of life-threatening illnesses like cancer.

"Optimism and pessimism affect health almost as clearly as do physical factors," says Dr. Martin Seligman, director of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania. Optimists are generally disposed to positive future expectations. They expect good things to happen and work toward them.

By contrast, Dr. Seligman says, a pessimist "habitually views setbacks as permanent, unchangeable, and pervasive." Pessimists often feel helpless when things go wrong and tend to believe that bad luck repeats itself. Such an attitude can increase stress and contribute to depression.

Pessimists can be reformed. The key is learning to recognize your thought patterns. Then, by identifying negative patterns of thinking, you can learn to challenge them and replace them with positive alternatives.

If you're constantly in the "glass is half-empty" camp, it's not too late to change. Will optimism lead to better health? Perhaps. But it's also its own reward. After all, who wouldn't prefer to wake up on the right side of the bed every morning?

--Dr. Ranit Mishori, Parade Magazine, November 15, 2009

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4. IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS
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Respect people's decision to be different from yours.

For example, someone very close to me has totally different viewpoints than I have on a number of issues. My approach is to have the person clarify the viewpoints.

By not thinking in terms of right or wrong but that the viewpoints are simply different from mine, I learn and grow and our relationships are not negatively effected.

In the final analysis, isn't this what diversity is really all about?

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5. PROMOTING LEARNING
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Eric Jensen interviewed over 100 principals and asked them that--assuming they have a list of a well-qualified candidates from which to hire--what people-skills would they look for when hiring a new teacher.

In no particular order, the following were listed:

1. Good attitude - optimistic
2. Resourceful - able to take care of their own problems
3. Love of learning - projecting this to students
4. Handle stress - being a resilient learner
5. Ability to read emotions - detecting when students are apathetic
6. Responsible - showing up every day, not blaming others, and a willingness to try something new or different
7. Likes kids
8. Willing to be a role model
9. Loves learning and making a difference

Other considerations included:

- being a team member
- enthusiasm
- good sense of humor
- flexibility
- creativity
- self-confidence
- a passion about teaching

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6. PARENTING

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The following is from "WHAT MAKES A GOOD PARENT? A scientific analysis ranks the 10 most effective child-rearing practices" By Robert Epstein, Scientific American Mind, November/December 2010, pp. 46-51

THE PARENTS' TEN (page 49)

Here are 10 competencies that predict good parenting outcomes, listed roughly in order from most to least important. The skills--all derived from published studies--were ranked based on how well they predict a strong parent-child bond and children's happiness, health and success.

1. **LOVE AND AFFECTION.** You support and accept the child, are physically affectionate, and spend quality one-on-one time together.
2. **STRESS MANAGEMENT.** You take steps to reduce stress for yourself and your child, practice relaxation techniques and promote positive interpretations of events.
3. **RELATIONSHIP SKILLS.** You maintain a healthy relationship with your spouse, significant other or co-parent and model effective relationship skills with other people.
4. **AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE.** You treat your child with respect and encourage him or her to become self-sufficient and self-reliant.
5. **EDUCATION AND LEARNING.** You promote and model learning and provide educational opportunities for your child.
6. **LIFE SKILLS.** You provide for your child, have a steady income and plan for the future.
7. **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT.** You make extensive use of positive reinforcement and punish only when other methods of managing behavior have failed.

NOTE: The author appears to be unaware of the differences between PRAISE and ACKNOWLEDGMENT or the differences between A PROCEDURE and a CONSEQUENCE--both of which are described in the book: <http://ParentingWithoutStress.com/>

8. **HEALTH.** You model a healthy lifestyle and good habits, such as regular exercise and proper nutrition, for your child.
9. **RELIGION.** You support spiritual or religious development and participation in spiritual or religious activities.
10. **SAFETY.** You take precautions to protect your child and maintain awareness of the child's activities and friends.

The article also noted that two of the best predictors of good outcomes with children are indirect: MAINTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER PARENT AND MANAGING YOUR OWN STRESS LEVEL. (Caps added)

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7. DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS (DWS)

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A teacher asking for advice was having difficulties with six or seven students who kept disturbing the class by repeatedly getting up for unnecessary Kleenex.

KERRY'S RESPONSE:

I use Marvin Marshall's DWS approach in my own teaching. There are three basic principles to follow. Perhaps something here might give you a direction.

The three DWS principles to practice:

- 1) You'll get better results if you approach everything from a POSITIVE point of view, even when the situation itself might be negative.
- 2) In this approach, the kids are asked to take responsibility. Rather than telling young people what to do, ASK QUESTIONS that prompt students to reflect. Also, ask the students to be accountable for coming up with solutions.
- 3) Increase CHOICES so as to reduce any feeling of being coerced or punished. (The thinking here is that kids these days often resist when they feel a sense of coercion. They often do just what you DON'T want them to do if they feel you are trying to overpower them.)

If it were me in this case, I might follow yet another one of Marshall's suggestions. I would put a notice up (Class Meeting today about Kleenex) to start the reflection process going. There would be a smile alongside to keep the tone light rather than angry and upset.

I would start the class meeting with a question: "Can anyone explain why we might need a meeting about Kleenex?" In my experience, some child will immediately come up with a very accurate description of the situation.

Next I would ask why they think I'm concerned. I'm sure there would be a number of kids who could explain the issue perfectly.

Then I'd ask for their help. I'd ask them if they had any ideas that would solve "the Kleenex problem" and so allow more learning to occur in our class. I think that the kids could come up with lots of ideas, many of which might work. When you ask kids to come up with their own suggestions or guidelines, they tend to be more interested in following them.

If their first ideas didn't do the trick and I needed another meeting, I would again follow Marshall's suggestion: When consequences seem necessary, they should be ELICITED FROM STUDENTS, not imposed by the teacher. Sometimes the teacher needs to temper the consequences that come from kids because they're usually harsher than a teacher would find necessary or appropriate, but generally kids come up with very sound ideas for what should happen if inappropriate behaviors continue. Good luck with your Kleenex issues! Small things can drive a teacher crazy!

Kerry in British Columbia, Canada

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8. TESTIMONIALS/RESEARCH
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I'm from Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology in New Zealand. I am responsible for several groups of students ranging in ability, background, level of motivation and age.

My reason for contacting you is that I have discovered your book and have seized upon it like a lost sailor finding land.

My main group of students come directly from high school and are 16/17 years low achieving in the current school system. They have low self esteem, some are angry, some have alcohol and drug issues, and most have low expectations of themselves. They are also absolutely FULL of personality, talent and creativity, and are quite high spirited. They are not bad kids! I am so distressed at listening and watching the kids being blamed and written off as a waste of time.

I am now in a position to implement something new and my aim is to provide a teaching environment using your teaching model to give my students a chance at a better sort of life than they may end up with if their behaviours continue.

Heather Dyksma
Christchurch, New Zealand

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EXAMPLES OF HIERARCHIES:

<http://www.MarvinMarshall.com/visuals.html>

SUPPORT LINKS AND DESCRIPTIONS

<http://www.MarvinMarshall.com/support.html>

http://www.MarvinMarshall.com/media_room.htm

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About Dr. Marvin Marshall
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THE TOTALLY NONCOERCIVE--BUT NOT PERMISSIVE--discipline, parenting, and learning system was developed from his experiences as a PARENT; TEACHER; COUNSELOR; middle and high school ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL; elementary and high high school PRINCIPAL; and DISTRICT DIRECTOR of education.