

Kindness and firmness at the same time

CONNECT

B4

CORRECT

Parenting with Courage and Connection

Where did we ever get the crazy idea that in order to make children do better, first we have to make them feel worse? CHILDREN DO BETTER WHEN THEY FEEL BETTER. - Jane Nelsen

Jody McVittie, MD
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Sponsored by
Thurgood Marshall Elementary PTA

Objectives: Participants will be able to

- Lead their family more effectively and comfortably in a manner consistent with their values and culture,
- Use limits to empower their children to grow responsibility,
- Use new connection and repair skills to increase the sense of family unity, and
- Use basic brain science to improve behavior at home.

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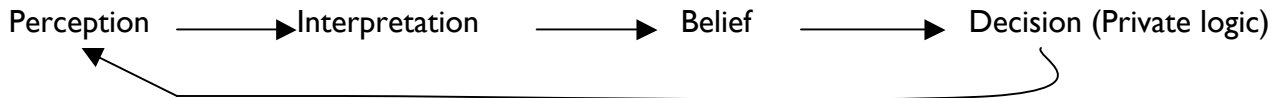
The "mis" behavior that you see is really the child's unskilled solution to another problem (that you may not see.)

For more resources please see last page of handout

Very Brief Overview of the Adlerian Approach

Core ideas

1. Behavior is purposive
2. The goal of behavior is belonging (sense of connection) and meaning (significance). Misbehavior is from “mis”-taken belief about how to find belonging/meaning.
3. People are continually making decisions based on how their world is perceived.



4. Horizontal relationships: Everyone is worthy of equal dignity and respect.

Basic tools and principles that flow from Adler’s thought

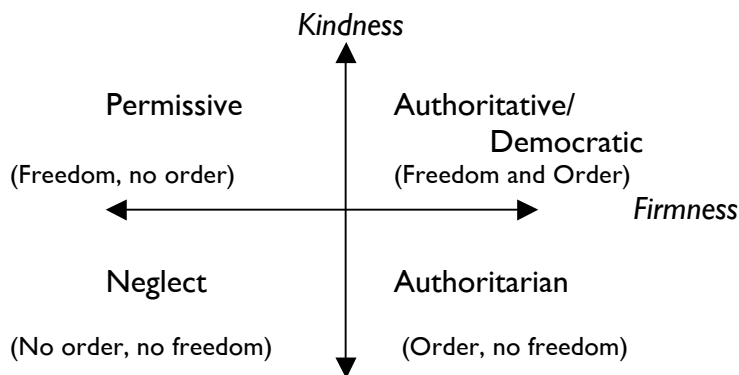
1. Teach life skills
2. Pay attention to the power of perception
3. Focus on encouragement (connection and presence, not rah-rah)
4. Hold the tension of Kindness *and* Firmness at the same time (Connect before Correct)
5. Look to Mutual Respect
 - Respect for yourself and the situation (firmness)
 - Respect for the needs of the child and others (kindness)
6. Celebrate mistakes as opportunities to learn.
7. Look to solutions rather than punishment

Five Criteria for Effective Discipline

Effective Discipline:

1. Helps children feel a sense of connection. (Belonging and significance.)
2. Is mutually respectful and encouraging. (Kind and firm at the same time.)
3. Is effective long - term. (Considers what the child is thinking, feeling, learning, and deciding about himself and his world – and what to do in the future to survive or to thrive.)
4. Teaches important social and life skills. (Respect, concern for others, problem solving, and cooperation as well as the skills to contribute to the home, school or larger community.)
5. Invites children to discover how capable they are. (Encourages the constructive use of personal power and autonomy.)

Source: Jane Nelsen, www.positivediscipline.com



*The essentials for living in a democratic society can be simply stated... **The principle implies mutual respect, respect for the dignity of others and respect for oneself.** The principle is expressed in a combination of firmness and kindness. Firmness implies self-respect; kindness, respect for the others.*

- Dreikurs, *Social Equality: The Challenge of Today*

Connect before Correct: The Language of Firmness

Adapted by Suzanne Smitha from *Positive Discipline for Preschoolers* by Jane Nelsen, Cheryl Erwin and Roslyn Duffy

1. **State clear expectations...** “As soon as you finish, you may...”
2. **Respond with a question...** “Would you like to do this yourself, or do you want/need my help?”
3. **State a given (i.e., a rule or condition)...** “In our house we don’t call other people names.” “The balls don’t go above waist level in the house.” “Plates go in the dishwasher after you are done with your snack.”... “In our house we only watch TV for one hour a day. You have already done that today. It is OK to be disappointed.”
4. **Check the child’s knowledge or understanding...** “What needs to happen before you can _____?”
5. **Invite cooperation...** “I need your help...can you figure out the most helpful thing you could do right now?”
6. **Limited choices...** “Would you rather brush your teeth before or after bath time?”
7. **Say what you want and mean...** “I want you to put the scotch tape back when you are done using it,” or, “The answer is no. (brief pause) it is ok to be upset or feel disappointed.”
8. **Negotiate an agreement...** “Let’s see how we can make this work for both of us.” (Don’t use this when there is an established rule or understanding that you are intending on continuing.)
9. **Use non-verbal language...** a gentle touch on the shoulder to redirect, a look with a smile, a pre-agreed upon “secret signal,” etc.
10. **Follow through...** “Time tonow.” Don’t argue, just repeat the main word, “now.” (A word of caution on this one: if you might get so busy you run the risk of forgetting to follow through, don’t choose this option!)
11. **For very young children:** Connection, then redirection and distraction

The Brain in the Palm of your Hand

(From *Parenting from the Inside Out*, by Daniel Seigel and Mary Hartzell)

Your wrist and palm: Brain Stem. Responsible for survival instincts: flight, freeze or fight; Autonomic (“automatic”) functions

Your thumb: Mid brain. Freeze, flight or fight response, emotions, where we store and integrate memories, and hold fears.

Your fingers over your thumb: Cortex. Perception, motor action, speech, higher processing and what we normally call “thinking.”

Your fingernails: Orbitofrontal cortex/ pre-frontal cortex – a primary integration center for the brain, almost like a “switchboard” that makes sure messages get where they need to go. Functions of the pre-frontal cortex: regulation of body through autonomic nervous system, emotional regulation, regulation of interpersonal relationships, response flexibility, intuition, mindsight, self awareness, letting go of fears, morality. The pre-frontal cortex doesn’t fully develop until a person is in his or her mid 20’s.

What happens when you are stressed, overwhelmed, or trying to deal with traumatic or painful memories? The pre-frontal cortex shuts down; it no longer functions. (This is temporary, thank goodness!) You have flipped your lid. You can’t use most of those 9 functions above (and can’t learn). To engage, to learn, you need to calm down and bring the orbito-frontal cortex back into functioning. Watch Daniel Siegel explain it: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DD-lfPIFBfk>

Mirror neurons: The “monkey see, monkey do” neurons that play a key role in social interaction, connection and learning. Go to: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sciencenow/3204/01.html> for an excellent 14 minute Nova episode on **mirror neurons**.

Encouragement or Praise?

Adapted from Positive Discipline by Jane Nelsen, Ballantine Books

Encouragement

1. To inspire with courage
(Courage < Old French corage, < Latin cor heart)
2. To spur on: to stimulate

Self-evaluation

("Tell me about it")
("What do you think?")

Addresses Deed

Appreciation, Respectful
("Thank you for helping.")
("Who can show me the proper way to sit?")

Empathy

("What do you think and feel?")
("I can see that you enjoyed that.")

Self disclosing "I" messages

("I appreciate your help")

Asks questions

("What is an appropriate noise level for the library?")

Effect:

Feel worthwhile without the approval of others.
Self confidence, Self reliance
Self esteem

Praise

1. To express a favorable judgment of
2. To glorify, especially by attribution of perfection.
3. An expression of approval

Evaluation by others

("I like it.")

Addresses doer

Expectation, Patronizing
("You are such a good boy.")
("Good girl!")
("I like the way Suzie is sitting.")

Conformity

("You did it right.")
("I am so proud of you.")

Judgmental "I" messages

("I like the way you are sitting.")

Should statements

("You should be quiet like your sister.")

Effect:

Feel worthwhile only when others approve.
Dependence on others
"Other" esteem

Questions you might ask:

- Am I inspiring self-evaluation or dependence on the evaluation of others?
- Am I being respectful or patronizing?
- Am I helping them discover how to act or trying to manipulate their behavior?
- Am I seeing the child's point of view or my own?
- Would I make this comment to a friend or neighbor?

Words for practice. Remember to leave out the judgments (good, bad, perfect, nice).

Descriptive encouragement: "I notice...."

Appreciative encouragement: "I appreciate....", "Thank you for...."

Empowering encouragement: "I trust you...", "I know you can..."

Courage (from the root word: cor – latin, heart) is the very small step you take in the direction to be more of who you truly are when it might be easier to take a step in another direction. (This is not an official definition!) So when you encourage someone, you are creating a space for him or her to take that step.

More Positive Discipline ideas:

Mistakes are opportunities to learn

We *all* make mistakes. We learn more from them when we fix them rather than “pay for them.”

Recovery from a mistake (repair is critical!): (adapted from Jane Nelsen, *Positive Discipline*)

Re-gather: Make sure both of you have calmed down. Even if it means waiting.

Recognize: “Whoops, I made a mistake.”

Reconcile: “I’m sorry.” (Or some other BRIEF expression of regret)

Resolve: (Re-Solve): “In the future I will do my best to _____.” (Your commitment to do better.)

Results of Punishment (from Jane Nelsen, *Positive Discipline*)

Resentment “This is unfair. I can’t trust adults”

Revenge “They are winning now, but I’ll get even”

Rebellion “I’ll do just the opposite to prove I don’t have to do it their way”

Retreat from others: “I won’t get caught next time”
or from one’s self: “I’m a bad person”

Solutions:

Reasonable, Respectful, Related AND Helpful

“A misbehaving child is a discouraged child.”

Rudolf Dreikurs

Resources:

Available at your local library or bookstore.

Children the Challenge by Rudolf Dreikurs

Drive by Daniel Pink

Parenting from the Inside Out by Daniel Siegel and Mary Hartzel

Positive Discipline by Jane Nelsen

Aim toward progress
not perfection

Available online:

Dan Siegel on the brain in the hand: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DD-lfPIFBfk>

Mirror neuron video <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sciencenow/3204/01.html>

<http://www.parentmap.com> the Parent Map website. Oodles of resources

www.positivediscipline.org Positive Discipline Association. Tips and Question & Answers.

www.positivediscipline.ning.com Social networking for Positive Discipline

www.pasadler.org Local resource for parenting class calendar/information

www.sounddiscipline.org Information on the collaborative school/parent projects, parenting calendar.

www.sounddiscipline.wordpress.com Sound Discipline’s weekly parenting tips

Follow Sound Discipline on twitter or Facebook as well.

“Violence arises when we do not know what else to do with our suffering.”

Parker Palmer