

Post Traumatic Growth

Anxiety actually helps productivity but there is a law of diminishing returns

The Brain and Stress

2 basic brain states (upstairs brain and downstairs brain from The Whole Brain Child book)

## 2 BASIC BRAIN STATES – WE NEED BOTH!

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- Downstairs Brain -
  - Fight, flight & freeze, breathing, digestion, sleep
  - Brain stem, limbic system, amygdala
  - Scanning for threats, emotion
- Upstairs Brain -
  - Regulation, language, logic, planning, creativity
  - Cerebral cortex, prefrontal cortex
  - Calm and connected

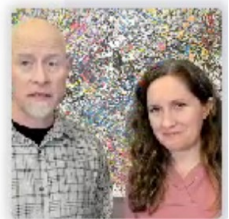


We have a negativity bias – the tendency to look at stuff and think that everything is negative

## NEGATIVITY BIAS

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*tendency not only to register negative stimuli  
more readily but also to dwell on these events*



--- if we overestimate threats it is protective and keeps us alive

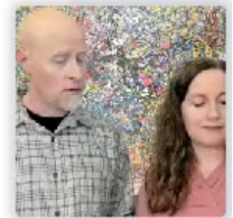
--- if we underestimate threats we might be wrong once and then die even if we were right every time before then

The brain has not changed in any significant way since the human stone age.

We need to consciously seek to record and notice positive signs and signals from the children, not just the negative ones.

### 3 QUESTIONS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

- In what ways is your child showing up right now?
- What is getting you personally through?
- What are your family's strengths?



Answer to these questions are what builds the window of (distress) tolerance.

We need to be the cheerleader/voice of positivity for the children. We are discovering that the children are really good about having a negative internal voice.

We need to change our parenting to integrate their upstairs and downstairs brains. We need to teach them what to do with their feelings. We need to help them have their negative feelings. Children coregulate by borrowing our brains. If we want a calm child, figure out how to make ourselves calm. If we want a happy child, figure out how to make ourselves happy.

“Name it to frame it.”

What can we do with the child in the moment? What can we do with the child ahead of time to prepare them for the moment? (aka outside of the moment)

Book rec — Brianstorm

Zones of Regulation to help regulate a child  
Leah Kuypers for Zones of Regulation

Wheel of Awareness Dan Siegel to help regulate a child

meditation on Dan Siegel's website to help regulate a child

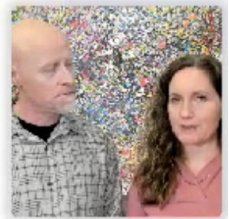
# NAME IT TO FRAME IT

*Help your child tune into their experience*

*Body Sensations*

*Feelings*

*Thoughts*



This isn't about words so much as simply being present with them. Help ask them questions about how they are feeling in their body.

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Session 2 Behaviors

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Behavior is communication.

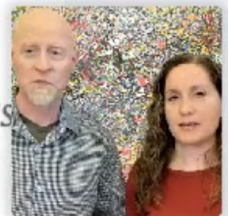


Just because they are using behavior as communication doesn't mean that the behavior has to be okay. We have to separate out what they are trying to communicate from how they are communicating it.

We are going to be talking about needs. "All behavior is an attempt to meet a need."

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Attribute to children the best possible motive consistent with the facts.



- Nel Noddings

Looking for win-win solutions as an alternative to threats, bribes, and other things that might otherwise be in play for the unmet need and its resultant behavior.

### 3 STEPS TO UNDERSTAND YOURSELF

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1. Make observation
2. Identify your feelings
3. Identify your unmet needs

Next Step: Self Empathy



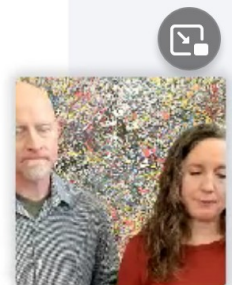
Feelings are communication too!

### 3 STEPS TO UNDERSTAND YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR

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1. Make observation
2. Identify your feelings
3. Identify your unmet needs

Next Step: Win-win Solution



"I want to work on a solution with you. Your input is valuable and very important to me. I care about your ideas as well. You have valid ideas and suggestions." Throw out some ideas that encourage brainstorming so that they can see that they can get their needs met.

Sometimes kids are silent on the win-win brainstorming because it is a change that you did without explanation. Solution is to explain why things are different: I took a workshop.

What if you give them accommodation after accommodation and none of them seems to be enough? Set that as the new problem and work through the chart on this topic.

Sometimes when we have done everything we can think of doing, it is time for a professional/expert to come in.

With anxiety we want to be compassionate but there is a limit to that. So there need to be strategies to increase comfort rather than avoidance.

When you come up with a win-win solution, write it down and put it in a public place. Important things get written down.

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## LIMIT SETTING

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- You have a boundary around s  
are willing or not willing to do
- Top-down
- Usually communicated ahead

Limit setting:

Different than win-win finding because these really are top down.

"I am not willing for you to do that. Here is what I am willing for you to do."

Limit can also be called a rule.

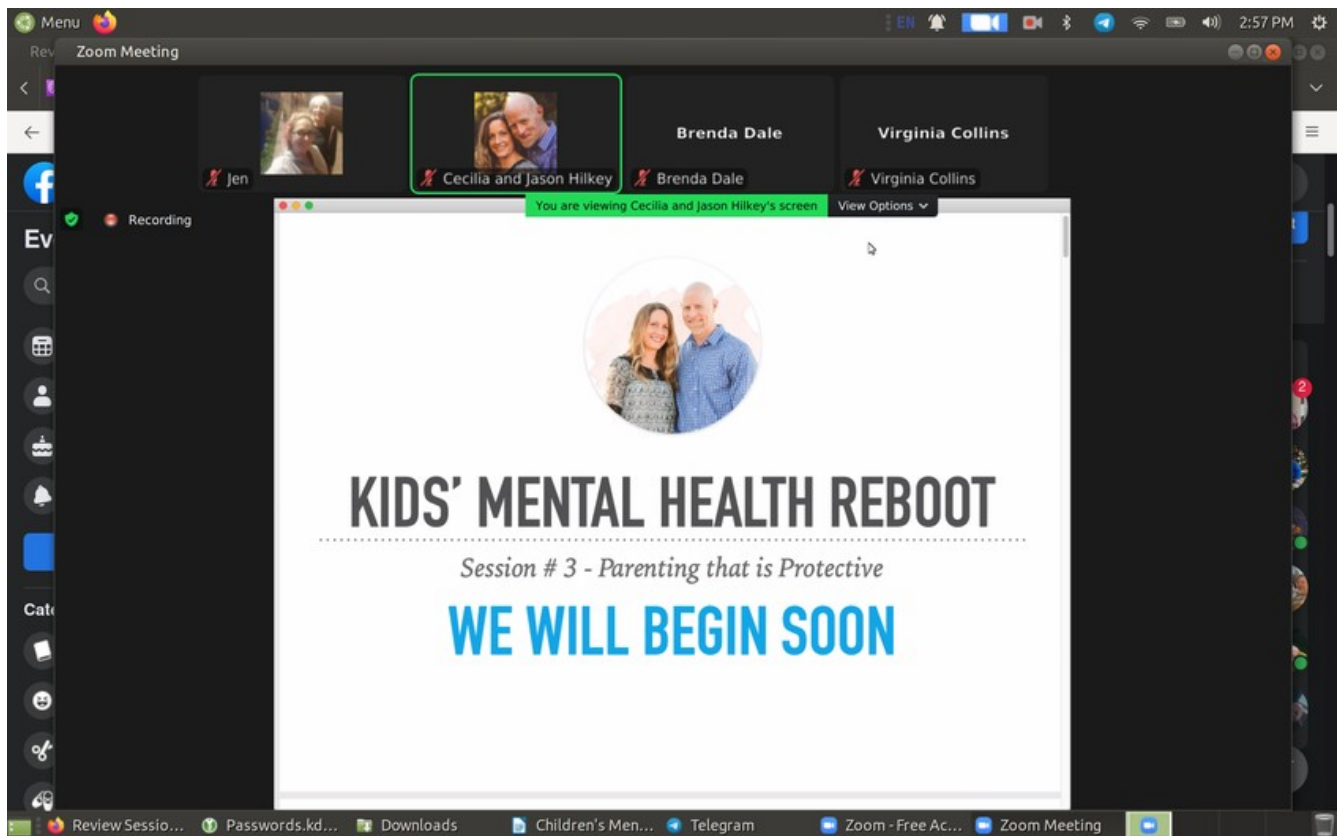
Experiences are not feelings. Neglect is an experience. And it is fair to try to prevent children having experiences. But we should not try to prevent them from having feelings.

Source: Nonviolent Communication

Book: The Explosive Child  
LivesInTheBalance.org

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## Session 3 Relationships



Recorded You are viewing Cecilia and Jason Hilkey's screen View Options 4 of 14 View

# PARENTING IS PROTECTIVE

- 4 S's
  - Safe
  - Seen
  - Soothed
  - Secure
- When kids talk to us we can relieve their burden

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Jen

Cecilia and Jason Hilkey

Brenda Dale

Virginia Collins

from author Dan Siegel

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“ Empathy is the ability or practice of imagining or trying to deeply understand what someone else is feeling or what it's like to be in their situation.

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Jen

Cecilia and Jason Hilkey

Brenda Dale

Virginia Collins



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## WHAT STOPS KIDS FROM TALKING TO THEIR PARENTS

1. They don't want to worry their parents
2. They think they will get in trouble
3. They don't want to cause an argument
4. They don't think their parents will understand

Jen

Cecilia and Jason Hilkey

Brenda Dale

Brenda Dale

Virginia Collins

Virginia Collins

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It's not that the bad thing happened, it is that the bad thing happened and there was no one there to talk to about it. – Gabor Mate on Trauma

# EMPATHY

- Connection to feelings and needs
- “Are you feeling\_\_\_ because you want\_\_\_?”
- “Ah, hm, I see.”
- Presence, Silence
- Listening with your whole body
- Attunement, bearing witness
- Results: release of tension or person stops talking
- Ends with reflecting thoughts and feelings



Jen



Cecilia and Jason Hilkey

Brenda Dale

Brenda Dale

Virginia Collins

Virginia Collins



Unmute



Start Video



Participants 130



Chat



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Reactions

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using a child's own language (such as texting or slang) rather than making them come to you  
don't always have to end with a reflection or feelings can instead just say "Thanks for talking to me about ..."

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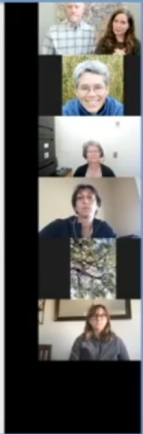
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pages.happilyfamily.com/mhr03

### Video 3: Parenting that is Protective

#### TAKE AWAYS

- How parenting is protective
- 4 Reasons kids don't talk to their parents
- How to have empathy for your kids



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“

The strongest predictor of a child's wellbeing is \_\_\_\_\_?



Isabel

SAFETY

Tabula Maza

Modeling?

Leslie

Yes Marina!

Marci

parents who show up

Donna

secure attachment with parents, siblings and friends

Drina

love

Guinevere

positive adult and peer relationships

Tessa

Emotional regulation, social skills with peers, identifying and expressing feelings and needs

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The strongest predictor of a child's wellbeing is a parent's self-understanding.

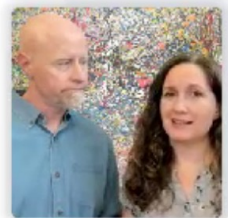
- Dr. Daniel Siegel



### WHY SELF-UNDERSTANDING?

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1. Parents who even had traumatic childhoods can make sense of their lives and have healthy relationships
2. When we understand our own emotional experience, we are better able to relate empathically with our children
3. In the absence of reflection, history often repeats itself



"We are not just talking about making sense of our own past. We are also talking about making sense of yourself in the moment."

There are ways besides therapy to reach self understanding. Mindfulness. Kristen Neff's self compassion resources (books, podcasts) are a great place to start.