

FUTURE PROOFING OUR CHILDREN FOR TOMORROW'S SUCCESS

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**NATIONAL
 COUNSELLING
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 CONFERENCE**

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COVID 19 Impact on Youth

- Since the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic was announced, we had an unprecedented change in the way we organize ourselves socially and in our daily routine.
- Children and adolescents were also greatly impacted by the abrupt withdrawal from school, social life and outdoor activities.
- The stress they are subjected to directly impacts their mental health on account of increased anxiety, changes in their diets and in school dynamics, fear or even failing to scale the problem.
- Although youngsters appear to be less vulnerable to COVID-19, the side effects of the pandemic can be devastating
- Children and adolescents may be highly exposed to biopsychosocial stressors generated by the pandemic and once population's containment measures to reduce virus spread are required, they could be potentially affected by the disruption in daily life routine as a result of social isolation and their unseasoned ability to conceive and comprehend the short- and long-term consequences of this outbreak.



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COVID 19 Impact on Youth

- Recently, an early published study evaluated 1036 quarantined children and adolescents in China in an age range from 6 to 15 years, of which 112, 196, and 68 presented depression, anxiety, and both, respectively.
- Another study demonstrated a high prevalence of psychological distress in quarantined children and adolescents due to the COVID-19 pandemic in India. These children experienced helplessness (66.11%), worry (68.59%) and fear (61.98%), compared to non-quarantined children.
- It was also reported in China that children and adolescents aged 3–18 years presented symptoms of inattention, clinging, worry and irritability during this pandemic.



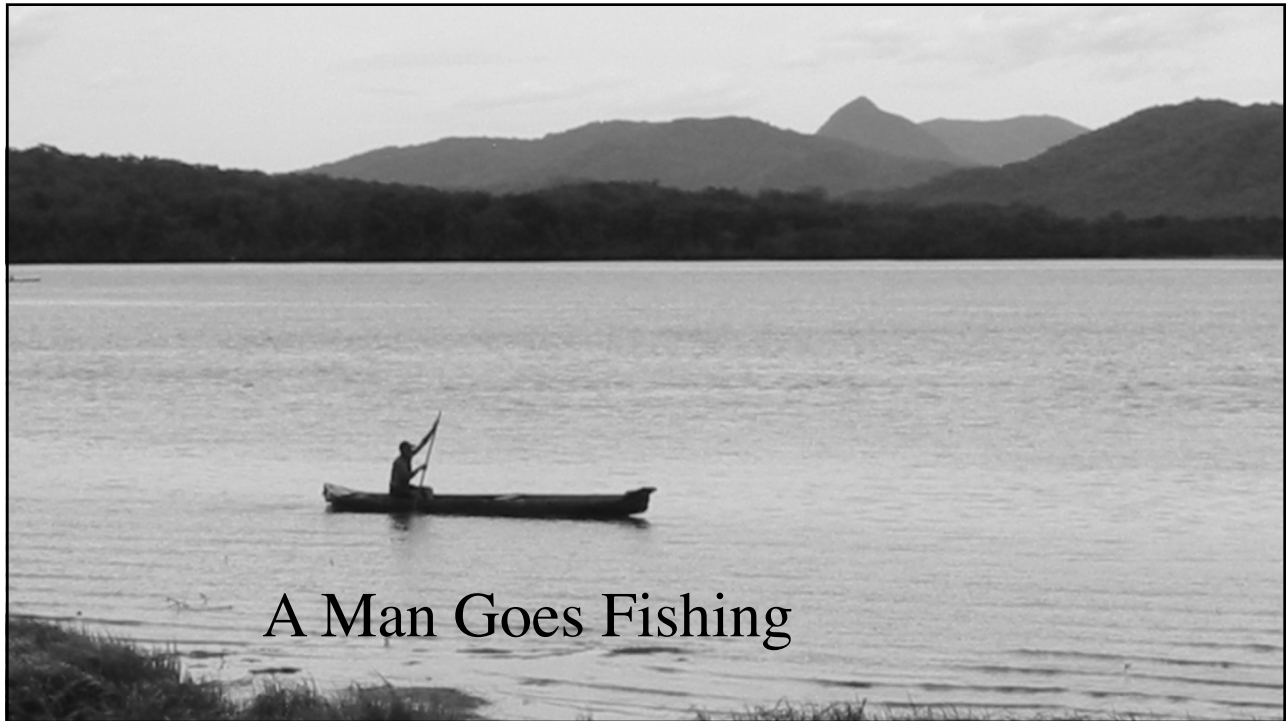
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Why are These Data a Concern?

- Stress and neuroinflammation.
- Social isolation and diet.
- Brain plasticity: social behavior; social inequalities, neglect and distress.
- Diminished opportunity for play and access to the community environment.
- Reduced public health and support.
- It is the nature of human beings to be social and, despite the need for these restraint measures, it is of great concern how this pandemic period can affect the young brain under development.
- Therefore, the search for strategies to mitigate a harmful long-term impact on it should be sought. This knowledge will bring us information and guide us in the future should we have to face another world wide like the COVID-19 pandemic.



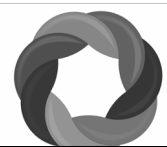
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The Essential Triad of Human Development

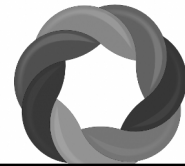
- The Essential Triad is an outgrowth of our continued elaboration of a strength-based model to understand human behavior and empower youth and adults.
- After writing the trade books *Raising Resilient Children*, *The Power of Resilience*, and *Nurturing Resilience in Our Children*, as well as co-editing a two science volumes, *Handbook of Resilience in Children and 2nd editions*, in which we introduced and elaborated on the concept of a *resilient mindset*, we recognized that one component of that mindset, self-discipline, deserved separate attention.
- This prompted us to further research and author *Raising a Self-Disciplined Child*.



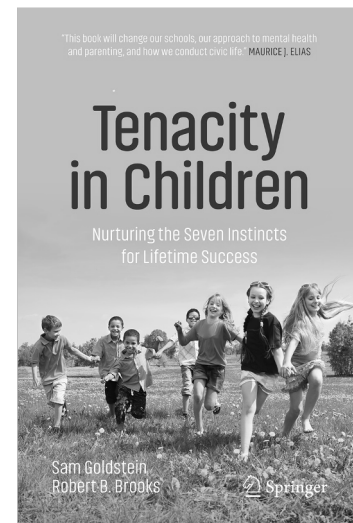
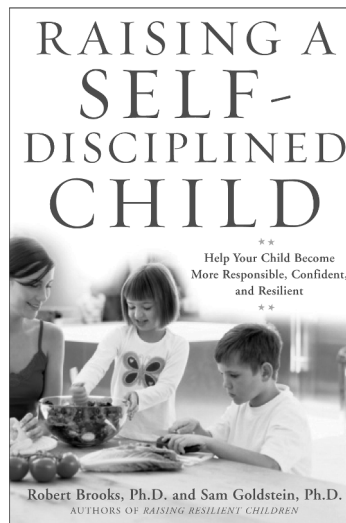
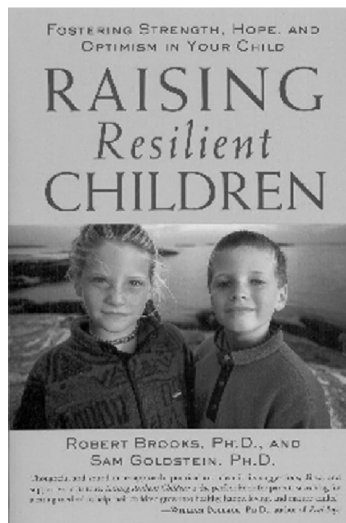
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The Essential Triad of Human Development

- We appreciate that resilience is a process of competent functioning under duress and self-discipline is the inner control required to be resilient over time.
- In our continued work with children and families we recognized that the guideposts of resilience and self-discipline were always helpful but at times fell short of our goals.
- Through our professional and personal experiences we learned that functional behavior and self-control over time requires a certain kind of determination and a firm grip in charting life decisions.
- This is what tenacity represents. Tenacity is the strength of will, strong mindedness, and sense of purpose needed to fuel self-discipline and resilience. Tenacity is rooted in a mindset of stalwart belief.



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We have perpetuated the nineteenth century perception that raising children is a process by which information is dumped into a **black box** lying mysteriously within the human brain.



9

We have also assumed a **Stepford Wives** model that all black boxes are identical.



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Caregivers are the architects of the way in which experience influences genetically preprogrammed but experience dependent brain development.

Daniel Siegel
The Developing Mind



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Me and My Dad!



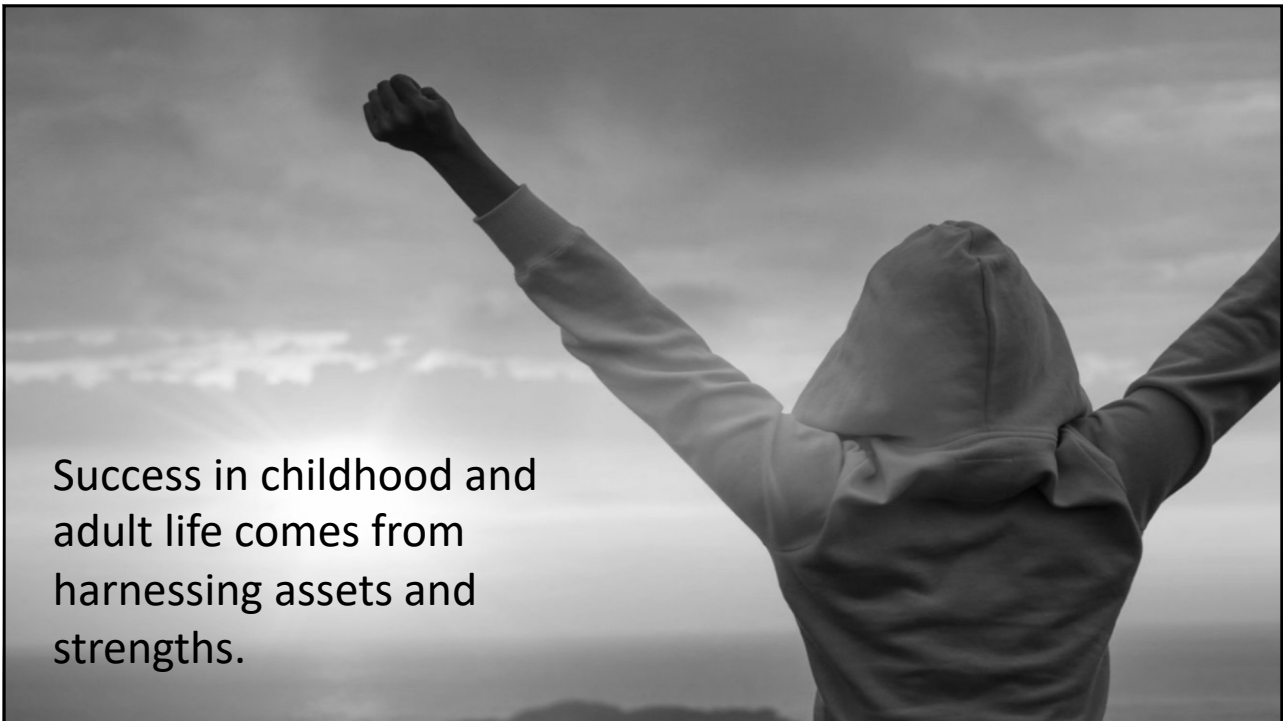
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When children transition into adult life their past mistakes, misbehavior or problems are of little interest to others.



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Success in childhood and adult life comes from harnessing assets and strengths.



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Did you ever wonder . . .



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How children learn to
speak?



16

How children learn to
manage their emotions?



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How children acquire
knowledge?



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How children master
challenging activities?

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How children
learn to socialize?



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How children create
their identity?



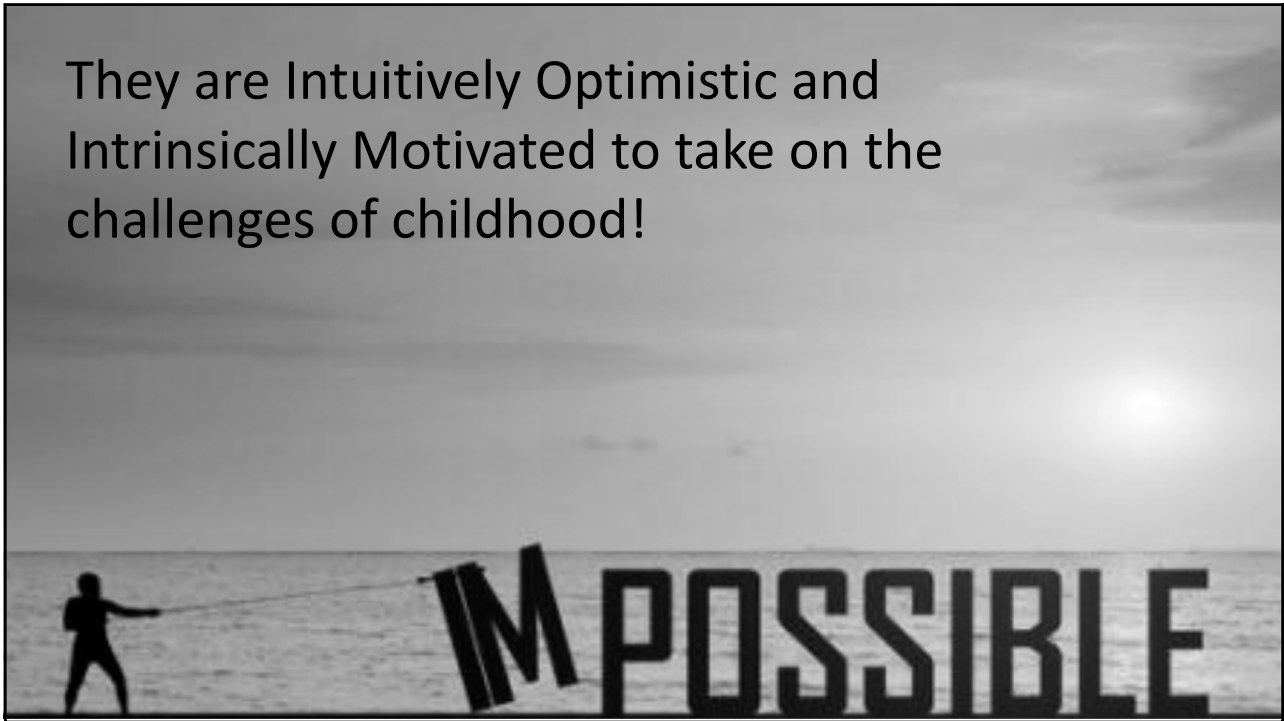
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They are guided by the nexus of genes, experience
and thought.



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They are Intuitively Optimistic and
Intrinsically Motivated to take on the
challenges of childhood!



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They solve problems through
Simultaneous Intelligence.



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They form and maintain relationships through Compassionate Empathy, Genuine Altruism and Virtuous Responsibility.

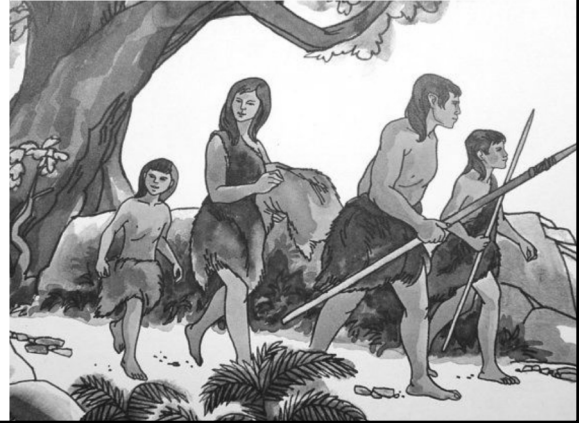
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They interact with their world through Measured Fairness

26

For thousands of generations, parents, relatives, and others raised and prepared children to become successful adults, to acquire knowledge and skills that were needed to meet the challenges of their time.



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Until relatively recent times in human history there were no schools or organized institutions, nor were there self-help or parenting books.



28



How did they do it?

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Our ancestors raised the next generation by drawing upon ten important instincts that evolved over tens of thousands of years in many species.

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However these instincts evolved furthest in our species likely because we developed spoken language. Language is the window into the mind.

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Instincts

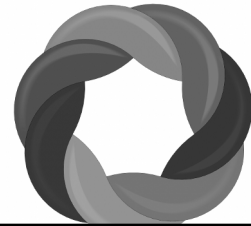
- In complex species instincts serve a critical role in shaping the developmental course through childhood into adulthood.
- Thousands of generations of children allowed for many genetic mutations, some of which were adaptive.
- Some of these increased the likelihood that babies would survive, even thrive throughout their childhood, and transition successfully into adult life.



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Instincts

- *TENACITY* is composed of seven affirmative instincts that I will introduce in today's webinar.
- We will also consider three additional instincts that we believe are responsible for much of what is wrong in the world today.
- We consider one of the most important affirmative instincts to be intuitive optimism. This is the unspoken belief that if you just keep at a task your chances of success are greater.
- We would argue that when it comes to reaching developmental milestones continued effort nearly always leads to success as long as the task is within the capacities of the child to achieve.
- This instinct is clearly a vital component of self-discipline and a resilient mindset.



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Instincts

- Our children are in fact hard wired to learn if we are sufficiently knowledgeable to understand how their wiring interacts with the world around them and create environments in which they can grow and thrive.
- Every society places expectations upon its youth to acquire a certain level of knowledge and behavior in order to functionally transition into adulthood.
- No matter how simple the society, children must harness their instincts to acquire knowledge, develop self-discipline, cope well with adversity and persist even in the face of failure.
- The instincts comprising *TENACITY* provide the critical foundation for children in any culture or society to acquire necessary knowledge to move successfully into adult life.



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Instincts

- In some species instincts are fixed patterns of behavior leading to a certain outcome such as a bird building a nest for the first time or a salmon returning upriver to its birthplace to spawn.
- We believe that in our species instincts represent an intuitive way of thinking and/or acting that increase the chances of survival and success.
- In viewing instincts in this way we appreciate that knowing what to do and doing what you know are not synonymous.
- Ultimately success very much dependent on experience.



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“The Unholy Trinity of Instincts”



- Open a newspaper, visit a web page, or turn on the evening news and you will find a disheartening and increasing number of stories of adverse events in the world.
- We maintain three additional basic human instincts:
 1. Rigid adherence to belief.
 2. Fear of difference.
 3. Defensive aggression to real or perceived threat.
 alone or in combination in great part explain why these events occur.

We call these three instincts the “unholy trinity.”

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Today, the seven affirmative instincts are more important than ever in preparing children for tomorrow's successes throughout life.

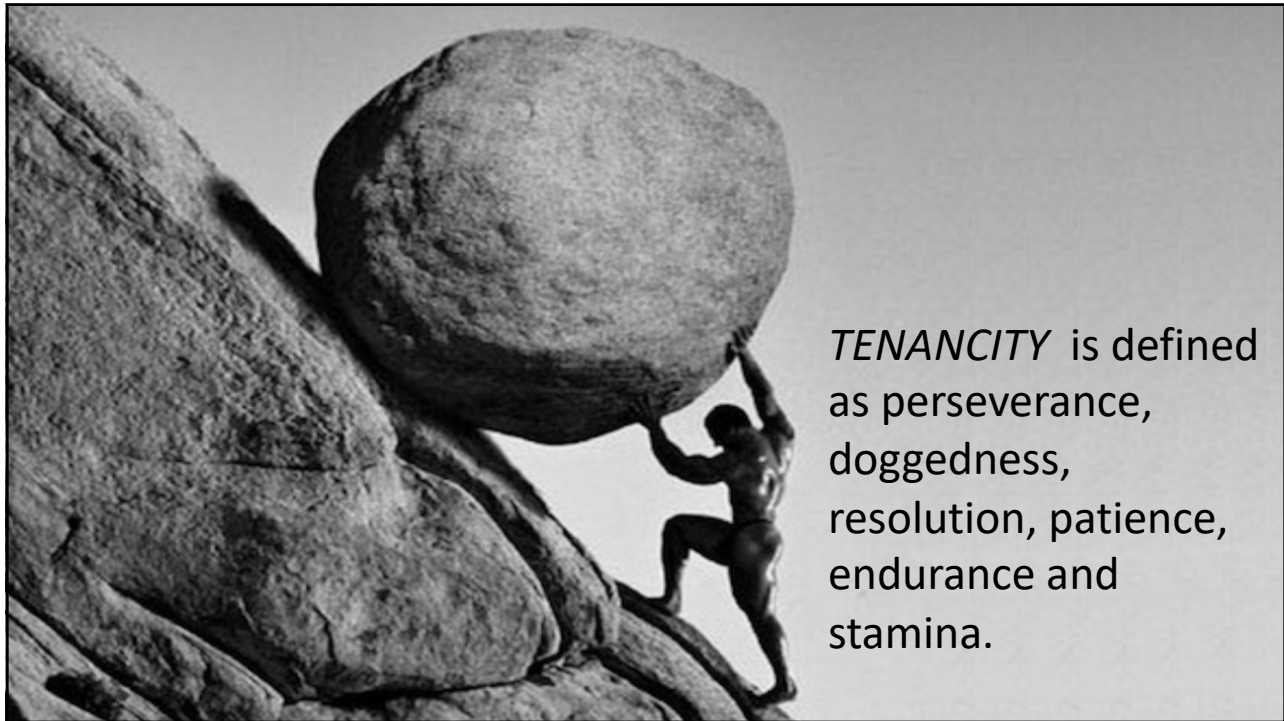


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We call these the Seven Instincts of *TENACITY!*



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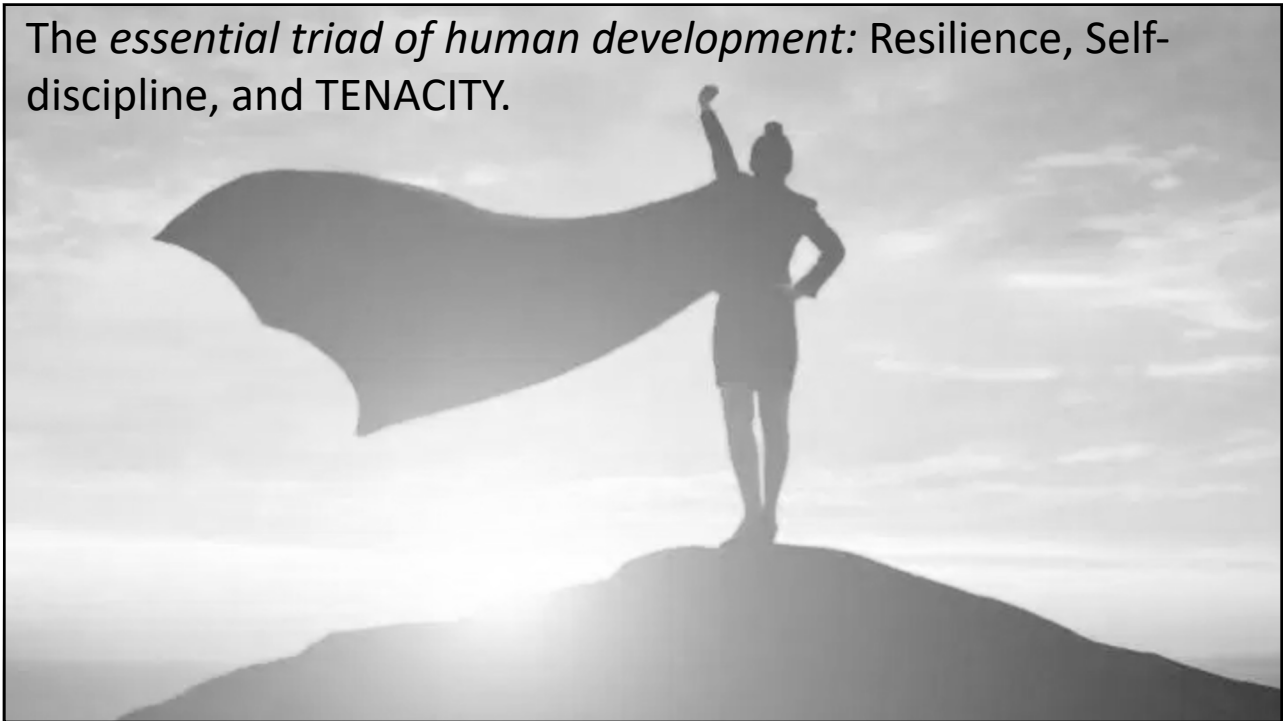
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Tenacity provides the mental and emotional fuel driving resilience and self-discipline.

**KEEP
CALM
AND
NEVER
YIELD**

40

The *essential triad of human development*: Resilience, Self-discipline, and TENACITY.



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TENACITY may be comprised of seven instincts, but for these instincts to develop and flourish in children they require the nurturing and support of caring adults.



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These instincts are:

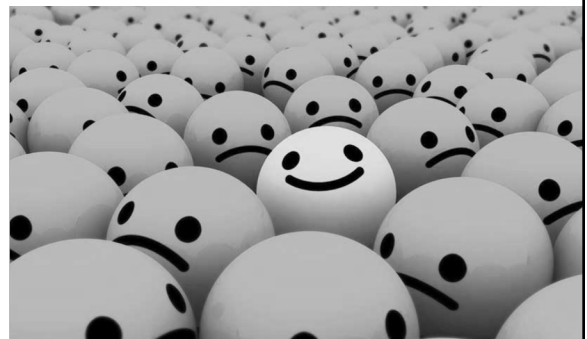
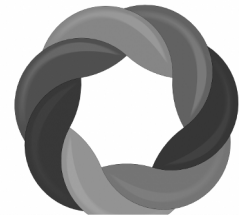
- intrinsic motivation
- intuitive optimism
- simultaneous intelligence
- compassionate empathy
- virtuous responsibility
- genuine altruism
- measured fairness



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Instinctual Optimism

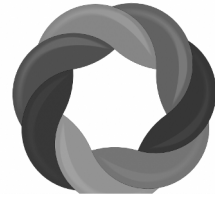
- A belief driven by genes.
- A belief that a way will always be found.
- A belief that success will be obtained.
- The glass is half full!



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Intrinsic Motivation

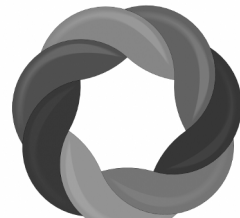
- Driven by internal reason and inspiration.
- Rewarded by the payoff to the mind.
- Guided by belief not environmental consequences.



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Simultaneous Intelligence

- The ability to see all the parts of a problem simultaneously.
- A mental activity by which the child integrates stimuli into groups.
- Stimuli are seen as a whole.
- Each part is related to the others.

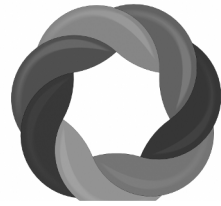


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Compassionate Empathy

Insight combined with:

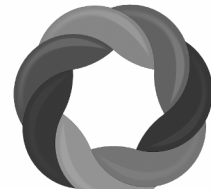
- Sensitivity
- Tolerance
- Kindness



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Through the Eyes of Others

- Do you practice what you have learned and lived?
- It is difficult to be empathic when you are disappointed or angry.
- Do you make assumptions about the motives of others?
- Do you hold the erroneous belief that if you are too empathic people will take advantage of you?

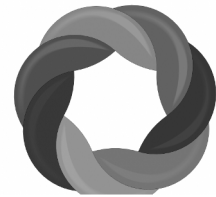


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Through the Eyes of Others

Steps to becoming an empathic person:

- Take the time to complete empathy exercise. Consider how you would like other people to describe you versus how they might actually describe you. Act on the discrepancy.
- Use your experiences as a guide.
- Make an effort to put empathy into practice every day.



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Virtuous Responsibility

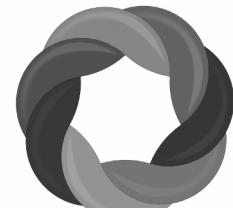
Responsible behavior guided by:

Dignity

Morality

Respect for self and others

Integrity

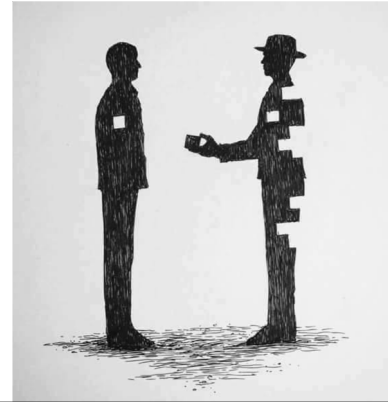


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Genuine Altruism

Giving of yourself (time and effort)
guided by:

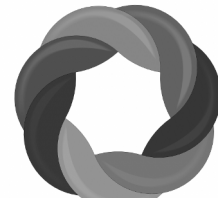
Sincerity
Honesty
Truth
Sensitivity
Honesty



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Measured Fairness

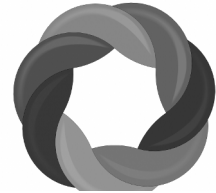
- A concept developed in Game Theory.
- Being fair to yourself first than to others.
- Knowing when you must put yourself first.



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The Road to *TENACITY*: Building Islands of Competence

- Examine your assumptions about children's choices and successes.
- Challenge their self-defeating attributions.
- Help them find passionate interests and islands of competence and pursue them.
- Listen and learn first before advising. Sometimes they just want to be heard.
- Let them learn from their experiences.
- Be proactive in the face of true problems.
- Take a long term view.



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Focus on Well Being!

- **COMPETENCE** in academic, social and vocational areas
- **CONFIDENCE** or a positive identity
- **CONNECTIONS** or healthy relations
- **CHARACTER** or positive values, integrity, and values
- **CARING** and compassion

(Lerner et al, 2000)



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Stress Hardiness

- Committed to finding a meaningful purpose in life.
- A belief that you can influence your surroundings and outcome of events.
- A belief that you can learn and grow from both positive and negative life experiences.



55

The pathways that lead to positive adaptation despite high risk and adversity are complex and greatly influenced by context therefore it is not likely that we will discover a magic (generic) bullet.



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Resilient children are not simply born that way nor are they made from scratch by their experiences. Genetic and environmental experiences loom large as protectors against a variety of risks to healthy development ranging from resistance to bacteria and viruses to resilience to maltreatment and rejection.

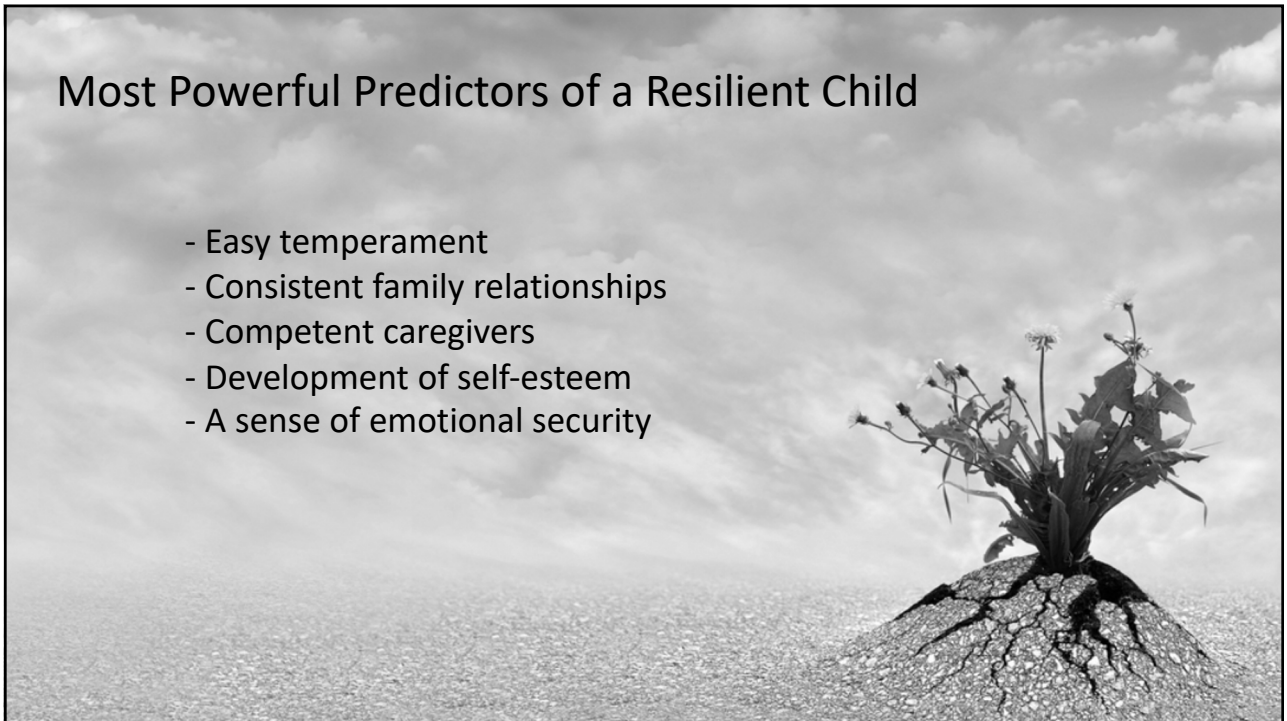
Kirby Deater-Deckard



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Most Powerful Predictors of a Resilient Child

- Easy temperament
- Consistent family relationships
- Competent caregivers
- Development of self-esteem
- A sense of emotional security



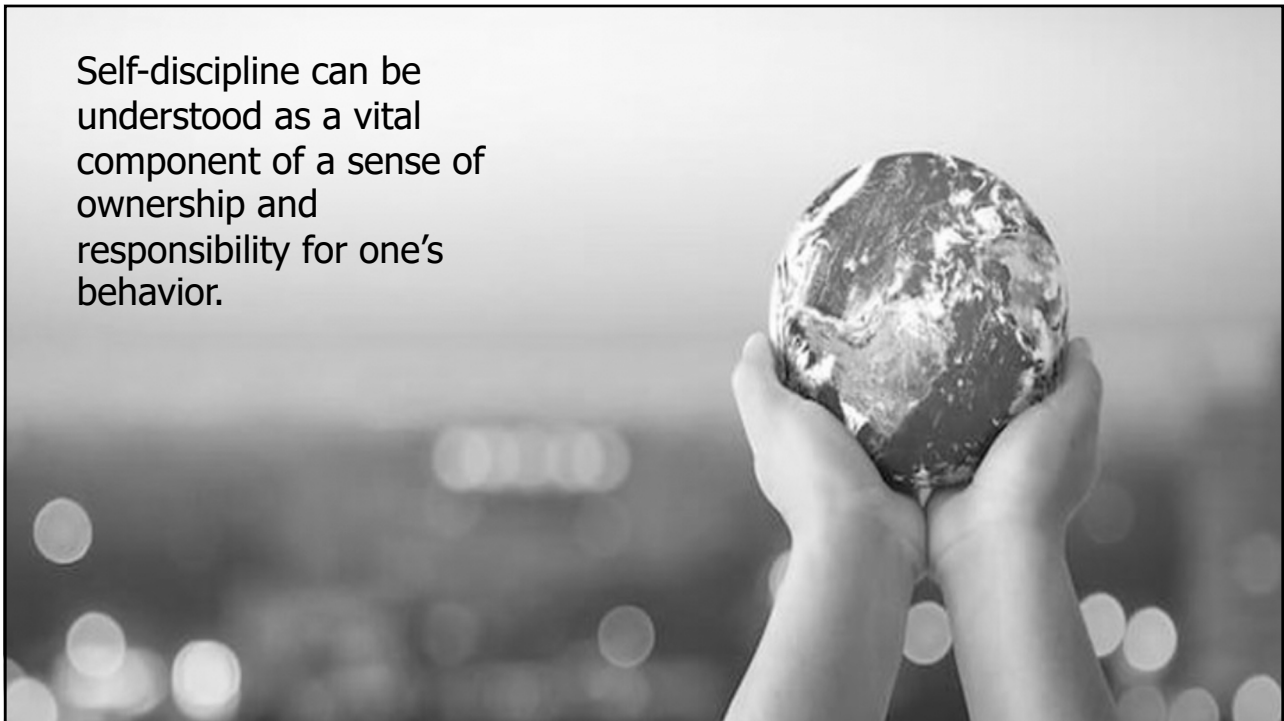
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Knowing what to do and doing what you know consistently and effectively requires self-discipline.

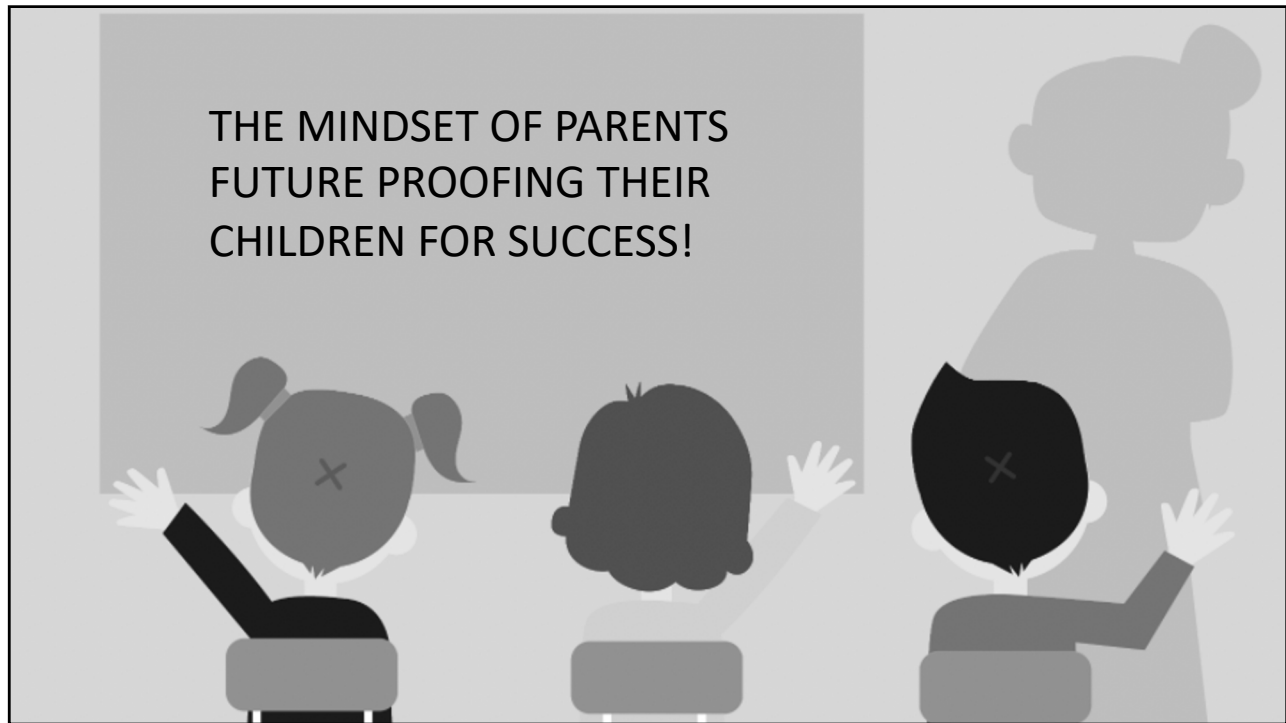


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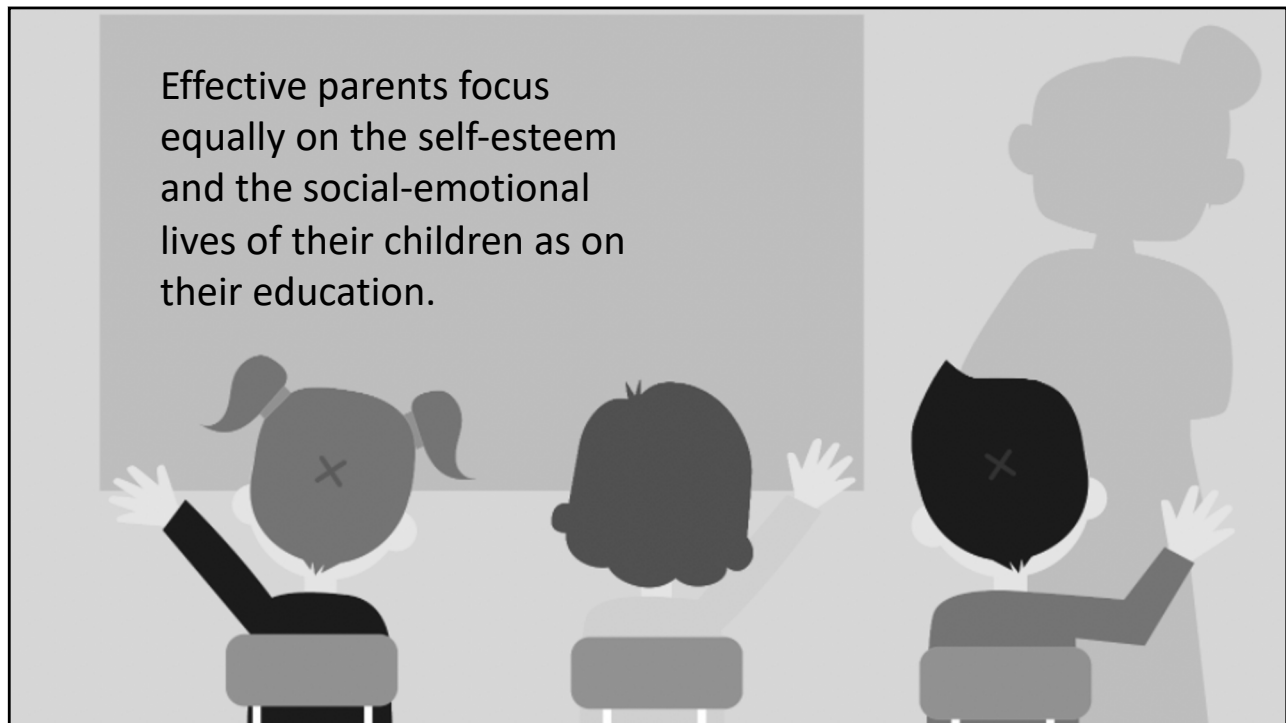
Self-discipline can be understood as a vital component of a sense of ownership and responsibility for one's behavior.



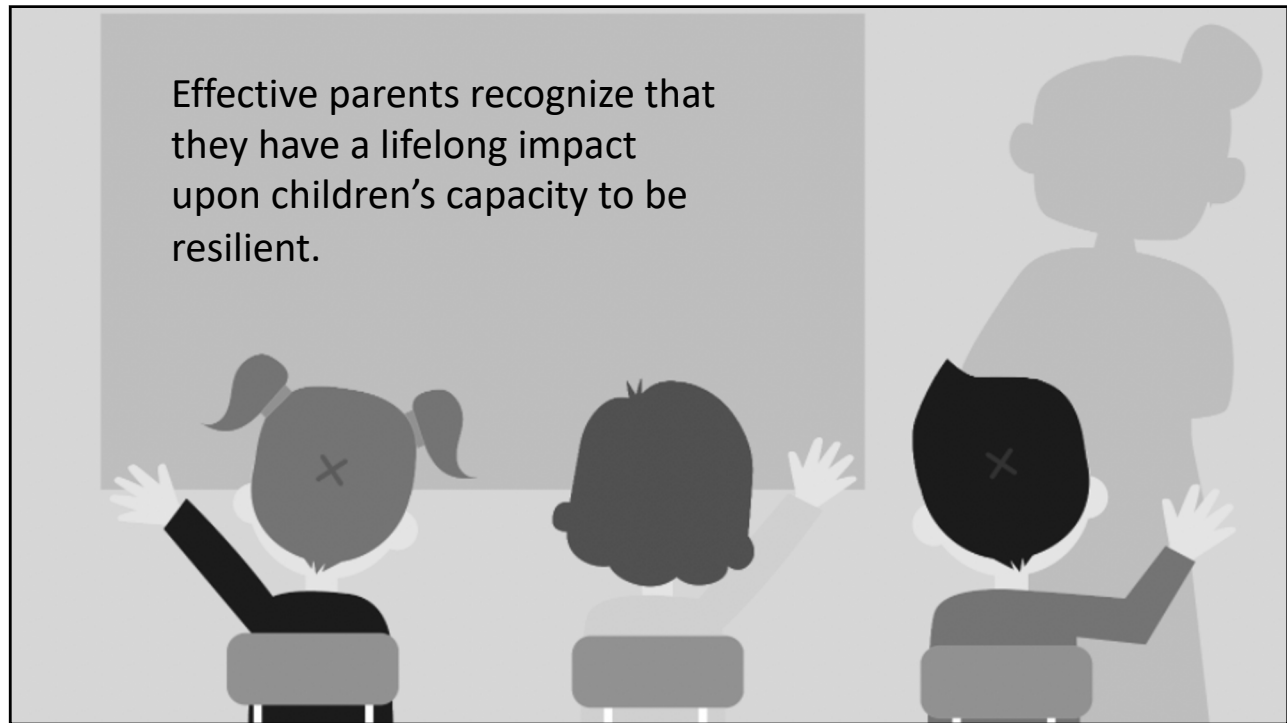
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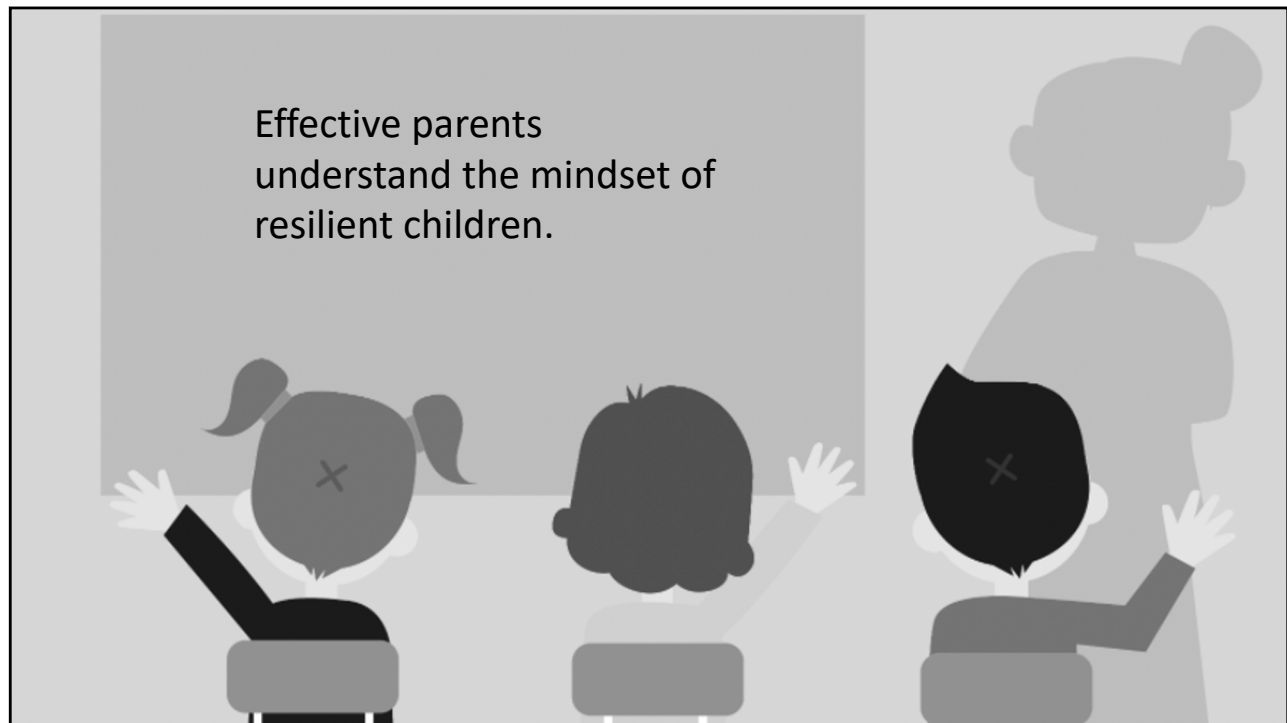
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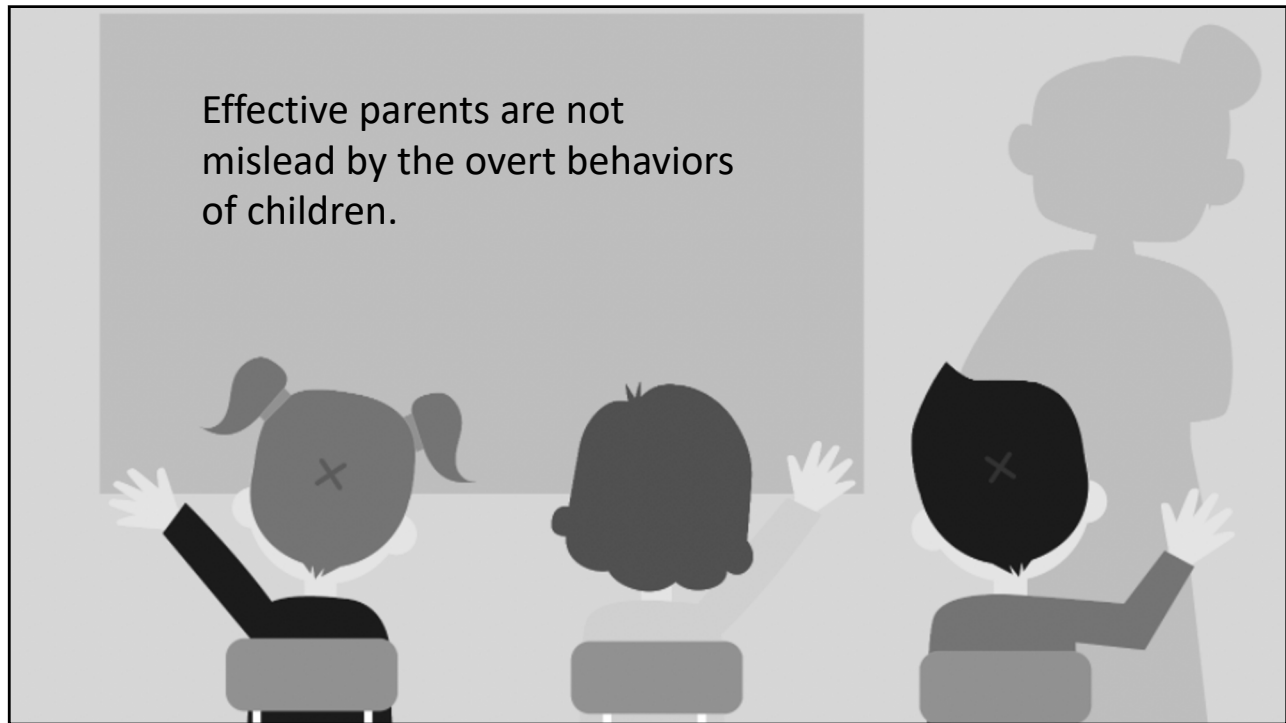
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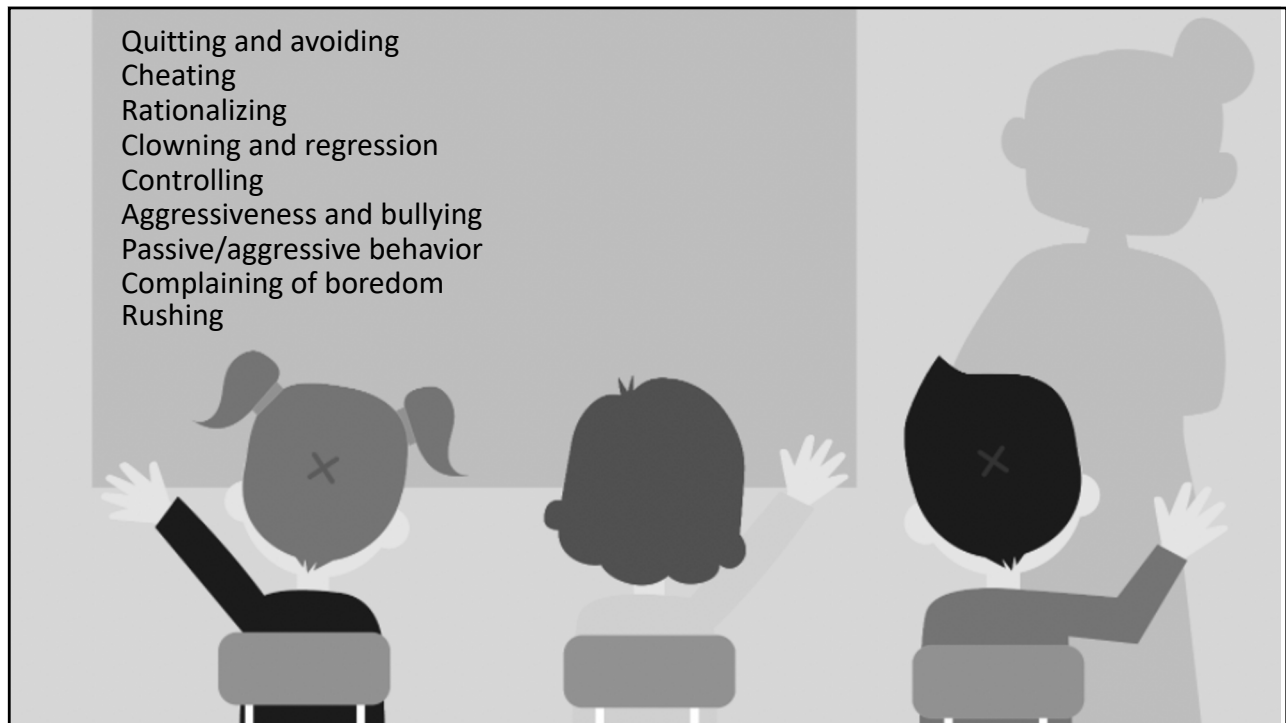
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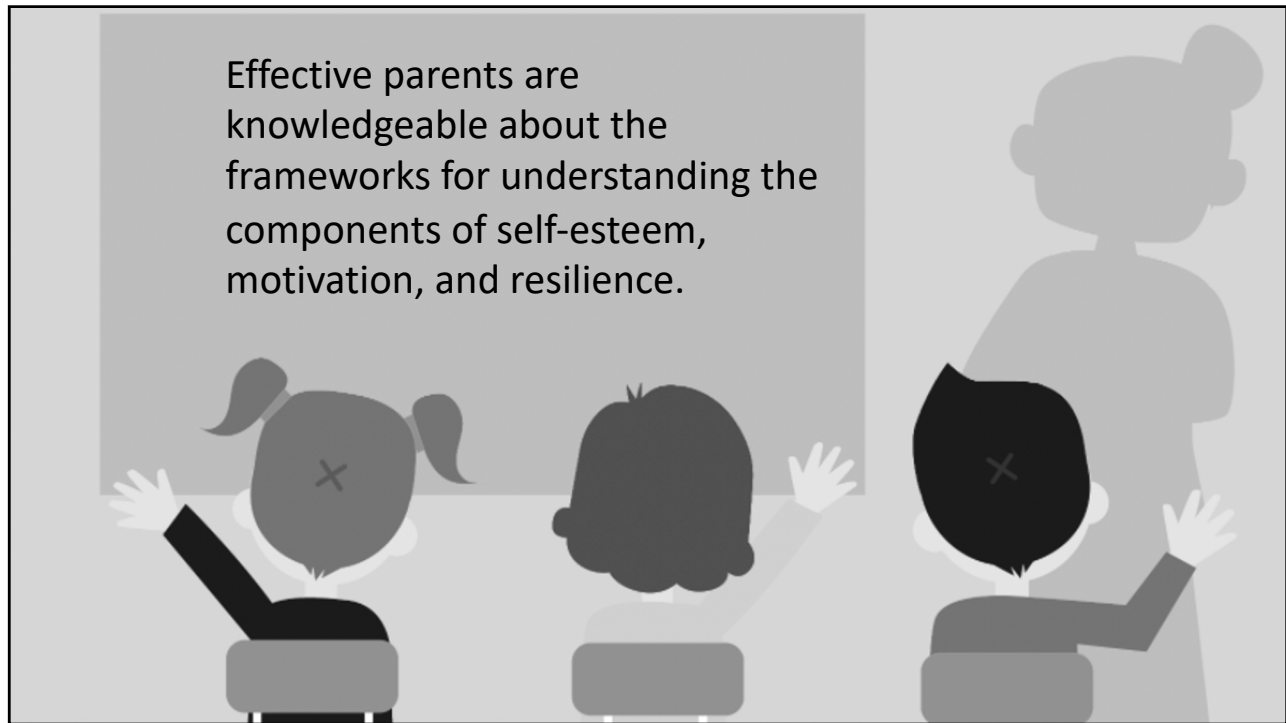
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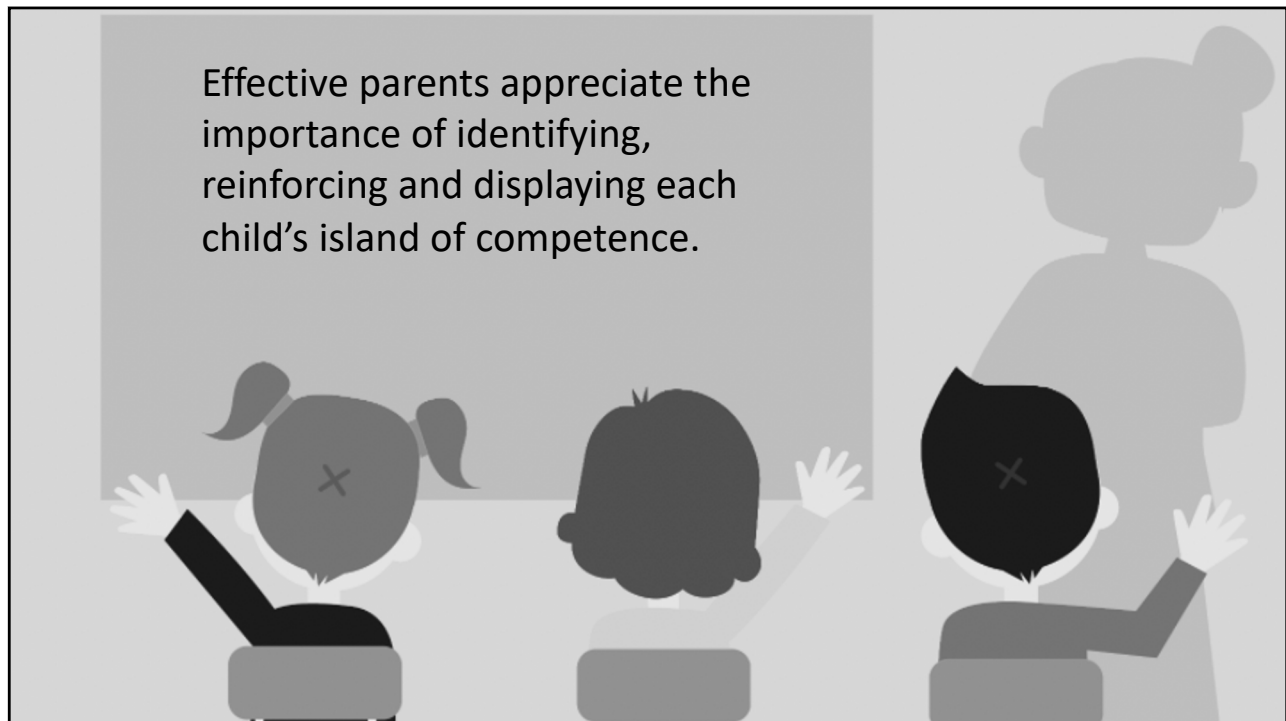
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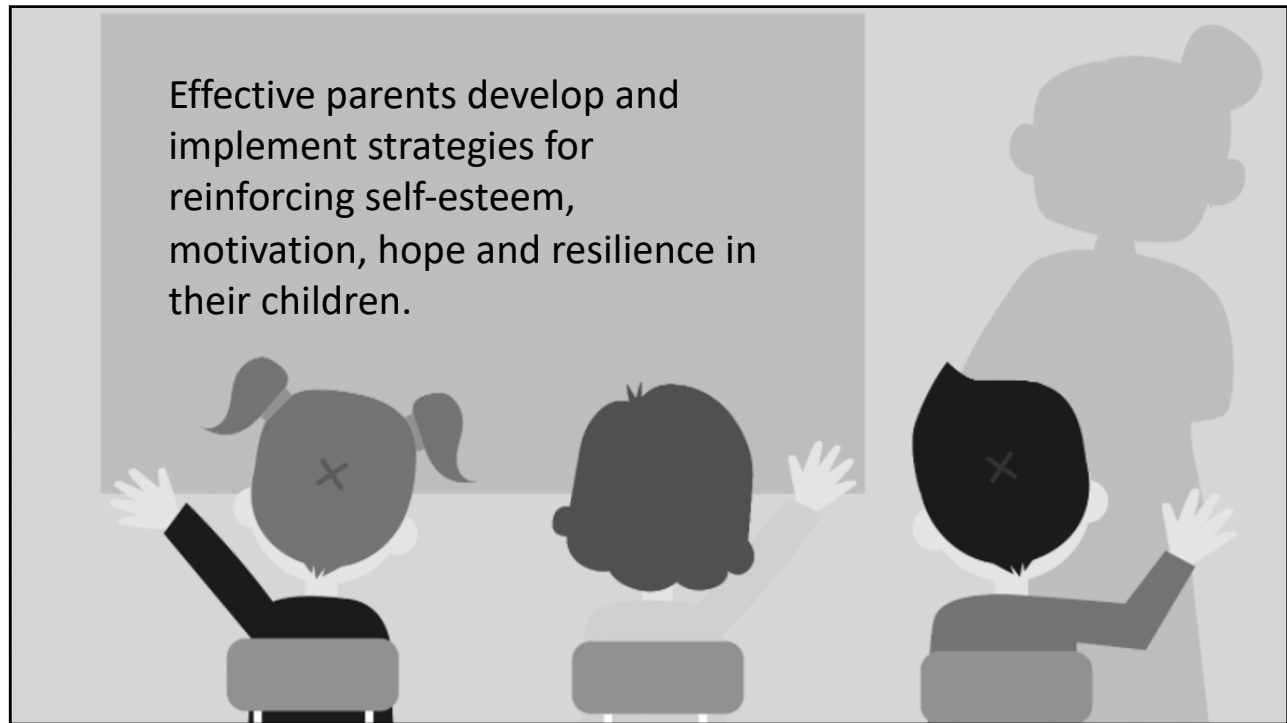
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The Mindset of a Resilient Child

- Optimistic and hopeful.
- Feel special and appreciated in the eyes of others.
- Set realistic goals and expectations.
- View mistakes, hardships and obstacles as challenges.
- Solve problems and make decisions.
- Internal locus of control.
- Believe you can and set out to solve problems.
- Possess empathy.



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The Essential Triad of Human Development

- We believe that the *essential triad of human development* – resilience, self-discipline, and tenacity offer not just a different way of raising children and managing ourselves, but a better way.
- Our role as parents, educators, and therapists is not solely to teach, but to create everyday experiences that nurture these seven instincts to blossom in our children, students, and patients.
- We hope you agree.



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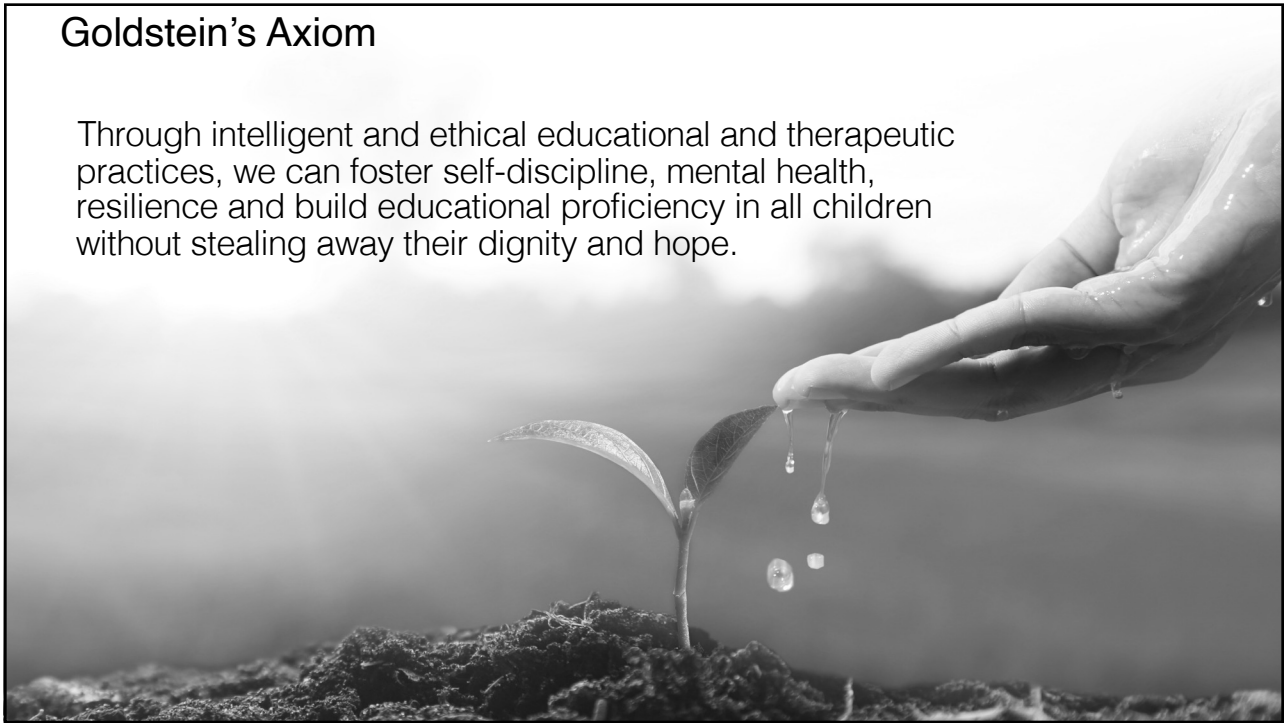


Adopt a Learning to
Ride a Bicycle Mindset!

72

Goldstein's Axiom

Through intelligent and ethical educational and therapeutic practices, we can foster self-discipline, mental health, resilience and build educational proficiency in all children without stealing away their dignity and hope.



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May our philosophies keep pace with our technologies. May our compassion keep pace with our powers. And may love, not fear, be the engine of change.

Dan Brown

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Thanks for listening!

FUTURE PROOFING OUR CHILDREN FOR
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