

Permission to Feel:

Unlocking the Power of Emotions to Help Our Kids, Ourselves, and Our Society Thrive

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(Summary by C.Bibby)

Part III.

Chapter 9: Emotions at Home.

“Past is always somewhere inside of you.” (p169)

- A. Parents avoid dealing w/their child’s feelings by turning to technology as a way of removing themselves from the stress of the moment.

Study: Mothers who used more sophisticated language when talking about feelings had children who were better at regulating their own emotions.

Research: > hrs of screen time assd w/lower well-being in children & adols; higher uses show < curiosity, self-control & emotional stability; twice as many high vs low users are dx’d anxiety or depression.

Repeated unpleasant experiences get wired into our brains. BUT our brains are plastic and can be rewired (“Neurons that fire together wire together.”)

Children absorb our 1) beliefs *about* feelings; 2) the breadth (or limits) of our emotion vocabulary; 3) how we regulate ourselves.

Co-regulation: How we affect one another’s feelings, moving another’s feelings up or down by our own actions. In the parent-child dyad, the child is an active participant in his or her own regulation, but the parent is the source of the strategy. (“How can we expect children to learn to self-regulate if we adults can’t?”)

B. Recommendations:

1. Apply co-regulation it by asking questions that walk children through RULER (particularly - R metacognitive prompting).

But use *balance* in applying RULER (e.g. don’t obsess ad nauseam about every single feeling).

2. Create a family feelings charter.
 - a. How do we want to feel as a family?
 - b. What can we do to experience these feelings as often as possible?
 - c. What can we do when we are not living the chapter?

3. 4 Steps
 1. Set yourself up for success.
 2. Explore.
 3. Strategize.
 4. Follow up.

(e.g. Plan thoroughly, practice, repeat.)

Chapter 10: Emotions at School

“The promotion of social, emotional, and academic learning is not a shifting educational fad; it is the substance of education itself.”

“...students are grateful to learn that their teachers are human beings with feelings too.”

Rational thoughts never drive pp’s creativity the way emotions do. Neil DeGrasse Tyson

A. “SEL is the universal life jacket, keeping students afloat & open to learning. Only when children learn in psychologically safe environments to nurture their emotion skills can they move from helplessness to resilience, from anxiety to action, from scattered to centered, from isolated to connected.”

“If we want children to flourish, we have to begin taking care of our teachers.”

Brackett shares several stories, including the circuitous route to implement SEL in schools.

“...Educators were mostly uncomfortable talking about emotions – their own *or* those of their students.”

Stats:

Anxiety d/os are the most common mental illness in the US, affecting 25% of children bw 13-18.

>50% of 17y/os report having either experienced trauma directly, ranging from neglect to abuse, or witnessed it at least once as a child (Chap. 10).

>1 in 3 college students report sx/s consistent w/at least 1 MH d/s (mostly depression, anxiety, substance abuse).

2019 World Happiness Report: Negative feelings, including worry, sadness and anger) have been rising around the world, up 27% from 2010 to 2018.

30% of elementary & MS students experience adjustment px/s severe enough to require counseling. In economically disadvantaged schools, it runs as high as 60%.

40% of teachers leave the profession w/in 5 yrs.

Survey: 77% HG students reported negative feelings each day at school.

Restriction of range: EQ is a better predictor of success at home and work than IQ, GPA and highest grade completed (Goldman, 1990).

Bullying increases likelihood of self-harm bx in both victim and perpetrator (Greenberg, 2019 seminar).

The 3 most important aspects of learning – attention, focus & memory – are all controlled by our emotions, not by cognition.

We need emotionally intelligent teachers (and leaders in the community). Teachers w/more developed emotion skills report less burnout, greater job satisfaction, & greater administrative support. The kids perform better academically & interpersonally.

The best way to engage students is to develop rxs, not prevent them (*& the currency of rxs is emotional expression* p.126)...The presence of a caring adult allows a child to manage stress more effectively (and make a difference whether a child will thrive, Chap2).

B. Recommendations:

1. The best SEK efforts are *systemic* (part of school's DNA), not piecemeal.

There needs to be a *common language* among all stakeholders.

Implementing EQ skills means not just focusing on kids but *fully integrate it into school curriculum* to provide skill building across *all* grade levels to reach *all* children. It even includes seating arrangements (i.e. all choices communicate intent).

Implementation is for *all adults* too (teachers, admins, security, janitors, bus drivers). If children are to develop emotion skills, all the adults around them need these skills too. *Otherwise, these programs fail.*

Encourage teacher buy-in by helping them recognize that EQ skills resemble science, math, or any other academic subject.

2. The best SEK efforts are *proactive/preventative*, not reactive.
3. Post Mood Meters prominently.
4. Display art about feelings.
5. Establish "relaxation stations".
6. Have the class create an *Emotional Intelligence Charter*.

7. EQ skills isn't a sole focus on raising self-esteem (it's more comprehensive).
8. Don't give unmerited praise. It backfires and can even decrease intrinsic motivation.
9. Teach scripts: "I feel..." statements to declare emotions.
10. Pay attention to outcomes to evaluate and course-correct.
11. HS students are best helped by exploring:
 - i. Who am I?
 - ii. What do I want out of my HS career (rxs, academics, xcurricular)
 - iii. What do I need to achieve my goals & support my well-being?
12. Look for any opportunity to empower kids/teens. One of the most common themes of my clients is "impostor sx".
13. Use language that communicates we're in this together (adults w/kids). (Bibby)
14. Assume & prescribe success. (Bibby)
15. Have pt. create a literal Coping Toolbox. Put cards in box, each w/different skills, resources, hoped-for things. (Bibby)
16. Potential resources: CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), Playworks, Boy & Girls Clubs,

Daily practice of mindful breathing enhances our ability to be present, accept feelings as they come & go, and not be overly reactive or overwhelmed by them.

Chapter 11: Emotions at Work

It's impossible to be in the company of another being & not be influenced by her or his emotional state, and vice versa." (chap.8)

"No doubt EQ is more rare than book smarts, but my experience says it is actually more important in the making of a leader. You just can't ignore it." Jack Welch

"No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care. T. Roosevelt (Chap2)

"Pp don't leave jobs, they leave bad bosses."

- A. "Emotions are the most powerful force inside the workplace – as they are in every human endeavor." Bc so many jobs require the ability to communicate, our emotions skills determine how we'll perform.

Stats:

2018 Gallup: >50% are “not engaged” at work; 13% have miserable work experience; est. cost = \$450B.

He gives lots of survey data tt indicates pp are pretty unhappy at work.

EQ skills are asssd w/: creativity, innovation, organ. Commitment, job satisfaction, customer service ratings, managerial performance, social support from team members, leadership emergence (the extent to which someone not in an official position exerts influence over colleagues), transformational leadership (that motivate & inspires subordinates to work toward a common vision), job performance (part.ly w/jobs requiring more emotional labor), merit pay.

Positive emotions result in lower level of employee exhaustion & fewer sick days.

High-power pp tends to be less responsive to the emotions of pp around them, respond w/lower compassion when listening to suffering.

Emotional contagion: our emotions & moods transfer from one person to another (or a team)

Emotionally intelligent workplaces are distinguished by how pp *behave* at work, & tt bx is heavily influenced by *structure* – the way pp are organized, meaning hierarchies – and by *culture* – what pp believe is appropriate.

B. Recommendations:

1. It’s critical to match our emotion (high/low energy, tone) to the task at hand so that particular task is more likely to be successful.
2. Leadership should be most concerned w/*how their employees feel* at work.
3. High EQ doesn’t mean always being “nice”. Leaders need the ability to have challenging conversation about sensitive subjects that will cause hurt feelings.
4. Leaders need to think about their driving forces: financial, interpersonal.
5. Resources: Oji Life Lab

Quotes:

“Feelings are inconvenient.”

“Ignorance is egalitarian.” (chapt6)

“Feedback is a gift, there is always something we can learn.” (chapt8.)

“Wouldn’t this be a great world if insecurity & desperation made us more attractive? If ‘needy’ was a turn-on?” Broadcast News

“There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” Hamlet (camp8)

Psycho-physics:

We don’t like hearing others’ feelings bc we may feel obliged to take action, even change, *which is usually the last thing we want to do.*

(We have a)...universal desire to feel superior t our fellow human beings when it comes to the wisdom of the heart (chap3).

Glossary:

alexithmia: the difficulty in recognizing and expressing emotions.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: the language we speak determines our worldview and even how our minds work.

schadenfreude: the feeling of happiness or satisfaction caused by so else’s misfortune.

litost: Czech word via Milan Kundera, “a state of torment created by the sudden sight of one’s own misery.”

Shame: a judgment from the outside, our perception that other pp believe we broke a moral or ethical rule or shared convention.

Guilt: a judgment we make of ourselves when we feel remorse or responsibility for st we did.

Embarrassment: we’re caught violating a social norm.

Contentment: a state of psychological balance, not st we actively pursue – we feel contentment when we cherish the present moment.

Convergent thinking: the search for only one correct solution to a px or one proper answer to a question, trying to arrive mostly w/straight-ahead, linear thinking.

Divergent thinking: move in all directions, assume there are many possible solutions & tried to consider each, espe. The most creative, unusual ones. (Chap2)