

# 15 PROVEN AND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Presented by:  
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and "10 Minutes to Save Your Marriage"  
On iTunes, Stitcher, SoundCloud, and iHeartRadio

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## Dr. Steve Olivas

- ▣ Licensed Psychologist in Private Practice, Nashville, TN
- ▣ M.S. From The University of Wisconsin - Whitewater
  - Dual Emphases:
    - Chemical Dependency Counseling
    - Marriage & Family Counseling
- ▣ PhD, Counseling Psychology - The University of Oklahoma (1996)
- ▣ Treating Children and Teens since 1990
- ▣ Author, *Bad Kids... or Bad Behavior?* (2008)
- ▣ and *When Good Kids Go Bad* (2012)

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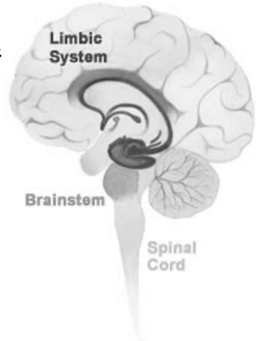
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## Overview of Behavior Problems

- ▣ Aristotle's Perspective

- ▣ Etiology:
  - Nature vs. nurture
    - ▣ Genetics and brain physiology
    - ▣ Three levels of motivation (Hendrix, 2007):
      - Primal
      - Emotional
      - Behavioral



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## DSM-V Associated Diagnoses

### Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

- Often loses temper
- Argues with adults
- Deliberately annoys others
- Is touchy or easily annoyed
- Is angry, resentful, spiteful, or vindictive
- Blames others for his or her misbehaviors
- Often actively defies or refuses to comply with rules or requests
  
- **Modulate Eye Contact**
- **Grant Power or Control**

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## Anger toward Compliments:

- ▣ **-Avoid using positive labels** (e.g., "You're so smart.", "You're a good boy.") because they will be rejected by a youngster who sees them as being incorrect (given his/her life experience).
- ▣ **FOCUS ON (+) BEHAVIOR**  
-"Thanks for holding the door for us. That was a kind gesture on your part."
- ▣ **-Prepare the student for your positive feedback**
- ▣ **-Note writing**

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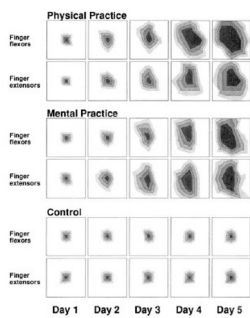
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## Why Do What We Do



Harvard University "piano study" (Pascual-Leone, 1995) shows that visualization and mental imagery can create new neural pathways just as physical practice can.

Used Transcranial - Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) to assess neural activity

12/11/2010 - M&M Study

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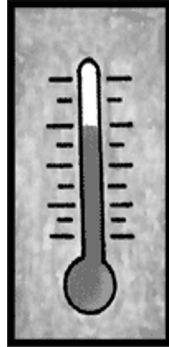
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## Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Anger:
- ▣ Thermometer/Two Thermometers
- ▣ Visualization
  - ▣ Gives a common language to speak about "Anger"
  - ▣ Makes abstract concept concrete
  - ▣ Helps with goal-setting, progress
  - ▣ Wicks on firecracker/bomb?




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## Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Anger
  - ▣ Standing 8 count (Minahan & Rappaport, 2012)
    - ▣ Simple, tested technique
    - ▣ "Thinking" part of the brain comes back and pushes out the "Emotional" part of the brain
    - ▣ How this process works - "It doesn't matter" (build broader structure)
    - ▣ Cooling off Period




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## Diffusing Anger/Crisis

Providing a dignified way out of situation:

1. "I have to check the parking lot (or store room, hallway). Would you like to walk along with me?"
2. "It looks like you might not be feeling too well. May I feel your forehead? It's a little warm. Would you like to lie down in the nurse's office?"
3. "Lets go talk somewhere private. There are too many people around here."

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## Gaining Compliance

- ▣ 5 no-no's:
  - "Why" Questions
  - "Easy" instead of Relax or Calm Down
  - The Word "You"
    - ▣ Use I or statements
    - ▣ We statements (all of us; my students...)
  - The Words "no" and "don't"
    - ▣ Focus instead on what SHOULD be done
  - Lecturing/nagging/berating
  
- ▣ \*www.behavioradvisor.com

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## After An Aggressive Act:

- ▣ (After s/he has "cooled down")
- ▣ **DEBRIEF HIM/HER:**
- ▣
  - "Why were you willing to:
    - hurt another?"
    - fight?"
- ▣ - "What was your purpose in that situation?"
- ▣ - "How else could you have attained that goal?"

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## Monday Morning Quarterback

- ▣ **-Where and when did it happen?**
- Who was present?
- **What event(s) preceded the action?**
  - ▣ Interrupt the **antecedent** aftermath
  - ▣ Clicker?
- ▣ -What behavioral signals did the youngster show before the outburst?
  - What actions were taken to prevent the crisis & were they effective?
  - What factors influenced/supported this behavior?

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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children



- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Anger:
  - ▣ The peace table
    - ▣ Goal: To build EMPATHY
    - ▣ Changes for older/younger kids
    - ▣ Opportunity for group interaction
  - ▣ Victim empathy?

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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Build Empathy & Manage Anger
  - ▣ Actor/Observer
    - ▣ Ross (1977)/Jones (1967) "Fundamental Attribution Error"
    - ▣ Dispositional vs. Situational Attribution




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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ 3 Quick Techniques for Short & Long Term:
  - ▣ 1. Time in!
    - ▣ Get active rather than passive
    - ▣ Find out true meanings/values of perceived threat
    - ▣ Hands down, eyes up
  - ▣ 2. Restitution
    - ▣ Teaches empathy skills
    - ▣ Makes good on transgressions
    - ▣ Teaches value

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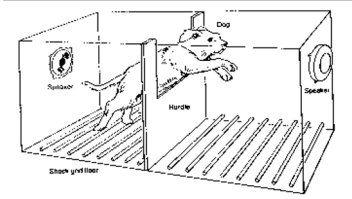
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### Learned Helplessness and Stress



Seligman's (1975) study of Learned Helplessness.  
Mitigating factors:  
(1) Control (real or perceived)  
(2) Dispositional "Optimism"

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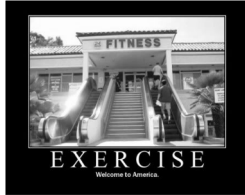
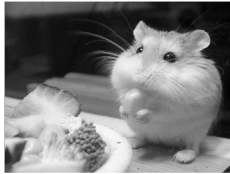
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### The "Trifecta" of Mental Health



Sleep... Eat... Exercise

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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Depression
  - Journaling (Ullrich & Lutgendorf, 2002)
    - Write out feelings, thoughts, behaviors
    - Can share or not share in therapy
    - Give homework, topics
    - Structure:
      - 1. 10 minutes, directed or non
      - 2. NOT for ruminators!
    - Catharsis, analysis
      - Write a letter to unavailable?



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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

☐ Journaling:

- ☐ Go with client's strength:
  - Draw, Music, YouTube
  - Photos
  - Draw a picture of (\_\_\_\_) as something other than a person
  - Reality Show Confessional



☐ What about privacy/security?

- Safe deposit box
- shredder

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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children (Grief)

Gestalt Techniques

- Depersonalizing via second person
- "Describe" rather than "Explain"
  
- Locating the problem (non-verbal - visceral/physical)
- Hi-light and emphasize to draw attention and create baseline
  
- Progressive muscle or Parasympathetic response

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### More Verbal :

- ☐ 1. Counterconditioning
- ☐ 2. Desensitize/Habituate
- ☐ 3. Grant Power or Control
- ☐ 4. Normalize to Avoid Panic
- ☐ 5. Don't say self-deprecation out loud
  
- ☐ (Kerkhof, Vansteenwegen, Baeyens, & Hermans, 2011)

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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Depression
- ▣ Cut n paste (Boyes, 2018)
  - ▣ Simple, Cognitive Behavioral Intervention
  - ▣ Identify (-) thoughts, replace with (+) or neutral
  - ▣ Applications:
    - Assertiveness
    - Friendships
    - Boundaries




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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Depression
- ▣ The mirror effect
  - ▣ Research has shown that facial expressions can effect mood
  - ▣ Practice "positive" facial expressions
  - ▣ Can use an actual mirror to enhance experience




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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Anxiety
- ▣ Ceiling fan breathing
  - ▣ Encourages Parasympathetic (vs. Sympathetic) Response
  - ▣ Concrete for younger kids
  - ▣ With older kids, work on this as a technique of relaxation
- ▣ Pal & Velkumary (2004)




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### Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Depression
- ▣ Inside movie
  - Visualizations and Mental Imagery
  - Remember the piano experiment - relaxation and positive images can create new pathways
  - Need Positive scenarios (example)

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### Adults in the Child's World: Parents

- ▣ Concrete behavioral interventions in the home
- ▣ The Listening Jar
  - ▣ Works with warning system
  - ▣ Listen on the first try, 2 nuggets
  - ▣ Second try, 1... Third try - none AND T/O
  - ▣ Progressively larger
    - Jars
    - Prizes




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### Adults in the Child's World: Teachers

- ▣ Immediate relief in the classroom
  - Set-up
    - ▣ Similar to parents (demonstrate (+) expectations, "Catch" them being good)
    - ▣ Greet at the door
    - ▣ **USE TEACHER AS REINFORCER**
    - ▣ Remember empathy at school!
    - ▣ Functionalize Behavior
      - "The Parent Trap"




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### Adults in the Child's World: Teachers

- ▣ Immediate relief in the classroom:
  - Token Economies/Response Cost
    - ▣ Done in a variety of ways - most teachers have a pretty good handle on this one
    - ▣ Cautions:
      - Reward system only
      - Keep 'em in the black
      - 1/8 Sticky Notes
    - ▣ Caveats:
      - Lottery
      - Secret Student



\*(Doll, McLaughlin, & Barretto, 2013)

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### Adults in the Child's World: Teachers

- ▣ Immediate relief in the classroom:
  - The Good Behavior Game
    - ▣ Thermometer example
    - ▣ Individual or class-wide
    - ▣ Two variables to ensure success: Time and Number
    - ▣ Caveat & Solution:
      - "Wonder Twins" Phenomenon




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### Intentional dialogue

- ▣ Harville Hendrix
- ▣ Meant to S-L-O-W dialogue, especially between angry parents & kids
- ▣ Create empathy
- ▣ Can create a different type of response when the other person is taken into account (especially for parents)

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## Intentional Dialogue



- ▣ Steps:
    - 1. Mirror ("Let's see if I've got this right...")
    - 2. Validate ("You're not crazy for feeling...")
    - 3. Empathize ("I would feel the same way because...")
  - can combine steps 2&3
- (Hendrix, 2007)

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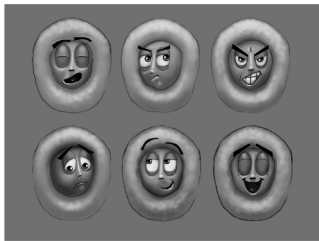
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## Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Asperger's Syndrome
- ▣ Facial expressions and social cues
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## Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Asperger's Syndrome:
- ▣ Practicing Social Cues and "Rules of Engagement"
  - Handshake example
  - Act "As if"
- ▣ Building a broader structure
  - ▣ Flowchart example on thinking
  - ▣ Create context for the "it"
  - ▣ Start at end, work backwards
- ▣

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## Tools for Helping Behavior Problem Children

- ▣ Quick Techniques to Manage Asperger's Syndrome:



- ▣ The burrito
  - ▣ Based upon the work of Temple Grandin (Grandin & Panek, 2014)
  - ▣ "Hug Box" or "Squeeze Machine"

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## References

- ▣ [www.behavioradvisor.com](http://www.behavioradvisor.com) for [sic] thousands of ideas for teachers & parents
- ▣ [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov) (search: "School Shootings") for profile and intervention information
- ▣ [www.psychiatrictimes.com](http://www.psychiatrictimes.com) for hundreds of articles on behavior and treatment
- ▣ *The Behavior Survival Guide for Kids* by Tom McIntyre, PhD (Free Spirit Publishing)
  - Written for kids w/Behavior Disorders!

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