

Supporting Students

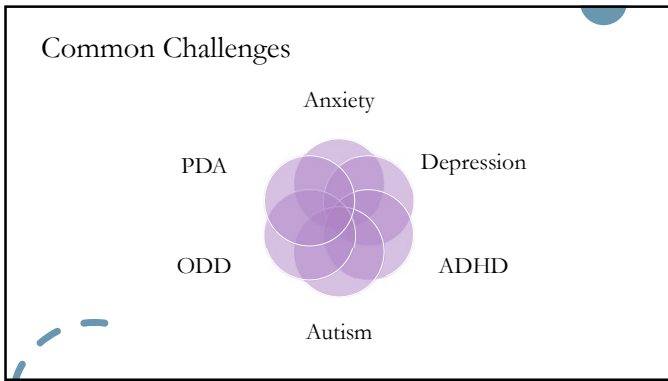
Understanding and Addressing Mental Health in the Classroom

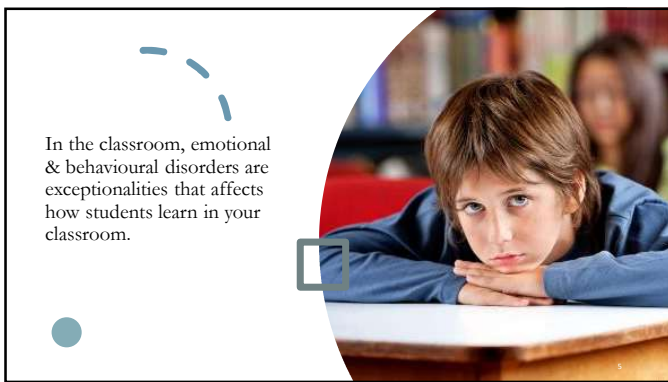
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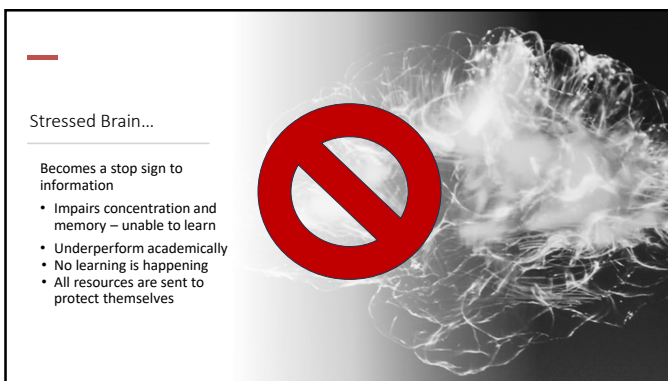
Developing a personal action plan

What traps do I need to get out of?	How can I improve my approach for effective communication?	What can I do proactively?	What can I start collaboratively problem-solving?	What I can do to strengthen our relationship?
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Emotional & Behavioural Disorders are on the Rise...







Limits Executive Functioning

- Attention
- Impulsivity
- Organization
- Planning
- Prioritizing
- Initiation
- Working memory
- Decision making
- Self-monitoring

**Inconsistent performance



Contributes to Behaviours

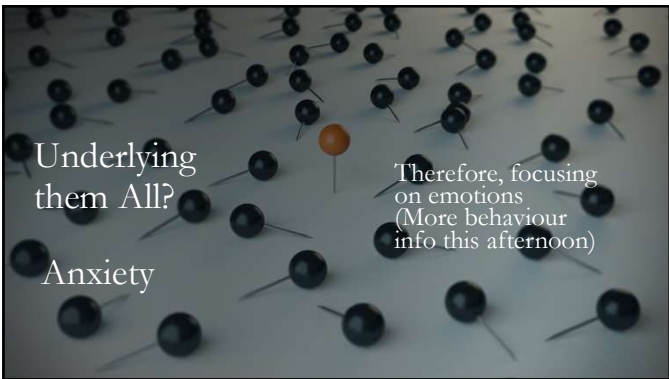
Some are internalizers, others are externalizers

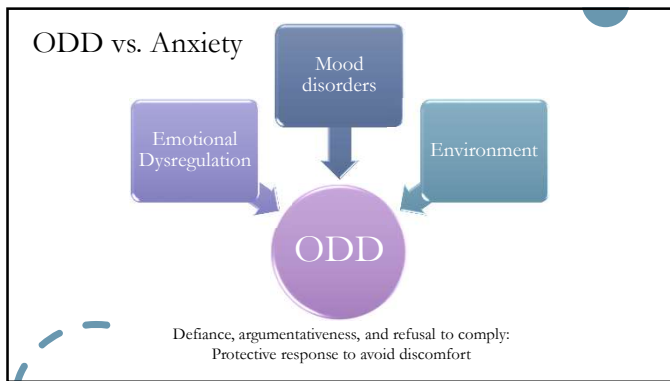


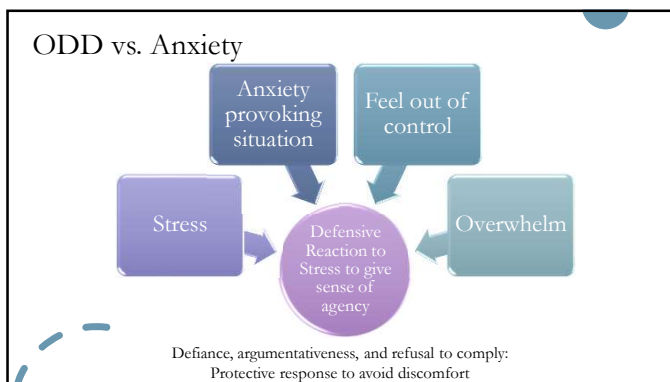
Underlying them All?

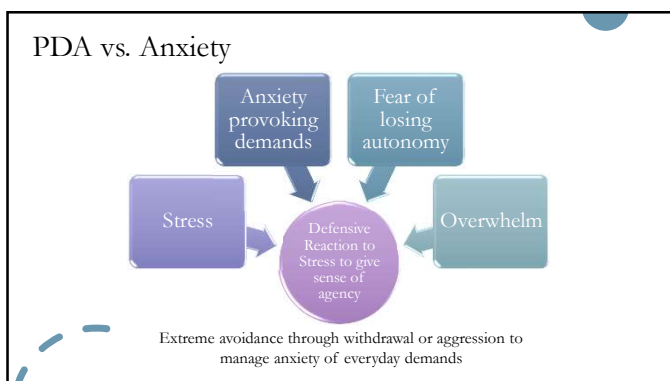
Anxiety

Therefore, focusing on emotions
(More behaviour info this afternoon)









ADHD: Anxiety worsens symptoms



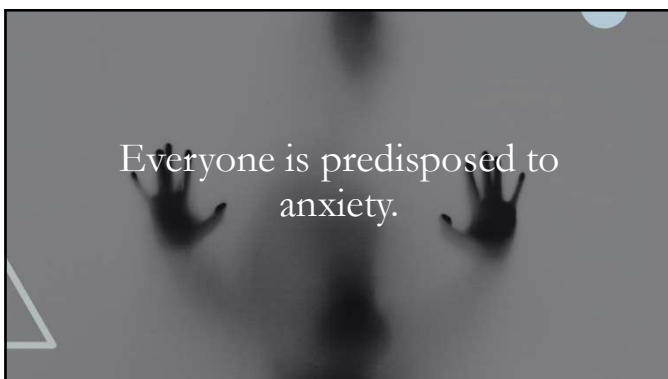
Depression

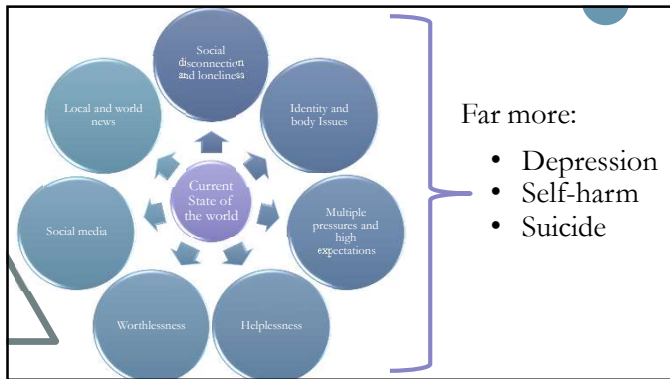


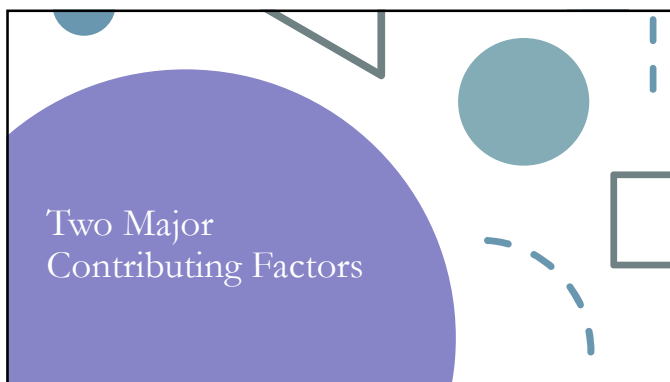


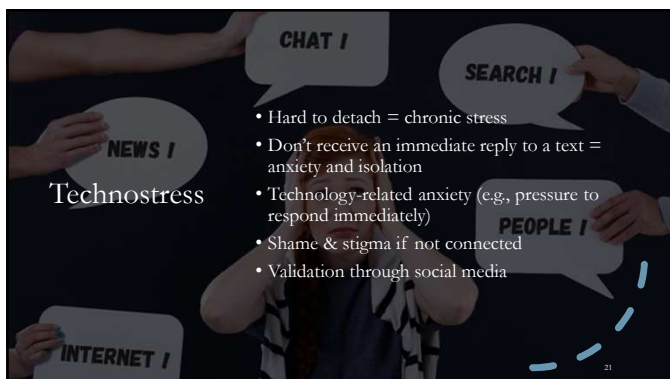


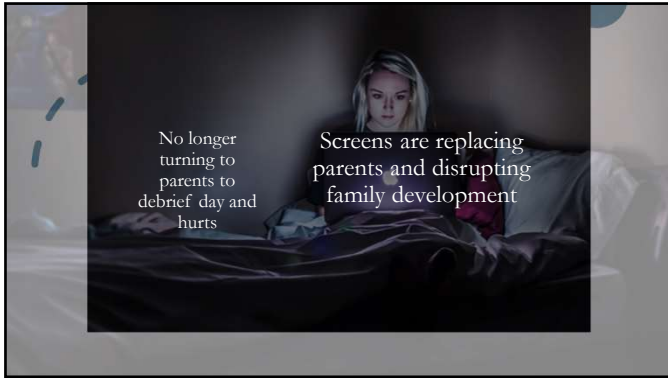




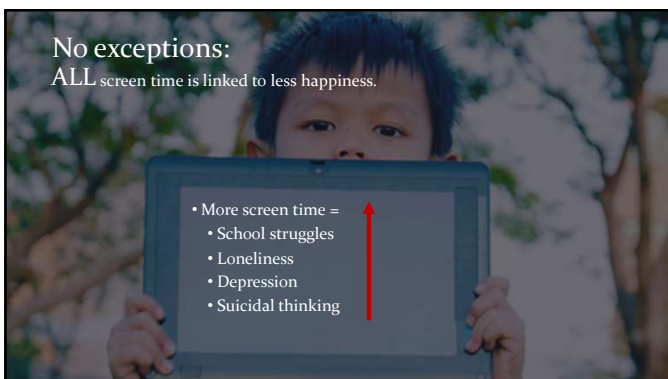


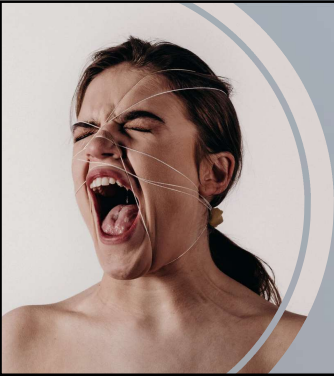













Adult Traps

This alone can make all the difference in the world



Unsolicited Support

- Swooping in can:
 - Undermine the equity in the relationship
 - Create a sense of obligation
 - Independence and self-esteem threatened
 - Feel invalidating
 - Seem unsympathetic
 - Shut down communication

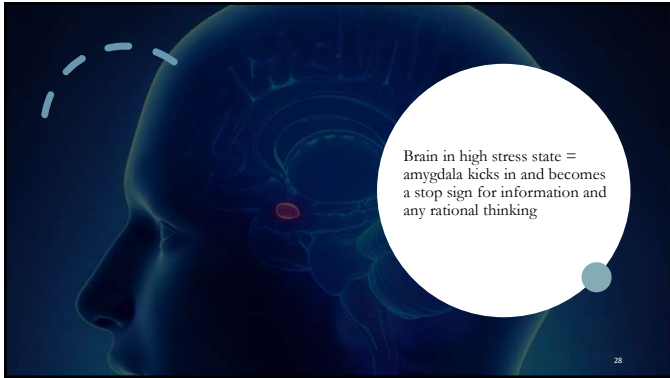


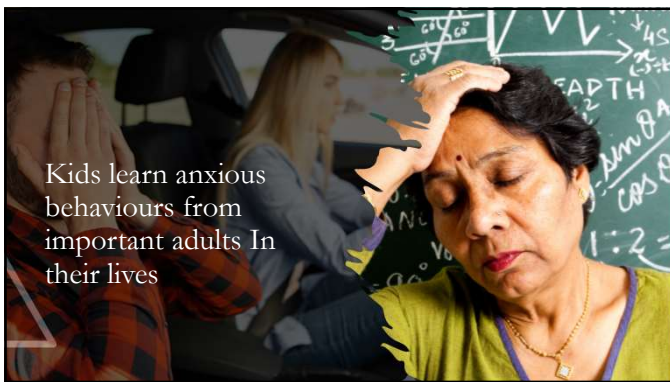
Saying
“Don’t
worry”
doesn’t work

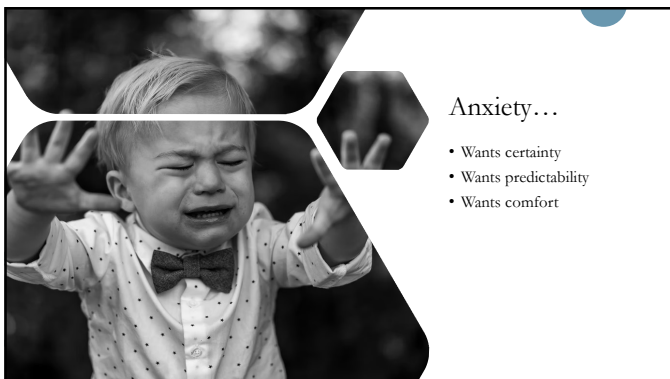
Minimizing

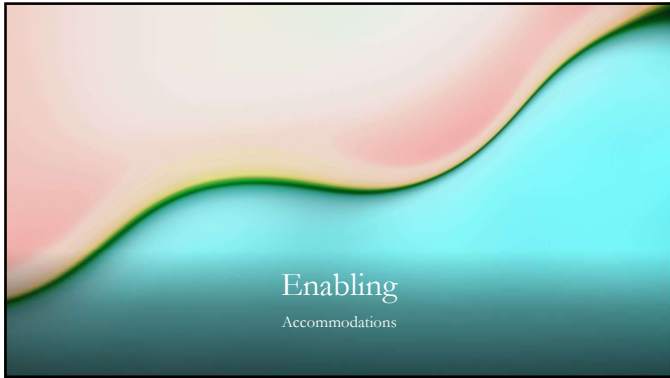
Get stuck in constant
need for reassurance

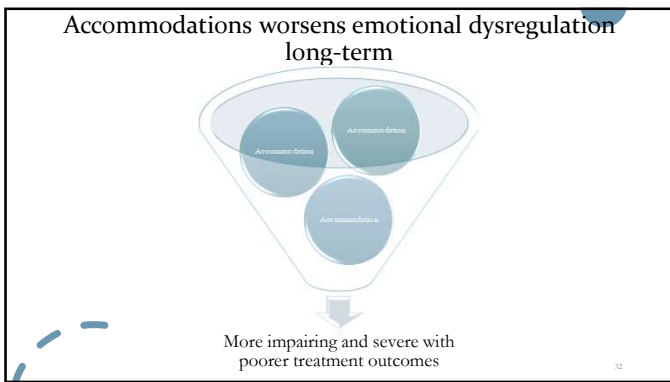
No skills developed

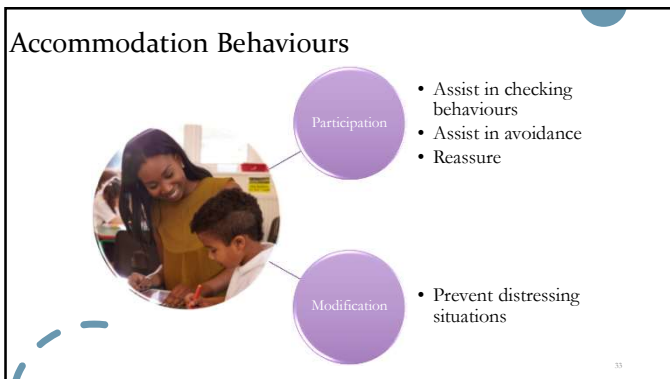












Consider IPP's

Does it accommodate anxiety? Or prevent it from showing up?

Are skills being taught?

- How do breaks/office visits help?

Is there a transition plan?

Does the plan address physical symptoms?

Does it document how to maintain contact between home and school?

Ensure skills-based goals (vs. avoidance based)

Skills IN the class

- If leaves, plans for quick return
- No pick-up plan
- Alternatives to phone calls home

Consistent language with home

- Name of worry
- Same responses
- Parent coaching (e.g., how to respond to texts/calls)
- Stipulations about home-school communication

Detailed and specific

- Everyone's role and response
- Minimal reactions – anxiety is so annoying
- Weaning off plans

Your Big But

Second Major Contributor: Deprived Kids



Critical for developing:

- Resilience
- Competence
- Confidence
- Maturity
- Mental health

Stunted Resilience

Kids develop patterns of behaviour/ways to respond to stress and other emotions depending on whether they believe they can manage....

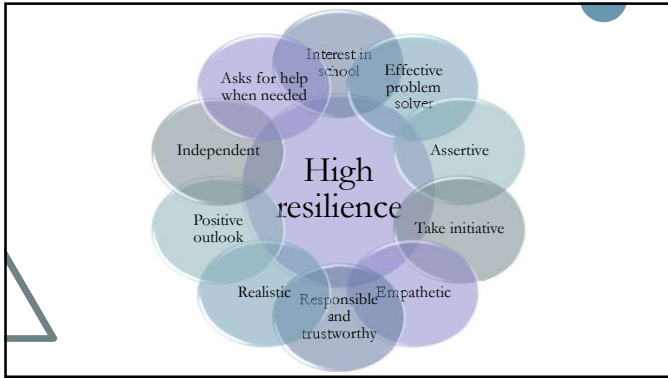
And when they don't think they can manage....



Resilient kids

- Effectively respond to and cope with everyday challenges+

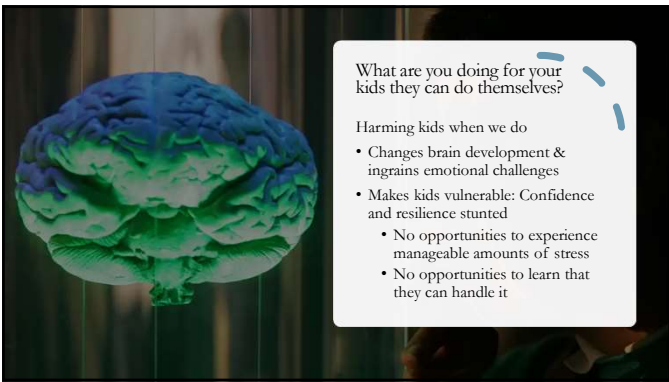














Solution:
Break the
cycle that
cripples
resilience



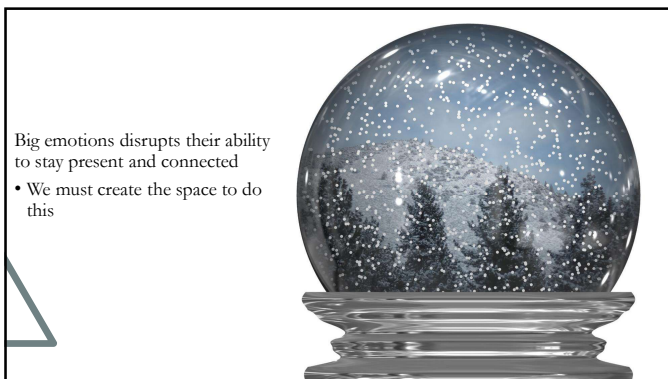


Show confidence =
FEEL confidence

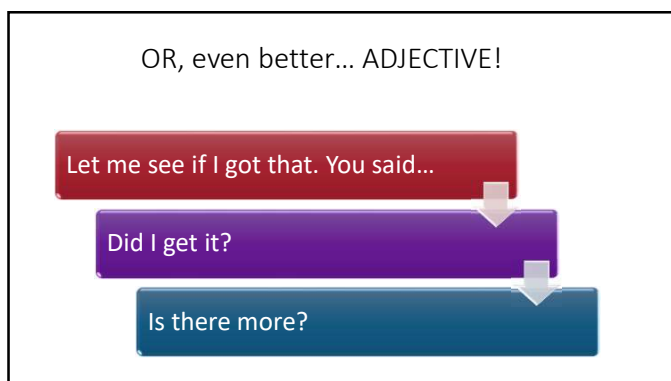
Emotion Coach

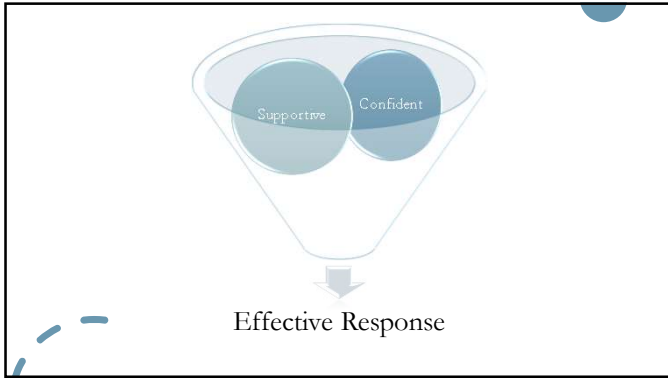
*Connect & communicate
effectively*



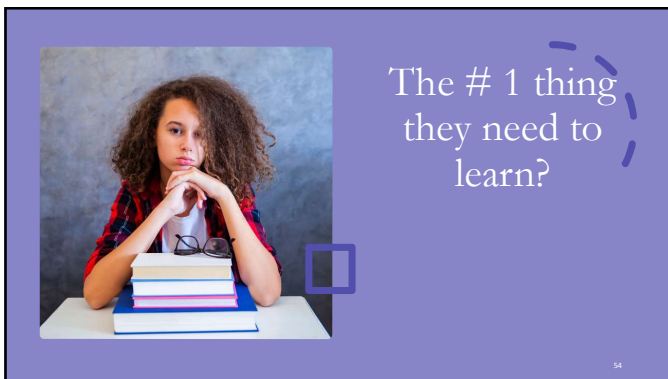












How to manage the experience of big emotions when they show up

Not the actual trigger

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Core Skill: Emotion Awareness

Emotions Are Adaptive!

*Tell us something
about reality*

Anger

- Alerts us to threats or injustices
- Protect our well-being

Fear

- Alerts us to danger
- Protects us from harm

Joy

- Positive reinforcement for doing things that promote our well-being and survival

Shame

- Prompts self-reflection, processing, and change
- Maintains social harmony

Sadness

- Alerts us to loss, separation, or unmet needs and allows us to process the event
- Promotes personal growth and deeper social connections

Excitement


- Propels resilience and growth
- Fosters curiosity, creativity, learning, and adaptability

Understand Functions of Emotions

and all that comes with it

MUST have physical reactions to alert us to what is happening

- Cannot change reactions without this understanding



Disappointment

Hurt

Fear


Curiosity is a key response to emotional experiences



Expressing Feelings Adaptively

Kids need to know:

- All feelings are ok and important
- How to label feelings effectively & rationale
 - To make sense of them
 - How they can guide us
 - Foresight
- How to talk about feelings
- Their feelings matter
- What to do next



Labelling Emotions *& All that comes with it*

- With no words comes behaviours
- Name it to tame it
 - Calms nervous system
 - Builds confidence

Labelling Emotions

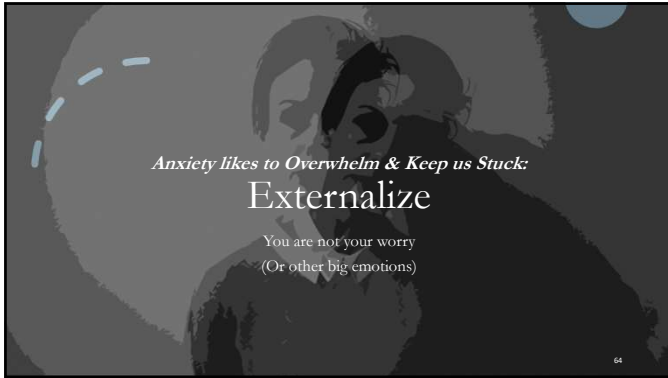
- Model
- **Build emotion vocabulary – the more specific, the better**
- Foresight

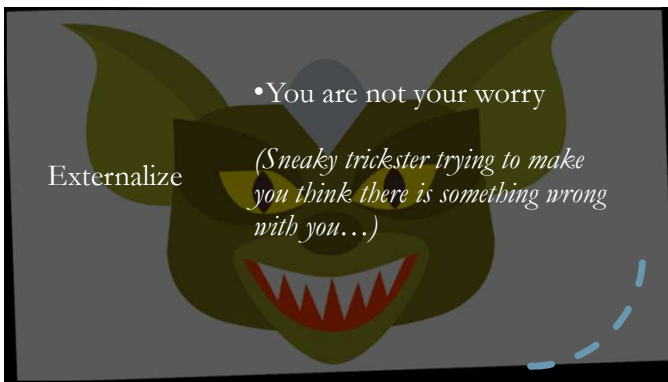
How do emotions show up?

Sounds like:
List the worried thoughts and images that come up:

Feels like:
List physical symptoms associated with worries:

Looks like:
List behaviours that result from the worries, including avoidance:







Physical Symptoms are a Problem

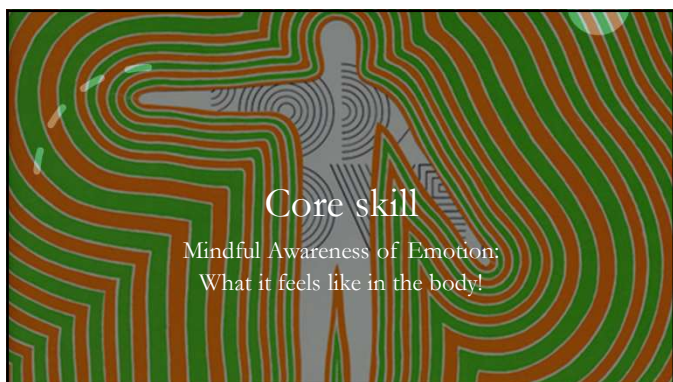
They start to worry about the physical feelings, which are distressing, which they will do anything to stop

Become reactive
Misinterpret and leads to more sensations...



Core skill

Mindful Awareness of Emotion:
What it feels like in the body!



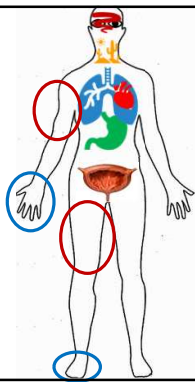
How
Emotions
Manifest:
Affect



And we can respond in helpful ways!

That makes sense!
No wonder - your
adrenal glands have
sent out all that yucky
stuff.

Emotions
show up in
the body



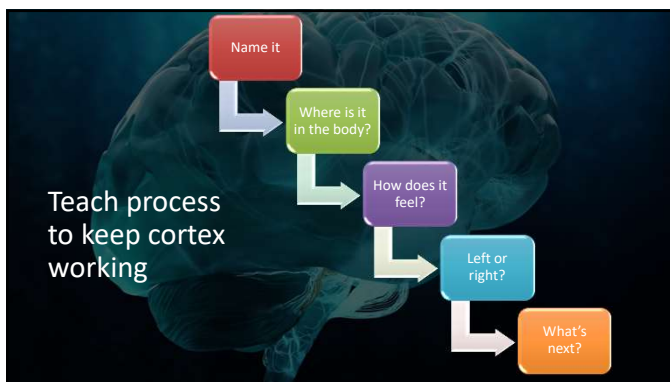
They need to know that
we MUST have physical
reactions to alert us to
what is happening

- Cannot change reactions
without this
understanding

Teach the process to
keep the cortex working

Even when their amygdala gets frustrated and wants to take
over with the stress response.

Dizzy		Shivers
Racing		Increased heart rate
Tension		Weak legs
Achy		Ringing ears
Sore		Blurred vision
Hot		Muscle tension
Cold		Shaking
Tingly		Trembling
Numb		Chest pain
Sharp		Headaches
Breathless		Burning skin/sweating
Shivering		Blushing
Sweating		Changes in breathing
Trouble swallowing		Stomach-ache/ Nausea
Tired		Relaxed



When we label the different parts of emotions and our experiences, we:

- Change our interpretation of them
- Change how our body responds
- Dampen amygdala's false alarm
- Turn on prefrontal cortex
- Make adaptive decisions
- Learn that we have control over our responses
 - I know what you are & I know how to handle you
- Avoid getting sucked in – it's just a piece of information









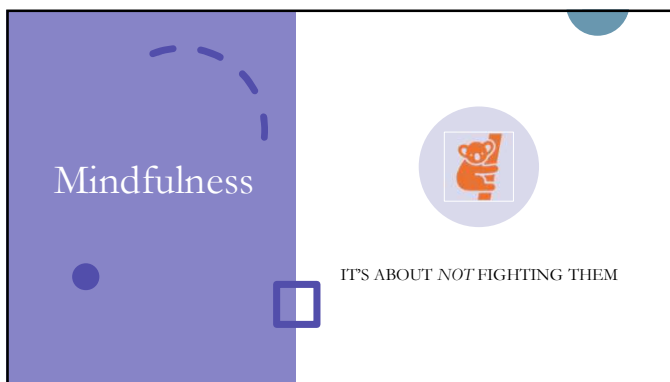
Mindfulness




Not about relaxing or getting rid of physical symptoms



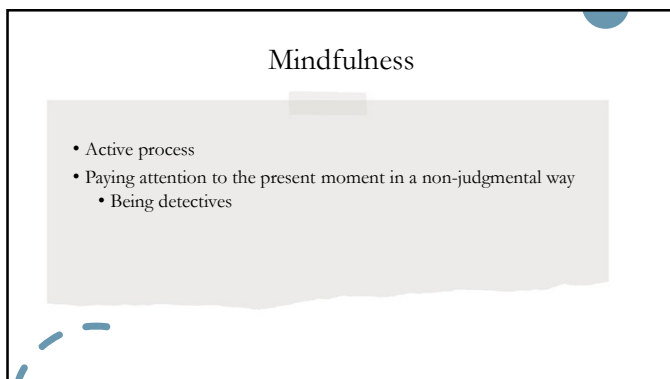
Not about changing thoughts



Mindfulness

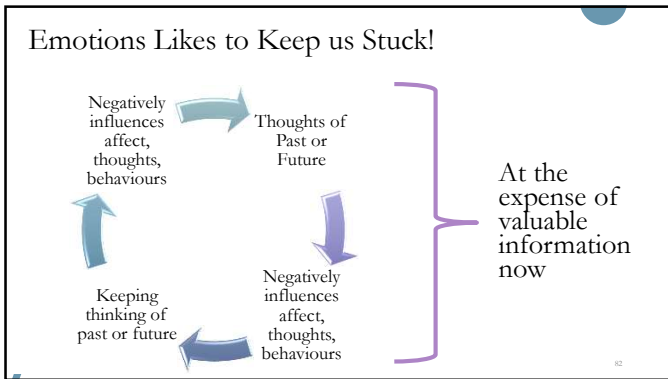


IT'S ABOUT *NOT* FIGHTING THEM



Mindfulness

- Active process
- Paying attention to the present moment in a non-judgmental way
 - Being detectives




Mindfulness

- Need to stay here and attend to the current context
 - To keep prefrontal cortex online
 - To attend to corrective information
 - To learn!

Versus getting sucked into worries, which intensifies the emotional experience and keeps us stuck

Build Acceptance & Tolerance

- NOT resist, control, or eliminate emotions
- Focus on **ending fear of discomfort**
 - I am uncomfortable but I am going to do this anyway



GOAL

Acceptance & Tolerance

- Normal part of being human
- Temporary, not fact
- Sit with them until they subside

Emotion Dial

Acceptance Dial

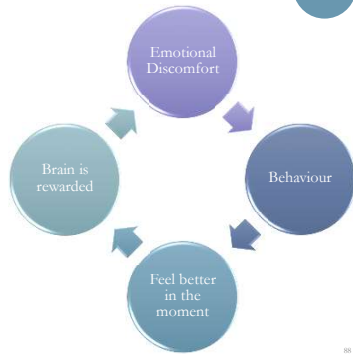
Core skills

Identifying and modifying unhelpful emotion-driven behaviours

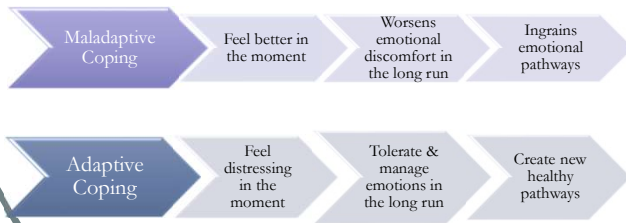
Important!

MUST understand how their behaviours are maintaining, or even worsening, their emotional discomfort

- The behaviour is reinforced in the moment, increasing the likelihood of using this strategy again in the future



Remember! Short- and long-term outcomes of maladaptive vs. adaptive coping strategies



Resilient kids

Effectively respond to and cope with everyday challenges

- This is where we are going!



Resilience

Ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress.

Key Ingredients

RECOVER
Bounce back from stressors, trauma and adversity.

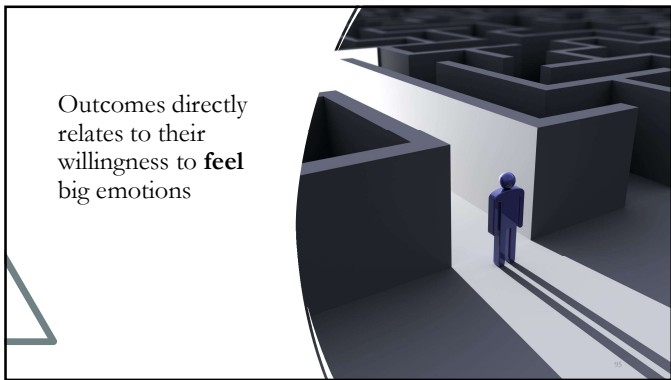
ADAPT
Accommodate stressors by surviving or thriving.

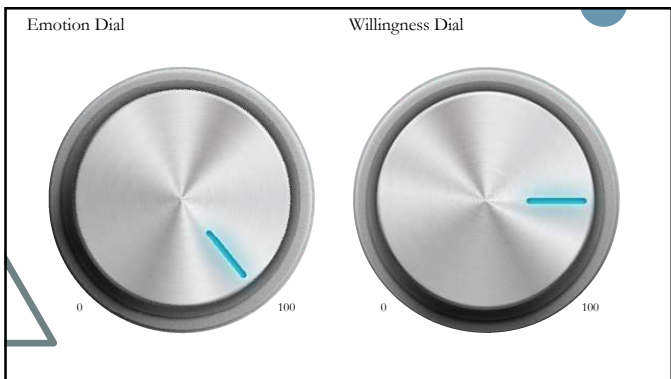
TRANSFORM
Grow stronger from the experience.

Resilience

90% of what kids learn is from what they *experience*





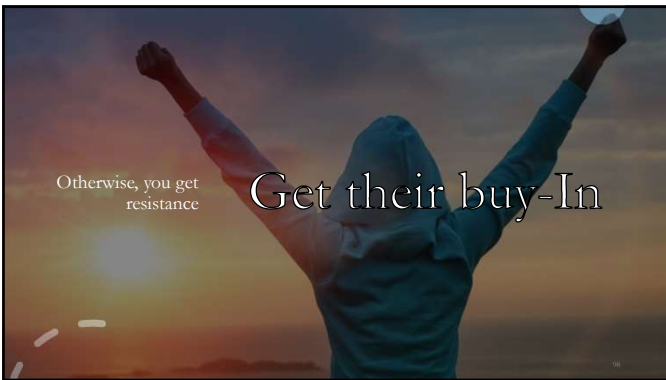




Integrate Skills through Emotion Exposure

Integrate skills to master adaptive responses

- Talking not enough to change the brain!
- Doing makes stronger memories
- Doing gives us experience
- Quicker progress
- Provoke **STRONG EMOTIONS** - MUST show up for learning to happen



Real bravery is
not fearlessness.


Bravery is acknowledging when something is hard and not pretending it isn't

- With an honest appraisal, we can respond productively

Hypothesis Testing


Lots of experiments and experiences needed!


- What do you think will happen?
- How sure? (1-10)?
- Was the hypothesis right?
- What did you learn?




Willingness Action Plan

Goal:

Big why:

The steps I need to take are:

I will take the first step on date at time.

The discomfort I am willing to have to achieve this goal:

Thoughts:
Feelings:
Sensations:
Urges:
I can reward myself for:

Resilience is About
Creating the Right World:
Stress Inoculation



Work on it everyday

- Focus on what skills the student needs to develop specifically
 - Problem solving
 - Making mistakes
 - Asking for help
 - Frustration tolerance
 - Persistence
- Change it up
 - Length of time
 - Distance
 - Time of day
 - Places
 - People



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Exposure to LEARN:

Emotions are safe,
tolerable, & temporary

When I don't do anything to try
to make myself feel better, the
amygdala learns: This is not
dangerous! (**And stops
sending the false alarm.**)



Exposure to LEARN

Despite feeling anxious, I
still did it

And... I can still live life and
do anything, even while
feeling anxious!




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Exposure TO LEARN

No matter what happens, I can handle it!

On my own

- Without others
- Without safety behaviours



Our job is not to convince:

Learning happens through experience

They need to:

- Test the accuracy of their predictions
- Make their own conclusions
- Create new expectations





Let them Be Independent

- Give kids the chance to do, think, be, and make their own decisions and mistakes
 - Check their own homework
 - Solve their own conflicts (even during soccer at recess)
 - Make their own friends
 - Make important decisions in the class
 - Hold important jobs
- Encourage kids to try new things, even when scared
 - They need to know you support and trust them!
- Teach kids to be comfortable in the world



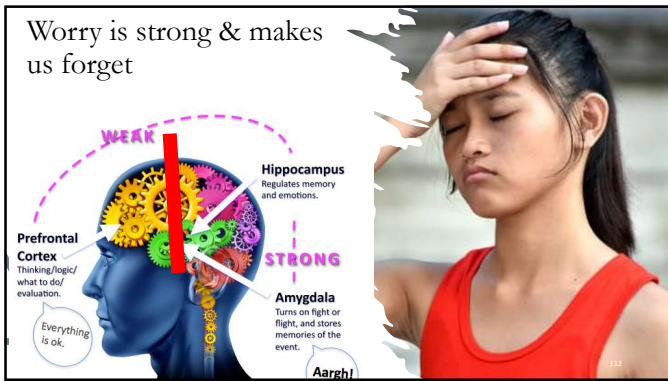
Risk-takers advantage
Exposing kids to opportunities for some risk is helpful

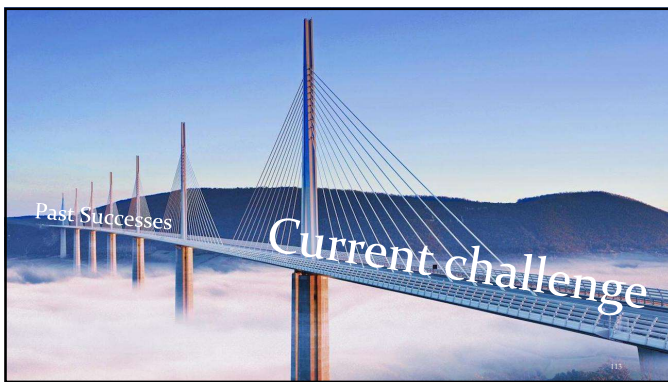
- Limits on screen time
- Learn the skills they need to survive early
- Help with important events and occasions
- Let them bake and decorate the cake (without you fixing it)
- Eskimo club
- Using tools

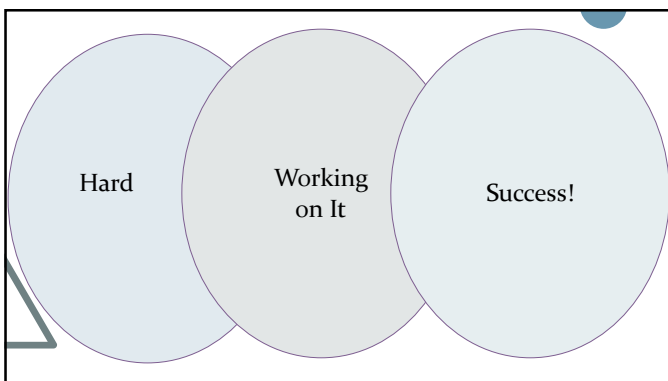
LET THEM PLAY!!!

LET THEM HELP!!!

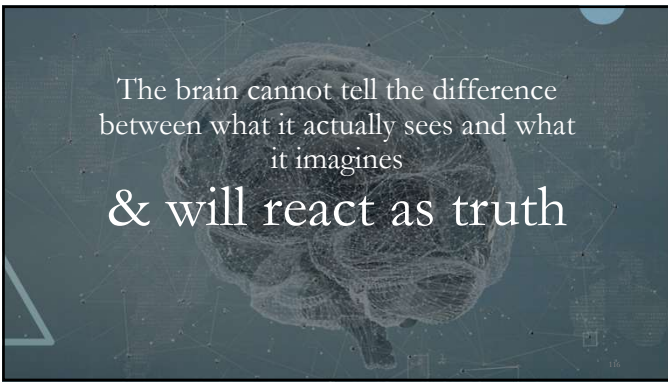
With IMPORTANT things
 Sooner vs. later





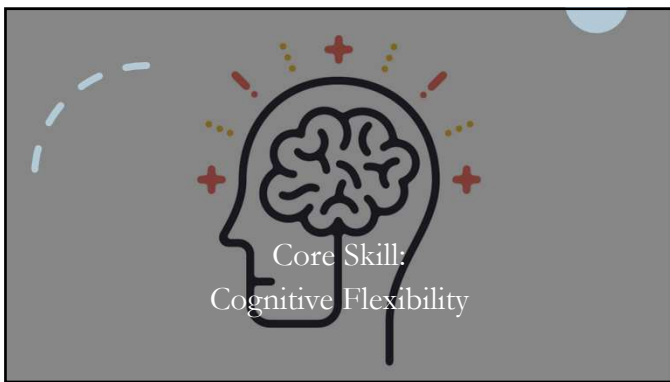


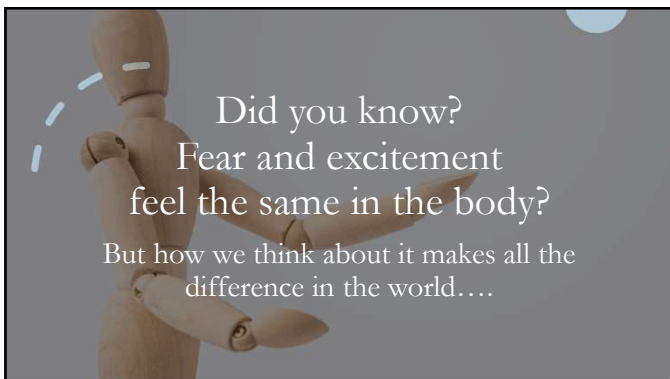












Different hormones released to prepare for what's to come.

How does our body know?

Depends largely on our evaluation of the situation.

Threat vs. Challenge Response

Not good or bad, different purposes

Threat response: Goal is survival in situations we aren't equipped to handle

- More cortisol to defend and protect

Challenge response: Opportunity for growth where we tackle hard but manageable situations

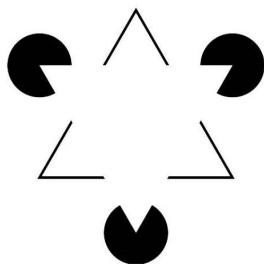
- More testosterone and adrenaline to help us achieve our goal

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Stretch

Make a list of things you or others have believed that you do not believe anymore



• Information from our eyes and ears only loosely connected to what we experience

- Fragmented
- Ambiguous
- Lots of effort to change them into 3-D

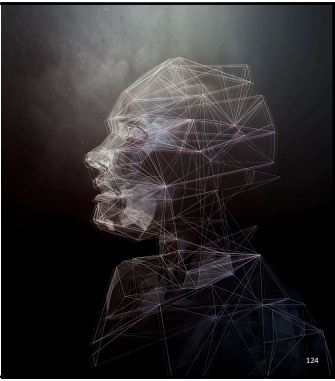
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Knowledge Influences Sensory Information

(e.g., all faces are always convex)

- Our knowledge/ experience misleads us into seeing the mask as convex

Bottom-up sensory information is overridden by top-down knowledge



Get Unstuck: Detach

Distancing

- “___ is noticing ___ is having the thought that...”
- Use third person language

Train, balloons, bubbles clouds, or leaves on the river

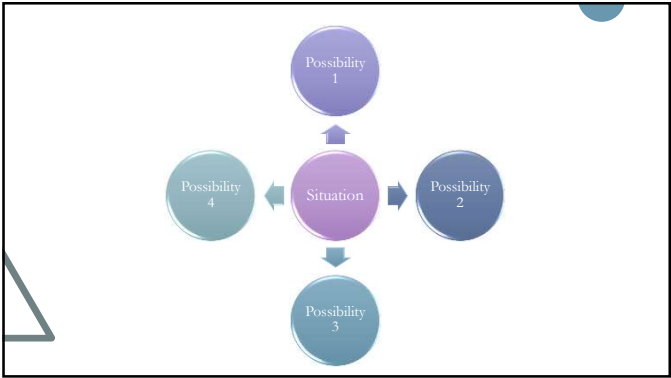
Thank them

Objectify

- What colour? How big? What shape? What texture?
- How would it move if it could?

Name that Story







Build Awareness! Externalize & Get Meta

- When does Stuck Stan show up?
 - What is easy to get stuck on? What is easy about it?
 - What is easy to avoid getting stuck? What is easy about it?
 - What helps you get unstuck? What worked before? What do you say to yourself to get unstuck?
- Identify obstacles to getting unstuck
- Collaboratively develop strategies to overcome them

(We can't know, so avoid reassurance.)


Let's figure that out.

What could you do?

What I know	What I don't know
• We are going to the zoo	• If I have to go to the bathroom
• We are going by 9:10	• Where the bathrooms are
• We are leaving at 9:10	• Who will be in my group
• We will get back at 2:55	• Where to go if I get lost
	• What parent I will be in our group
	• if we will see the gorillas
	• if I will fall down and get hurt
	• if I have an allergic reaction

Model!

- I feel frustrated. I need to take a minute to think what to do next.
 - Can you help me brainstorm ideas?
- That's a tight timeline. I am going to plan this out.
- I am a little nervous; I have no idea what will happen. Let's figure this out.







Create opportunities





Unexpected event/mistake of the day & how you handled it

Be Creative!



Mixing up the day


Find three ways to learn about a topic


Find three ways to show what you know about a topic


Stop and Switch (e.g., dribble, switch to math, back to ball activity)


Perfectionist Paula
Gets in the Way of
Life




Perfectionism is the most
serious thinking trap &
root of depression

Focus on core concepts


- **Unrealistic expectations**
- Rumination
- Need for approval
- Concern about mistakes
- Doubts about actions
- Additional traps like circumstantial thinking , quality/quantity






Break into Parts

Ex: Perfectionism



Helpful parts of perfectionism


- Helps us prepare
- Helps us strive for excellence



Unhelpful parts of perfectionism

- Become paralyzed
- Procrastinate & create more stress
- Stifles learning and growth
- Narrows our world
- Makes us perform worse

Perfectionism likes to work with Pals



Henchmen Guesses

- You never do anything right
- No one likes you
- Everything you do sucks
- You always fail and will continue to fail

Break into parts

- Good and not so good
- This part is hard
- I will focus on one step at a time

**All or nothing:
I can't do anything**

I can't write

Math is easy

I can brainstorm

I can follow a template

I can edit

Reading: Easy

Gym: easy

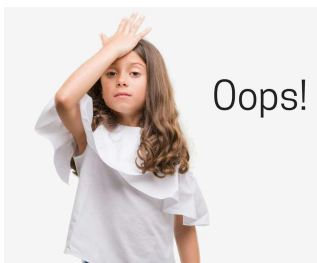
Mistake of the day/ Honourary Mistake Wall





Forging ahead

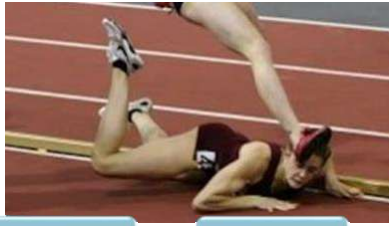
- Avoid getting stuck
- No need to ask why, lecture, or explain the problem
- Have THEM think of the **hows**
 - How will they fix this mistake?
 - How will they move on?
 - How will they handle _____?



Oops!

Build Procedural Thinking!

- Strive for excellence, but address unrealistic standards
 - Emotions related to expectations
- Focus on what's next (vs. circumstances, rumination, should's)



What's next?



What's next?



What's next?



<https://parentsoftheyearbuzzsprout.com/>



OVERPOWERING EMOTIONS

with Dr. Caroline Buzanko

<https://bit.ly/overpoweringemotionspodcast>
