

Teaching & Coaching During Pandemic:

**Best ways to shift coaching and
support to empowerment strategies
during the stressful times**

April 29, 2020



"Our society has so many critical problems that it desperately needs as many active, participating internal-minded members as possible. If feelings of external control, alienation and powerlessness continue to grow, we may be heading for a society of dropouts – each person sitting back, watching the world go by."





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- Julian Rotter (1971)



“The allure of independence, so powerful to previous generations, holds less sway over today’s teens.”

- Jean Twenge
(The Atlantic; September 2017)



Infinite know how
for school



**Preparing for a life-long
journey full of
challenge & excitement!**

WEBINAR COLLABORATION



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Every aspect of daily management during COVID-19 or otherwise requires assertion of well-developed Executive Function. We will define the context of COVID-19 and articulate tips to help everyone learn how to shift your coaching and support strategies to empower our students & clients during these stressful times.

How can we as experts help?

Reframing Expectations & Rethinking Strategies

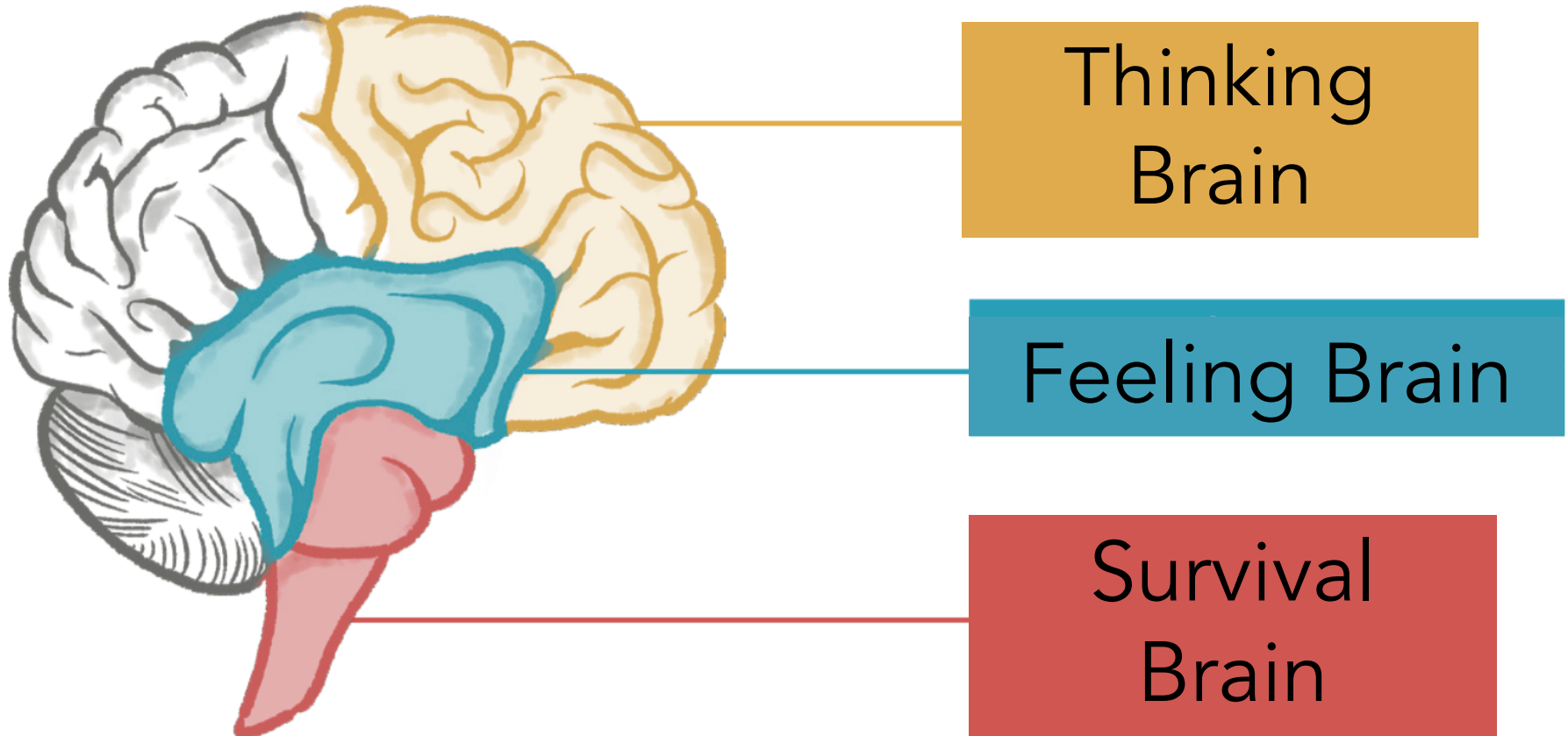


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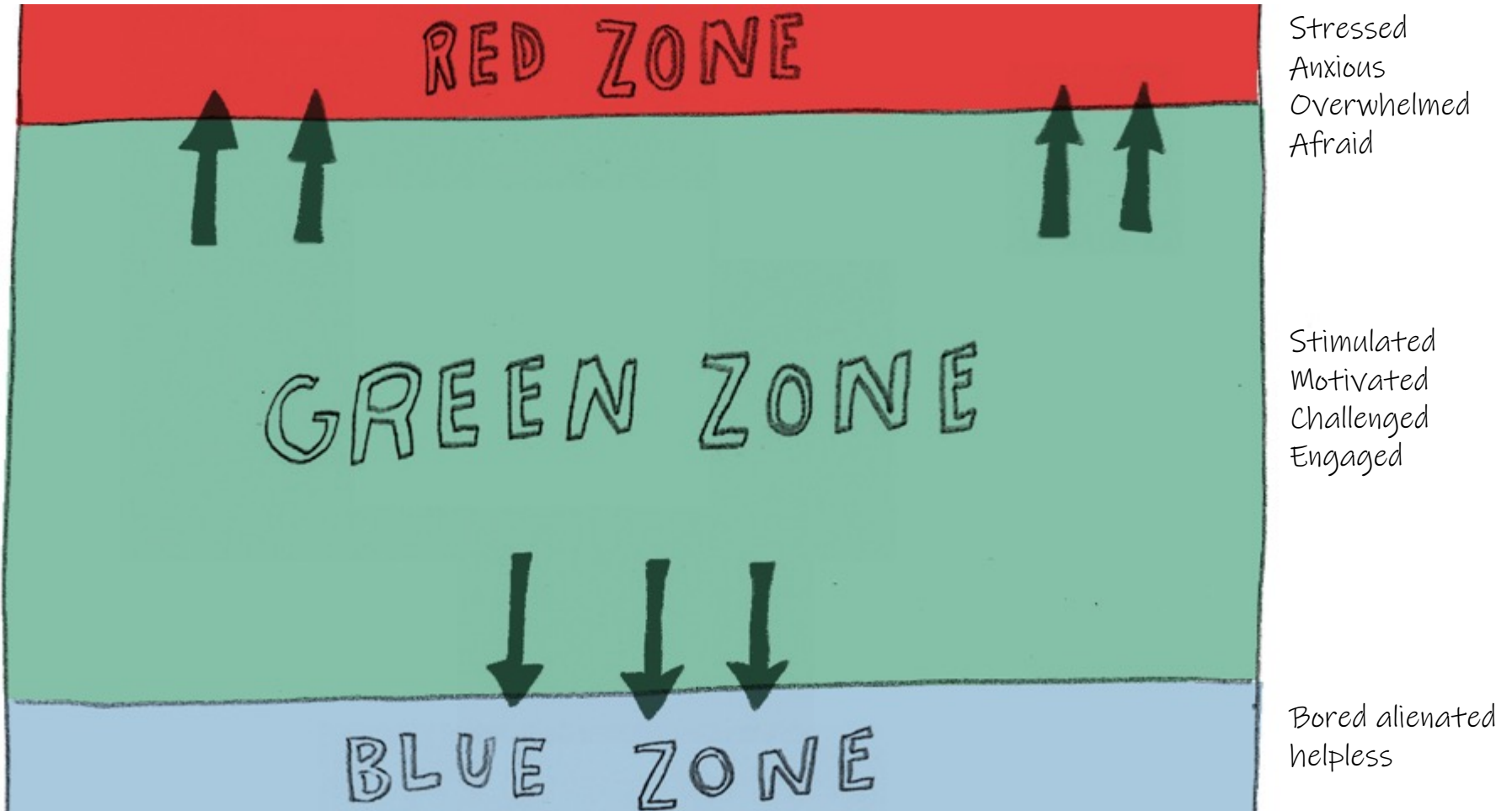
Question 1:

What do we know about the roles that regulation and brain integration play in a child's ability to be resilient and emotionally-regulated during this difficult time?



The brain prioritizes survival, comfort, and connection above problem solving!

Ideal Learning Happens in the Green Zone





Question 1:

How should we factor in the “under-construction” nature of the prefrontal cortex in young and developing brains and then set reasonable and meaningful expectations that are likely to lead to a positive change in our clients and families we serve?

High Performing Brain vs. Brain that is Highly Activated (or overactive) during Toxic Stress



Neural Cement vs. Neural Swamp



Balancing two
contradicting ideas
with two essential
ingredients:

- **Stability** (through Structure and consistency) and
- **Flexibility** (Novelty and challenge)





Question 2:

What does
"promoting EF
skills" look like
right now?

Help Families Make Sense of Their Child's Learning

- Each school is approaching distance-learning differently.
- Before we jump into strategies for students, we need to consider what their learning situation looks like:
 - High-tech vs. low-tech
 - Synchronous vs. asynchronous
 - Teachers as managers vs. parents as managers

For Most, Home \neq School

Consider the differences between classroom-based learning and virtual learning:



Many learning cues are now gone:

- Where the teacher is in the room and what that means
- Glancing at peers for support
- Asking questions and getting clarification in real time
- Our brains are used to thinking about different things at home vs. at school
 - Can make it easier to be distracted by other thoughts/activities when at home

Surviving Discomfort



- Help your child regulate through triggering situations rather than trying to remove all triggers.
- The goal is sometimes to help your child feel a little more comfortable in an uncomfortable situation.



Question 2:

As clinicians, our goal is to see that our clients **USE** the strategies that we have helped create. What is an effective way to get our clients to utilize the methods that we have personalized for them?

Non In-Person Learning



Remember,
few things are
as motivating
as *success*!

7-Steps to Concretize the Strategy Use

Concept credit: Douglas Fisher & Nancy Frey



Example of '25-10' Pomodoro Technique

Traditional Pomodoro method uses a 25-minute cycle followed by a 5-minute break. After the fourth Pomodoro, you are encouraged to take a 15-minute break.



Step 1: Name the Strategy

This is a
“Pomodoro 25-10”
Strategy

Step 2: State the Purpose of the Strategy

After working for 25 minutes,
your brain needs to switch
from the Task-Positive to Task-
Negative Network so that your
brain’s hippocampus can get a
chance to connect all the
information and solidify
learning into new memories.





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Step 3: Explain when strategy or skill is used

"When I have many tasks and projects to get done and on time, I use the Pomodoro 25-10 strategy to help me stay on track and use my time well."

Step 4: Use Analogy to link to prior knowledge to new learning"

"I like to think of this strategy as making sure I am removing rocks that block my path to *free time* for myself. When my work is done in time that I have assigned for it, I am effective and stress free."





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Step 5: Demonstrate *how* the skill, strategy, or task is completed

"I am going to show you a worksheet that needs to be done. First, I'll skim the task to see what I need to do. Then I am going to use my timer for 3 minutes followed by a 30 second break."

Step 6: Alert learners about errors to avoid

"I have to be careful not to lose track of my timer as I take a 30-second break so that I can return to my work without fail."





Step 7: Assess the use of the skill

"Now I am going to see if my 25-10 strategy worked or not. Looks like I didn't stick to the plan as the timer was ticking and I did not return to work after the 30 seconds were over."

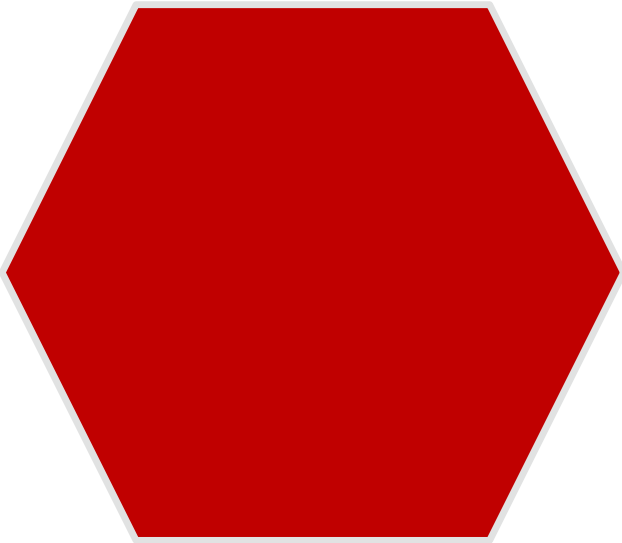


Question 3:

What is one functional strategy parents, teachers, therapists, and other supportive folks working with kids can use to support EF and regulation skills?

S.T.O.P. and Make a Plan

Concept credit: Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC-SLP & Carrie Lindemuth, M.ET.



- **Space:** what is the **location** where your child is trying to work?
- **Time:** what **time of day/night** is your child working on school tasks?
- **Objects:** what **items/materials** does your child have available to help them learn?
- **People:** **who** is available to help your child feel successful as a learner?

Considerations for Space

Does your child's current learning space support focus, sustained attention, engagement, creativity, and success?

- **Noise level:** some kids need noise; others need quiet.
- **Activity level:** who is walking in/out/by? What shared work is happening in that space?
- **Neural familiarity:** If your brain is used to doing a certain activity in a certain space, it can be hard to focus on something else (like academics).
- **Little adjustments can go a long way:** "study cubby," comfy chair/standing, headphones, lighting, etc.



Considerations for Time

Daily Home Schedule

7:00	BREAKFAST	🍳
7:30	FREE PLAY	🌟
8:30	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	📅
10:00	SNACK	🍷
10:30	CRAFTS	✂️
11:00	MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES	🏃
11:30	STORY TIME	📖
12:00	LUNCH	🍽️
12:30	OUTDOOR PLAY	🌳
1:30	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	📅
3:00	COOKING & SNACK	👨🍳
4:00	GAMES & PUZZLES	🎲
4:30	FREE PLAY	🌟
5:30	DINNER	🍕
6:00	FREE PLAY & TECH TIME	📺
7:30	BEDTIME ROUTINE	🛏️

Activity Ideas

LEARNING
 • MATCHING
 • COUNTING
 • PROPORTIONS
 • COLOR/SHAPE ID
 • PATTERNING
 • LETTERS/NUMBERS
 • DESCRIBING
 • ORDERING BY SIZE
 • WRITING

CRAFTS
 • COLLAGE
 • MONITORING
 • STICKERS
 • USING THE SAND
 • LEARNING ABOUT
 • RELATIONS
 • SCRAPBOOKING
 • BUNDLING
 • SHAVING

MOVEMENT
 • SNACK FRUITS
 • GONKOLE (FUN & HUMANITY ONLINE)
 • MOVEMENT SONGS
 • ORSONELLE COURAGE
 • DANCE DANCE
 • BRAIN BREAK
 • ACTIVITIES
 • YOGA POSES

FREE PLAY
 • LEGOS/BLOCKS
 • MAKE A FORT
 • PUPPET SHOW
 • BOLL HOUSE
 • DRAMATIC PLAY
 • BUILD A CITY
 • GONKOLE BEN
 • CREATE A PAGE
 • PLAY DOUGH

COOKING
 • HOMEMADE PIZZA
 • POPCORN
 • CEREAL BARS
 • STOVE TOP POPCORN
 • PLAY DOUGH
 • SLIME/DOOBIE
 • APPLESauce
 • JELLY PUDDING
 • FRUIT SALAD

STORY TIME
 • STORYLINE ONLINE
 • BOOKS ON TAP
 • PICTURE WALK
 • FELT BOARD
 • ALTERNATE
 • STORY TELLING
 • COMPREHENSION
 • QUESTIONS
 • STORY ELEMENTS

GAMES
 • PUZZLE RACE
 • PLAYING CARDS
 • HIDE AND SEEK
 • BOARD GAMES
 • CHANGING
 • FOLLOW THE LEADER
 • SPOON GAMES
 • ACTION STATION
 • I SPY

OUTDOOR
 • WALK IDEAS
 • NATURE WALK
 • SCRAMBLER HUNT
 • CHALK
 • HOPSCOTCH
 • BUBBLES
 • JUMP ROPE
 • SPORTS RACES
 • TAG

- When does your child's brain learn best?
 - Do you have the flexibility to adjust their most challenging learning tasks to occur at their best times?
- Learning time versus family time
 - If your child is too burnt out by the end of the day for family connection time, consider swapping the order.
- If you are working during the day, does school support need to happen in the evenings?

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Considerations for Objects

- The goal is not just to survive, but also to **thrive**
- What your child needs to **survive**:
 - School books
 - Writing materials/paper
 - Calculator
 - What else can you imagine?
- What your child needs to **thrive**:
 - Snack/hydration
 - Motivating reward(s)
 - Music
 - Breaks
 - Focus tool
 - What else can you imagine?



Considerations for People



- Who is the *homework master* and who is the *homework monster*?
 - Not all parents/caregivers are the right fit for every support role.
- Who in your child's network can be supportive even if they're not in the household? How can you access them?
- Use playful parenting strategies to deescalate triggering situations

- Reference: *The Whole-Brain Child*

Breaks vs. Brakes

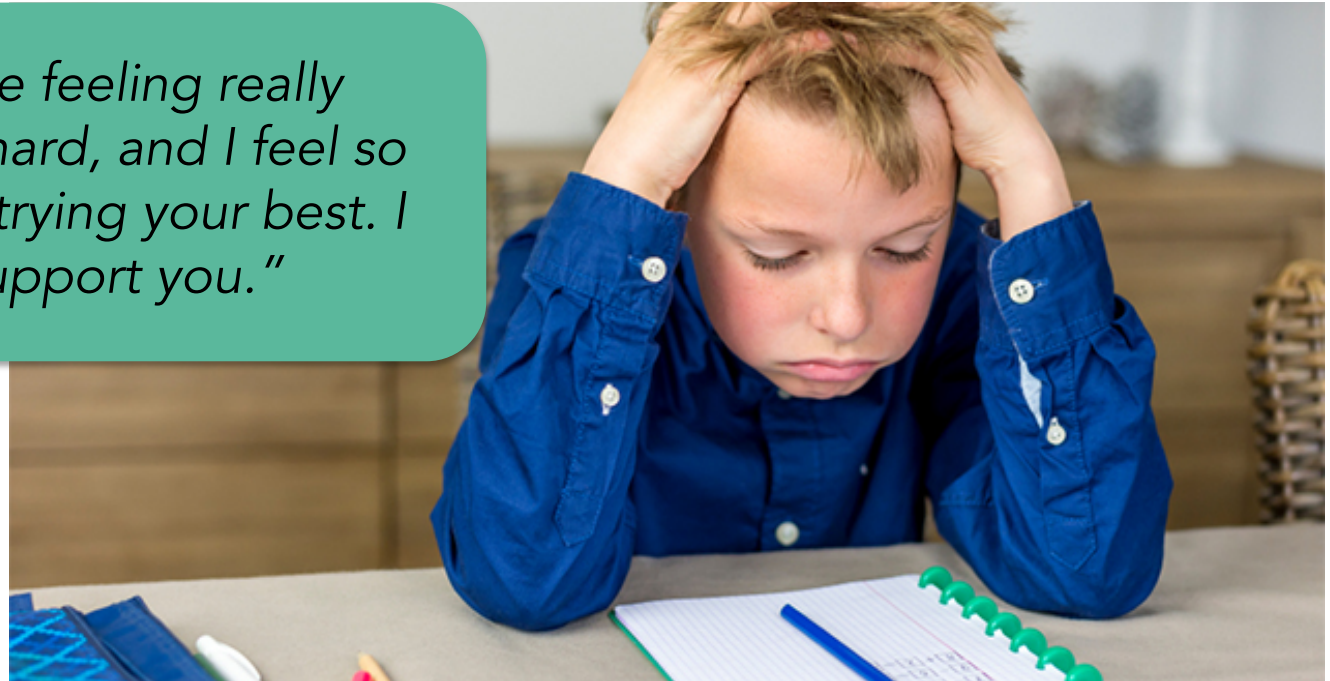
- Sometimes an activity that is meant to be a **break** can accidentally put the **brakes** on learning.
- Break activities have the potential to be highly dysregulating if they are poorly planned:
 - If the activity takes longer than the allotted break time, your child will feel *cheated* out of their break.
 - If the activity is too exhausting, it can be hard to reengage the brain for learning.
 - Some breaks are better for when tasks are over rather than in the middle because it's hard to stop.
 - Consider a "Break Menu"



The Power of "AND"

Instead of solving every problem for your child, communicate your support while your child struggles through something new or challenging. Validation can be a powerful tool!

"I can see you're feeling really frustrated. This is hard, and I feel so proud that you're trying your best. I am here to support you."





Question 3:

How can we apply the findings from positive psychology to create optimal social-emotional conditions that facilitate learning, adaptive problem solving, and emotional calm?



People need a sense of control over their lives. Without it they become:

- Stressed
- Angry
- Uncooperative
- Hostile

The best message to convey to children in these difficult times (or otherwise) is the sense that:

This is your life.

We respect that.

And, we support that!



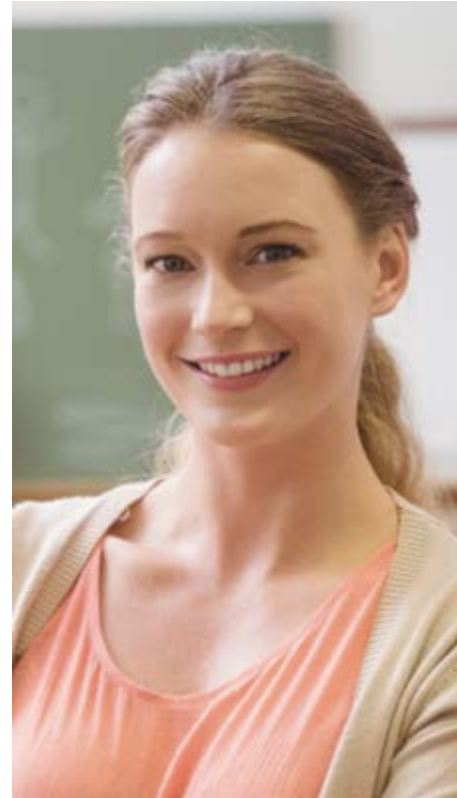
Build a close
nurturing
relationship
with the child



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Always
Champions
for the child



James Baldwin talking about his teacher
Orilla (Bill) Miller

"She (Bill Miller) gave me books to read and talked to me about the books, and about the world . . . and took me to see plays and films, plays and films to which no one else would have dreamed of taking a ten-year-old boy. I loved her, of course, and absolutely. . . . It is certainly partly because of her, who arrived in my terrifying life so soon, that I never really managed to hate white people."

Credit: Documentary "I am not your negro"

A How-To Guide for Better Coaching

- Work on being a non-anxious presence
- Demystify learning challenges
- Bring clarity around issues
- Provide hope





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**Calm is
contagious**

**Return to
equilibrium**

**A Non-Anxious
Presence**

Credit: William Stixrud, Ph.D.

Spiritualize Your Support



Define Your Goal: "I want my clients (kids) to be independent to make decisions & solve problems that brings them joy while causing no pain/harm to others."



When kids ask for help without trying first, inquire: "Show me how you helped yourself. Show me why it didn't work."



When kids do something well: "You must be so proud" and/or "I really loved the way you worked hard on it."



If kids are being uncooperative or unwilling to help themselves, ask: "What do you think I am feeling about your cooperation (work)? Tell me why?"

IN SUMMARY...

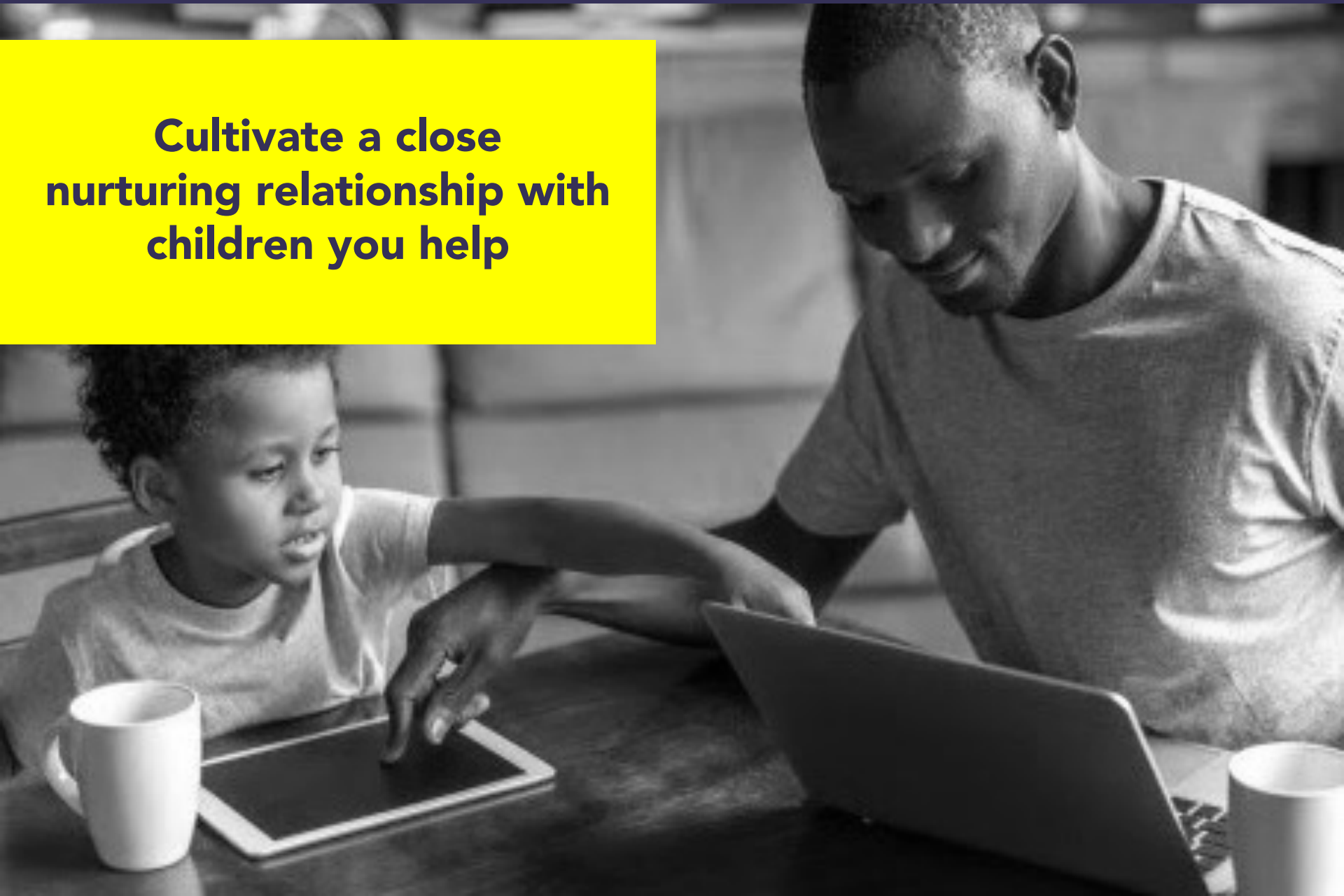


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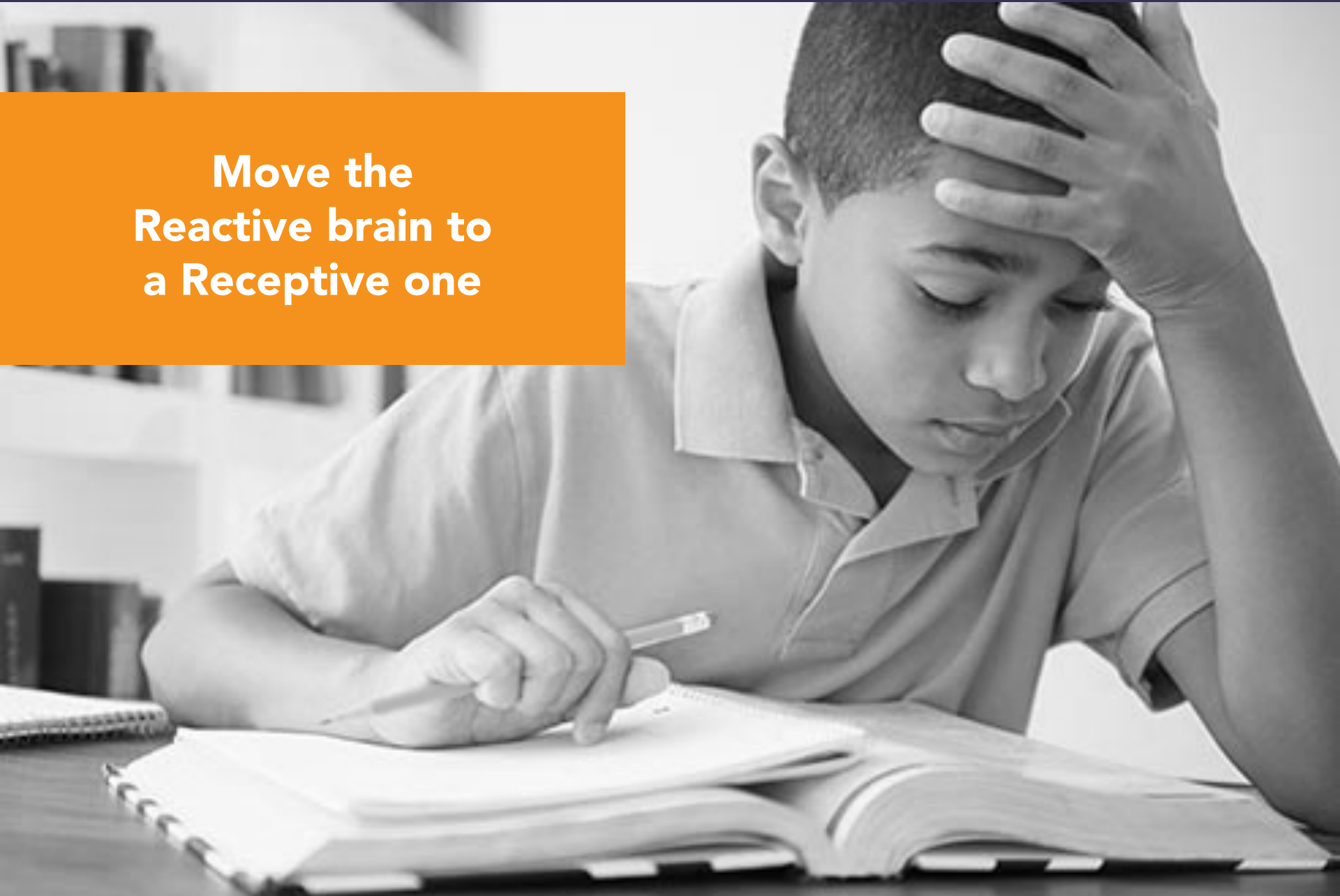
**Cultivate a close
nurturing relationship with
children you help**





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**Move the
Reactive brain to
a Receptive one**






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**Ensure the success of the
S.T.O.P Method**



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A black and white photograph of a beagle puppy being held by a person's hands. The puppy is looking directly at the camera with large, dark eyes. The hands are visible at the bottom, with the thumb and index finger holding the puppy's front paws. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Think of
Breaks vs. Brakes**



**Know the Power
of "and"**



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**Help families find a
rhythm, schedule, or
system that works**



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**Cultivate a
“Non-Anxious Presence”
within yourself**



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A black and white photograph of a young girl with glasses and headphones, sitting at a desk and using a computer mouse. The image is slightly blurred, focusing on the girl's profile. A teal-colored text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**Let your child know and feel
that he is in charge of his
destiny!**

Thank You!



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