"CONCERNING A TEACHER’S INFLUENCE, I HAVE COME TO THE FRIGHTENING CONCLUSION THAT I AM THE DECISIVE ELEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM. IT’S MY PERSONAL APPROACH THAT CREATES THE CLIMATE. IT’S MY DAILY MOOD THAT MAKES THE WEATHER. AS A TEACHER, I POSSESS A TREMENDOUS POWER TO MAKE A CHILD’S LIFE MISERABLE OR JOYOUS. I CAN BE A TOOL OF TORTURE OR AN INSTRUMENT OF INSPIRATION. I CAN HUMILIATE OR HUMOR, HURT OR HEAL. IN ALL SITUATIONS, IT IS MY RESPONSE THAT DECIDES WHETHER A CRISIS WILL BE ESCALATED OR DEESCALATED, AND A CHILD HUMANIZED OR DEHUMANIZED."

--BY HAIM GINOTT
Self-Efficacy
It influences:

SELF-EFFICACY AFFECTS
■ The choices we make
■ The effort we put forth (how hard we try)
■ Our perseverance (how long we persist when we confront obstacles)
■ Our resilience (how quickly we recover from failure or setbacks)

Albert Bandura (1925 -) popularized the term self-efficacy. He defines it as the part of our "self system" that helps us to evaluate our performance. Perceived self-efficacy refers to one's impression of what one is capable of doing. This comes from a variety of sources, such as personal accomplishments and failures, seeing others who are similar to oneself, and verbal persuasion.

Verbal persuasion may temporarily convince people that they should try or avoid some task, but in the final analysis it is one's direct or vicarious experience with success or failure that will most strongly influence one's self-efficacy. For example, a teacher may "fire-up" her students before a standardized test by telling the kids how great they are, but the enthusiasm will be short-lived if the test is completely beyond their ability or their perceived beliefs that they can actually do well.

People with high-perceived self-efficacy try more, accomplish more, and persist longer at a task than people with low perceived self-efficacy. Bandura speculates that this is because people with high-perceived self-efficacy tend to feel they have more control over their environment and, therefore, experience less uncertainty.
Zone of Proximal Development...ZPD

Zone of Proximal Development, an idea developed by Lev Vygotsky over one hundred years ago, seeks to define the process through which students effectively learn in cooperation with a teacher.

A student’s Zone of Proximal Development, or ZPD, defined as the student’s range of ability with and without assistance from a teacher or a more capable peer, consists of two ends: the student’s ability level without assistance and the student’s ability level with assistance.

A classroom that makes the best use of all of its students’ ZPDs should follow the following guidelines:

1. The teacher should act as a scaffold, providing the minimum support necessary for a student to succeed. The idea is to assist without denying the student’s need to build his or her own foundation. The challenge for the teacher, then, is to find the optimal balance between supporting the student and pushing the student to act independently. To effectively scaffold the student, the teacher should stay one step ahead of the student, always challenging him or her to reach beyond his or her current ability level. However, if instruction falls outside of the zone (above or below a student’s ZPD), no growth will occur.

2. To effectively scaffold students within their ZPDs, a teacher should also have an awareness of the different roles students and teachers assume throughout the collaborative process. The roles roughly resemble the following:
   - teacher modeling behavior for the student
   - student imitating the teacher’s behavior
   - teacher fading out instruction
   - student practicing until the skill is mastered.

What lies behind us and what lies in front of us are but tiny matters as compared to what lies within us.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson
Teachers can use many proven effective teaching strategies including the following:

1. Assessing accurately where the learner is in knowledge and experience.

2. Relating content to what the learner already knows or can do.

3. Giving examples of the desired outcome and/or showing the learner what the task is as opposed to what it is not.

4. Breaking the larger outcome into smaller, achievable tasks with chances for feedback along the way.

5. Giving students a chance to orally elaborate (“think out loud”) their problem-solving techniques.

6. Using appropriate verbal clues and prompts to assist students in accessing stored knowledge.

7. Recognizing specific vocabulary that emerges from the exploration of the unit (emphasizing its meaning within the context of the lesson).

8. Regularly asking students to hypothesize or predict what is going to happen next.

9. Giving students time and opportunity to explore deeper meanings and/or to relate the newly acquired knowledge to their lives.

10. Providing time for students to debrief their learning journey and review what worked best for them.

Extrinsic Motivation
(adapted from a Jewish folktale)

A wise old gentleman retired and purchased a modest home near a junior high school. He spent the first few weeks of his retirement in peace and contentment. Then a new school year began. The very next afternoon three young boys, full of youthful, after-school enthusiasm, came down his street, beating merrily on every trash can they encountered. The crashing percussion continued day after day, until finally the wise old man decided it was time to take some action.

The next afternoon, he walked out to meet the young percussionists as they banged their way down the street. Stopping them, he said, "You kids are a lot of fun. I like to see you express your exuberance like that. In fact, I used to do the same thing when I was your age. Will you do me a favor? I'll give you each a dollar if you'll promise to come around every day and do your thing." The kids were elated and continued to do a bang-up job on the trash cans.

After a few days, the old-timer greeted the kids again, but this time he had a sad smile on his face. "This recession's really putting a big dent in my income," he told them. "From now on, I'll only be able to pay you 50 cents to beat on the cans."

The noisemakers were obviously displeased, but they did accept his offer and continued their afternoon ruckus. A few days later, the wily retiree approached them again as they drummed their way down the street.

"Look," he said, "I haven't received my Social Security check yet, so I'm not going to be able to give you more than 25 cents. Will that be okay?"

"A lousy quarter?" the drum leader exclaimed. "If you think we're going to waste our time, beating these cans around for a quarter, you're nuts! No way, mister. We quit!" And the old man enjoyed peace.
What Are Classroom Rewards?

- **Extrinsic rewards** can be defined as rewards that come from an outside source such as the teacher. Rewards include the obvious bonuses such as prizes, certificates, special privileges, gold stars, stickers, candy gum, redeemable tokens, grades, or even money. Teacher praise is also considered to be an extrinsic reward as are more subtle signs of approval such as thumbs up signs, smiles, nods, hugs, or pats on the back.

- **Intrinsic rewards** can be defined as rewards that are inherent or the natural consequence of behavior. Some researchers prefer the term *reinforcers* to rewards because teachers use them to strengthen behavior (make it more likely to be repeated). Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

  Psychological reactance relates to a classic distinction made by motivational psychologists: the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motives. An activity is intrinsically motivating if a person does it voluntarily, without receiving payment or other type of reward. An activity is extrinsically motivated if it is performed primarily for external reinforcement such as food or money.

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- **Intrinsic rewards** can be defined as rewards that are inherent or the natural consequence of behavior. Some researchers prefer the term *reinforcers* to rewards because teachers use them to strengthen behavior (make it more likely to be repeated).

- **Task-contingent rewards** are available to students for merely participating in an activity without regard to any standard of performance (i.e. anyone who turns in a homework paper gets an “A”).
* **Performance-contingent rewards** are available only when the student achieves a certain standard (i.e. anyone who has at least 93% correct responses on the homework paper gets a sticker).

* **Success-contingent rewards** are given for good performance and might reflect either success or progress towards a goal (i.e. anyone who has at least 93% correct responses on the homework paper or improves his/her last score by at least 10% receives a sticker).

Most researchers agree that task-contingent rewards are at best futile and at worst counterproductive. There are varying opinions about the need for either performance-contingent rewards or success-contingent reward.

**Guidelines For Using Classroom Rewards**

- Use the weakest reward required to strengthen a behavior. (Don’t give candy if a sticker will do. Don’t give a sticker if praise will do.)

- When possible, avoid using rewards as incentives.

- Reward at a high rate in the early stages of learning and reduce the frequency of rewards as learning progresses.

- Reward only the behavior you want repeated. (If you reward a long, verbose paper, expect to see lots more of them.)

- Remember that what is an effective reward for one student may not work well with another.

- Reward success, and set standards so that success is within each student’s grasp.

- Bring attention to the rewards (both intrinsic and extrinsic) that are available for students from sources other than the teacher.

- Continually work towards a system that uses less extrinsic rewards.

*Adapted from Paul Chance, 1992, by Debbie Silver*
Carrots and Sticks: The Seven Deadly Flaws

1. They can extinguish intrinsic motivation
2. They can diminish performance.
3. They can crush creativity.
4. They can crowd out good behavior.
5. They can encourage cheating, short-cuts, and unethical behavior.
6. They can become addictive.
7. They can foster short-term thinking.
(Pink, 2009. P. 59)

Alternative to Saying “Good Job!”

1. Say nothing. Sometimes praise calls attention to something that does not need it. Overzealous praise may give the child the idea that you think the positive behavior is a fluke.

2. Say what you saw. A simple evaluation-free acknowledgement lets the child know you noticed. “You went the extra mile in helping your friend.” “You did it!” Or describe what you see. “Wow, you’ve got this room looking a maid was here.”

3. Talk less, ask more. Better than describing is asking questions about the work. “So what made you decide to clean your room like this?” “How did you select such an interesting topic to write about?”
(adapted from Kohn, 2001)
How to Encourage Learners When The Task At Hand Is Boring or Routine

1) Offer a rational explanation for why the task is necessary. (e.g. “Diagramming sentences may seem pointless to you right now, but I promise you it will eventually strengthen your writing skills. Let me give you an example . . .” “Doing these sprints will build your stamina so that you will be a stronger player in the long run.” “Once you commit your multiplication tables to memory, you won’t have to waste time calculating them in your head, and you’ll find that math is a whole lot easier for you.”)

2) Acknowledge that the task is boring. (e.g. “Yeah, I don’t like this part either. It seems so dull and repetitive. However, everyone who has ever succeeded in this had to do the same thing we’re doing.” “Okay, let’s get this part over with so we can get on to the fun stuff.” “I play little games with myself to make this part less boring. Let me show you one you might like to try . . .”)

3) Allow learners to complete the task in their own way. (e.g. “Maybe you would like to do this to music or perhaps do a little rap as you work.” “You can do this in the morning or in the evening – whatever works best for you.” “Sure, you can do the practice steps backwards. That should be interesting.”

(adapted from Pink, 2009)
STEPS IN DELIBERATE PRACTICE

- Remember that deliberate practice has one objective: to improve performance. “People who play tennis once a week for years don’t get any better if they do the same thing each time,” Ericsson has said. “Deliberate practice is about changing your performance, setting new goals and straining yourself to reach a bit higher each time.”

- Repeat, repeat, repeat. Repetition matters. Basketball greats don’t shoot ten free throws at the end of team practice; they shoot five hundred.

- Seek constant, critical feedback. If you don’t know how you’re doing, you won’t know what to improve.

- Focus ruthlessly on where you need help. While many of us work on what we’re already good at, says Ericsson, “those who get better work on their weaknesses.”

- Prepare for the process to be mentally and physically exhausting. That’s why so few people commit to it, but that’s why it works. (Pink, 2009, p. 159)

Attribution Theory

- Task Difficulty
- Luck
- Innate Ability or Talent
- Effort

External (Controlled by other than Self)
- Task Difficulty
- Luck
- Innate Ability or Talent

Internal (Controlled by Self)
- Effort
STRAATEGIES TO COMBAT LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

1. Help students understand that everyone has problems, fears, failures, and self-doubt. Share stories about people like those who have overcome similar or even harsher circumstances.

2. Help learners attribute their success or lack of it to internal rather than external causes and show them how they have power over the results.

3. Treat students’ successes as though they are normal, not an isolated example or a fluke.

4. Help learners seek alternate paths to success when they encounter a roadblock or setback.

5. Help students learn the difference between hard work and strategic effort.

6. Continually reinforce the idea that the students can work on things within their control, like effort and choices, and they can always control those parts of her life.

7. Concentrate on improvement rather than on a finite goal. Give continual feedback on progress toward the goal.

8. Keep the learner operating in the zone of proximal development. Tasks that are too easy or too difficult will squash motivation.

9. Help students understand that intelligence and talent are not permanent entities. They can be incrementally improved in everyone.

10. Use feedback that is specific, constructive, and task specific.

“Praise should deal, not with the child’s personality attributes, but with his efforts and achievements” – Haim Ginott
### Implicit Personality Theory

**Dr. Carol S. Dweck, Stanford University**

#### Fixed Mindset (Entity Theory)

- Either I am smart or I am not.
- One is born with a certain amount of intelligence.
- Smart is making no mistakes, going fast, and about the outcome being perfect.
- Failure is not an outcome, it is an identity.
- If I fail, people may realize I was/am an imposter, and I am not as good as they think I am.
- So if I fail, I might not just be judged, but I might also be unworthy of love.

> “Constructive means helping the child to fix something, build a better product, or do a better job.” -- Carol Dweck

#### Growth Mindset (Incremental Theory)

- A belief that effort is a positive, constructive force.
- Development and progress is important – not just the product or achievement.
- One can substantially change, stretch, and grow, and that is desirable.
- Brains can become “bigger.” Challenge is good!
- Being on a learning edge is the smart thing to do.
Why Is It Hard to Promote a Growth Mindset?

• Larger society has said for a long time that, “Success is about being more gifted than others, that failure does measure you, and that effort is for those who can’t make it on talent.”

• We don’t talk about vulnerability and struggle as good things. We are an instant-success society. Good job! Great! Way to go!

• We have told our students they can be anything they want to be, and that is simply not the whole truth!

• The media gives us an unrealistic view of success with all the “instant stars.” (Reality TV, etc.)

• It is hard to work with an individual who is struggling or trying to cope.

• We don’t value and acknowledge risk-taking enough.

When Do You Feel Smart?

Growth Mindset:
“When it’s really hard, and I try really hard, and I can so something I couldn’t do before”

“When I work on something a long time and start to figure it out.

For them it’s not about immediate perfection. It’s about learning something over time: confronting a challenge and making progress.

Fixed Mindset:
“It’s when I don’t make any mistakes.”

“When I finish something fast and it’s perfect.”

“When something is easy for me, but other people can’t do it.”

It’s about being perfect right now!
Implicit Personality Theory

Leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to:

- **Challenges:**
  - Avoid challenges

- **Obstacles:**
  - Give up easily

- **Effort:**
  - See effort as fruitless or worse

- **Criticism:**
  - Ignore useful negative feedback

- **Success of others:**
  - Feel threatened by the success of others

As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential.

Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to:

- **Challenges:**
  - Embrace challenges

- **Obstacles:**
  - Persist in the face of setbacks

- **Effort:**
  - See effort as the path to mastery

- **Criticism:**
  - Learn from criticism

- **Success of others:**
  - Find lessons and inspiration in the success of others

As a result, they reach ever-higher levels of achievement.
Helping Kids Grow Their Mindsets

- Strive to deliver the message, “You’re a developing person, and I’m interested in your development.” NOT “You have permanent traits, and I’m judging them.”

- Remember that praising children’s intelligence or talent sends a fixed-mindset message. Focus on the processes they used -- their strategies, effort, or choices.

- Remember that constructive criticism is feedback that helps the child understand how to fix something. It’s not feedback that labels or simply excuses the child.

- Help children set goals. Remember that having innate talent is not a goal. Expanding skills and knowledge is.

- Lowering standards does NOT raise a student’s self-esteem. Neither does raising standards without giving students ways of reaching them.

- Great teachers believe in the growth of talent and intellect and are fascinated by the process of learning.


