

LEADERSHIP IN A CHAOTIC WORLD

Jim Mason, LPCC, Principal
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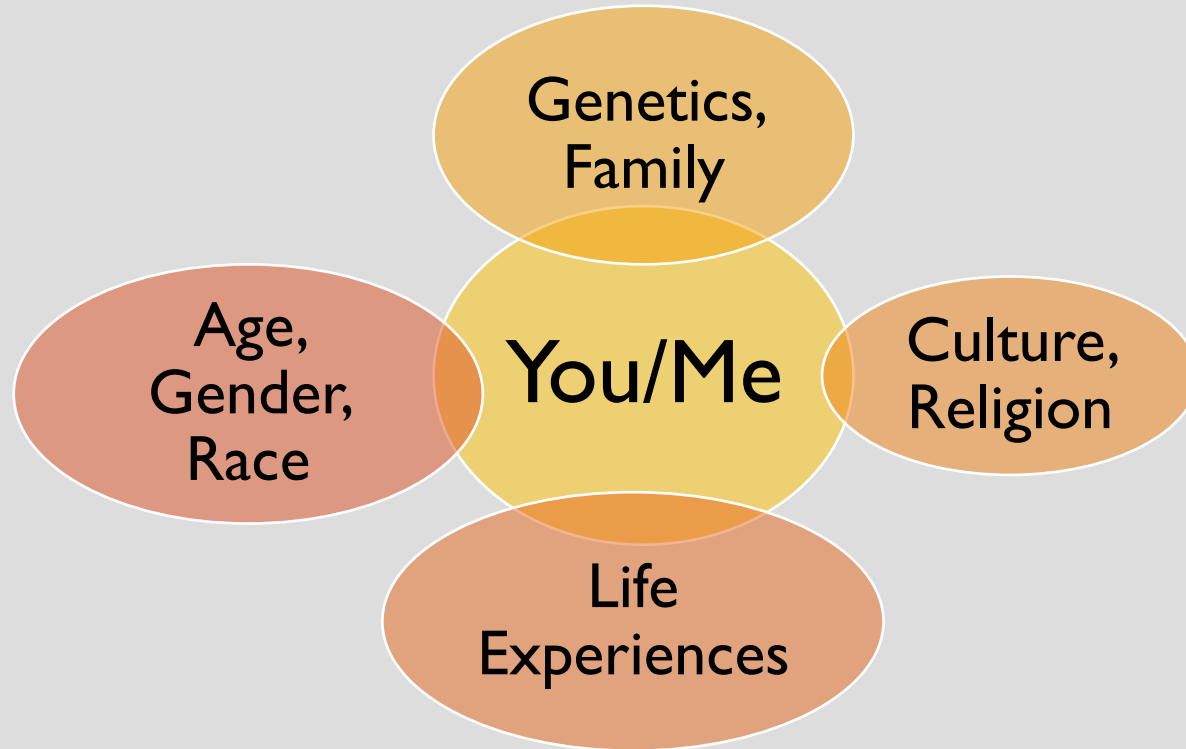
Dave Wallace
Former Beech Acres Parenting Center board chair
(Jim's Old Boss)

EFFECTIVE LEADERS...

- **Get things done** (Make a difference; by setting goals, implementing plans, meeting deadlines, showing results, etc.)
- **Bring people along** (With, through, and for others; by including, listening, encouraging, challenging, recognizing, etc.)



HOW WE SEE OUR WORLD





“There is no
one alive who
is you-er than
you!”

- Dr. Seuss

MINDFUL LEADERSHIP MOMENT

“TRUTH OR LIES” COURSE GOALS

- Improve independent thinking capability
- Apply creative and critical thinking to mitigate reality distortion
- Expand capability to seek solutions to challenges we face
- Learn how to adopt new models of how to think independently

V.U.C.A. WORLD

- **Volatile:** The nature, dynamics and speed of change
- **Uncertain:** Lack of predictability, prospects for surprise
- **Complex:** Many forces with confounding issues, no cause & effect chain, confusion
- **Ambiguous:** Haziness of reality, potential to misread

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY SUPER CYCLE

- 5G Connectivity & Quantum Computing
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - Wearables
 - Biotech
 - ETC.



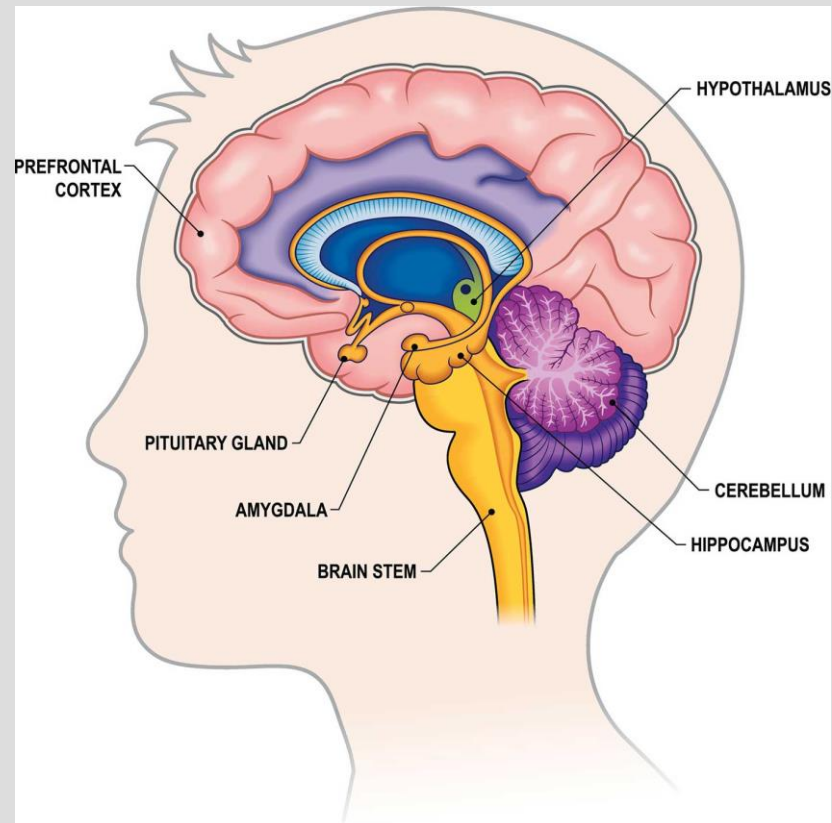
OVERWHELMED

“The world and my life are unfolding at a speed that my nervous system and my psyche cannot manage.”

-Jon Kabat Zin, Mindfulness Thought Leader



90% OF WHAT THE HUMAN BRAIN DOES IS
'PERCEIVE' AND 'JUDGE'

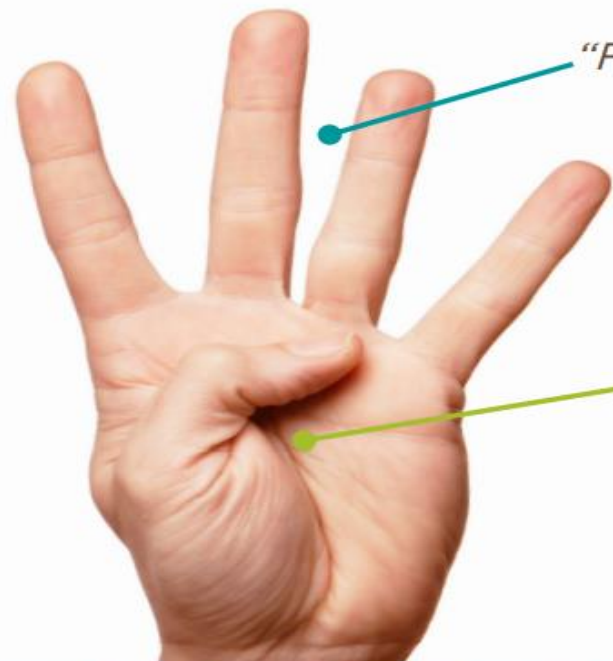


HOW OUR BRAIN REACTS TO VUCA EXPERIENCES

UPSTAIRS BRAIN

Prefrontal cortex

Allows you to make good choices and think clearly.



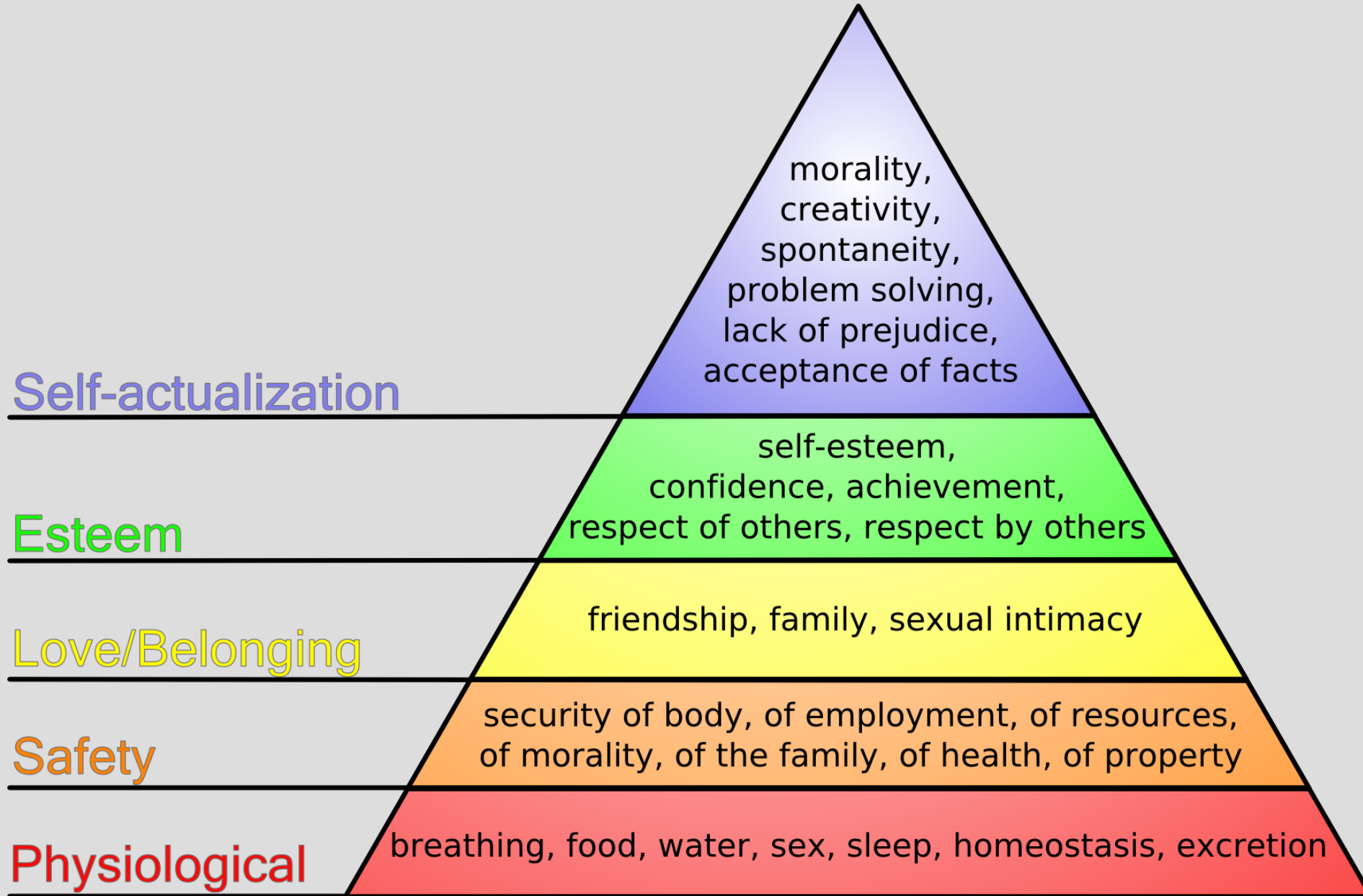
"Flipping Your Lid"

DOWNSTAIRS BRAIN

The Amygdala

Alarm center of our big emotions such as anger, fear and frustration.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



ILLUSORY TRUTH EFFECT

- Cognitive Fluency: The ease with which the brain processes information. Repeated information is processed more fluently. This fluency can be mistaken for the truth.
- Heuristics: The brain uses heuristics (mental shortcuts) to make quick decisions. This enables the person to react immediately, particularly when under threat.
- Source Amnesia: With repeated exposure, people remember the information but *forget* where it came from.
- Confirmation Bias: People are more likely to believe repeated information that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs.

TWO MINDSETS

CAROL DWECK, PH.D.

- **FIXED:** Intelligence is static, it doesn't change. This leads to a **desire to look smart**, and therefore a tendency to:
 - Avoid challenges
 - Give up easily when facing obstacles
 - See effort as fruitless
 - Ignore useful negative feedback
 - Feel threatened by the success of others
- **GROWTH:** Intelligence can be developed. This leads to a **desire to learn**, and therefore a tendency to:
 - Embrace challenges
 - Persist in the face of obstacles
 - See effort as the path to mastery/success
 - Learn from criticism
 - Find lessons and inspiration in the success of others





CHINESE SYMBOL FOR CRISIS

EFFECTIVE LEADERS...

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RESEARCH BY GALLUP

WHAT FOLLOWERS WANT FROM THEIR LEADERS...

- Stability
- Compassion
- Hope
- Trust



**LEADERSHIP
IN A V.U.C.A. WORLD**

**BEECH ACRES PARENTING
CENTER**

A Consistent Mission Adapted to the Times

From a 19th century orphan home....



To a 21st century parenting center...



**EMPOWERING
PARENTS
STRENGTHENING
KIDS
TOGETHER**



Cincinnati
Enquirer's Top
Places to Work



Better Business
Bureau Torch
Award



Accredited by
the Council on
Accreditation

IMPACT OF TODAY'S VUCA ENVIRONMENT ON CHILDREN & TEENS (CDC REPORT)

- 40% of high school students feeling so sad or hopeless that they could not engage in their regular activities for at least two weeks
- Suicide attempts among adolescents jumped 31% in 2020 compared to 2019.
- Things are worse for girls;
 - 30% drank in past 30 days
 - 20% experienced sexual violence
 - 60% experienced persistent sadness and hopelessness
 - 25% made a suicide plan
- 70% of LGBTQ+ had persistent sadness and hopelessness & 25% attempted suicide during the past year
- 35% of undergraduates and 32% of graduate & professional students were depressed, while 39% of both groups had generalized anxiety.
- 25% of people affected by mass shooting incident suffer from PTSD

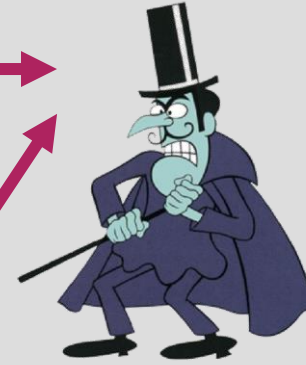


COMMON APPROACH TO “HELPING”



HERO

**Drama
Triangle**



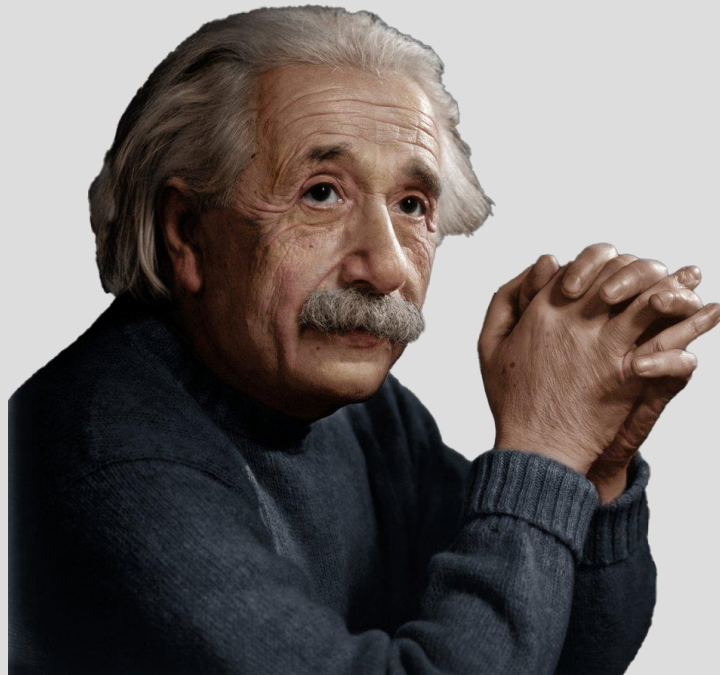
VILLIAN

VICTIM



“Problems cannot be solved
at the same level of awareness that created them.”

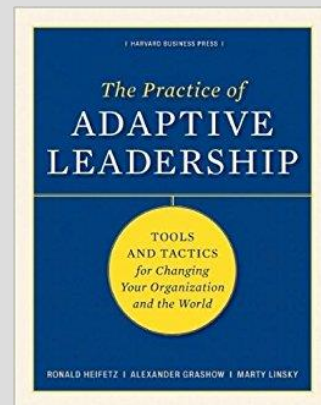
-Albert Einstein



TECHNICAL VS. ADAPTIVE

Technical Problems

- Easy to identify
- Known solutions exist (cause & effect)
- Solvable by an authority or expert
- Change in just one or a few places; often contained within organizational boundaries
- People are generally receptive
- Solutions implemented quickly—even by edict



Adaptive Challenges

- Difficult to identify (and easy to deny)
- Solutions are systemic and complex
- Needs changes in values, beliefs, roles, relationships, & approaches to work
- Require change in numerous places, some distant and/or outside organizational boundaries
- People resist changing, blame others.
- People facing problem directly best to help solve it
- “Solutions” require experiments and new discoveries; takes time & learning, not edicts.



“The single biggest failure of leadership is to treat adaptive challenges like technical problems.”

- Ron Heifetz, Harvard University



SHIFTED OUR FOCUS

From...

- Rescuing
- Reactive/Autopilot
- Focus on Deficits
- Blame and Punish
- Constrained by Limits
- Treat the Symptoms
- Immediate Gratification
- Loving our Solution
- This must work!
- We know what's best
- External Power & Influence

To...

- Getting off the Triangle
- Proactive/Intentional
- Focus on Strengths to build capability
- Accept and Teach
- Empowered by Growth
- Address Root Causes
- Long Term Perspective
- Loving the Problem
- Continuous test and learn
- Families know what's best
- Internal Power & Influence



SHIFTED OUR LEADERSHIP STYLE

From...

- Top down 'telling'
- Leadership by title
- Failures are setbacks
- Asking "What's the answer?"
- Asking customers to get ROI or surveys to understand behavior
- Barriers that justify bureaucracy

To

- Shared vision & values
- Leadership by strengths
- 'Failure' seen as learning
- Asking "What should we be asking?"
- Observing and pivoting in fast learning cycles
- Bust barriers to innovation

We believe...

*All parents **love** their children and want the **best** for them.*

***Parenting is a journey** in which all parents face happiness, success, confusion and self-doubt.*

*Parents do the **best they can** given their awareness, capability and circumstances at any given time.*

***Everyone is born with unique talents and gifts.** We can find true joy and meaning when we strive to discover, develop, and share them.*

*Parents learn best in an **atmosphere of inspiration, acceptance, support, and competent guidance.***

Parents and children can benefit from an intentional, strength-based, mindful approach to child-rearing.

NATURAL STRENGTH PARENTING™
UNCOVERING THE **STRENGTHS** OF ALL **CHILDREN**
WITH A **MINDFUL** FRAMEWORK
FOR **INTENTIONAL** GROWTH.

Intentional

I raise my children ‘on purpose’ by clarifying the legacy I want to leave and the life values I want them to learn.

Strength-Based

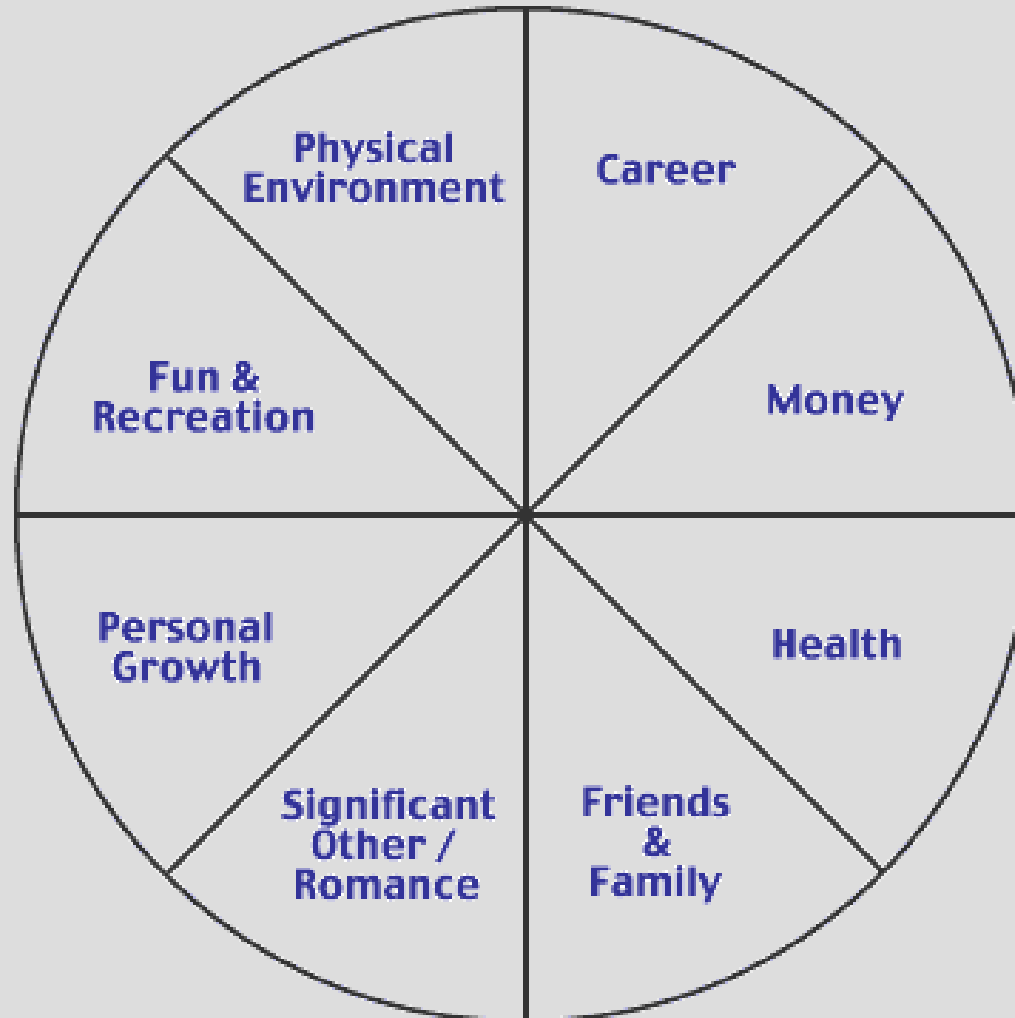
I strive to see and grow my child’s natural gifts. This process begins with an awareness and appreciation of my own strengths as a parent and human being. Doing so leads to a sense of empowerment, joy, and connection with our life’s passions.

Mindful

Being present, fully engaged and accepting in each moment enables me to see personal strengths in myself and others, and carry out my intentions.



NOTE: NSP CONCEPTS APPLY TO MORE THAN PARENTING



INTENTION IS...

Shifting from a reactive, auto-pilot, whack-a-mole mindset to one which is purposeful and proactive.

GOALS= Targeted outcomes with clear metrics and deadlines

vs.

INTENTIONS=Overarching attitudes or states of mind that guide one's choices and behavior

- *Long Term*: What life legacy do I want to leave? (E.g; family, community impact)
- *Today/Now*: How should my actions today reflect my overarching intentions?
 - E.g; How do I want to show up when my child or my friend needs help?

IMAGINING MY LONG-TERM PARENTING INTENTION...

- What will I *preserve*, and *let go of*, from my own parents?
- How will my child remember me when I'm gone?
- What non-financial legacy will I leave?
- What will our successful family look like in 20 years?

IMAGINING MY LONG-TERM PARENTING INTENTION FOR MY CHILD AS AN ADULT

- What specific qualities & values do I hope to see in my child at age 30?
- How will I describe my relationship with her/him as an adult?
- What kind of parent do I want her/him to be?

STRENGTH-BASED IS..

VIA Character Strengths

Everyone has all 24 Strengths

No two people are identical

Each person has their unique 'way of being'

Our top 5-10 remain rather consistent over time

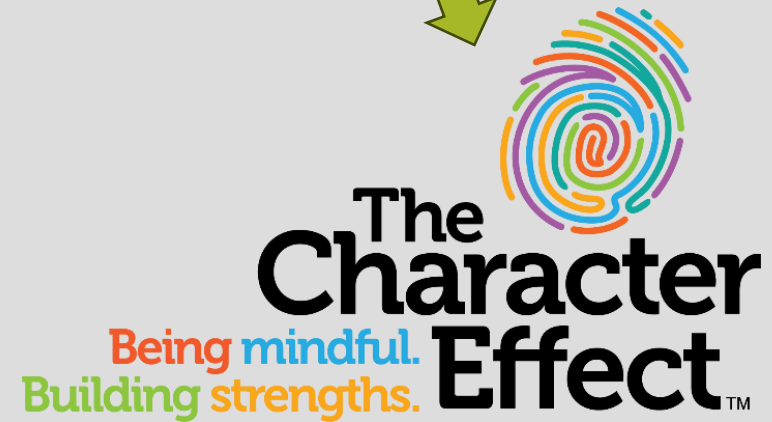


Source: Peterson, Christopher & Seligman, Martin EP. (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, cop.

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UNCOVERING THE **STRENGTHS** OF ALL **CHILDREN**
WITH A **MINDFUL** FRAMEWORK
FOR **INTENTIONAL** GROWTH.



Proven effective with parents in pediatric offices



Proven effective with teachers, students,
and parents in schools



APPLYING A STRENGTHS-FOCUSED APPROACH

- When we INTENTIONALLY shift to a ‘seeing’ and ‘applying’ our **strengths**, we feel authentic, comfortable, confident, energized, and in ‘the zone’. It also promotes better brain health:
 - Enhance neural efficiency
 - Increase dopamine levels
 - Reduce stress
 - Improve cognitive functioning
 - Greater emotional well-being
 - Promotes life-long learning

STRENGTHS SPOTTING

- Reflect on your own top strengths. Notice when you find yourself expressing one of them. How do you feel? What effect did it have on you and another person?
- Build a language of strengths; Familiarize yourself with the definitions on viacharacter.org and other sources.
- Spot strengths in others. You may try replacing 'good job' with, "I appreciate the PERSEVERANCE you showed to get that job done and beat the deadline."

MINDFULNESS IS...

- Mindfulness is the practice **observing** our **thoughts** and **feelings** in the **moment without judging** them.
- Mindful responsiveness is **the momentary space between** an ‘incoming stimulus’ (threat?!) and my external reaction to it...metacognition
- Mindful Breathing is one of the most powerful personal and relationship tools we all have.
 - And it’s always available!

INTENTIONAL STRENGTH
MINDFUL MOMENT

TAKEWAYS??