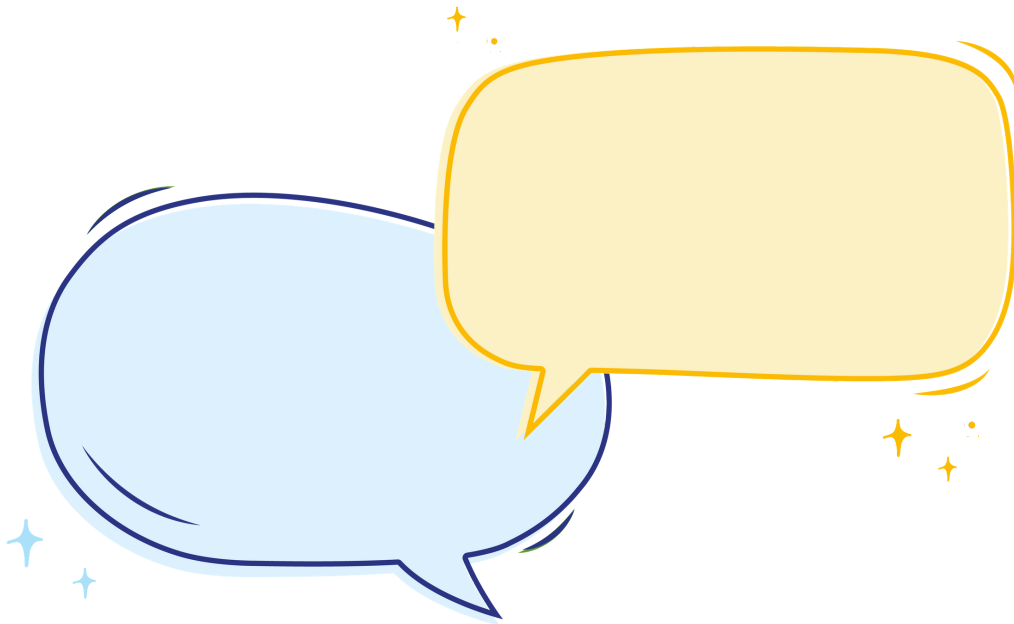


YOUR WORDS MATTER

How to talk to children so they develop a growth mindset and "I can do hard things" attitude

VOLUME 1



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Big Life Journal team

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO "RAIN" ON THEIR NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Our minds constantly create mental drama. Sometimes it's so powerful that we actually believe it. And we make ourselves miserable because of it. When you teach your child to surround their negative thinking with compassion, it becomes easier for them to move on.



THE **RAIN TECHNIQUE** CAN HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME THEIR BEST FRIEND
INSTEAD OF THEIR OWN WORST CRITIC.

RECOGNIZE → **ALLOW** → **INVESTIGATE** → **NON-IDENTIFY**

R STEP 1: RECOGNIZE THE TROUBLING EMOTION OR THOUGHT

ASK YOUR CHILD:

"How are you feeling?"

"Where do you feel it in your body?"

THEY MIGHT SAY

"I'm so mad at myself for failing my spelling test. I am so stupid!"

A STEP 2: ALLOW THE MOMENT TO HAPPEN

TELL YOUR CHILD:

"We need to let our thoughts and feelings just be there. Even if we don't like it. It's okay to feel this way."

I STEP 3: INVESTIGATE WITH KINDNESS

ASK YOUR CHILD:

"When have you felt the same way before?
What do you need right now?"

THEY MIGHT SAY

"I felt the same after my biology test...I'm bad at it too."

N STEP 4: NON-IDENTIFY

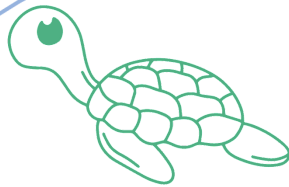
TELL YOUR CHILD:

"Sometimes we have angry thoughts and feelings and it's okay. Our thoughts are not always true though so we can't believe them all the time. Our thoughts and feelings come and go. **They are not who we are.** You can pretend that your angry, sad feelings and thoughts are like clouds. Clouds pass, the sun comes out again, and you feel better."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ASSERTIVE?

Being passive

"I'M OK WITH WHATEVER YOU WANT."



- You hide
- You feel you have no control.
- You're not expressing your needs.
- You avoid problems.
- A lack of eye contact

Being assertive

"I DON'T WANT TO PLAY TAG. DO YOU WANT TO PLAY FOOTBALL INSTEAD?"



- You inform
- You're in control of yourself.
- You respect your and others' needs.
- You are calm but firm.
- A steady eye contact

Being aggressive

"YOU CAN'T PLAY WITH ME IF YOU DON'T PLAY THIS GAME."



- You attack
- You want to control others.
- You focus on your own needs only.
- You're rude or bossy.
- Eye rolling

WHAT TO ASK KIDS INSTEAD OF "HOW WAS YOUR DAY?"

Instead of:

How was your day?



Try this:

What's one thing that made you laugh today?

You can learn a lot about your child's sense of humor, friends, and get them smiling by asking them to recount things that made them laugh.

Instead of:

Did you eat your lunch?



Try this:

Who did you sit by at lunch today?

Allowing your child to discuss friends they may have a hard time getting along with, opens opportunities to discuss how others make them feel.

Instead of:

Did you have a good day?



Try this:

What did you do that made someone smile today?

Show your kids that school isn't just about academics. Kindness matters.

Instead of:

What did you learn at school?



Try this:

Did you enjoy art or science more today? Why?

When questions are broad, it's easy for a child to feel unsure of how to answer. Being specific facilitates a detailed response and opens the door for further discussion.

Instead of:

What did you do today?



Try this:

I love hearing about your day.

Sometimes questions are overwhelming. Just letting your child know that you're interested, gives them permission to share when they are ready.

Instead of:

How was your day?



Try this:

What was easier today than yesterday?

Encouraging your kids to notice that their practice is making a difference helps instill a positive self-image and a growth mindset.

TURN NEGATIVE LABELS INTO POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

WHEN WE TELL OUR CHILDREN:

"DON'T BE SO BOSSY!"
"WHY ARE YOU SO MESSY?"
"STOP BEING SO SENSITIVE..."



WHAT THEY LEARN IS:

"I'M BOSSY."
"I'M MESSY."
"I'M SENSITIVE."

THESE LABELS BECOME THEIR INNER VOICE.

HERE'S HOW TO REFRAME

SHY	→	TAKES THEIR TIME TO KNOW SOMEONE	QUIET	→	THOUGHTFUL, CONSIDERATE
MESSY	→	CREATIVE	STUBBORN	→	PERSISTENT
SENSITIVE, EMOTIONAL	→	EMPATHETIC	BOSSY	→	HAS LEADERSHIP SKILLS
DEMANDING	→	ASSERTIVE	LOUD	→	ENTHUSIASTIC
RIGID	→	ORGANIZED	RESTLESS	→	ACTIVE
PICKY	→	SELECTIVE	DRAMATIC	→	EXPRESSIVE
WILD	→	ENERGETIC	NERVOUS, FEARFUL	→	THOUGHTFUL, CAREFUL

BONUS TIP

If your child struggles with self-image, ask them **what they like about themselves** and turn it into their daily affirmations (they'll be more likely to stick).

"I AM FUNNY."

"I AM GREAT AT LEARNING NEW THINGS."



15 COMPLIMENTS FOR KIDS

THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH LOOKS

- ♥ Thank you for being you.
- ♥ I love listening to your stories.
- ♥ You're a thoughtful friend.
- ♥ You make me smile.
- ♥ You make others feel welcome.
- ♥ I admire your confidence.
- ♥ Your passion is contagious.
- ♥ Love spending time with you.
- ♥ You lead others without being bossy.
- ♥ You're determined.
- ♥ I love how focused you are.
- ♥ You're a great listener.
- ♥ Your ideas matter.
- ♥ You give great advice.
- ♥ You care for others with such kindness.

HOW TO COMPLIMENT YOUR CHILD TO BUILD SELF-ESTEEM:

- ♥ Focus on non-appearance related compliments
- ♥ Be sincere (children can tell)
- ♥ Focus on what they can control or their actions
- ♥ Communicate unconditional love (do not add "but")
- ♥ Model saying, "Thank You," when you receive a compliment

COMPLIMENTING YOUR CHILD ON SOMETHING OTHER THAN THEIR LOOKS HELPS BUILD THEIR SELF-ESTEEM AND TEACHES THEM THAT WHO THEY ARE IS WHAT MATTERS MOST.

10 THINGS TO SAY INSTEAD OF "HAVE A GOOD DAY!"



"I believe in you!"



"Make today great!"



"Be the best YOU."



"Smile at someone today!"



"Make a new friend today."



"Be kind. Be helpful. Be YOU."



"Ask good questions."



"You can do hard things!"



"Fill someone's bucket!"



"Make yourself proud!"



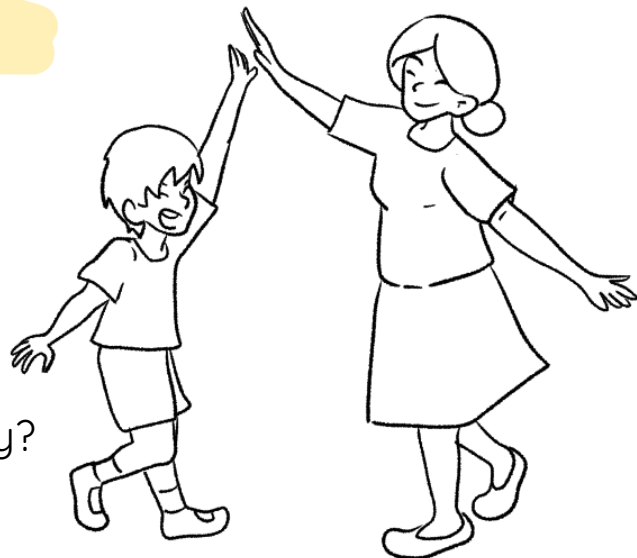
"Go make a difference!"



"Be a kind friend!"

5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD AT THE END OF EACH DAY

- ◆ How were you kind today?
- ◆ What questions did you ask today?
- ◆ What is one thing you learned today?
- ◆ What was your favorite mistake today?
- ◆ How can you make tomorrow great?



COMMON WAYS WE UNINTENTIONALLY BREAK OUR CHILD'S SPIRIT

★ WE UNINTENTIONALLY **SHAME** TO GET COMPLIANCE:

"Why can't you behave? All the other children are sitting quietly."



★ **INSTEAD, ADDRESS WHAT'S CAUSING THE BEHAVIOR:**

"I see you are having a hard time sitting still. Let's think about what we can do to keep your mind busy."

★ WE **LABEL** AND CREATE A FIXED IDEA OF WHO THEY ARE:

"He's so shy, he probably won't play with them."



★ **INSTEAD, DESCRIBE BEHAVIORS AND GIVE THEM A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THEMSELVES:**

"He is observing what's going on first."

★ WE **CONFUSE** THEM BY ENCOURAGING BOUNDARIES BUT THEN PUSHING THEM:

"I know you want to sit here but he's asking you to move next to him. Don't make him sad."



★ **INSTEAD, RESPECT BOUNDARIES TO BUILD A STRONG PERSONAL VOICE AND THE ABILITY TO SAY "NO":**

"She said she wants to sit here. Perhaps she can sit by you another time."

★ WE **DISMISS OR AVOID** SOME OF THEIR BIGGER EMOTIONS:

"You are unreasonable. Go to your room until you can control yourself."



★ **INSTEAD, BE PRESENT AND AVAILABLE FOR ALL EMOTIONS TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO SHARE THEIR TRUE SELVES WITH YOU:**

"I see you are frustrated and mad. I'm here to help."

★ WE **SUGGEST** THAT OUR CHILDREN ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR EMOTIONS:

"You are making me so mad. Just pick up the shoes."



★ **INSTEAD, ACKNOWLEDGE THAT EACH PERSON IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN EMOTIONS, TEACHING ACCOUNTABILITY:**

"I am feeling upset right now. While I calm myself down, please take care of your shoes."

★ WE **EXPECT** OUR CHILDREN TO ACT LIKE ADULTS AND THEN GETTING FRUSTRATED WHEN THEY DON'T:

"Act your age. Stop doing that."



★ **INSTEAD, REMEMBER THAT THEIR DEVELOPING BRAINS STILL NEED GUIDANCE ON ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS:**

"You are having difficulty sitting still. I know your body wants to move but I need you to calm your body and focus your attention."

WHEN WE ENCOURAGE: SELF-CONTROL, SELF-EXPRESSION, FLEXIBLE THINKING,
ACCEPTANCE OF ALL EMOTIONS, BOUNDARIES, ACCOUNTABILITY.
WE NURTURE OUR CHILD'S SPIRIT AND AUTHENTICITY.

5 PROVEN WAYS TO BUILD HIGH SELF-ESTEEM IN KIDS

1 MODEL IT BY...

◆ CELEBRATING SUCCESSES

"I'm so glad I did skateboarding with you. I was nervous but I tried it. Go me!"

◆ NORMALIZING FAILURES

"I lost my temper. Next time, I'll take a deep breath, and count to 10 before I say anything. Then I'll be more in control of my feelings."

3 ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE THROUGH...

◆ SUGGESTING A KID-FRIENDLY TASK

"Do you want to help with making breakfast today?"

◆ GIVING OPTIONS SO THEY FEEL IN CONTROL

"Hm... I need someone to butter the toast or set the table. Which would you like to try?"

2 RESPECT THEIR CHOICES BY...

◆ SHOWING INTEREST

"Who do you like watching on Tik Tok? What do you like about them?"

◆ ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES

"I like that you have your own unique style. You know what you like to wear."

4 ACCEPT ALL EMOTIONS BY...

◆ ASKING ABOUT FEELINGS

"How did you feel when your friend made fun of you in class today?"

◆ SHARING HOW YOU COPE

"When I feel sad, sometimes listening to music helps me feel better. What makes you feel better when you're feeling that way?"

5 APPRECIATE MISTAKES...

◆ BOTH THEIRS

"You had a little spill? That's ok. What do you think is the best way to clean it up?"

◆ AND YOURS

"Oops. I think I put too much salt in that recipe. That was a good lesson. Now I know for next time."



HOW YOU PRAISE YOUR CHILD MATTERS

◇ LOOK BEYOND THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS:

"I noticed you encouraging your friends at the tournament, what a supportive friend you are!"

◇ FOCUS ON HOW THEY GOT THERE:

"You didn't give up during the entire game and had great energy. It was so fun watching you!"

◇ NOTICE THEIR PRACTICE AND HARD WORK:

"Have you been practicing? I've noticed your aim is much sharper!"

◇ NOTICE WITHOUT GIVING YOUR EVALUATION:

"Your room looks clean."



WHY DOES IT WORK?

WHEN YOU:

- ◇ Look beyond their achievements
- ◇ Focus on HOW they got there
- ◇ Notice their hard work
- ◇ Notice without giving your evaluation

THEY THINK:

- "My mom cares about the person that I am!"
- "Doing my best matters."
- "I can achieve anything when I work hard and practice."
- "It matters how I view my work, I don't need someone's approval."

WHAT AN ANGRY CHILD NEEDS TO HEAR



"EVEN WHEN YOU FEEL YOUR WORST, I LOVE YOU."

- ◆ Tells the child that you will love them, no matter how they feel or behave
- ◆ Creates a safe environment
- ◆ Deepens connection and builds trust
- ◆ Demonstrates unconditional love



"I CARE ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL."

- ◆ Tells the child that you are present
- ◆ Acknowledges the child's feelings
- ◆ Demonstrates compassion
- ◆ Opportunity for deeper connection



"I WILL STAY WITH YOU."

- ◆ Tells the child that you are present
- ◆ Creates a safe environment
- ◆ Deepens connection and builds trust
- ◆ Demonstrates resilience and patience



"I CAN SEE THIS IS HARD FOR YOU."

- ◆ Tells the child they have your attention
- ◆ Acknowledges the child expressing their feelings



"I AM HERE FOR YOU."

- ◆ Tells the child that all feelings are ok
- ◆ Demonstrates compassion
- ◆ Deepens connection and builds trust



"IT IS OK TO FEEL ANGRY."

- ◆ Tells the child that all feelings are ok
- ◆ Validates child's feelings
- ◆ Helps the child work through their big emotions

Mindset is everything. Teach it early.

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"The Growth Mindset Parenting Guide has been an essential resource for me to learn the right things to say and how to say it when my child's frustrated. I can't recommend this resource enough."

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NEGATIVE SELF-TALK
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