

YOUR KINDLE NOTES FOR:

No-Drama Discipline: The Whole-Brain Way to Calm the Chaos and Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind

by Daniel J. Siegel, Tina Payne Bryson

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35 Highlights | 10 Notes

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 23

For my parents: my first teachers and my first loves (TPB)

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 107

whenever we discipline our kids, our overall goal is not to punish or to give a consequence, but to teach. The root of “discipline” is the word disciple, which means “student,” “pupil,” and “learner.” A disciple, the one receiving discipline, is not a prisoner or recipient of punishment, but one who is learning through instruction. Punishment might shut down a behavior in the short term, but teaching offers skills that last a lifetime.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Location 177

To take it even further, consequences and punitive reactions are actually often counterproductive, not only in terms of building brains, but even when it comes to getting kids to cooperate.

Still working on this one from @tinabryson

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 193

Part of truly loving our kids, and giving them what they need, means offering them clear and consistent boundaries, creating predictable structure in their lives, as well as having high expectations for them. Children need to understand the way the world works: what’s permissible and what’s not. A well-defined understanding of rules and boundaries helps them achieve success in relationships and other areas of their lives.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 235

The research is really clear on this point. Kids who achieve the best outcomes in life—emotionally, relationally, and even educationally—have parents who raise them with a high degree of connection and nurturing, while also communicating and maintaining clear limits and high expectations. Their parents remain consistent while still interacting with them in a way that communicates love, respect, and compassion. As a result, the kids are happier, do better in school, get into less trouble, and enjoy more meaningful relationships.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 8

This pause between reactive and responsive is the beginning of choice, intention, and skillfulness as a parent.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 9

Our kids don't usually lash out at us because they're simply rude, or because we're failures as parents. They usually lash out because they don't yet have the capacity to regulate their emotional states and control their impulses.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 9

In fact, when a four-year-old doesn't hit and acts "perfect" all the time, we have concerns about the child's bond with his parent. When children are securely attached to their parents, they feel safe enough to test that relationship.

This wisdom from @tinabryson has helped me tons since I first read 2 yrs. ago

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 29

You don't want to send the message that you'll be in relationship with her when she's "good," or "happy," but withhold your love and affection when she's not. Would you want to stay in that kind of a relationship? Wouldn't we advise our teenagers to avoid friends or partners who treat them like that when they've made a mistake?

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 38

The point is that when we parent, and especially when we discipline, we need to work hard to understand our children's points of view, their developmental stage, and what they are ultimately capable of. This is how we use our own mindsight skills to see the mind behind our children's behavior. We don't simply react to their external actions, we tune in to the mind behind the behavior. We also must remember that what they're capable of isn't always the same; their capacity changes when they are feeling tired, hungry, or overwhelmed.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 47

When your five-year-old throws a fit at the grocery store, and you tower over him and point your finger and insist through clenched teeth that he "calm down this instant," you're poking the lizard. You're triggering a downstairs reaction, which is almost never going to lead anywhere productive for anyone involved. Your child's sensory system takes in your body language and words and detects threat, which biologically sets off the neural circuitry that allows him to survive a threat from his environment—to fight, to flee, to freeze, or to faint.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 49

Simply by naming the emotion, a person feels her levels of fear and anger decrease. That's how the upstairs brain can calm the downstairs brain. And that's a skill that can last a lifetime.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 49

Engage, don't enrage. When we enrage the downstairs brain, that's usually because our amygdala is firing as well. And guess what the amygdala wants to do. Win! So when the amygdalae in both the parent and the child are firing at top speed, both looking to win, it's virtually always going to be a dramatic battle that ends with both sides losing. No one will win, and relational casualties will litter the battlefield. All because we enraged the downstairs, rather than engaging the upstairs.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 61

The point, in other words, is not to make a point of saying no, but to understand the importance of helping kids recognize limits so that they become increasingly better at putting on the brakes themselves when necessary.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 71

Another way to parent proactively is to HALT before responding to your kids. When you see your child's behavior trending in a direction you don't like, ask yourself, "Is he hungry, angry, lonely, or tired?" It may be that all you need to do is to set out some raisins, listen to his feelings, play a game with him, or help him get more sleep.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 74

Imagine the last time you felt really sad or angry or upset. How would it have felt if someone you love told you, "You need to calm down," or "It's not that big a deal"? Or what if you were told to "go be by yourself until you're calm and ready to be nice and happy"? These responses would feel awful, wouldn't they? Yet these are the kinds of things we tell our kids all the time. When we do, we actually increase their internal distress, leading to more acting out, not less. These responses accomplish the opposite of connection, effectively amplifying negative states.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 77

For example, one of the most powerful ways we connect with our children is simply by physically touching them. A loving touch—as simple as a hand on an arm or a rub on the back or a warm embrace—releases feel-good hormones (like natural oxytocin and opioids) into our brain and body, and decreases the level of our stress hormone (cortisol). When your children are feeling upset, a loving touch can calm things down and help you connect, even during moments of high stress. This is connecting with their inner distress, not simply reacting to their outwardly visible behavior.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 82

But connection should be our first response in virtually any disciplinary situation. Not only because it can help us deal with the problem in the short term. Not only because it will make our children better people in the long term. But also, and most important, because it helps us communicate how much we value the relationship.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 86

Parents tend to overtalk in general when their kids are upset, and asking questions and trying to teach a lesson mid-tantrum can further escalate their emotions. Their nervous systems are already overloaded, and the more we talk, the more we flood their systems with additional sensory input.

Another one from @tinabryson that helped me today -->

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 89

Let's start with what spoiling is not. Spoiling is not about how much love and time and attention you give your kids. You can't spoil your children by giving them too much of yourself. In the same way, you can't spoil a baby by holding her too much or responding to her needs each time she expresses them. Parenting authorities at one time told parents not to pick up their babies too much for fear of spoiling them. We now know better. Responding to and soothing a child does not spoil her—but not responding to or soothing her creates a child who is insecurely attached and anxious. Nurturing your relationship with your child and giving her the consistent experiences that form the basis of her accurate belief that she's entitled to your love and affection is exactly what we should be doing. In other words, we want to let our kids know that they can count on getting their needs met. Spoiling, on the other hand, occurs when parents (or other caregivers) create their child's world in such a way that the child feels a sense of entitlement about getting her way, about getting what she wants exactly when she wants it, and that everything should come easily to her and be done for her. We want our kids to expect that their needs can be understood and consistently met. But we don't want our kids to expect that their desires and whims will always be met. (To paraphrase the Rolling Stones, we want our kids to know they'll get what they need, even if they can't always get what they want!) And connecting when a child is upset or out of control is about meeting that child's needs, not giving in to what she wants.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 98

When your child is at his worst, that's when he needs you the most.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 111

Sherlock Holmes: the Arthur Conan Doyle character who declared, "It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts."

Reminder from @tinabryson -->

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 112

Chasing the why doesn't mean that we should necessarily ask our children "Why did you do that?" every time a disciplinary situation arises. In fact, that question may imply immediate judgment or disapproval, rather than curiosity. Further, sometimes children, especially young ones, may not know why they are upset or why they did what they did. Their personal insight and awareness of their own goals and motivations may not be very skilled yet. That's why we're not advising you to ask the why. We're recommending that you chase the why. That's more about asking the why question in your own mind, allowing yourself to be curious, and wondering where your child is coming from in this moment.

Reminder to self from @tinabryson -->

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 120

So, how do we communicate “I’m not a threat” to our kids, even in the midst of escalating emotions? By connecting. One of the most effective and powerful ways to do this is to put your body in a posture that’s the opposite of imposing and threatening. Lots of people talk about getting at a child’s eye level, but one of the quickest ways to communicate safety and the absence of threat is to get below the child’s eye level and put your body into a very relaxed position that communicates calm.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 127

Think about it: how does it make you feel when you’re upset, and maybe not handling yourself well, and someone tells you that you’re “just tired,” or that whatever’s bothering you “isn’t that big a deal” and you should “just calm down”? When we tell our kids how to feel—and how not to feel—we invalidate their experiences.

More wise words from @tinabryson -->

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What’s more, talking and talking to an emotionally activated child is not the least bit effective. When her emotions are exploding all over the place, one of the least effective things we can do is to talk at her, trying to get her to understand the logic of our position. It’s just not helpful to say, “He didn’t mean to hit you when he threw the ball; it was just an accident, so you don’t have to get mad.” It doesn’t do any good to explain, “She can’t invite everyone in your whole school to her party.” The problem with this logical appeal is that it assumes the child is capable of hearing and responding to reason at this moment. But remember, a child’s brain is changing, developing. When she’s hurt, angry, or disappointed, the logical part of her upstairs brain isn’t fully functioning. That means a linguistic appeal to reason isn’t usually going to be your best bet for helping her gain control over her emotions and calm herself.

This one from @tinabryson has been huge for me -->

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 132

So we recommend that parents follow the kids’ advice and stop talking so much. Communicate comfort and validate your child’s feelings—“It really hurt that you didn’t get invited, didn’t it? I’d feel left out, too”—then close your mouth and listen. Really listen to what she’s saying. Don’t interpret what you hear too literally. If she says she’s never going to get invited to another party, this isn’t an invitation for you to disagree, or to challenge this absolute statement. Your job is to hear the feelings within the words. Recognize that she’s saying, “I’ve really been thrown for a loop by this. I didn’t get invited, and now I’m afraid about what this says about my social standing with all of my friends.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 143

Again, being punitive or doling out consequences, especially when we’re angry and reactive, can be counterproductive because it distracts our children from the physiological and emotional messages of their own conscience, which is a powerful force in developing self-discipline.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 145

One of the most self-defeating parenting recommendations we hear from time to time goes something like this: “When a child misbehaves, it’s important that you address the behavior right away. Otherwise, they won’t understand why they are being disciplined.” We actually don’t think this is bad advice if you are running a behavioral conditioning lab with animals. For mice, or even dogs, it’s good advice. For human beings, not so much. The fact is that there are times when it does make sense to address misbehavior right away. However, it’s frequently the case that the absolute worst time to address a misbehavior is immediately after it’s occurred.

Yep.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 151

At times, for example, you might try a “do-over.” Instead of immediately offering a punishment for speaking disrespectfully, you can say something like, “I bet if you tried again, you could come up with a more respectful way to say that.” Do-overs allow a child a second chance to handle a situation well. It gives them practice doing the right thing. You’re still consistently maintaining your expectations, but you’re doing so in a way that’s often much more beneficial than a rigidly imposed, unrelated consequence.

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 156

So the more we give our kids practice at considering how someone else feels or experiences a situation, the more empathic and caring they will become.

From @tinabryson -->

Highlight (Yellow) and Note | Page 169

And remember not to dismiss a child’s feelings. Instead, acknowledge the internal, subjective experience. When a child reacts strongly to a situation, especially when the reaction seems unwarranted and even ridiculous, the temptation for the parent is to say something like “You’re just tired” or “It’s not that big of a deal” or “Why are you so upset about this?” But statements like these minimize the child’s experience—her thoughts, feelings, and desires. It’s much more emotionally responsive and effective to listen, empathize, and really understand your child’s experience before you respond. Your child’s desire might seem absurd to you, but don’t forget that it’s very real to him, and you don’t want to disregard something that’s important to him.

This from @tinabryson key for all human relationships, actually -->

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 170

Reduce words Embrace emotions Describe, don’t preach Involve your child in the discipline Reframe a no into a conditional yes Emphasize the positive Creatively approach the situation Teach mindsight tools

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 179

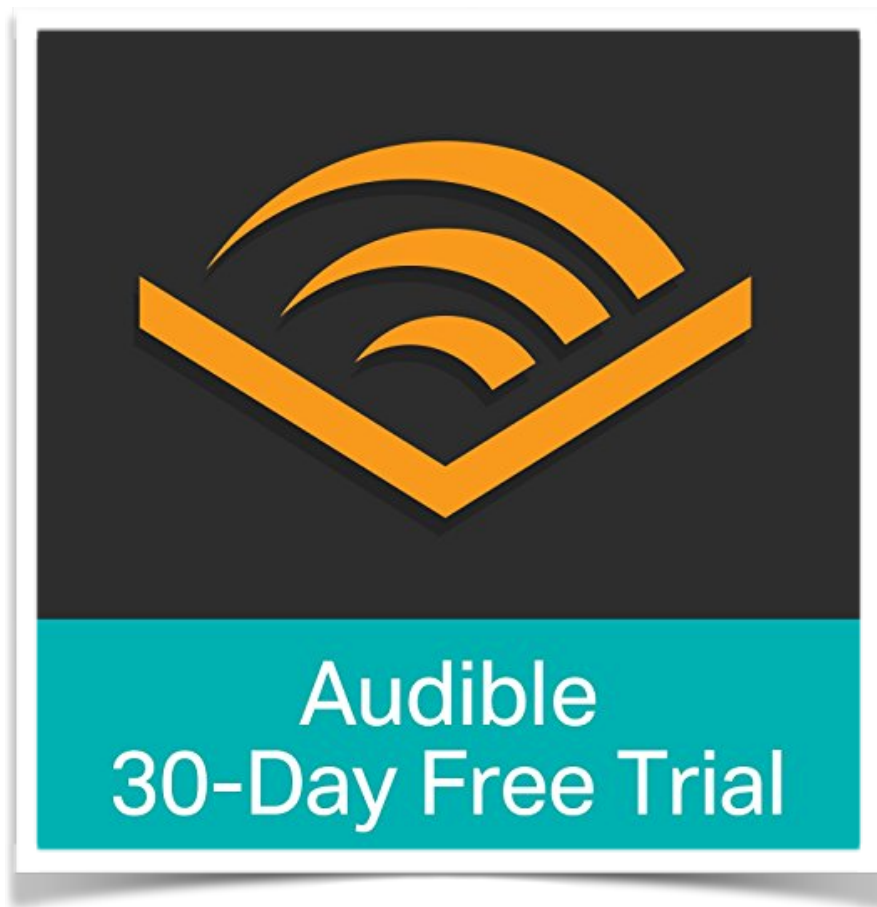
Kids don't need their parents to tell them not to make bad decisions. What they need is for their parents to redirect them, helping them recognize the bad decisions they're making and what leads up to those decisions, so they can correct themselves and change whatever needs to be changed.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 184

when children are involved in the process of discipline, they feel more respected, they buy into what the parents are promoting, and they are therefore more apt to cooperate and even help come up with solutions to the problems that created the need for discipline in the first place. As a result, parents and children work as a team to figure out how best to address disciplinary situations.

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