



# 5 things every Positive School should know...

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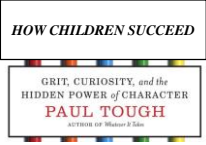
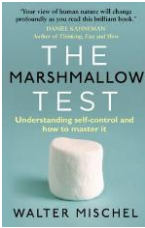



We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this Land. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians present.

# WELCOME 😊

Greeting  
Positive Primer  
Values  
Expectations  
Tracking the speaker  
Announcements  
WWW





We help schools reach and teach struggling students.



**140 years in Victoria**  
Family welfare, clinical, and education services



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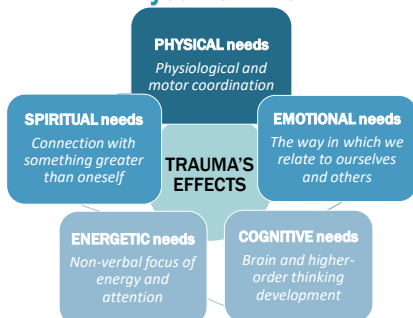
Orville Gardener

## Impacts on academic performance and social functioning

- Reduced cognitive capacity
- Sleep disturbance
- Poor concentration
- Difficulties with memory
- Language delays
- **Need for control**
- Attachment difficulties
- Poor peer relationships
- Home destabilisation

(Calmer Classrooms, Downey, 2007)

**CONSIDER** a struggling young person that you work with:



Reflection: How might culture and connecting to culture inform these domains?

## Unpredictability = RISK

- The need for power is all about building predictability!
- Brodie is familiar with adults yelling at him when he messes up so that's why he 'throws' the room – even though it is maladaptive.

*It is predictable!!*

## Mirror Neurons

- Specialised brain cells that allow you to learn and empathise by observing the actions of another person
- Ancient, pre-verbal systems of non-verbal communication
- Attachment co-regulation

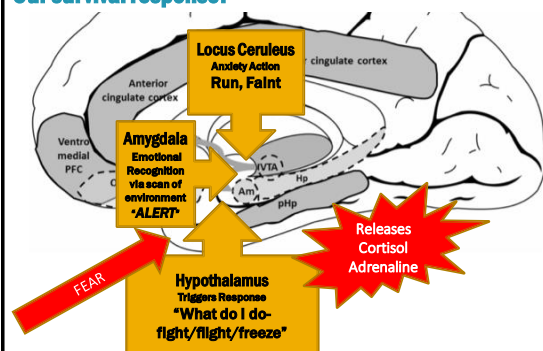
(Kohler et al., 2002)

## Evolutionary benefits of negative emotions

- We DO have an evolutionary bias to the negative
- We notice angry faces in the crowd before happy ones
- We remember negative feedback before positive feedback
- We remember negative memories before positive memories

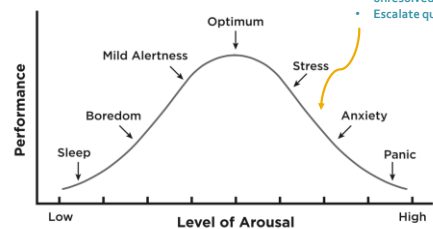
(Baumeister et al., 2001)

**Instantaneously occurs in the primal part of our brains.  
Our survival response!**



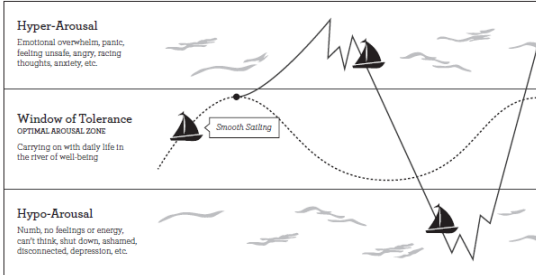
## The stress response and learning

Fig. 2 The Stress Arousal Curve



- Students with a history of unresolved trauma
- Escalate quicker

## Window of Tolerance



Ogden, et al. (2006); Siegel, (1999).

Our teaching challenge is to negotiate the internal and external storms in our classrooms.

1. **YOU** are a *negative* person.

## Brainbreaks

Strategies to use in your classroom



Brainbreaks:

- Are short lesson 'interruptions' to enable a renewed focus on learning
- Take less than 4 minutes
- Build self-awareness and develop self-regulation
- Reinforce positive classroom behaviours
- Positive escalation - to increase student energy if they are 'flat'

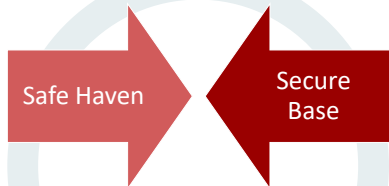
OR

- Positive de-escalation to calm/centre students if they are escalated
- **REFLECTION** - Are there any cultural connections that could be made through brainbreaks?

## Evolutionary benefits of Positive Emotions

- Enhances creativity and mental flexibility
- Improve immunity leading to lengthened life expectancy
- Opens us to take on new learning (Fredrickson, 2001)
- Positive emotions lift children up out of trauma's effects by 'undoing' the biological effect of negative emotions (Hughes, 2006)

### Circle of Security: Attending to our Children's Needs



*Welcome my coming to you*

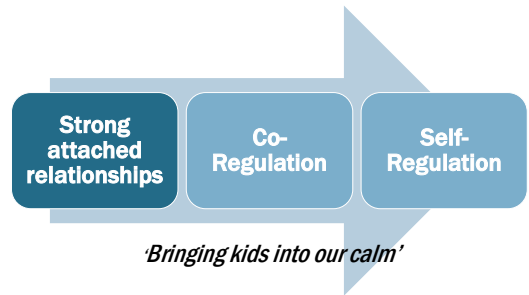
- Protect me
- Comfort me
- Delight in me
- Organize my feelings

*Support my exploration*

- Limit setting
- Watch over me
- Help me
- Enjoy with me

(Cooper, Hoffman, Marvin, & Powell, 1998)

### ATTACHMENT (*a regulatory theory*)



### Co-regulating students NON-verbally

- Position yourself so that you are looking at the students – rather than looking down at them
- Position yourself shoulder to shoulder – rather than facing them
- Touch the work they are meant to complete
- Offer some healthy touch – a high five, fist bump etc

### Patterned Repetitive Rhythmic Somatosensory ACTIVITIES

**REGULATING  
MOVEMENT:**  
How might  
we integrate  
these  
physical  
activities into  
our day?

(Perry, 2006)

2. We must **prime** the classroom with **POSITIVE EMOTION**.

## What do distracted people look like?

## MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a structured process of focusing the mind with three steps:

1. **Focus your attention on a particular thing**  
(i.e., the breath or the present moment)
2. **Notice when your attention has wandered away**
3. **Bring your attention back**

(Lea Waters, *The Strength Switch*, 2017)

## Mental health

Mindfulness has been associated with reduced:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Other mental health problems

And improved:

- Wellbeing
- Emotional regulation
- Vitality
- Sleep quality

Ref: Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hoffman et al. 2010; Ivanovski & Malhi, 2007, Shapiro et al. 2008.

Guidelines for enlisting students in Mindfulness practice

- 1. Respect the class.
- 2. Let's brainstorm some agreements
- 3. OK alternatives?
- 4. Genuine appreciation

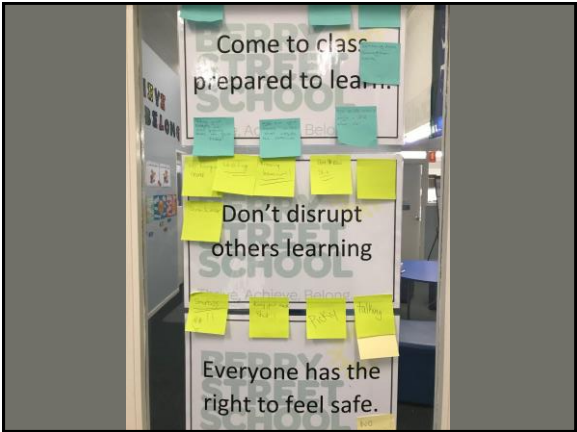
3. Build FOCUS by practicing mindfulness.

What are Values?

- Values are core aspects of a person's character.
- Values are enduring beliefs and attitudes that guide behaviours—both big and small.
- Knowing your values, and living in accordance with them, is a pathway towards a fulfilling and meaningful life.

Why teach values—to vulnerable students?

- Struggling students have not had opportunities to determine and articulate *their* values
- Values are the *foundation* of wellbeing
- You can use values in the *triage-conversation*

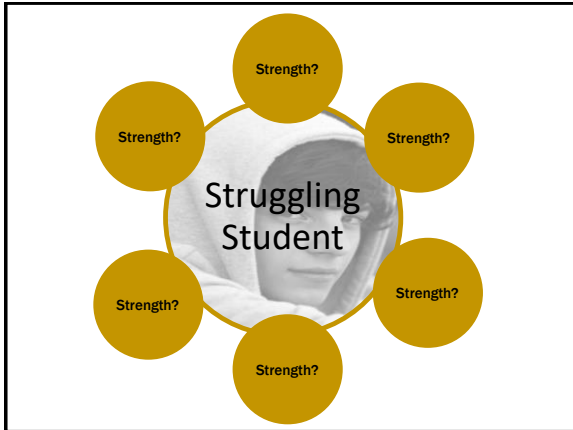


4. Know your **VALUES**.

Wisdom	Curiosity	Creativity	Judgment Critical Thinking	Love of Learning	Perspective	Strengths of the Head
Courage	Bravery	Persistence	Integrity Honesty	Vitality Zest	Strengths of Action	
Humanity	Love	Kindness	Social Intelligence	Strengths of the Heart		
Justice	Teamwork Citizenship	Fairness	Leadership	Strengths of Community		
Temperance	Mercy Forgiveness	Humility Modesty	Prudence	Self-Regulation	Strengths of Self-Control	
Transcendence	Appreciate Beauty & Excellence	Gratitude	Hope Optimism	Humour	Spirituality Belief	Strengths Of Meaning

7 High Leverage Strengths?





5. Use your **STRENGTHS**.

SO...today we learned:



1. You are a **negative** person.
2. We must prime the classroom with **positive emotion**.
3. Build **focus** by practicing **mindfulness**.
4. Know your **values**.
5. Use your **strengths**.

