TEACHING HAPPINESS

A RELATIONSHIP DRIVEN APPROACH TO SUCCESS

Presented by Sydney Bryer (BAC Teacher)
WITH THAT MOON LANGUAGE  
(HAFEZ)

Admit something:
Everyone you see, you say to them,
   “Love me.”
Of course you do not do this out loud;
   Otherwise,
Someone would call the cops.
Still though, think about this,
This great pull in us to connect.
Why not become the one
Who lives with a full moon in each eye
That is always saying
With that sweet moon
Language
What every other eye in this world
Is dying to
Hear.
DURING OUR TIME TOGETHER

• Social-emotional learning (SEL) & academics
• Behavior & misbehavior

• Why joy & happiness?
• What can you do? (strategies)
  • Teacher-student relationships
  • “Clan” building

• Food for Thought & Questions
“What happens between brains has a great deal to do with what happens within each individual brain.”

— The Whole-Brain Child
BEHAVIOR = COMMUNICATION

• Misbehavior is generally inappropriately expressed feelings resulting from lagging skills

• You and the student are on one team against the behavior
  • Separating the student from the behavior
  • Understanding is not excusing the act of “wrongdoing”

• Relationship Driven Classroom & Trauma Informed Practices
  • Signs of the wounded

EARLY EXPERIENCES ≠ FATE
YOU ARE ALWAYS THE MODEL

“Every discussion, argument, joke, or hug we share with someone else literally alters our brain and that of the other person.” – The Whole Brain Child

So what are you going to model?

WHY NOT JOY AND HAPPINESS?
WHY JOY AND HAPPINESS?

• Negative emotions become standard

• The Destructive Cycle

• The power of disputation
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

1. Teacher-Student Relationships
2. “Clan” Building
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

• Specific Praise
  • State behavior
  • “I” statement
  • Emotion

“It made me proud when you helped Jimmy move those books because it made it easier for us all to use the bookshelf.”
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?
TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

• Identifying Emotions
  • Connect feelings with actions

“I see that you are angry/happy/sad.”

“I see that you are angry. We can’t hit when we’re angry because it’s not safe. When we are angry we can take a deep breath and walk away.”
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?
TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

• Exhibit trustworthy behaviors
  • Identify trustworthy and not trustworthy behaviors
  • Consistency
  • Never promise what you can’t deliver
  • Acknowledge your own emotions
  • Share ordinary events in their lives
  • Smile – GENUINELY
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?
TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

• Relaxation Techniques
  • Read Aloud
  • Meditation
  • Music
  • Planned & structured break activities
    • (high impact vs. low impact)

• Skills to navigate a high stress world
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?
TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

• Build in Joy
  • Be planned or spontaneous
  • Be unconditional (reward vs. opportunity)

“A ‘built-in opportunity for joy and enthusiasm’ is unconditional. It happens simply because one is in the right place at the right time. Think of it as being unconditional in the way math is unconditional. Whatever your behavior, math still happens at ten o’clock.” - Teaching Children Who Are Hard to Reach
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

CLAN BUILDING

• “We” Language
• Empathy
• Teaching Commonality
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

CLAN BUILDING

• Group Problem solving
  • Experience making choices
  • Teach and practice

• Group Goals
  • “You do, we do” & “We do, you do”
  • Unifies process and result

Remember, progress is incremental
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

CLAN BUILDING

- Celebrating Each Other’s Successes
  - Group happiness
  - Accomplishments
  - Birthdays/Holidays

Be Structured & Be Spontaneous
SO, HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

CLAN BUILDING

• Support Each Other’s Challenges
  • Restorative practices
  • Emotional growth & empathy
  • Difference between person and actions

Make it “Cool to Care”
“I heard it said that never before in the history of our world are our children more in need of a hug, and never before in the history of our world are we less willing to hug them.” – Reaching the Wounded Student

“And real love, for whatever time it lasts, is never wasted.” - Teaching Children Who Are Hard to Reach
MY FAVORITE THINGS
(REFERENCES)

QUESTIONS?

* or good, clean jokes I can share with my students?