

Managing Frustration, Anxiety, in Caregivers and Clients



Jed Baker, Ph.D.

www.socialskillstrainingproject.com

First help caretakers have the right attitude

Understand why students misbehave

Manage your own emotions as a provider

De-escalate crises with your students

Set up prevention plans for any repeat problems

Quote from Yoda – Star Wars

- FEAR IS THE PATH TO THE DARK SIDE
- FEAR leads to ANGER
- ANGER leads to HATE
- HATE leads to SUFFERING



One size fits all... until one size does not fit all

- Discipline, rules and consequences can be a first step
- But when it does not work:
 - Continue in an escalating power struggle?
 - Or ask why is it happening so we can prevent the problem rather than simply react to it.

“Fear leads to anger” applies to caregivers as well

- We can have our buttons pushed
- React out of fear by
 - Giving in
 - Getting mad and forcing compliance
- Or use our intellect to figure out how solve problem for next time

90% of Teaching and Parenting is Tolerance

- Can we tolerate our own discomfort long enough to think about what to do?
- Discipline is a starting point: But what if it does not work?

Handling Our Own Feelings

- Hope! Yet expect delays in what you want to accomplish. (Attribution: temporary & specific)
- The individual's behavior is not intended to simply challenge your authority, but is rather a reflection of his/her lack of coping skills. (Attribution: external not internal)
- Most observers do not question your competence, they get that this is part of dealing with kids or challenging students. Laugh it off.

Difficulties Associated with Challenging Behavior

- Difficulty with abstract thinking & perspective-taking.
 - Misbehavior is often unintentional! Teach perspective more than discipline.
- Inflexibility: Limited problem solving
 - Learning facts is more enjoyable than socializing.
 - Preparation and expanded problem solving avoids meltdowns.

Difficulties Associated with Challenging Behavior

- Low Frustration Tolerance
 - Limbic system: Controls emotions and fight, flight or freeze response
 - Forebrain: Reasoning and planning
 - Limbic system can hijack the rest of the brain
 - Prevent rage and distract when in rage.



Behavior Management

- Step 1: Relationship Issues
 - Warmth and caring
 - Structure with use of visual supports
differentiated instruction
 - Build confidence: 80/20 rule
 - Avoid escalating power struggles.



Behavior Management

- Step 2: Crisis Management
 - Non-verbal skills to increase safety.
 - Listen, agree, apologize when necessary
 - Collaborate: Ask “what do you want? Lets find the right way to get that.”
 - When logic is gone: Distract
 - Novel items
 - Special interests
 - Sensory activities
 - Ignore if you are trigger
 - Make a plan for next time



Behavior Management

- Step 3: Repeat Behavior Problems
 - Explore why it happens: Interview, observe & and keep an ABC journal
 - No More Meltdowns APP, available at APP store or www.symtrend.com/nmm
 - Develop a good prevention plan

Typical Triggers

- Internal issues: hunger, tiredness, illness, grief
- Sensory issues: noise, light, touch, over-stimulation, boredom
- Lack of structure
- Challenging or new work, feared situations
- Having to wait, not get what one wants, disappointments
- Threats to self-esteem: losing, mistakes, criticism
- Unmet wishes for attention: ignored, want others to laugh

Components of a Behavior Plan

see www.apbs.org

1. **Change the triggers:** sensory/biological, structure, task demands
2. **Teach skills to deal with triggers:**
3. **Reward new skills**
4. **Loss system** if not already frustrated

Demands for Work

1. Change the triggers

- Model, prompt rather than test, explain learning curve
- Give choice of work, use special interests
- Visual supports: instructions, webs, outlines, labels
- Reduce length, use timer

2. Teach “Trying When It’s Hard”

- Try a little
- Ask to watch first or ask for help
- Take a break and try again
- Negotiate how much

Carol Dweck’s Mindsets

Mindset	Preferred task difficulty	Response to Mistakes	Acceptance of help	Learning outcomes
Fixed	Easy	Lose motivation	Avoid	Lower
Growth	Hard	Stay motivated	Welcome	Higher

Demands for Work

3. Reward system

- For trying, not for being correct
- Trying Poster

4. Avoid loss system when frustrated

Dealing with Fear

- Change the triggers
 - Can avoid feared situation when easy, but some situations we may need to face
- Teach “Dealing with fear”
 - Win them over to working on issue
 - Explain anxiety: True versus false alarms
 - Gradual exposure to fear: create a FEAR LADDER based on self-report or observed behavior
 - Think like a scientist: Overestimating likelihood or danger of neg event?
 - Add exercise, meditation/relaxation
 - Consider neurofeedback, meds if needed

Dealing with Fear

3. Reward system

- For facing each step of a fear

4. Avoid loss system when anxious

OCD: Think like a scientist

Feared situation	Anxious thought	Realistic Outcome
Touching germs	I will get a lethal disease.	I have skin that will protect me if I leave it intact and do not over wash or crack the skin. Germs I encounter are not lethal and can only cause minor treatable illnesses.
Not being able to wash repeatedly	The germ will remain on me and lead to illness.	Data show that washing once after exposure to germs, using warm not hot water is all that is needed. Washing more can damage the protection of the skin. If I refrain from putting fingers in eyes or mouth, I am not likely to allow the germ to enter my body.

OCD: Fear ladder

Situations	Fear level 1-5	Points earned
Not washing hands until after touching door handles, community property or others belongings.	2	2
Touching a door handles, community property, others' belongings, or something that fell to the floor and not washing for 5 minutes	3	3
Washing just once with warm water for about 20 seconds and rinsing for 10 seconds and then not washing again until the next time touching community property	3	3
Touching a door handles, community property, others belongings, or something that fell to the floor and not washing for 10 minutes	4	4
Touching a door handles, community property, others belongings, or something that fell to the floor and not washing for 20 minutes	4	4
Not washing before eating	5	5
Not washing for at least 20 minutes after using public restroom	5	5
Not washing hand for one full day	5	25



Waiting, Accepting No, Stopping Fun

1. Change the triggers

- Use a visual timer and shorten wait time
- Create a visual schedule. Use a “to do” box
- Highlight reward for waiting/accepting no & prime ahead

2. Teach skills (invisible payoff)

- Waiting: get some later
- Accepting no: get something else later
- Stopping on time: get to go back later

Waiting, Accepting No, Stopping Fun

3. Reward system

- Points for waiting, accepting no and stopping on time
- Disappointment poster

4. Natural loss systems:

- Can't stop, can't do it again

Self-esteem: Mistakes, Losing, Teasing

1. Change the triggers

- Offer choice: let them win or not see mistakes
- Stack the deck: with activities that they do well (80/20)
- Prime ahead
- Protect from teasing

2. Teach skills (invisible payoff)

- Mistakes help us learn
- Win the invisible game: friendship/self-control
- Teasing: check it out 1st, stop, ignore, report

Self-esteem: Mistakes, Losing, Teasing

3. Reward system:

- Rewards for handling imperfection are greater than rewards for winning or doing work right.

4. Avoid loss systems when frustrated

Unmet Needs for Attention

1. **Change the triggers**
 - Schedule attention: special time
 - Use a timer and red/green cards
 - Provide an appropriate outlet: theatre, presentation
2. **Teach “Positive Ways to Get Attention”**
 - How to get adult attention
 - How to get peer attention: Public versus private topics
 - Rules of comedy: Can’t make fun of vulnerable, use slapstick, random thoughts, and self-deprecation

Public/Private

Public	Private
Past: How was ____?	<u>Avoid sensitive topics:</u>
Future: What are you going to do ____?	Sex, Violence, Race, Religion, Politics
Present: What are you _____?	Avoid insults
Common/other interest: Did you ____?	Avoid curses

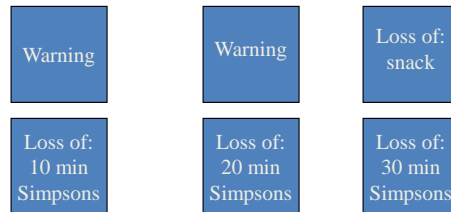
Unmet Needs for Attention

3. Reward system:

- Rewards for appropriate topics

4. Loss systems:

- Response cost



Sensory Needs: Self-Stimulation

1. Change the triggers

- Alter sensory environment
- For boredom, reduce wait time and engage
- Modify frustrating work

2. Teach skills

- Alternative ways/times to self-stim
- How to be a self-advocate for better environment

Sensory Needs: Self-Stimulation

3. Reward system

- Reward new ways to self-stim

4. Loss systems:

- Maybe response cost

Unexpected Triggers: Self-Calming

1. Prepare for unexpected

- Collaborate on ways to distract and soothe in preparation for the unexpected upsets. Create a relaxation folder.
- Establish a safe person

2. Teach skills

- Self-talk: “All problems can be solved if you can wait and talk to the right person.”
- Draw or write the thing that distracts/soothes you.

Unexpected Triggers: Self-Calming

3. Reward system:

- for using calming strategies

4. Natural loss systems:

- outbursts will limit continued participation in certain events.

In Closing

Can we tolerate our
own discomfort
long enough to . . .

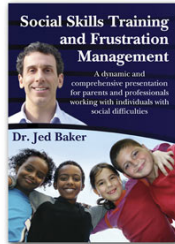
Can we enjoy what
we do?

Think

Rather than react
out of fear or anger

Resources

DVD



Challenging behavior

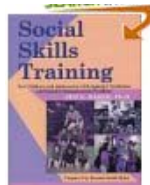


Now an APP too!

Music CD



Social Skills Books



Elementary Level



Social skill picture book



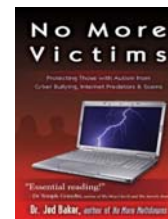
Middle, High School and Beyond



Social skill picture book for high school

More Resources

- No More Victims: Protecting Those with Autism Cyber Bullying, Internet Predators & Scams (Baker, 2013)
- Overcoming Anxiety in Children Teens (Baker, 2015)
- School Shadow Guidelines & Baker 2015)



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