

Positive+Parent™ Newsletter

Where the science of positive psychology+ meets the art of parenting™

Shaya Kass, PhD

www.PositiveParentPlus.com

HERE IS A PRACTICAL WAY TO TEACH YOUR CHILD SELF-COMPASSION

The way you treat yourself sets the standard for others. ~Sonya Friedman

I read some fascinating research about a program that help people to stop smoking. The rationale behind the research was that when people are trying to stop smoking, they are stressed. When people are stressed, they usually have negative self-talk. If the smokers were able to practice self-compassion, they were more likely to not go back to smoking.

I was thinking that it would be wonderful if we taught this to our kids. Imagine if our kids were able to practice this compassionate mind therapy on themselves whenever they were in a stressful situation. They would always be level-headed and thinking straight.

The reason practicing self-compassion works is because what we conjure up in our mind has the same effect on our body as if it was actually happening. If being in a stressful situation causes our body to produce adrenaline, then thinking about a stressful situation also produces adrenaline. So when we are stressed, even though we will not be running or fighting, our body gets ready to that – fight or flight. Our body gets more blood to our arms and legs and gets less blood to our brains. The rationale is simple, running from a tiger doesn't take much thought but your legs better be working as best they can!

Now, if your son or daughter is taking a test and they are very stressed, their body will be producing adrenaline. But here the system doesn't work. Now they need as much blood going to their brain as possible, not less! But the adrenaline will be sending

extra blood to their legs – what a waste!

So we should be teaching our kid ways to not get stressed. And compassionate mind training is one such way. The compassionate mind training is done by having each participant imagine their own perfect compassionate person. Who is it that can always comfort them? How old are they? What do they look like? What does your most compassionate person think to themselves? What is their voice like? Now integrate that person into you!

In the smoking program, the smokers then had their "compassionate person" write them a letter saying how proud they were that they were quitting smoking, knowing that there would be hard times and supporting them no matter what. Then, every time the participant wanted a cigarette, they would conjure up their compassionate self.

Imagine what this could do for our kids! Every time they are in a situation where there is peer-pressure, they would have a compassionate self there to help them. Every time they were in a tense situation, their compassionate self could calm them down. They would never need to turn to cigarettes or other destructive habits!

And, of course, if they have a wonderful relationship with themselves, they will certainly have a wonderful relationship with their friends and their friends will be happy to spend time with them.

And, best of all, this will do wonders for their relationship with you!



You can reach me by email at DrShaya@PositiveParentPlus.com I love to hear reader comments.

The Positive Parent Plus newsletter is published weekly for free distribution by day care facilities, schools and parent groups. Quotes are compliments of www.TrulyInspiredQuotes.com Picture compliments of photobucket.com/netandyahoo600

(c) 2011 by Shaya Kass, PhD & PositiveParentPlus.com