

CONNECTIONS

Volume 9 Issue 2

FALL 2007

Hard Work Trumps Natural Ability

by Don Benson

A recent book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, by developmental psychologist Carol Dweck emphasizes current research findings on the impact of praising children. Her study divided two sets of children. Both groups were given a very easy test. While they both did very well, one group was told "You must be smart at this", while the other group was told "You must have worked really hard". Then she gave both groups a much more difficult test. The second group outperformed the first group. The conclusion, quoting Haim Ginoot: "Praise should deal, not with the child's personality attributes, but with his efforts and achievements" (Handler, 2007).

Dweck goes on to describe variations on these tests in her studies, stating that the findings are repeatedly replicated. Her explanation is that "fixed" mindsets, where individuals believe they are born with innate abilities, are inferior to "growth" mindsets, characterized by the conviction that learning and development are ongoing. Using labels like smart and gifted actually reinforce fixed mindsets, as opposed to concentration on effort and hard work.



It can be disconcerting to hear that identifying a child as gifted could actually sabotage her path to success. Is this an indictment of gifted programs altogether? Perhaps not. While Dweck seems to feel that the fixed mindset leads to being unsure of oneself and a need for approval, surely there are plenty of examples of growth mindsets in gifted programs as well. A concentration on effort and achievement is hardly foreign to these kids, and it is possible that giving strokes for their intelligence is less common than reinforcing their hard work. Also, the enriched learning environment that these children can benefit from might compensate for the focus on perceived innate abilities. Still, a cautionary message to programs for gifted kids, and all children for that matter, is clearly evident. Praising effort and achievement appears to result in better performance than praising innate abilities.

Reference: Handler, R. "Flattery will get them nowhere: Are we overpraising our children?". *Psychotherapy Networker*, July/August, 2007.

Three Trails Employee & Family Assistance Program

NEW FACES AT THREE TRAILS

Three Trails EFAP is pleased to announce the addition of Linda Nelson, Joanne Robinson, and Wesley Bertagnole!

Linda Nelson is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Registered Drama Therapist. She has experience in both the field of education and mental health.

Joanne Robinson is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Prior to joining Three Trails, Joanne worked as a therapist for Dr. Stephen Brown.

Wesley Bertagnole is currently finishing his Master of Science degree in Counselor Education at the University of Wyoming and satisfying his degree requirements by doing his internship with Three Trails EFAP.

To find out more about our new staff, visit:
www.threetrailsefap.com/staff.htm

PARENTING YOUR TEENAGER

Three Trails EFAP is once again offering a group this fall on "Parenting Your Teenager". Beginning October 15th and running for six straight weeks, the group will meet on Mondays from 5:15 - 6:30. Both parents are encouraged to attend, but this is not required & single parents are welcome. Please call Lynette at 237-5750 if you are interested.

"When you are content to simply be yourself and don't compare or compete, everybody will respect you". Tao-te Ching (Mitchell translation)



CONFIDENTIALITY

by Joanne Robinson

Confidentiality and privacy is protected zealously among counselors and their clients. Although it can be very tricky at times (e.g. between an adult child and their parent or between a husband and wife) counselors deal with this ethical dilemma every day. If you are not familiar with the protocol of a counseling relationship, the counselor may go over the ground rules of therapy with you. They will tell you that what is said in that room stays in that room. In other words, therapists do not talk about their clients with their family or friends. There are three exceptions to that rule. In the event that child abuse is disclosed, counselors are mandated to report it to the proper authorities. A threat to harm yourself or someone else means that the therapist may have to take whatever action is necessary to ensure safety. In addition, a rare exception is that if the records are subpoenaed by the courts. However, if you reveal that you are going to do something illegal, for instance, rob a bank, nobody else will know about it. Although counselors in the same agency may tell each other background or details about a client, everyone is ...

(Confidentiality cont...)

bound to the same rules of confidentiality. These rules hold true within private practice or an EFAP. When you belong to an EFAP the counseling session are paid for by your (or your family member's) employer. The counseling service will not tell your employer what is discussed or even whether or not you came in unless you sign a release of information form. Counselors and their clients hold privacy and confidentiality in very high regard.



"A change of heart or of values without a practice is only another pointless luxury of a passively consumptive way of life "

Wendell Berry

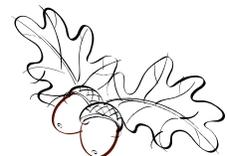


TROUBLE IN DENMARK

Follow the instructions carefully, ONE LINE AT A TIME. Be sure to do exactly what it says before moving to the next instruction.

- 1. Pick a number from 1 to 9*
- 2. Subtract 5*
- 3. Multiply by 3*
- 4. Square the number (multiply it by itself)*
- 5. Add the digits in the number together until you get only one digit; ie.
64: $6+4=10$; $1+0=1$*
- 6. If the number is less than 5, add five. Otherwise subtract 4.*
- 7. Multiply it by 2*
- 8. Subtract 6*
- 9. Give the digit it's corresponding letter in the alphabet (for example: 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, 4=D... 26=Z)*
- 10. Pick a name of a country (NOT A STATE) that begins with that letter.*
- 11. Take the second letter in the country name and think of a mammal that begins with that letter.*
- 12. Think of the most common color of that mammal.*

Answer on the back page.





Three Trails EFAP

812 S David
Casper, WY 82601

Three Trails Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is a counseling agency designed to respond to the needs of eligible active and retired employees, spouses, and dependent family members of participating businesses and organizations.

Our mission is to provide professional assistance early and in a timely manner so that problems do not worsen. Such concerns may include workplace stress, marriage and family tensions, alcohol and drug abuse, and other difficulties that may impact individuals. Counselors at Three Trails assess the scope and nature of the presenting concerns and will either provide short-term counseling or refer the individual(s) to specialized services as necessary.

Three Trails EFAP is staffed by two full time, one part time counselor and an administrative assistant. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 237-5750 or stop by the office at 812 South David Street.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Wednesday	9:00 to 6:00 pm
Thursdays	9:00 to 8:00 pm
Fridays	12:00 to 5:00 pm

We are closed through the noon hour, although noon sessions may be arranged.

