

SCREAMFREE PARENTING

RAISING YOUR KIDS
BY
KEEPING YOUR COOL

HAL EDWARD RUNKEL, LMFT

PRESENTED BY:
TIM ROLFE, LCSW, PIP





The Revolutionary Approach to Raising Your Kids -----by----- Keeping Your Cool





Training Objectives

- Explore the importance of being self-aware
- Improve effective parental responses in a crisis
- Enhance Role Modeling behaviors



What is parenting all about?



- Kids want and NEED to have “cool” parents
- But don’t try to be hip with the latest styles
- That makes you decidedly “un cool”





- **ScreamFree Does not mean**
 - Being permissive
 - Let them do whatever they want
- **They want parents who “keep their cool”**





The ScreamFree approach is:

- Less anxious
- More levelheaded
 - Especially when things get hot





- **Old School of Thought**
 - Children should be seen not heard
- **Current School of Thought**
 - Parent orbits life around the child
- **Way Ahead**
 - Restoring balance
 - Focusing more on “self” as a parent
 - We can be parents and friends to our children, as long as “parent” comes first





- **4 Reasons why “helicopter parents” hover:**
 - Fear of consequences
 - Want to protect from being hurt or disappointed
 - Overcompensation
 - Peer pressure from other parents



- **Benefits of involved/engaged parents**
 - increasing feelings of love and acceptance
 - building self-confidence
 - provides guidance and opportunities to grow



- **Pitfalls of overinvolved parenting:**
 - Child never learns from mistakes or failures
 - Decreased confidence and self-esteem
 - Child receives wrong message “I cant handle anything”
 - Undeveloped or underdeveloped coping skills
 - Increased anxiety in the child and parent
 - Sense of entitlement- always getting their way



- **ScreamFree Parenting is about calming emotionally reactive responses to anxieties and life stressors**

- Screaming
- Disconnecting
- Overcompensating
- Giving In
- Giving Up
- Avoiding/Neglecting
- Withholding love
- Using violence



- **All are ineffective in creating the type of relationships we crave with our children**



- **Effective Parenting**

- Nonreactive
- Calm Authority
- Fully engaged
- Fully connected
- Inspiring
- Influential





- **Your commitment:**
 - Be open to change
 - Commit to practicing new techniques
 - Develop new patterns that foster connection and cooperation
 - Evaluate and be honest with yourself
 - Don't forget Self Care
 - "Parenting is more about the parent than it is the child"



Question/Answer Time

**“The greatest thing you can do for your kids is
focus on yourself.”**

~Hal Runkel



- **Focusing on self will:**

- Improve relationships
- Live happier
- Feel healthier
- Parent better





- **Parenting Facts:**
 - Some things in LIFE we can control
 - Some things we cannot
- **Questions to these facts:**
 - Which category does your children fall into?

<u>Can control</u>	<u>Can't control</u>
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 - If you could control them, should you?
 - Is that what parenting is really all about?
 - What if it's not the children who are out of control?
 - Does it make sense to focus our energy on things we can't control?



Pop Quiz

- Which one of the following is your worst enemy when it comes to effective parenting
 - Television
 - Internet (Cell Phones)
 - Poor Peer Influences
 - Reacting Emotionally
 - Drugs/Alcohol





- Emotional Reactivity is our worst enemy when it comes to effective parenting

- It's not television/cell phones
- It's not bad influences
- It's not even drugs/alcohol





- **Most effective way to influence our children's decision-making abilities is to demonstrate control of our own decision-making**
 - When we react, we regress to immature levels of functioning



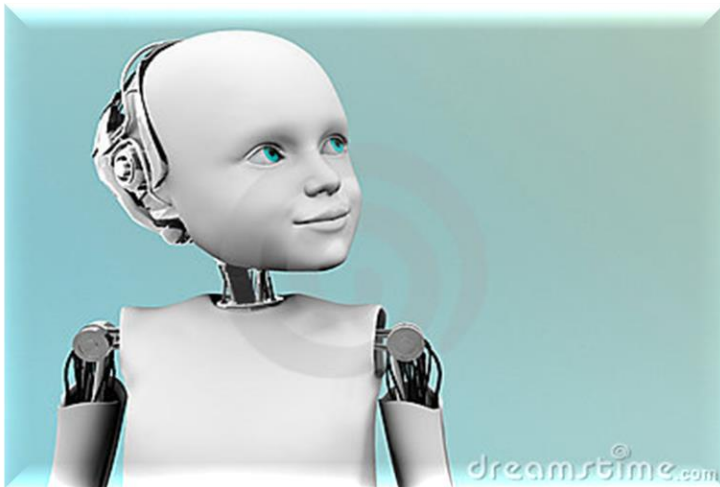


What type of relationship will you have with your children if you parent with emotional reactivity and intimidation?





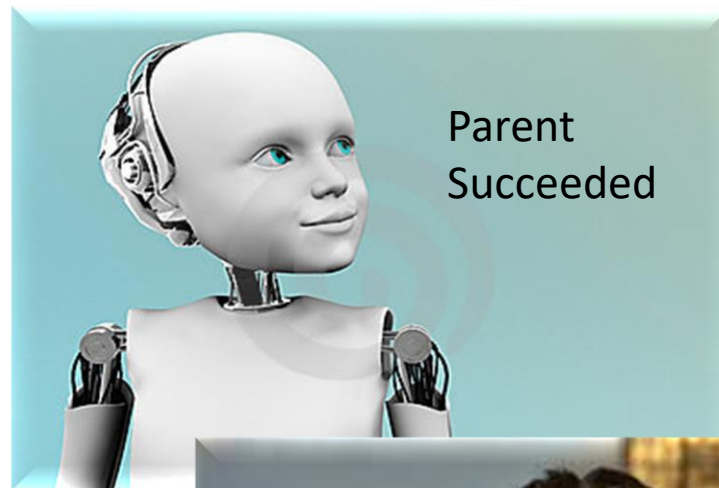
- We are not responsible for our children
- We are only responsible to our children
- Two possible results when responsible for:
Robot or Rebel





- It is not our job as parents to get our children to :

- Always think right
- Always feel right
- Always Behave





- **Definition of Growing Up: Learning to make your own choices**
 - Children begin their own decision-making early in life
 - They quickly embrace this natural ability even as infants/toddlers
 - This is where our frustration, as parents, begins
 - We don't always agree with their decisions



- If we are responsible for our children we will have to figure out a way to program them to always make the right decisions and always be “good” according to our definition
 - Helps parents feel big and in charge
 - BUT-
 - Leaves children feeling small and incompetent



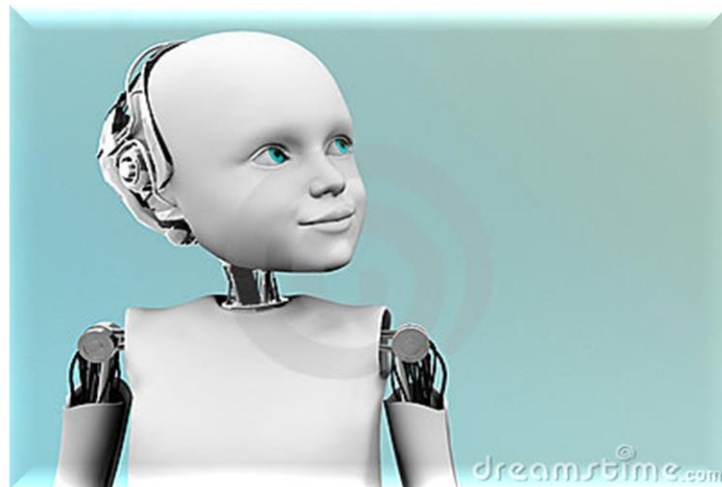
Responsible for our children (continued)

- Our children are born with the power of choice
- Obedience training is useless and can even backfire
- Will soon realize they are in a no-win situation
 - Either we kill their own decision-making spirit (Robot)
 - Or they will eventually reject parental authority (Rebel)



What category would make parents:
less anxious?
more anxious?

Robot



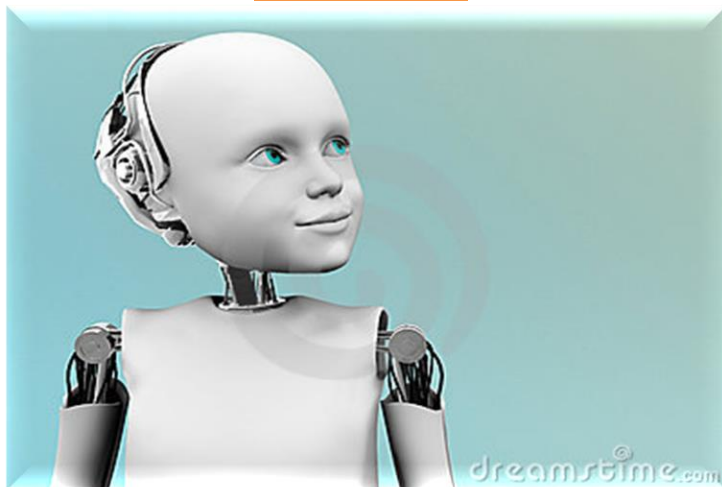
Rebel





Our goal as parents is to help our children learn how to use critical thinking skills to make mature/wise decisions on their own

Robot



Rebel





“The only way to regain a position of positive influence with our children is to regain a position of control over ourselves”





- You are responsible to your children
- You are accountable to them for how YOU:
 - Think
 - Feel
 - Behave
 - React...towards them
 - Regardless of how they act





- Goal of good parenting is to help our children be more:

- Confident
- Self-aware
- Self-directed
- Responsible



- They will never get there if WE don't model it for them



“Don’t make me angry”



“You wouldn’t like me when I’m angry”



- Who is in control of Bruce Banner's emotional responses?
- Who is in control of yours?
- Don't surrender control of your emotional responses to those around you, especially your children





- It's not about being perfect/flawless as a parent
- It's about taking responsibility for your own actions/decisions
 - Before, during, and after you make them
 - Recognizing nobody can MAKE you feel anything
 - People are just not that powerful
 - Your responses are totally up to you



**Make controlling your emotional responses, and
calming yourself down
priority #1**





- **Being “in charge” as a ScreamFree Parent:**
 - Is not about exerting power and demanding obedience
 - It’s a fundamental shift from control to influence
 - It means having the power to:
 - Create lasting growth in your children
 - Inspire your children to motivate themselves





“Children have to learn that there are consequences to their choices”





- Children can't make the connection between choices/consequences IF...:
 - Parents force compliance
 - Enable/Bailout
 - Turns parenting into warfare
 - Has long-term negative impacts
 - Leaves child ill-prepared for the real world





- Be aware of triggers:

- Sights
- Sounds
- Situations
- Scenarios

- What are your triggers?





- Prevent “anxiety transfer” by staying calm:
 - Transferring anxiety to your children makes things worse
 - Giving in to your reactivity creates the very situation you are trying to avoid
 - You will alienate your children
 - Discipline? Yes! But from a calm and loving place that helps maintain authority and influence





What is the difference between discipline and punishment?



Discipline

- Used to teach and guide
- Teaches children a particular misbehavior is bad because it violates the social order, thus promoting the development of internal controls
- Creates dialogue and communication with the adult acting as teacher

Punishment

- Used for the purposes of controlling and retribution
- Interferes with the development of internal controls by teaching children that it is someone else's responsibility
- Validates fear, pain, intimidation and violence as acceptable methods of resolving conflict



- What you want is for your children to share their lives with you, right?
- To come to you in times of trouble?
 - When you overreact you send mixed signals
 - Your children will potentially eliminate you as a resource for guidance and support all together
 - We must continue to learn and grow as parents



True Story: During softball practice one evening my daughter had a total meltdown and started crying uncontrollably because she popped out to an in-fielder. The coaches were desperately trying to console her but to no avail.

On the drive home I had to fight every urge to lay into her about her behaviors on the field. Practicing ScreamFree techniques, I simply said in a calm voice “ I just want you to think about what happened tonight ” She turned her back to me in frustration and in protest of my gentle words. Needless to say, it was a quiet ride home for a while. I felt it was important to give her some space so I said nothing else. Within 15 minutes she turned and said “Daddy, I don’t know why I let the game get to me like that. It’s not like I’m playing in the Hunger Games.”

Wow! What insight, what perspective. We laughed and had a great ride home from that point on and she has never experienced another meltdown over softball again. This stuff works!



- What children need most from parents is for us to see them as individuals in their own right
 - Their own lives
 - Their own decisions
 - Their own futures



- They were put here to become themselves and they need us to create enough space to do just that



- Children need space:
 - Physical space
 - Emotional Space (Freedom to explore different feelings)
 - Anger
 - Sadness
 - Confusion
 - Frustration
 - Self-reflection
 - Self-definition
 - Self-understanding
 - Opinion
 - Attitude
 - Thought





- **Allow children enough space:**
 - To make mistakes and learn from them
 - To Learn to struggle through discomfort
 - Be themselves with no fear or shame
 - Space where they don't have to put on a mask or pretend





“If we model that our children have their own space to grow then they will come to expect that same type of relationship with others.”





Eight ways to create space for your children (pg 88):

1. Respect their space and privacy
2. Calm your anxiety about (____)their messy room)
3. Respect their choices
4. Calm your anxiety by giving up your need to know how they feel
5. Give up your need to know why
6. Let them struggle and experience failure
7. Allow them to disagree with you and learn to respect their point of view
8. Rarely look your kids in the eye when talking with them



Parenting by Assimilation

- Most common form of parenting
- Parents feel the need to exercise their power in order to feel in control. Occurs when:
 - Parents are unsure of their position of influence
 - Parents feel intimidated when child exerts their will
 - Child's will is viewed as a challenge to parental authority



- **Parenting by Assimilation (Outcomes):**
 - Parents step up their use of power to counter the child's attempt to exert their will
 - This is where familiar power-struggles begin
 - Leads to a relationship based on struggles with little room for connection off the battlefield
 - End result: Robot or Rebel





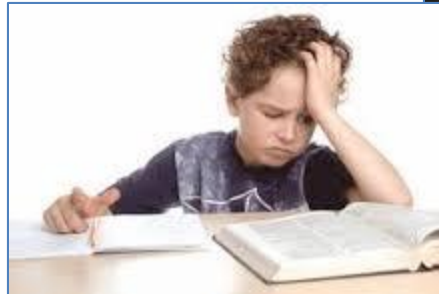
Refuse to pick up the gauntlet (pg 97):

I was helping my daughter with homework one evening and she began to throw a fit because she was having trouble learning some of her vocabulary words. Picking up the gauntlet and engaging in the battle was my first instinct and is how I normally approached the situation (Parenting by Assimilation). I initially thought about overpowering her level of frustration with my own; whereby dominating the exchange.

Instead, I remained calm, quietly asked that she return to her room to study her words some more, and to check back with me when she thinks she is ready to test again. She made several additional attempts to draw me into the battle, but I was not budging and remained calm. The results were astounding and within five minutes she learned all of her words. My wife even wondered how it was possible because of her past experiences.



- **Variety of Gauntlets:**
 - Practical ways to deal with a couple of them using the SF approach
 - I'm Bored (pg 100)
 - Are we there yet (pg 101)
 - I can't do my homework (pg 102)
 - I'm not going to do it (pg 105-106)





- ScreamFree Overview

- Keep your cool
- Control emotional reactions
- Stay engaged, build connections, inspire
- Don't forget self-care
- Model behaviors we desire to see in our children

- ScreamFree Overview

- We are not responsible for our children only to our children
- Be aware of triggers
- Children need space
- Avoid Parenting by Assimilation
- Don't pick up the gauntlet



Thank You!