



TRUST THE AUDIOLOGIST WHO TEACHES

Teaching Strategies for Clinical Educators

Welcome back to our *Trust the Audiologist who Teaches* series. Think for a moment about the attributes you feel most contribute to a student's success in graduate school. Would the ability to bounce back from setbacks be on that list? It may be safe to say that all students will encounter a setback or challenge at some point in graduate school. However, what dictates their **success through the tough times has less to do with the nature of the adversity, and more to do with how students respond to it.** In this edition, we will explore the factors that determine resiliency and how to foster a resilient mindset in your students.

Promoting a Resilient Mindset in Clinical Education

By: Diane E. Smith (formerly Cheek), Au.D.

What is Resilience? Resilience is defined as an ability to recover from, or adjust easily to, misfortune or change (Merriam-Webster, 2019). It has also been described as a *behavioral or emotional response* to a challenge that is *positive and beneficial* for the individual's development.

Becoming Resilient. Research has shown that the difference between resiliency and non-resiliency is impacted by one's interpretation of adversity, that is, whether someone believes that adversity has the *potential* to cause positive change and improvement. Essentially, it's all about one's mindset. Preparing or shaping your mindset can be thought of like applying a primer before painting a wall in your home. The primer prepares the wall so that the paint has better adherence to it once it's applied. Similarly, the mind must also be primed so that the resiliency skills that are learned can be more effectively applied.

Minding your Mindset. So how do you know if your student's mind is primed to be resilient? A good place to start is to examine their beliefs and assumptions about intelligence and learning. Yeager & Dweck (2012) describe two types of assumptions, or implicit theories, about intelligence and learning:

Entity Theory — Fixed mindset

- *The goal is to look smart*
- *Give up or cheat in response to challenges*
- *Grades decrease during times of adversity*
- *Requiring effort means less natural ability*
- *The world is comprised of threats*

Incremental Theory — Growth mindset

- *The goal is to learn*
- *Work harder in response to challenges*
- *Grades increase during times of adversity*
- *Effort is a key to success and growth*
- *The world is comprised of opportunities*

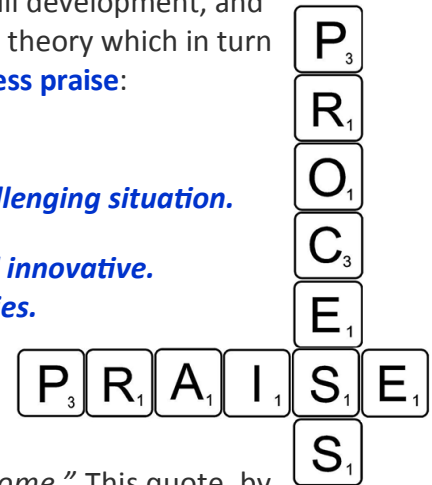
Students who identify with entity theory enter a *fixed mindset* and are more likely to have lower grades and higher dropout rates. The opposite is true for those who identify with incremental theory who are more likely to enter a *growth mindset*. Intervention studies have even found that the academic performance of underachieving students improves simply by learning that their brain is malleable and that when faced with a challenge, neural connections in their brain are created and strengthened in response to that challenge. Think about it — by simply changing one's mindset, academic behavior and performance improve despite challenges that may threaten success! Now that is being resilient!

Promoting a Resilient Mindset. If having the right mindset is the first step towards resiliency, how can you make a difference as a clinical educator? One easy way is to provide feedback in the form of “process praise” rather than “intelligence praise”. Process praise focuses on *strategies and effort* behind a specific behavior. Intelligence praise focuses on one’s inherent *ability and talent*. The goal of process praise is to help students recognize that 1) intelligence is malleable, 2) effort leads to skill development, and 3) challenges are opportunities to learn. These are the tenets of incremental theory which in turn fosters resiliency. Here are examples of turning **intelligence praise** into **process praise**:

Great job today! ➡ *You worked very hard at this!*
You showed perseverance during that challenging situation.

▶ **You’re very smart!** ➡ *The ideas you thought of are unique and innovative.*
I like the way you try all kinds of strategies.

You’re so kind! ➡ *You thought of a terrific way to help that*



Final Thoughts. “I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become.” This quote, by psychologist Carl Jung, reminds us to not let challenges define who we are. But despite knowing that the first part of this quote is true, “I am not what happened to me”, it’s the second part that can be difficult to put into practice...the pick yourself up, dust yourself off and move forward part. But that is exactly what resilience is! Resilience is developed from within and requires a growth mindset as a foundation. Simple changes in how you give feedback, can help prime the growth mindset your students need to be resilient to the demands of graduate school, and later, professional life.

Community Clinical Educator Spotlight

We are pleased to celebrate this edition’s featured Community Clinical Educator:

Elizabeth Cozzi, Au.D.

Liz Cozzi’s commitment to our profession shines through her outstanding work as a clinician and educator. After graduating from the University of Arizona in 1992, she practiced in a variety of clinical settings. From educational audiology and hearing aid dispensing, to intraoperative monitoring and vestibular diagnostics, Liz has had a remarkable career. For the past 25 years, she has shared her skills and expertise as a clinical educator, with most of that time within Tucson’s Carondelet network (St. Joseph’s and St. Mary’s Hospitals). She has particularly enjoyed teaching at St. Joseph’s Hospital because it not only allows her to give back to the University from which she graduated, but it was at St. Joseph’s Hospital here she too honed her clinical skills as an audiology student. On educating students, Liz maintains that creating a positive and supportive training environment is the most effective way for students to learn: “Students need and deserve a safe space. We can all probably think back to a preceptor who upset us or made us doubt our abilities. I want students to have the opposite experience.” Thank you for all that you do Liz!

Reference: Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational psychologist, 47*(4), 302-314.

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