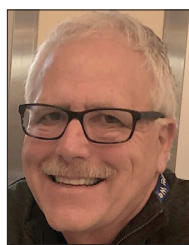


OTHER
VIEWS

Scott Smith



Teaching our children how to deal with disappointment

Babies learn quickly that if they are hungry, with a bit of crying, someone will provide nutrition.

As they grow and develop, they promptly refine what response they need to give to resolve what is causing their unhappiness. The child is beginning to create conflict resolution skills. Yet when they reach a certain point, we as adults often step in and “fix” situations so our children don’t become frustrated and have a meltdown causing us possible embarrassment. Our problem-solving skills of avoiding a temper tantrum stop the child from developing this life skill of self-evaluation and resolution.

Everyone being a winner does not help our children succeed in dealing with life disappointments independently. It does teach them that adults will fix things, so they are happy. The older the child gets, the harder it becomes to change those behaviors. Starting young and teaching them how to deal with disappointments and evaluating how they might avoid the situation next time will serve them the rest of their lives.

Taking the time to teach your children how to deal with loss or failure and not blame is a complex skill they will continue to refine all their life. At some point, you or they will have to deal with failure or loss. Sooner is better than later. Stepping back and helping them evaluate why they lost or failed is that life-impacting teaching moment. Asking them, “What could you do next time?” teaches them what they need to do to have success. It is much more challenging than it seems, but the results will have rewards beyond belief. It’s a process and takes multiple situations to refine the understanding that failure or loss is actually learning.

As adults, how we deal with the failure of a situation models how our children respond when they experience a loss or failure. Most of us have gone to a school’s science fair and observed the students’ projects. The student who learns the most often is the one with the sad-looking cardboard box with notebook paper notes and drawing taped on the box, if handled correctly. This child was placed into the natural process of evaluating their project against others. Therefore, learning to see what others did, they understand adjustments they might try their next project. This student now learns the process of assessing a situation to better the result next time. The more often we allow a child to experience this process, the more their abilities will be enhanced, and they will use these abilities daily.

Timing can be crucial. The night of the science fair when they see no ribbon is the best time to evaluate things. There is a natural process of learning when dealing with loss or failure. The absolute worst thing you can do is push the loss or failure onto someone else or something else. Later, spend time to reassure your child that you are proud of them and ask them what they noticed about other science projects and what they might do differently next time.

Life-learning occurs when we allow the child to evaluate a situation and make life adjustments to prevent replaying the previous experience. Life-learning also happens when participating in sports — asking, “What might you try next time to make things better?” cause the child to start the thinking process. It’s easy to blame others when things don’t go as planned. The skill of self-evaluation over what the child might change next time activates the thinking process in the child. However, blame won’t increase the child’s ability to evaluate and improve their skills or change the result.

Looking for ways to acknowledge our children’s frustration and learn how to deal with loss or failure is accomplished through questioning as a way of evaluation. Asking questions such as: “What do you think happened?” “What should we do differently next time?” helps build their understanding of evaluating and taking charge of situations in a healthy way.

Loss and failure are a part of life, yet we can control how we deal with it and make things better for ourselves and others.

Scott Smith, doctor of education, is a 40-plus year Umatilla County educator and serves on the Decoding Dyslexia Oregon board as its parent/teacher liaison.

Maintaining dental health should be a priority

LAYIN’ IT
ON THE LINE

Steve Kerby



As teeth are one of the busiest organs of the human body, they need to be taken care of with utmost priority. Our recklessness often neglects our oral health (dental health) in eating habits and hygiene routines. Our overall well-being is dependent upon our dental hygiene. A single shred of bacteria can set our whole body in pain and jeopardy as many organs get affected by the bacteria deposits in our teeth.

The matter of dental health includes the overall condition of our gums, salivary glands, lips, tongue, ligaments and mouth tissues and chewing muscles. It means being free of ceaseless oral-facial torment conditions, oral and pharyngeal (throat) tumors, oral delicate tissue injuries and craniofacial tissues, all in all, known as the craniofacial complex.

Dental care is neglected at a very early age, due to which the dental health deteriorates on the arrival of adulthood and mostly in old age. Today, many senior citizens in the U.S. are facing oral health-related problems that affect their overall health. There are ample medical outlets that provide dental care for senior citizens at cost or free throughout the country.

Importance of dental health

More often than youngsters, senior citizens fall into the trap of oral health malfunctioning. This is because, after retirement, they find it difficult and unnecessary to avail themselves of dental care facilities and checkups. Secondly, they often have inadequate and unbalanced appetites due to soreness, and tooth loss is inevitable. This minor health negligence can be a driving force behind many other chronic dental and overall health issues.

Good dental health influences the overall health and well-being of a person. Painful

cavities and bleeding gums are signs of deteriorating dental and overall health. Children need to be guided about the significance of oral hygiene so that they do not face chronic tooth decay or tooth loss at the slight onset of old age from an early age. Recent reports indicate a relationship between strokes, cardiovascular diseases, breathing problems and periodontal diseases with dental health.

The tooth diseases start at the onset of plaques, which accumulate in the teeth if they are not cleaned properly. This gives birth to bacteria that can be harmful to the whole body’s functioning, as this bacterium runs through the bloodstream to different organs of the body such as the heart or lungs. This bacterium becomes a hard base gathered at the base of teeth, inflaming the gums and causing painful swelling and bleeding. Daily brushing is necessary for oral hygiene; otherwise, these bacteria thicken into black substances such as tartar and cause multiple infections.

Another reason why you should take care of teeth is because it can cause cavities in the mouth, resulting in holes in the tooth structure. Cavities can rot the teeth at an early age; thus, one entirely becomes toothless by old age. So, if you want to possess some teeth as you age, the observance of dental health is a must.

Studies have also indicated a link between diabetes and tooth infections. Diabetic conditions are more vulnerable to tooth decay, gum infections and cavities. This further puts a person’s overall health at risk.

Some tips to enhance your dental health It is advisable to brush your teeth twice every day with nutrient-rich toothpaste, like fluoride-containing toothpaste.

Flossing can prevent the accumulation of bacteria or any food leftover; thus, it can be done at home or at a dental clinic.

The best practice to keep your teeth healthy is to visit the dentist once a week or twice a month. Dental checkups can be very beneficial as the dentist can advise on the onset of any medical condition or provide counseling on preventive measures.

Diabetic patients must immediately visit the dentist if they feel a slight ache, swelling, or bleeding in the gums.

Facilities by government

In the U.S., the government has devised free medical health, dental and insurance plans for senior government agencies through which clinics, charities and nonprofit organizations offer extensive medical and dental care. These dental and medical care facilities are free of cost and quality assured, with special attention paid to senior citizens’ health.

The senior citizens can apply for government-funded health programs that suit their medical conditions: a renowned government-owned free health and dental organization. Medicare provides assistance in dental care for senior citizens.

The public medical care service is like a free health insurance plan with comprehensive and extensive medical and dental facilities and allowances. The U.S. government founded it in 1965. This program is for senior citizens, youngsters, and other patients with chronic health conditions and disabilities. The senior citizens can enroll in this program and apply for Medicare medical and dental facilities for 50% and above provisions.

Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is a database of specialists and doctors who act as consultants. They also assist senior citizens in understanding the importance of medical care, dental health, insurance plans, and billing processes. Many other such plans can be of great assistance to senior citizens.

Apart from this, every county’s dental association can provide accessible dental care facilities, dental checkups and dental medicines to the enrollees.

Summary: This article sheds light on the importance of dental health for the general health of senior citizens. It also highlights the facilities provided by the U.S. government for the dental care of senior citizens.

As an avid outdoorsman, Joseph and the Wallowa area have been a big part of Steve Kerby’s life since 1964. Steve is a Syndicated Columnist member; a national organization committed to a transparent approach to money management. Visit stevekerby.retirevillage.com or call 503-936-3535 for more.

‘Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything’

ON LIBERTY

Devin Patton



The beginning of each new year brings with it feelings of excitement and hope; even in the midst of the ongoing pandemic, a CBS News poll found that 71% of Americans say they personally feel “mostly hopeful” as they look ahead toward 2022. Along with feelings of anticipation come the customary (and often perfunctory) New Year’s resolutions that are meant to propel us toward a better, more meaningful life. Often times these resolutions are small and not monumentally life-changing, but the concept of resolving one’s self to change is quite profound on its own. I commend each person who is courageous enough to recognize the need for change in his or her own life, and my hope is that this month’s column will embolden each reader to pursue his or her ideal.

My own struggle with change reaches back far into my childhood. Growing up in a large, relatively conservative farming and ranching family in Wallowa County, I was immersed in a strong culture of spoken and unspoken beliefs relating to just about every facet of life. “That’s just the way we do things here,” is a common refrain and a theme found in many country songs like John Denver’s “Thank God I’m a Country Boy.” After graduation, I studied AgriBusiness at the University of Idaho and then moved to the Midwest to work as an agricultural commodities derivatives broker. Admittedly, the closest thing I’ve experienced to culture shock (outside of marriage) was try-

ing to navigate I-25 and find parking in downtown Denver.

While it’s true I spent my formative years (and much of my adult life) in a relatively homogenous community, it would be a mistake to say my thoughts and beliefs have always reflected the values of the culture in which I have found myself. I’ve always been a bit of an unconventional thinker, and as a young boy I caught flak from my peers for sharing thoughts that were different from those of the group. In fact, one of the main reasons for writing this column is to encourage others to break the mold and develop their own perspectives relating to partisan dogma, culture, and the narrative of the mainstream media. I believe the most sacred liberty we hold as Americans is the ability to think freely, and it’s always a bit ironic to me when critics prove my point by labeling me as another partisan hack because I call out the fact that partisanship, tribalism, and identity politics are some of the greatest threats to liberty.

What I have discovered is that it is incredibly difficult to hold a nuanced view of the world. It’s much easier to label and sort things in an attempt to render further thought no longer necessary. It’s more comfortable to conform to cultural and political norms. The process of labeling and sorting is useful in daily life because it allows us to spend less time arduously analyzing the information pertinent to our lives, but this tendency also leaves us susceptible to developing deeply entrenched beliefs, habits, and a rigid culture that seeks only to perpetuate its own survival.

It’s easy to observe the far-reaching and harmful effects of deeply entrenched dogma and to call for a mass overhaul of our country’s value system. It may be a worthy endeavor to change how we (whoever “we” is) think. Calling for change of our own personal belief system, however, is much less appealing. George

Bernard Shaw, Irish playwright and winner of both an Academy Award and the Nobel Prize in Literature, aptly wrote that “those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.” When we think of New Year’s resolutions and the desire for personal change, we have to confront the reality that we must first change our own mind about certain beliefs. In order to learn, we must first stop believing we already know everything. In order to grow, we have to stop believing life is best where we’re at presently. Facing the harsh truth that we are not measuring up to our ideal can be excruciatingly painful and humiliating, but it is undoubtedly worthwhile.

Personal change is uncomfortable, but ultimately we must open ourselves up to these growing pains if we desire to ever be of benefit to the world. Only after we set our own minds on changing ourselves for good can we earnestly call others to change, otherwise the message gets lost in our hypocrisy.

If change feels impossible, take heart knowing that even some of the staunchest political commentators change their minds. Visit Ben Shapiro’s website to see his list of previously published articles that he now renounces. Watch Ana Kasparian’s admission that she was wrong about the Kyle Rittenhouse case on The Young Turks’ YouTube channel. Ask people you respect what things they’ve changed their minds about. You will probably find that the most compassionate, understanding people are folks who have changed their minds about a few things during their lives, and when you catch a vision of the kinder, wiser human you could become, you might be persuaded to take the harder road in pursuit of your ideal you.

Devin Patton is a fifth-generation Wallowa County native whose pastimes include the study of ag economics, history and free thought.

