Dropping the Rope:

Letting go so your kids can fly

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OVERVIEW:

1. There once was an antique car…
2. What is resilience?
3. Why we don't want our children to take chances
4. Why we need our children to take chances
5. The Dignity of Risk
    a. Dignity of Risk v. Duty of Care
    b. Components
    c. Informed decision making
    d. Teaching (and learning… and practicing) radical acceptance
6. Dealing with anxiety
7. Q & A

There Once Was an Antique Car…

…and a man who loved it

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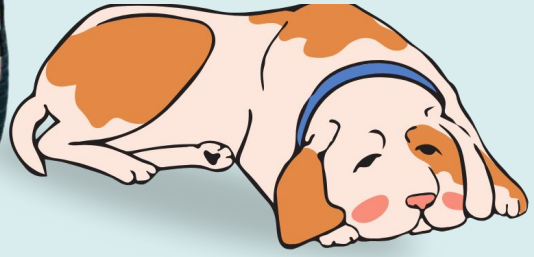
There Once Was an Antique Car…



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As they say, “use it or lose it.”
It’s the same with resilience.

What is Resilience?

Most people say it is “bouncing back.”

We believe it is “bouncing forward.”

Why We Don't Want Our Children to Take Chances

Fear of…

Emotional toll
Physical toll
Financial toll
Broken spirit
Being taken advantage of
Not getting back "on the horse"
…what's your fear?

Why We Need Our Children to Take Chances (and maybe fail…)

"The ability to tolerate imperfection (or limitations) ...is often more important to learn than whatever the content subject is."

- Amanda Mintzer, PsyD, clinical psychologist

The Dignity of Risk

"Overprotection may appear on the surface to be kind, but it can be really evil. An oversupply can smother people emotionally, squeeze the life out of their hopes and expectations, and strip them of their dignity. Overprotection can keep people from becoming all they could become. Many of our best achievements came the hard way: We took risks, fell flat, suffered, picked ourselves up, and tried again."

- Robert Perske, 1972

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have goals and passions, just like their neurotypical counterparts. They want to achieve things that may be difficult, that people may say are over-ambitious.

The Dignity of Risk V. Duty of Care

Intersections of Trauma and Disability: Reactions, Responses and (Re)traumatising

by Dr Michelle Ronksley-Pavia

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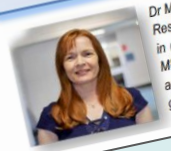

Dr Michelle Ronksley-Pavia is a Special Needs and Inclusive Education lecturer, and GIER Adjunct Research Fellow at Griffith University, in the School of Education and Professional Studies, lecturing in undergraduate and postgraduate Primary and Secondary preservice teacher education courses. MIchelle has taught in a variety of educational settings, including Adult and Community Education and TAFE colleges, and P-12 school sectors, where she has extensive experience working with gifted and talented students, twice exceptional learners, and students with special education needs.

As disability writer and activist Lauren Beller writes:

When we objectify people with disabilities for doing things we expect them not to be able to do, we send a message that we have lowered expectations for them from the start. We **see them as able to do less**, or **perhaps incapable altogether**. Advocates encourage us to frame it more as being **fully capable with appropriate adaptation and modifications**.

Do some people's disabilities prohibit them from doing certain things? Sure. Does the appearance of disability or a specific diagnosis determine what one's abilities may be?

Absolutely not.

But with or without a diagnosis, **all human beings are unable to do some things**. It's part of being human.

No one can do it all.

Specific disabilities make some inabilities more likely, but we should **never assume inability** based on this alone. Within the disability activism community, there is a simple yet effective slogan we've historically used:

PRESUME COMPETENCE.

(Beller, 2020, para. 6-11, emphasis ad

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The Dignity of Risk - Components

1. Treating people fairly
2. Being an advocate for exercising their rights to the fullest extent possible
3. Supporting the person's preferences and values, rather than one's own
4. Providing supports for health and safety by using least restrictive methods
5. Being realistic with expectations

It is their right.

The Dignity of Risk - Components

Remember person-centered planning

"Nothing about us, without us!"

Acknowledge strengths and interests

Remember desires and rights to take risks

Always seek the least restrictive environment

Be a cheerleader

We know what you can't do. Tell me what you <u>can</u> do!

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The Dignity of Risk - Informed Decision-Making

"Rather than protecting people with disabilities from disappointments and sorrows, which are natural parts of life, support them to make informed decisions."

- The Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth Universities

FEED THE DREAM,
BUT FIRST ARM THE DREAMER WITH EDUCATION.

The Dignity of Risk -

Teaching (and learning…and practicing) Radical Acceptance

Radical acceptance is the ability to accept situations that are outside of your control without judging them, which reduces the suffering they cause.

The Dignity of Risk -
Teaching (and learning…and practicing) Radical Acceptance

- Remind yourself that, in this moment, reality can't be changed.
- Remind yourself that the causes of this reality are outside your control.
- Think about what you would do if you could accept what happened (and then do it as though you had already accepted what happened).
- Imagine what things would be like if you accepted the situation.
- Use relaxation strategies, mindfulness practices, journaling, and self-reflection to understand your emotions.
- Let yourself safely feel your emotions.
- Observe how emotions resonate in your body (is there tightness, pain, restriction?).
- Accept that life can be worthwhile even when experiencing pain.
- Decide to commit to the practice of acceptance when you feel resistance come up again.

The Dignity of Risk -
Teaching (and learning…and practicing) Radical Acceptance

For your loved one:

- Show empathy
- Make yourself a model
- Make it a teachable moment (without the “I told you so”)
- Allow them to vent frustration
- Share your own experiences of falling or failure
- De-escalation
    - Act in a calm manner
    - Make the environment calm and safe
    - Keep soothing objects on hand
- Praise the strength it took to try

The Dignity of Risk -
Teaching (and learning…and practicing) Radical Acceptance

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The Dignity of Risk - Handling Anxiety

Stress management
- Breathing techniques
- Visualization
- Soothing items
- “Spilt Milk”

Listening/Encouragement

Stress the journey, not the destination

Crisis hotline:

Crisis Assessment Response and Enhanced Services (CARES) 1-888-393-3007 (21+)

PerformCare Emergency Services 1-877-652-7624 (under 21)

9-1-1

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Thank you for watching!

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