Strategies for Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors – Working from the Inside Out

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People often say that ‘beauty is in the eye of the beholder’, and I say that the most liberating thing about beauty is realizing that you are the beholder. This empowers us to find beauty in places where others have not dared to look including inside ourselves.

- Salma Hayek

Reflection

Individually reflect on the following statement:

Behavior is in the eye of the beholder.

Stand Up partner meeting:

What resonated for you when you read this quote? What questions surfaced?

How might this statement be useful to keep in mind in the classroom?
## Outcomes and Agenda

### Outcomes

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<td>Identify and understand the functions of the three brain states</td>
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<td>Understand the connection between social and emotional skills and executive functions and their relationship to challenging behaviors</td>
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<td>Recognize individual triggers and practice composure, pivoting, and reframing when addressing challenging behaviors</td>
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### Agenda

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<tr>
<td>Welcome, Connect, and Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brain States</td>
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<td>Addressing Challenging Behaviors Through Composure and Reframing</td>
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<td>Closure</td>
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Collaborative Norms

- Equity of Voice
- Active Listening
- Respect for All Perspectives
- Safety and Confidentiality
- Respectful Use of Electronics
BRAINSTORM

Table Talk

With your table group, consider and brainstorm:

How does it show up in the classroom when children have not yet developed social and emotional skills?

“If a child doesn’t know how to read, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to swim, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to multiply, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to drive, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we….. ……..teach? ……..punish?”

“Why can’t we finish the last sentence as automatically as we do the others?”

Tom Herner (NASDE President) Counterpoint 1998, p.2
Brain States: Survival

**Survival State**: The survival state is activated under stress. It is a reactive state in which self-defense is the primary goal and intention. When activated, it results in some of our most primitive behaviors: Fight flight and/or freeze.

**Emotional State:** The Emotional State is coming from the Limbic System of the brain. The limbic system consists of several interconnected brain structures (amygdala, hippocampus, etc.) that process memories, activate our emotions and tell us what is worth remembering. If the experience is tagged as threatening, the amygdala serves as the gatekeeper of the emotional state, it becomes activated, and *self-defense* (not learning) become the goal of the exchange.

Brain States: Executive

**Executive State:** The executive state represents the *optimal integrated learning* state, one of relaxed alertness. The brain state model depicts all the integrated systems that regulate the CEO of the brain due to the regulatory function they serve. When integrated, they allow us to see from others’ points of view, manage our emotions, and access goal achievement and problem-solving skills.

Reflection on Brain States

Individually Reflect:
Think of a time this year that you found yourself in…
   A survival state?
   An emotional state?
   An executive state?

Partner Share:
What was your experience and how did you know, looking back, that you may have been in that “brain state”?

Video Reflection Questions:
1. What sentiments from this video resonated with you?

2. Might you be able to identify a child in your classroom that you believe has established a pattern in the brain where they are *unconsciously responding* or behaving in the classroom?
Be a S.T.A.R.
COMPOSITE

Composure is self-regulation in action. It is the prerequisite skill adults need before disciplining children.

-Dr. Becky Bailey

In any situation, we can choose to be a STAR.

Stop, perhaps smile
Take a deep breath
And
Relax
Composure Strategies

1. S.T.A.R. and others
   

2. Tucker Turtle
   
   http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html

3. Safe Place
   
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUMc3fWgLEk
1. Trigger Thought
2. Activates Old Messages (CD-ROM)
3. False Messages
4. Uncomfortable Sensations
5. Automatic Reactions
Where is the Attention?

1. Ignatius, why did you hit Jake? Would you like someone to hit you? Hitting hurts. Go turn your card to red. Then come back and be nice.

2. Jenna, what is our rule about fighting? You need to go see the principal right now. Fighting is not allowed in this school. Fighting is bad and wrong.

3. Jose you wanted a marker. You didn’t know the words to use to get it. You may not grab. When you want a marker say, May I borrow your maker, please? Practice saying that now.
Reframing Using Assertiveness

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<tr>
<th>Triggered/Habitual Response</th>
<th>Assertive Statement</th>
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<td>Don’t touch!</td>
<td>Hold my hand so I can help you touch delicate objects safely.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You know better than that.</td>
<td>Say, “Excuse me,” when you bump into others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stop. It’s not nice to hit others.</td>
<td>When you want to get her attention, tap her on the shoulder gently like this and say her name.</td>
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