

SHOW  HOPE

HOPE

for the Journey
CONFERENCE



PRACTICAL APPLICATION GUIDE

Practical Application: An Introduction to TBRI

Guiding Thought

In order to help our children heal, we must understand and address the [complexities] in their brain, body, biology, and beliefs.

— Dr. Karyn Purvis

Questions and Reflections

- + Consider how your needs were met as a child. In what ways did you know you were precious, unique, and special?
- + What are some needs that might have gone unmet for your child in his or her past? What can you do to meet those needs now?
- + Consider your current parenting tools and habits in light of your child's history and needs. What strategies may need to be adjusted to better communicate to your child(ren) that he, she, or they are precious?

Action Steps

- + Make a list of five attributes about your child that you can regularly affirm (not only actions and abilities but also the beauty you see in their heart and character).
 - » "I love how curious you are. You ask great questions about the world around us."
 - » "I love playing with you! You are so much fun."
 - » "Thank you for sharing. That was very kind and thoughtful of you."
 - » "That is such a great idea! You are incredibly creative."
- + Introduce new experiences in your day-to-day interactions. Positive, joyful experiences are essential for rewiring the brain, and novel experiences also contribute to brain health. Combine the two, and incorporate one new, joyful experience with your child each week. Some ideas include:
 - » Host a tea party.
 - » Make a fort.
 - » Paint rocks.

Activities

Crossing the Midline

Cross-lateral movement refers to any time one side of the body crosses over the midline of the body to the other side. The right side of the body is controlled by the left side of the brain, and the left side of the body is controlled by the right side of the brain. Practicing crossing the midline is a great way to get the right and left sides to communicate optimally. Ideas for younger children—that are also fun—include classic games like "Hot Potato" (but you must hold the object with both hands), "Simon Says" and clapping games like "Miss Mary Mack." For older children, consider tennis, baseball, or softball; washing the family car together (which also promotes connectedness); and even a game of Twister.

Remember to Remember

In "The Whole-Brain Child," Drs. Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson write, "Implicit memories are often positive and work in our favor, like when we fully expect to be loved by those around us simply because we've always been loved. ... But implicit memories can be negative as well, like when we've repeatedly had the opposite experience of our parents being irritated by or uninterested in our times of distress. ... The problem with an implicit memory, especially of a painful or negative experience, is that when we aren't aware of it, it becomes a buried landmine that can limit us in significant and sometimes debilitating ways." As outlined by Siegel and Bryson, a great strategy for shining a light on those implicit memories is through storytelling. Building in habits of checking in with your child or children during normal activities together like dinnertime, errands, school commutes, or bedtime routines offer great opportunities for your child(ren) to talk about his, her or their past experiences.

Practical Application: Connecting Principles

Guiding Thought

Embrace vulnerability; reject judgment; care deeply.

– Emily Chapman Richards

Questions and Reflections

- + Attachment is often described as a dance between the child and the caregiver. What are some ways you have seen your own history impact your relationship with your child?
- + What does “being fully present” mean to you, and what steps can you take to be more fully present with your child?
- + What activities does your child enjoy? How can you more intentionally engage your child around his or her play styles and interests?
- + Why is it sometimes challenging to see beyond your child’s behavior and recognize the underlying need he or she is trying to express or have met?

Action Steps

- + Stop, look, and listen when your child approaches you.
 - » “Stop” what you are doing.
 - » “Look” into his or her eyes.
 - » “Listen” to his or her words, and share in the excitement and passion he or she is expressing.
- + Find creative ways to give more “yeses.”

Activities

Child-led One-on-One Time

Work to spend 10 minutes a day with your child engaging in play with an activity of his or her choice. Allow space for your child to lead the play with his or her unique ideas. During this time, offer healthy touch (high fives, fist bumps, side hugs); match behavior (whatever he or she creates, you create); and validate his or her ideas. Make an effort to keep your child in the lead of the play by avoiding playtime as a way to teach or give direction. This time is for him or her to be expressive and for you to recognize his or her unique ideas, creativity, gifts, and imagination.

Healthy Touch

Healthy touch is an important way to build connected, trusting, and healthy relationships with children. Unfortunately, many children who have experienced trauma have never known caring touch on a regular basis. Making it a priority to incorporate healthy touch in your child’s day-to-day activities and interactions can help facilitate healing. Beyond fist bumps, high fives, and gentle chin prompts, also work to find opportunities to incorporate some of these “out of the box” activities to add some fun and healthy touch into your daily interactions:

- + Have a three-legged race.
- + Give the family dog a bath together.
- + Practice fun hairstyles on each other.
- + Get creative together with face paint.
- + Play “freeze tag” together.

Practical Application: Empowering Principles

Guiding Thought

To bring a child to a place of healing, you must know the path yourself.

— Dr. Karyn Purvis

Questions and Reflections

- + Think of a time when you were safe, but you didn't feel that way. Consider situations in which your child may not feel safe. How does he or she respond to fear?
- + Describe a time when you misunderstood a fear-driven response as manipulation, control, or willful disobedience.
- + Help your child navigate change by creating predictability. Doing so will encourage felt safety. Think about the transitions that are most difficult (i.e. bedtime, school drop off, parent leaving for work). What are some strategies you can use to support your child in transitioning well?
- + What are some ways you can modify your environment to support your child's sensory needs (i.e. lights, smells, noises, sensory-rich or sensory-sensitive environments)?

Action Steps

- + Remember the importance of staying hydrated and eating healthy snacks. Encourage hydration by taking your child to pick out his or her own water bottle, and consider keeping mini water bottles in your car. Provide healthy snacks every two to three hours, and remember to offer protein before bedtime.
- + Bedtime is often challenging. To create a calming environment, establish an evening ritual (i.e. bathtime, reading a book, singing a song, and so forth). Also consider how to build connection points and nurture attachment before other challenging transitions with your child. Perhaps you create a "going to work" handshake or establish a routine of saying a prayer as you arrive at school for drop-off.

Activities

Get Active

Exercise and physical activity are critical in the life of a child. Running, jumping, free play, sports, and similar activities all work to promote healthy brain development. Begin to incorporate exercise into regular family activities. Go on walks or bike rides together. Consider weekend hikes. Find a sport you all can play (i.e. kickball or catch). Or just plan on regular walks around your neighborhood or at a nearby park. The point is to be active and active *together* to foster greater connection.

Sensory Tubs

Children impacted by early trauma often struggle to manage information coming in through the senses. While some children may be sensory-avoiding, others are sensory-seeking. For children who are sensory-seeking, sensory bins can be a great resource for tactile stimulation and encouraging creative play. Fill a plastic bin with uncooked rice or beans along with small toys like cars, trucks, or small plastic animal figures. For older children, consider making playdough together (find recipes online), and then let the creative fun begin.

Practical Application: Correcting Principles

Guiding Thought

Stay calm no matter what. See the need behind the behavior. Find a way to meet the need.

— Dr. David Cross

Questions and Reflections

- + How could you proactively teach and practice to help create a new pattern of behavior or interaction for both you and your child?
- + Which elements of the IDEAL Response come more naturally to you? Which do you struggle with and why?
- + When thinking about calming engagement, what helps you regulate and calm? What helps your child regulate and calm?
- + Consider whether you are using fear or control to change your child's behavior. How can you correct while staying connected and building greater trust?

Action Steps

- + Offer choices to help your child feel safe, heard, and valued. Keep in mind that you must be willing to accept either choice you offer and choices should not be threats or punishments.
- + Return to playful, warm interactions when conflict is resolved. *When it's over, it's over.*

Activities

Practicing Redos

Write on five index cards the most common scenarios your child needs to redo. Select one card at a time, and make it fun and playful. Use puppets or stuffed animals to act out the wrong and right ways. Praise your child for completing the redo. With older kids or teens, act out or talk through the scenarios. Share power by giving your child the choice of which role he or she portrays. Praise the child with a high five, fist bump, hug, or verbal affirmation.

Regulating Activities

- + Sample regulating activities include:
 - » Deep Breathing: Breathing deeply will oxygenate the body and brain, helping children and youth (and caregivers!) think more clearly, learn more easily, and make better behavioral choices.
 - » Magic Mustache: Pressing the parasympathetic pressure point—just above the center of the upper lip—creates a calming influence. Most kids love this exercise.
 - » Blowing Your Soup: Pretend to hold a bowl of soup and blow on it to cool it off. Let children choose the type of soup they are cooling.
 - » Chair Sit-Ups/Floor Push-Ups: These are calming and can be done anytime your child is feeling overwhelmed.

Practical Application: The Gospel + TBRI

Guiding Thought

Our labors will never be in vain because [God's] labors for us were perfect.
— Scotty Smith

Questions and Reflections

- + What does humility in service look like as a parent or caregiver?
- + In the hard moments (because they'll come!), where does your source of joy come from?
- + As you consider the love and grace shown to you through Christ's work of reconciliation, how can that inform and encourage your daily interactions and approaches with your child?
- + What role does forgiveness play in your family's story?

Action Steps

- + Be intentional about carving out space for yourself for personal prayer, meditation, and time with God. It may mean making adjustments to your daily schedule, even if only a few minutes, but this time can be rejuvenating to your mind, body, and soul.
- + In the hard moments, remind yourself what brought you here, why today matters, and where you are headed.
- + Before your head hits the pillow for the night, treasure in your heart one special moment from the day that brought you joy.

Activities

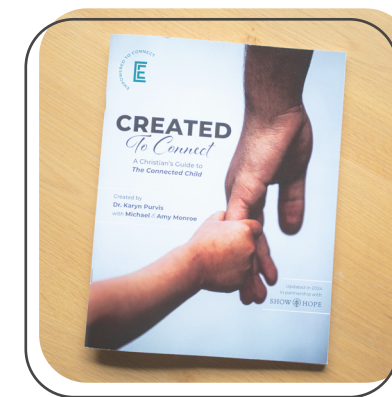
Verses to Remember

Below are four Bible verses Show Hope believes connect well to the foundational principles of TBRI. Spend time meditating on these truths, whether journaling, memorizing, or writing on index cards to place around your home or office space.

- » **An Introduction to TBRI:** *Two are better than one, ... For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.* — Ecclesiastes 4:9-10
- » **Connecting Principles:** *Let love be genuine ...* — Romans 12:9
- » **Empowering Principles:** *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.* — 1 John 4:18
- » **Correcting Principles:** *Love never ends.* — 1 Corinthians 13:8

Create Community

Think of other individuals and families within your church or faith community. Consider beginning a support group for one another. Perhaps you can begin meeting weekly or monthly together in prayer, study, and discussion. A great resource to walk through together is "Created to Connect: A Christian's Guide to The Connected Child" by Dr. Karyn Purvis with Michael and Amy Monroe.



To download a digital copy of "Created to Connect," visit the conference Resources page at showhope.org/hopeforthejourneyresources.