



Beyond Videogames: Helping Kids Find Inspiration and Embrace Challenge During Covid-19

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Kingsbury Wellness and Learning Group

kingsburywellness.org



The Kingsbury Wellness & Learning Group



Our mission is to remove barriers and unlock potential for families with learning and behavior challenges.

Services

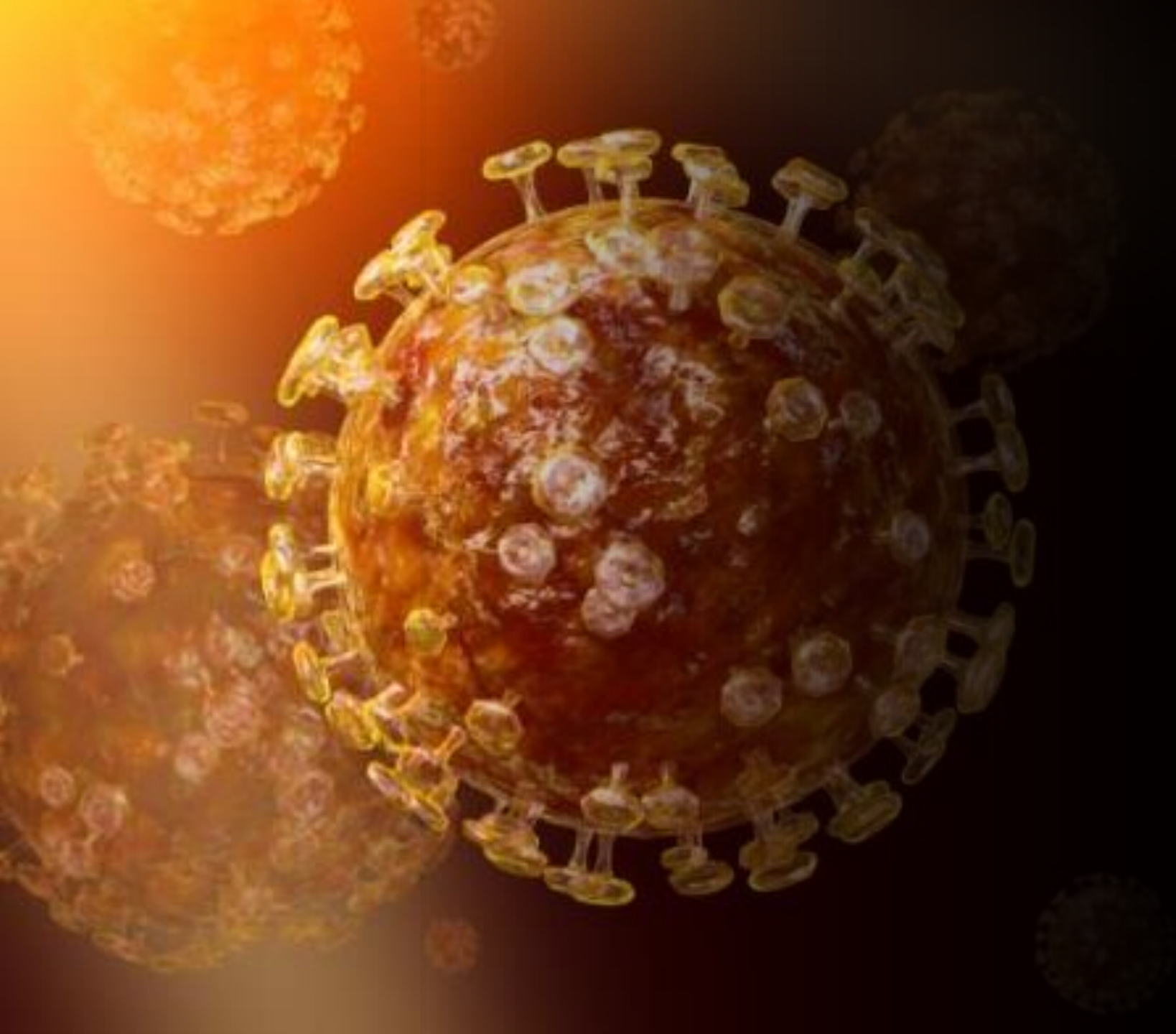
- Comprehensive Neuropsychological Testing
- Autism Evaluation
- Admissions Testing
- College Accommodations
- Individual Psychotherapy for Children and Adults
- Family Therapy
- Tutoring
- Speech Language Evaluation
- Consultation
- Professional Development

During Covid-19, telehealth services available.



Limitations of Technology and Other Info

- **Sound Problems on GotoWebinar**—check the speaker settings and close other windows/streaming
- **Webinar is being recorded** and will be posted on our website kingsburywellness.org
- **Handouts:** click on control panel to download. We will also post on our website and share with Fusion to send out.
- **Email me at** arowe@kwlg.org
- **Questions during presentation:** Click on question mark on control panel and type your question. We will answer at the end.



Covid-19 Disaster **AND** Opportunity?

Covid-19 is accelerating ongoing changes in work

Heuristic Jobs

- Worker may help define the task
- Work requires creativity, “out of the box” thinking
- Requires “soft skills”, emotional intelligence
- Requires ability to focus attention
- Require autonomous thinking



SELF-MOTIVATION

Different
Parenting
Skills Are
Needed

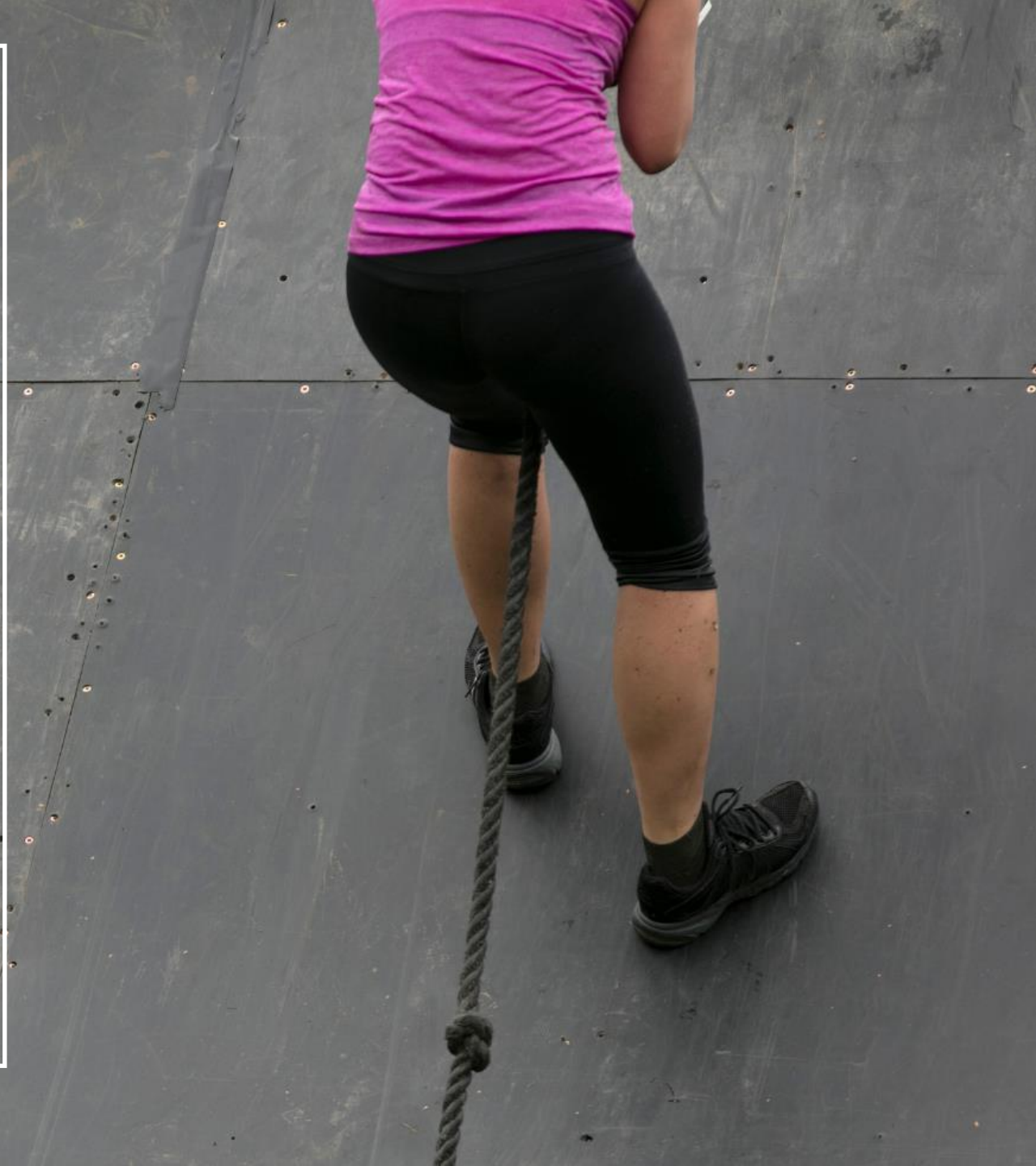


Rules
Expectations
Demands

INSPIRATION

Overview of Today's Webinar

- Understanding Ingredients of Focus and Self-Motivation
- Parenting Strategies to Foster Inspiration and Self-Motivation
- Dealing With Resistance and Reluctance in Your Child
- Your Questions Answered by Our Panel
 - Elliott Conklin, Psy.D., Executive Director Kingsbury Wellness and Learning Group
 - Lauren Siegel, Psy.D., Director of Clinical Services, Kingsbury Wellness and Learning Group



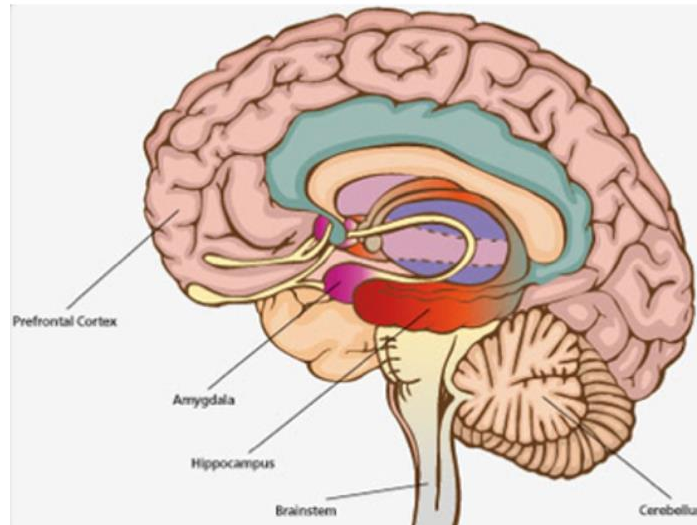


Focus

Two Brain Systems

Top-Down

- More deliberate processing speed
- Effortful
- Voluntary
- Seat of Self Control
- Able to learn new models
- Self-awareness and Reflection
- Planning
- Deliberation



Bottom-Up


- Rapid Processing
- Involuntary and Automatic
- Unconscious
- Network of Models Based on Past
- Impulsive
- Driven by Emotions
- Executor of Habits
- Intuition
- "Gut Reaction"

Delicate Balance Between the Two Systems

- Focus requires top-down system to take charge
- Brain always going toward automaticity to reserve resources

Open Awareness—Mind is open and observant



A still life composition featuring a small glass oil dispenser, a bottle of olive oil, lemons, and olive branches on a dark surface. The image is split by a white curved line, with the left side showing the still life and the right side containing text.

Focused Attention is the EVOO of the Brain

- Potent
- Requires High Effort
- Limited in Quantity
- In High Demand

How is Your Child's EVOO Being Invested?

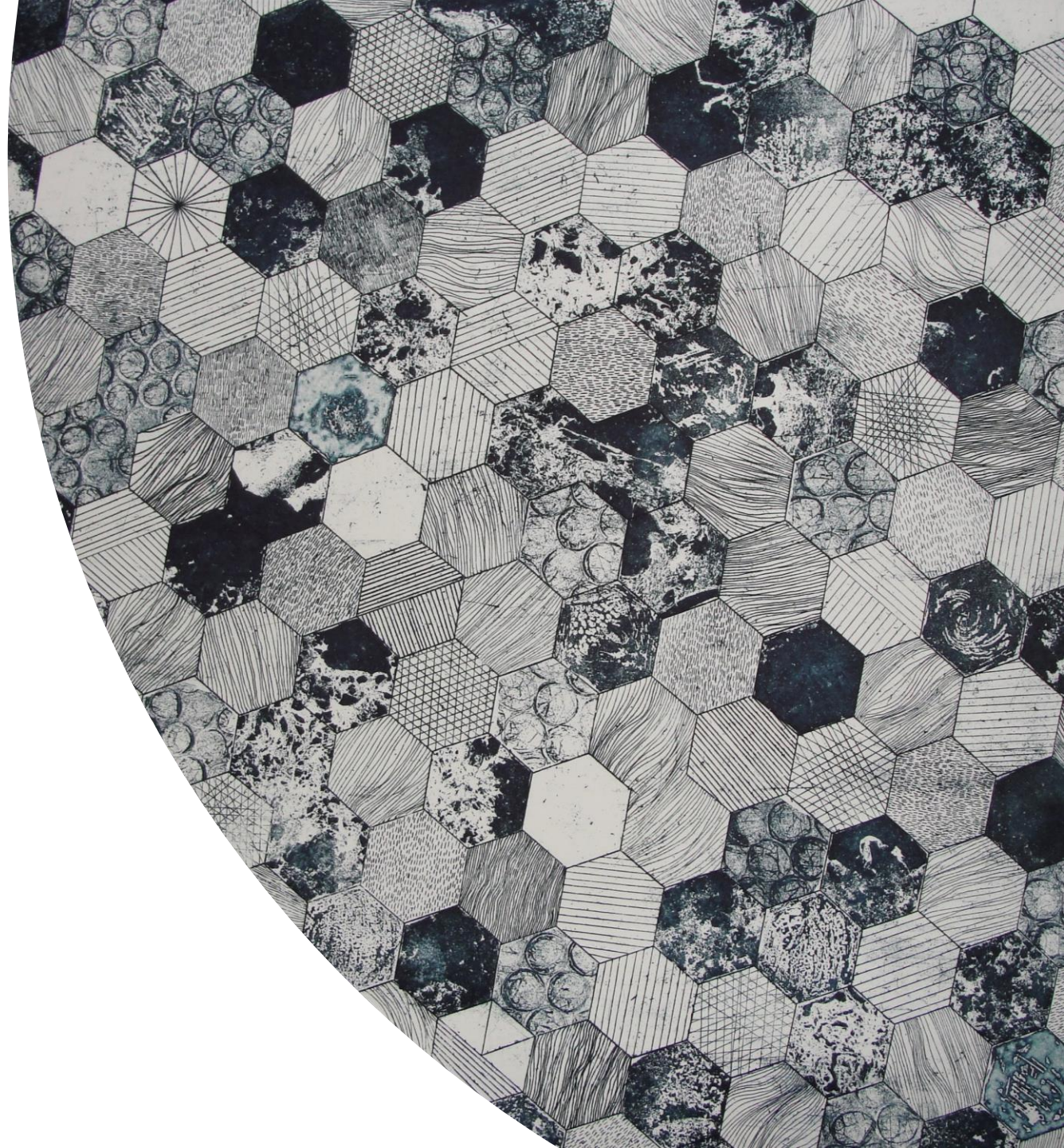
Dealing with “Distractions”

Social Media

- “Hive Mind” --Expands attention using others in peer group, way to more efficiently find what to attend to
 - Adolescence is period of developing identity in relationship to peers
 - Social media is the only outlet under quarantine

Videogames

- Can facilitate social engagement
- Can develop some problem solving and visual perceptual skills



When to Worry About Screen Use

- “Addiction”
 - Preoccupation with internet activities
 - Inability to control use
 - Distress when use is limited
 - Continued use despite disruption in essential activities (eating, sleeping)
- Factors that predispose to screen overuse
 - ADHD (impulsivity, extraversion, disinhibition, low self-esteem)
 - Hostility
 - Depression
 - Social Phobia



Screens can reinforce Bottom-Up Brain and limit time developing Top-Down Brain

Self-Motivation Requires:

- Autonomy
- Mastery
- Purpose

“Good work is what people are excellent at, what engages them, and what they believe matters.” Howard Gardner





Autonomy: where, when, how, what

People differ in what they want control of

A black and white photograph of a person playing a Schaefer & Sons organ. The person's hands are visible on the keyboard. The organ has a decorative metal screen with a geometric pattern. The text "Mastery—the desire to get better and better at something that matters" is overlaid on the image.

Mastery—the desire to get better and better at something that matters

Developing Expertise

10,000 Hour Rule (Gladwell) is not accurate

Need lots of practice but **deliberate** practice

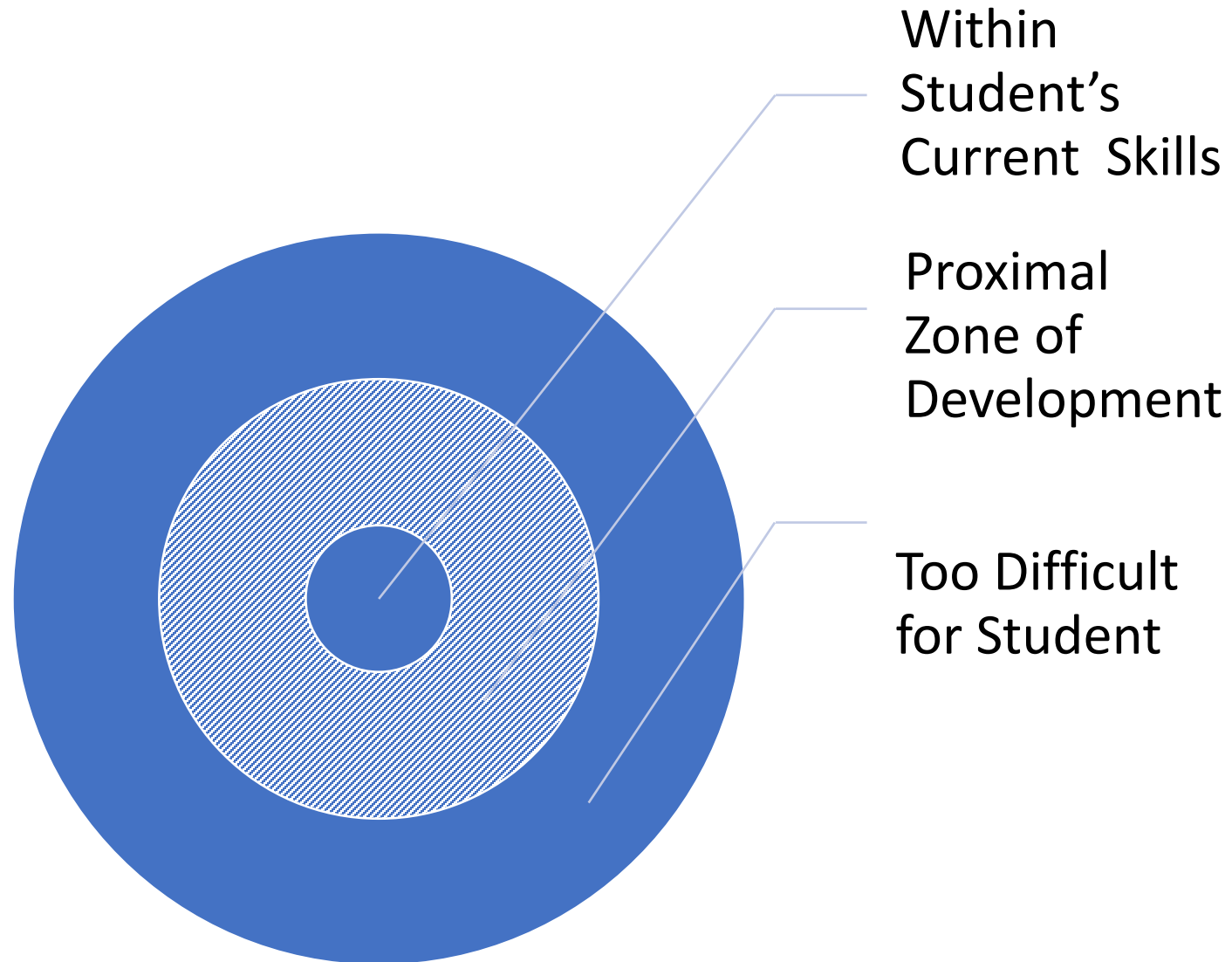
- Repetition leads to habit and increased automaticity
- Only get to “good enough” plateau and then no progress
- Need to fight automaticity by challenging self

Need feedback loop with mentor or coach

Growth Mindset

- See failures as necessary for growth rather than challenge to competence

Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky)



The Road to Inspiration is Hard



Perhaps I can best describe my experience of doing mathematics in terms of a journey through a dark unexplored mansion. You enter the first room of the mansion and it's completely dark. You stumble around bumping into the furniture, but gradually you learn where each piece of furniture is. Finally, after six months or so, you find the light switch, you turn it on, and suddenly it's all illuminated. You can see exactly where you were. Then you move into the next room and spend another six months in the dark. So each of these breakthroughs, while sometimes they're momentary, sometimes over a period of a day or two, they are the culmination of—and **couldn't exist without—the many months of stumbling around in the dark that proceed them.**

Andrew Wiles (emphasis added)

Proved Fermat's Last Theorem (1637) in 1995


A person wearing a blue hairnet, yellow goggles, and white gloves, looking down. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for the text.

Purpose: To What and To Whom Do I Feel Responsible?

Authenticity, Relevance, Values

A man and a child are riding mountain bikes on a dirt trail. The man is on the left, wearing a red helmet and a white shirt with a backpack. The child is on the right, also wearing a red helmet and a white shirt. They are both looking down at the trail. The background is a hilly landscape with tall grass and some trees under a cloudy sky.

Parenting Strategies to Increase Engagement



Rewards and Punishment Can Be Counterproductive

- Encourage Short-term thinking
 - Taking short-cuts
- Turns potentially enjoyable activities into work
- Need to increase rewards to maintain impact
- Only good for routine tasks
- Decreases productivity and creativity
- Increases emotional distraction



Fostering “Out of the Box” Skills Requires Parents to Use Different Skills

- Providing Choices
- Providing Opportunities to Explore Without Evaluation
- Making Space for Unstructured Time
- Flexibility in Outcomes
- Empathy
- Perspective Taking
- Collaborative Problem Solving



“I’m Bored!”

- Uncomfortable underlying emotions may be present
- Not able to get involved or engaged with an activity
- Used to adults intervening and providing structure
- May feel needs are not being met





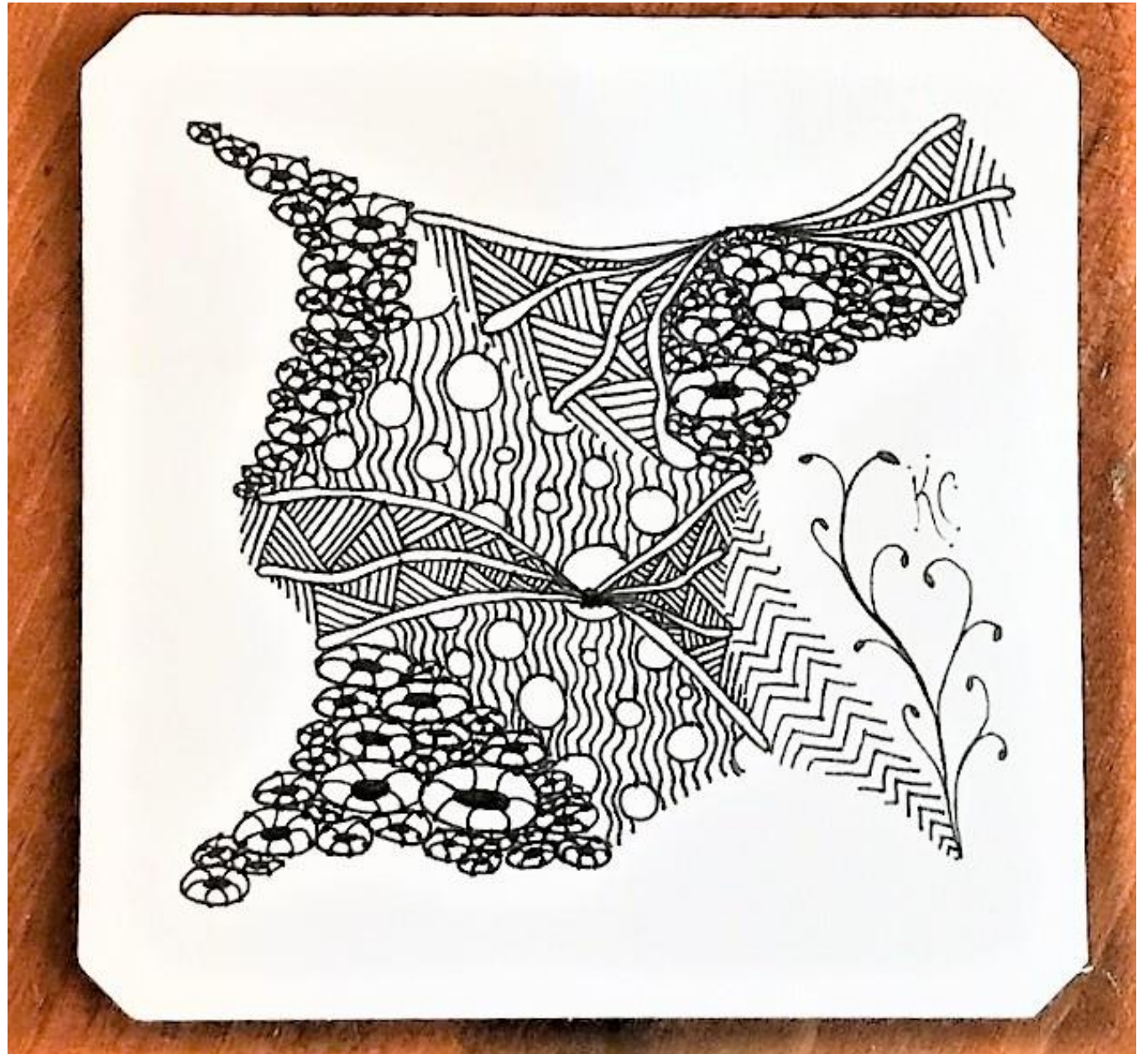
Develop Comfort with “Down Time”

- Establish “Down Time” periods of the day
- Provide a setting
 - Materials
 - Space (can be portable if space is limited)
- Limit expectations for productivity (Don’t monitor)
- Avoid screens
- Establish predictable quality time with parent

New Habits Take Time to Develop!

Create Opportunities for Open Awareness

- Family screen/electronics quiet time
- Nature Walk
- Encourage passive bottom-up activities to calm mind
 - Meditation
 - Yoga
 - Zentangles
 - Knitting
 - Morning Pages (The Artist's Way)
 - Unstructured Art Activities



Tinker Lab Monthly Art Challenge

[https://tinkerlab.com/
monthly-art-challenge/](https://tinkerlab.com/monthly-art-challenge/)

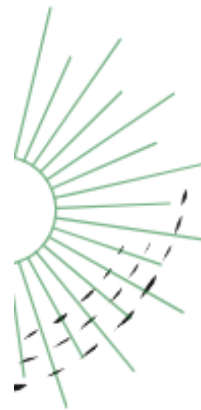


MARCH *art challenge*

#TINKERSKETCH

HOSTED BY @TINKERLAB

square	1	16	toys
fluffy	2	17	monochrome
opposite	3	18	receipt
bump	4	19	in between
splash of color	5	20	news
angle	6	21	straight
boundary	7	22	contrast
fire	8	23	symmetrical
bird's eye view	9	24	destination
hatch marks	10	25	dessert
flora	11	26	architecture
night	12	27	giant
vertical lines	13	28	broad strokes
name that tune	14	29	open
spice	15	30	change
		31	fast



TINKER LAB





In Pursuit of Purpose

Make Some Lists

- What Do You Do When No One Is Telling You what to Do?
- What Do You Do When You Are Supposed to be Doing Something Else?
- What Type of Information Do You Read and Watch?

Evaluate by Category

- Consumption
- Communication
- **Creating/Making**

Put In a March Madness bracket

- **Would You Rather?** Eliminate Based on What You Would Spend Time On If Won the Lottery and Could Do Anything

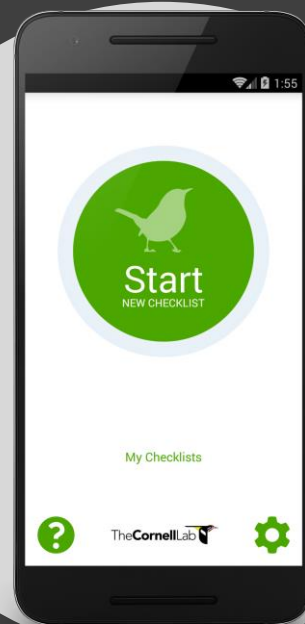
Trial of Final Four (one week each)

- Look for Flow
- Look for Purpose

<http://ajjuliani.com/6-simple-strategies-to-help-find-your-passion/>

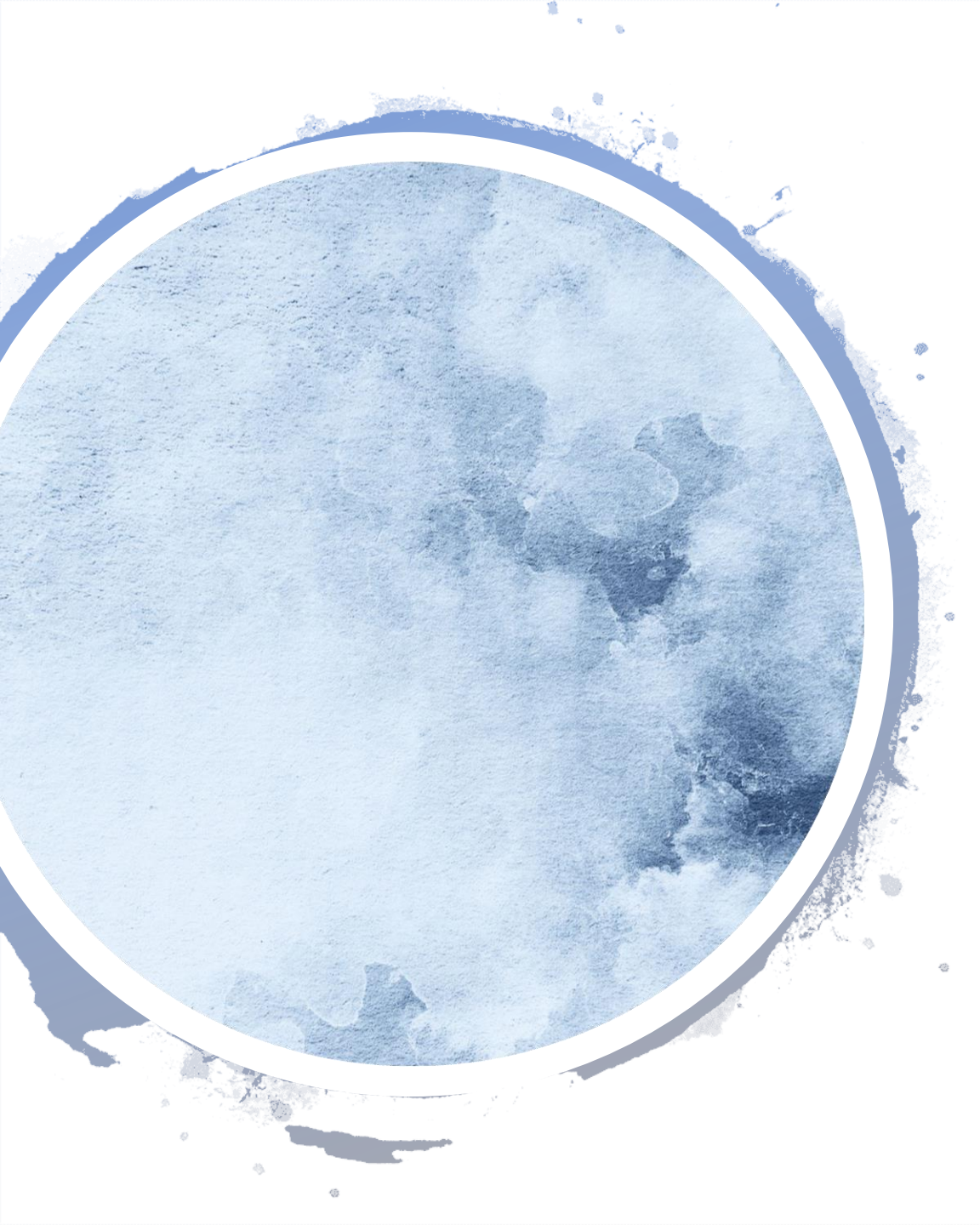
For the Common Good: Virtual Edition

- Community Service for Covid-19
- Activism
- Citizen Research
 - Zooniverse
 - NASA Globe Project
 - Scientist Participant Games---**Yes!**
Videogames that lead to Scientific Discoveries
 - Cornell Ornithology Lab





Getting Back On Track



Negative Parent-Child Dynamic Develops

Parental Coercive Strategies

Rewards-Punishments-Threats

Child Avoidance

“Bored”/Disengaged

“Frazzled” (defensive/anxious)

Refusal (argumentative/unfairness...)

Parent Gives in or Escalates Demands

Child Escapes Unpleasant Task (Negative Reinforcement)

Occasionally, Child Capitulates Leading to Random Reinforcement of Parent Coercive Behaviors

Reconnect

- Deal with Your Feelings
 - Your inner critic
 - Calming your own mind
- Be Present
- Be Open to Alternative Priorities and Outcomes
- Try to Connect with Your Own Experiences/Feelings
 - Don't you want control over your work, feel competent and that your work is meaningful?



Authentic Listening

- Attend to what is going on with you first
- Spotlight on the other person --listen in their frame of reference (not where do I agree so I can state my position when it is my turn to talk)
- Use Neutral Prompt--make a neutral observation and “What’s Up?”
- Try to see what is behind the words
 - Emotions
 - Needs
 - Wants
- Restate or reframe to show understanding

Empathy causes relaxation and helps people be more willing to negotiate and be influenced

When Frustration Strikes

- Self-Calming Strategies
- Break Task Down to Smaller Steps
- Scaffold If Skill is Developing
- Too Much Top-Down—focusing too much on technique
- Find a Logical Stopping Point—NOT Frustration
- Try Bottom-Up Strategies
 - Open Awareness
 - Visualization—Visual Model



Strategies to Increase Engagement

Focus on Positive

- Reminder of Strengths
- Celebrate Progress However Small

Coaching

- What are dreams and hopes
- What are concrete steps to take
- What skills would you need to reach those goals

Choose Battles

- Give Choice When Possible
- Let Small Things Pass

Collaborate

- Try to find a Middle Path
- Try a Solution
- Evaluate Success



References

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us
by Daniel Pink

Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence by Daniel
Goleman

Intelligence in the Wild Perkins, et al.

Television and Video Game Exposure and
the Development of Attention Problems

The screens culture: impact on ADHD

Resources

engagetheirminds.com

[zooniverse](https://zooniverse.org)

tinkerlab.com

[zentangle](https://www.zentangle.com)

Scientific Discovery Games

- <https://news.stanford.edu/2019/07/21/contributing-science-games/>

[NASA Globe Project](https://www.nasa.gov/globe)

[Cornell Ornithology Lab](https://www.cornell.edu/ornithology)



Your Questions

Want to talk with us about your child?

Free 30-minute Phone Consultation

Define the Problem
Get Started on a Solution

Contact Us: info@kwlg.org
(202)545-2410