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Olivia's 5 and Learning Emotional Intelligence

By Susan Dunn

Olivia's 5 and Learning Emotional Intelligence by Susan Dunn, The EQ Coach

Olivia and I returned from going to the rodeo, and we'd been talking about going swimming. "That would be fun," I said. "We're hot and sticky. Let's ask your Dad if you can."

When we got to the house, Olivia ran ahead of me. While I was talking to her Dad, she came running out in her swimsuit. "We're going swimming!" she said, bouncing up and down, "We're going swimming!"

You can imagine what transpired. She'd been told she couldn't go swimming, and had done an end-run around Nana. She had to go to her room and take off her swim suit, and she was inconsolable. I helped her get dressed, while she sobbed. I commiserated with her sadness and anger, supported her father's decision, and agreed with her it was sad, sad. I'd been looking forward to it myself and it isn't always easy for me to accept my son as a higher-authority than me! I didn't like his reason why she couldn't go, so was dealing with my own stuff, looking for a distraction.

Finally she quieted, brightened up, and said, "Let's do what an optimist would do!" We'd been working on that - optimism is an emotional intelligence competency.

"What would an optimist do?" I asked.

"Think about something happy," she replied. "Find something else to do." She remembers things, that's for sure.

"What else could we do that would be fun?" I asked her.

"I want to play with Donnie," she said. He's the little boy next door. And off she ran.

I decided to freshen up with the shower and then settle in with a good book.

Learning "optimism" can't start too young! When we have a disappointment, we don't dwell, we find something else to do that's fun, and your child can learn this too.

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What Are You Going to Inoculate Yourself Against in 2004?

By Susan Dunn

Ever wonder why there's a new flu vaccine every year? That's because the flu virus mutates a little every year, in order to infect us better, and we have to come up with a new vaccine to keep ahead of the game.

The virus keeps evolving so it can do us in, and we keep trying to find new ways to combat it. There is no such thing as a permanent "flu" vaccine, and there never will be.

Getting the vaccine makes us resistant to that particular strain, or resilient. We're likely to stay healthy and be able to fight it off, or to get over it quickly if we get infected.

Resilience is an Emotional Intelligence competency and the same principle applies: when we learn the skills that give us resilience, we're better able to cope with the stresses of our lives. Today more than ever, the stressors are changing rapidly, and we need to be able to change quickly too; to keep injecting ourselves, as it were, with new "vaccine." Emotional Intelligence gives you the power to do this.

Last year maybe it was a layoff, a forced retirement, depression, or sending your firstborn off to college. This year it may be major surgery, marriage, a promotion, or having your first child. Learning Emotional Intelligence competencies will make you better able to cope with whatever comes your way and will assist you through all your transitions.

The quicker we can change, and adapt, the more resilient we'll be!

Start the year off right by honing your Emotional Intelligence competencies. Take an EQ Foundation course, and work with a certified EQ coach.

Your health depends upon it!

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