

RAISING YOUR SPIRITED CHILD

Lesson #7 Regularity, Energy, First Reaction, and Mood

Introduction

Introduce Topic	Regularity, energy, first reaction and mood are considered the bonus traits. Unlike the first five temperamental traits (intensity, persistence, perceptiveness, sensitivity and slow adaptability), which are common to most spirited kids, the bonus traits appear about 50% of the time.
Discuss the definitions	<p>Regularity – how predictable our biological rhythms are (eating, sleeping, eliminating)</p> <p>Energy – how energetic we are</p> <p>First Reaction – our first and most natural response to anything new</p> <p>Disposition – our prevailing mood</p>

Regularity

<p>Activity</p> <p>(Pages 230 & 231, Raising Your Spirited Child Workbook)</p>	<p>“Designate one end of your imaginary line or tape as the spot for the ‘regular’ individuals to stand. These are the people who need to have dinner at a specific time every night, say five-thirty or six o’clock—not because their life requires it but because they need it.</p> <p>The middle of the line is for the ‘grazers’ – those who eat and snack throughout the day.</p> <p>The end of the line is reserved for the ‘irregular’ individuals, those who have eating and non-eating days or who may eat one meal and skip the next.</p> <p>Ask each group the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What’s positive about your type? 2. What triggers your type? 3. What do you need?”
<h3>Effective Strategies For Managing Regularity</h3>	
Discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the differences. ▪ Teach good nutritional guidelines. ▪ Keep nutritious foods available, then be flexible. ▪ Develop or maintain family rituals and routines that are consistent so your child can gradually adapt to them. ▪ Teach them to prepare simple foods and snacks (ie. dressing themselves).

Energy

<p>Activity</p> <p>(Pages 235 & 236, Raising Your Spirited Child Workbook)</p>	<p>“Gather your group again. This time ask the high-energy people to stand on one end of the continuum. These are the people who crave exercise and need to move. The low-energy people, those who may exercise but don’t necessarily crave it, should stand on the opposite end of the line. I’ve found that exhausted parents of spirited children will place themselves on the low-energy end but realize as we talk that they actually have a high need for exercise and movement. Their need is not being met and as a result they feel even more fatigued. When doing this exercise, think about your days before spirited kids. Where would you have placed yourself on the line?</p> <p>Ask each group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What’s positive about your energy level? 2. What triggers you? 3. What do you need?”
<p>Effective Strategies For Managing Energy</p>	
<p>Discuss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the differences. ▪ Plan exercise and other appropriate outlets for your high-energy child (not before bedtime). ▪ Create safe environments (child proof home). ▪ Avoid activities that require sitting for a long time (i.e. soccer is better than baseball). ▪ Recognize that wild behavior is sometimes related to other traits such as overstimulation or too many transitions.

First Reactions

<p>Activity</p> <p>(Page 240, Raising Your Spirited Child Workbook)</p>	<p>“Read the following scenario: You have won a trip from a local radio station. The hitch is, to get it you have to go onstage with the disc jockey at a community fair.</p> <p>Then ask each participant if his reaction would be:</p> <p>‘Great! Let’s go!’</p> <p>‘Tell me more.’</p> <p>‘Tell me a lot more because right now I’m thinking, Forget it.’</p> <p>Form your continuum with the ‘Great!’ people on one end, the ‘Tell me more’ people in the middle, and the ‘No way’ folks on the other end.</p> <p>Then ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What’s positive about your reaction style? 2. What triggers you? 3. What do you need?”
--	---

Effective Strategies For Managing Negative First Reactions

Discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the differences (physiological responses are different). ▪ Help your child understand their feelings; acknowledge their feelings; teach them to use soothing techniques – deep breathing. ▪ Prepare your child for new activities or situations, arrive early, watch others. ▪ Support your child – plan to stay with them; let them know who can help them after you leave. ▪ Allow them time to observe and think through the process – do not push. Teach them to say “Let me think about it” rather than “no.” ▪ Remind your child of past successes – point out progress. ▪ Allow your child a second chance. <p>What’s the difference between pushing and encouraging?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ encouragement – makes you feel confident ▪ pushing- makes you feel out of control
---------	---

Disposition or Mood

<p>Activity</p> <p>(Page 245, Raising Your Spirited Child Workbook)</p>	<p>“Ask participants to form a continuum based on how they would describe a day with a few clouds in the sky. Would they see themselves saying, ‘A glorious day! The sun is shining. It’s warm. It’s beautiful?’ Or ‘It’s partly cloudy and eighty-two degrees today.’</p> <p>Then ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What’s positive about your style? 2. What triggers you? 3. What do you need?”
---	--

Effective Strategies For Managing Mood

<p>Discuss</p> <p>Refer to handout: “Seven Steps in Coping With a Negative Child”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the differences. ▪ Slow down and look for cues (too many transitions or stimulation can lead to negative emotions) ▪ Teach optimism (remind them of past struggles and how they were successful). ▪ Note how your child expresses enthusiasm (a serious introverted child may never be overly enthusiastic). ▪ Teach your child social graces (i.e. “No thank you” instead of “Oh, yuck!”)
Summarize	<p>The temperamental traits of regularity, energy, first reaction and disposition can lead to major power struggles. Sometimes we feel like our children are out to get us, but in reality they are doing what comes most naturally to them.</p>