



Intelligence is NOT FIXED



RESILIENCE

Article by
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A lot of people think we are born with a set amount of intelligence and that they have to "like it or lump it". Not true. Intelligence is not fixed and alters over your lifespan. For example, we know that children are getting cleverer. Average IQ rates go up every ten years.

The three-pound blob of grey matter that sits on the top of your neck is the most complex, adaptable, regenerating object we know of. And it's busiest when we are children.

Children's brains are much busier and quite a bit cleverer than adult brains. From birth, the brain is busy setting up connections. At birth each neuron has 2,500 synapses and the number increases rapidly so that by 2 to 3 years of age, more active, more connected and more flexible than ours. Up to the age of nine or ten the brain continues to be twice as active as an adult's.

Between ten years of age and puberty, the brain ruthlessly destroys its weakest connections

preserving only those that experience has shown to be useful. The adage here is "use it or lose it" – and this applies at any age.

You can help your children to use their brain well. Connecting ideas, linking words with pictures, pictures with sounds, developing their concentration and memory skills. Help them to become resilient learners who do not give up at the first sign of difficulty. They know that sometimes they won't get everything correct the



first time they try. They persist. They know that success involves having a go and living by your wits even though you don't always know what the outcome will be.

This doesn't mean rushing them to learn before their time, and it certainly doesn't mean pressuring children to be the fastest reader, the youngest writer or the slickest number cruncher. Rather it's giving them opportunities to learn that learning can be fun. It's important to expand kids but not to accelerate them.

Some children have difficulties in learning and it's important to remember that everyone can be good at something. Finding that area for your children and then supporting it will not only build their confidence to learn in others areas but will also help boost their self esteem.

Other children find learning very easy and some of these will be described by teachers and psychologists as "gifted and talented". If you have one of these kids it's important to realise that emotional development may not always match intellectual development. Some people try to treat gifted kids as if they were little adults. Kids need to be allowed to be what they are – kids.

Andrew Fuller's latest book " Help Your Child Succeed at School " is available from www.inyahead.com.au Andrew conducts a private practice in Blackburn Ph 9894 3939 or email inyahead@satlink.com.au

Six steps to a clearer mind



BALANCE

Article by
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Ever felt overwhelmed with the demands of work, family and household commitments?

Of course you have. You're human!

This feeling of being overwhelmed can easily lead to frustration, resentment and anger. The result of being reactive rather than pro-active is making poor choices for ourselves.

As busy parents, it seems that there can be little time left at day's end to devote to solving a particular challenge. Without proper attention, it can circle around in our minds – taking up valuable energy that could be better utilised elsewhere.

One way to prevent the feeling of being overwhelmed is to have a daily 'Brain Dump'. Here's how to do this simple exercise:

- Step 1: Find a quiet place for a minimum of 15 minutes. Have pad & pen ready.
- Step 2: Clearly write out the situation needing attention (a problem well stated is a problem half solved!).
- Step 3: Take a few slow, deep breaths and relax.
- Step 4: Write down everything that comes to mind around the issue – don't vet or edit - allow it all to bubble up and capture it on paper.

Step 5: Re-read your list/comments. Circle those that will help you to make a decision.

Step 6: Take action! This last step is key – without action, nothing will change.

You could also choose to brainstorm with a friend or partner. Make sure you write down all the suggestions, commit to taking action and keep each other accountable!

Remember, practice makes perfect – the more you do it, the easier it gets. The easier it gets, the more you'll do it and the faster you have a clearer mind!

Need more help? Then here's a gift for you - the 'Solution Finder' Worksheet, a simple and effective way to work through any issue. Email info@timeforyou.com.au with "Parentingideas Solution Finder" in subject line, and I'll send it to you.

Marie Farrugia speaks about balancing life and work, not from theory, but from personal experience. She can be contacted at www.timeforyou.com.au or info@timeforyou.com.au