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Nursing Dept., Mental Health Contribution to ECASD Newsletter for Students/Families
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[Metacognition: How Thinking About Thinking Can Help Kids | Child Mind Institute](#)

“Kids need to be able to make the transition from ‘I can’t’ to the proactive ‘How can I’” – Rae Jacobson

Metacognition is a purposeful thought process; it is spending quality time ‘dialing in’ to the awareness of your surroundings – the people, faces, behaviors and gestures – the places, sights and sounds, while concurrently evaluating our thoughts and feelings in response to them.

Metacognition is intentional exploration of what is occurring and what we believe are the contributions to it...the reason(s) influencing what is happening, difficult or otherwise. Think about what your role is relative to the ‘happening.’ Through this deeper awareness, we create and strengthen connections between our thoughts, words and actions in order to move beyond negative thinking, to overhaul inaction and ultimately, stay invested as opposed to withdrawing based on initial discouraging impressions.

As a coping mechanism that can be introduced, practiced and mastered, metacognition is developmental, retainable, transferrable and limitless in its application to the world *around* us and the world of thoughts and emotions *within* each of us. The sooner we learn and incorporate this practice the better because we can develop healthy mental groundwork providing the positive reinforcement we need during our trying times while modeling it for others.

Training ourselves and our children to approach and respond with a mindset more like: Growing, learning and disappointments are natural and should be expected (with a plan to address it – not feared and avoided at all costs). Every so often, think: let’s take time to absorb the surroundings, what we enjoy and what we think needs improvement. Where we direct our focus – we are naturally an advocate for – be purposeful in your thinking process because thoughts are foundational for action.

Example:

“A girl who is regularly told how talented she is and is used to being praised for her performances is likely to get frustrated and overwhelmed at the sheer thought of performing badly.

But a girl who is praised for her ability to work hard and persevere when she’s faced with a challenge can draw on her metacognitive skills to help her manage her nerves and help her figure out a way of rehearsing that works better for her.” (p. 2)

Focus on the cognitive (thinking) process versus whether or not a desired outcome is obtained. This process will become part of you/your child’s character and approach/response as a problem-solving technique for life!

Reference:

Jacobson, R. (n.d.) Metacognition: How Thinking About Thinking Can Help Kids. *Child Mind Institute*. Retrieved on 12/17/20 from <https://childmind.org/articlehows-metacognition-can-help-kids/>