



POWERFUL WORDS

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

PARENTS PERCH

Young students: “Calm brain, calm body!”

Older students/teens/adults: Keeping calm, steady and in control while under pressure.

Week 1 Composure defined: What is composure? How do I show it? What does it mean to “lose it?”

Week 2 Understanding & recognizing signs of panic, anger or anxiety: What’s happening? Where do you feel them?

Week 3 Strategies to stay calm: Employing methods to help your body and mind remain into control

Week 4 When you lose it: How to regain your composure, repair the damage & learn from the experience

Dear Family,

This month our Powerful Word is “composure.”

Composure means “keeping calm, steady and in control while under pressure or stress.” It doesn’t mean that those who show composure don’t feel stress but rather, that they employ techniques that allow them to manage it so that it doesn’t infringe on their ability to think and act in appropriate ways while experiencing the mild to moderate pressure of daily life. Of course, everyone has their moments of breakdown, but those who have composure are able to return to a state of calm when it’s disrupted.

Children, whose brains are still developing, often have big feelings that can feel overwhelming. While we, as parents and key adults in the lives of our children, can comfort them, it can be even more useful to teach them how to calm themselves.

Especially now, when we are still coping with the COVID-19 crisis across the world and a disruption of schedule for many children and families, learning how to cope with big emotions and develop composure can be extremely useful. While coregulation (i.e. breathing with your child, swaddling/swinging/singing/swaying with your child) may be one technique you use to help your child learn composure, there are many techniques that children can use on their own.

In her book; *The Calm Brain*, Gayatri Devi explains that the brain has complex systems to calm and relax the body that counteract anxiety and states of alertness. These systems don’t lie in the frontal lobes or “higher brain” but rather in the core brain which controls emotions and impulses. Interestingly, the way to calm oneself is to address the body to calm the logical brain rather than trying to get the logical brain to calm the body.

How do we do that? One of the

greatest techniques we can teach children is how to breathe in order to “soothe the caveman” and “engage the thinker,” as my colleague, Dr. Lynne Kenney explains on *How to Talk to Kids about Anything*. A study on calm yoga breathing shows that “by changing patterns of breathing, we can change our emotional states and how we think and how we interact with the world,” according to Patricia Gerbarg, a professor at New York Medical School and the author of a study. Deep breathing works!

We look forward to partnering with you on teaching composure this month!

Here’s to your success!

Best Regards,
—Your Motivated and Dedicated Instructors

UPCOMING POWERFUL WORDS

JUNE LEADERSHIP
JULY SPORTSMANSHIP
AUGUST COMPASSION