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## Helpful Links

For info about SAT I, II, and AP Tests go to:

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

For info about ACT test go to:

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

For info about test optional schools go to:

[www.fairtest.org/university/optional](http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional)

For info about financial aid go to:

[www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov)

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

For college search info go to:

[www.collegenavigator.gov](http://www.collegenavigator.gov)

[www.collegeprowler.com](http://www.collegeprowler.com)

To take a virtual tour of college campuses go to:

[www.youniversitytv.com](http://www.youniversitytv.com)

[www.youvisit.com](http://www.youvisit.com)

To learn about Colleges That Change Lives go to:

[www.ctcl.org](http://www.ctcl.org)

Dear Clients, Parents, Referral Sources, and Friends,

As we enter our 24<sup>th</sup> school year, we take pride in the accomplishments our students have achieved. Whether it's learning how to get out the door on time, establishing a successful routine to manage one's personal space in their bedroom, engaging in a successful homework protocol, handing work in accurately and on time, understanding one's learning profile, or effectively advocating for oneself; our students have grown!

We are looking forward to the 2021-2022 school year and are hopeful we can collectively reach a new and stable "normal".

Thank you for the privilege of working with your students-we take this opportunity very seriously. Please lean on us when it comes to "dusting off the summer cobwebs"; establishing strong homework protocols (from initiation of homework, to following directions, to handing in assignments on time); and learning how to talk with your growing and more sophisticated students.

We look forward to continuing our [alliance](#) with you, our tireless and dedicated parents who are committed to helping your children meet with personal success.

In partnership,

*Hannah Bookbinder, LSW, M.Ed.*

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## Motivation

As a follow up to the article about Rick Lavoie's study on motivation, we will be featuring two types of motivated students for the next 4 editions of this newsletter. This month, we discuss the student who is motivated by power and the student motivated by praise.

**The Student Motivated by Praise:** praise needs to be offered authentically and not in an off-the-cuff manner. How effective praise is depends on the recipient and the student's desire to please the teacher. The older a student gets, the less interest there is to "keep a teacher happy" and the **more** inclined a student is to impress or influence one's friends.

According to Lavoie, "there exists a happy medium between lavish, constant, and undeserved praise and the actual

## Setting Up Your Space for Success

One of the most important steps you can take this month is to establish a working space that is conducive to your learning style:

- 1) Make sure your workspace is in a part of the house that is quiet and holds the least number of distractions.
- 2) Notify your family that you are working—maybe hang a sign on the door that says: “Caution, genius at work.”
- 3) Speaking of distractions, noise-eliminating headphones may be helpful in situations where noise is unavoidable. Keep your phone out of your workspace. Use breaks as an opportunity to catch up on notifications.
- 4) Make sure you have proper lighting, not just for the ability to do work, but so you can be seen effectively by your classmates and teachers during synchronous, virtual instruction.
- 5) Do you have all your supplies? Make a space for your writing utensils, highlighters, printer paper, books, binders/folders, calculator, graph paper, rulers, tape, etc so that everything has a “home” and is easily accessible.
- 6) Sound machines or non-lyrical music can be a friendly means of accompaniment without being distracted and can serve to quiet the noise outside your door or calm the racing thoughts in your mind.
- 7) Monitor long-term and daily assignments using a tracking tool. Use a Google calendar, Month-at-a-Glance wall calendar or desk blotter, assignment book, digital sticky notes, OneNote, phone notes, or whatever tool will enable you to successfully track your daily assignments, long-term projects, tests, etc. Be sure to include doctors’ appointments, sessions with us, sporting events, so you are truly aware of your time constraints.
- 8) Got the wiggles? Sitting on a large exercise ball or in a swivel chair can help students to move as they learn. Alternatively, the use of a standing desk can enable a student to move around during instruction while remaining within view of the screen.
- 9) Take breaks. One cannot and should not be expected to sit still for long periods of time.

withholding of praise.” He cites Vince Lombardi, the famous Green Bay Packers coach who said, “Practice does not make perfect; only perfect practice makes perfect.” Similarly, Lavoie suggests: “Praise does not make perfect; only effective praise makes perfect.”

So how do we praise effectively? Lavoie suggests substituting the following for praise as praise tends to be “largely conditional”:

**Encouragement:** unlike praise, which is oftentimes contingent upon a child’s success, encouragement acknowledges the effort and progress the child is making. Using Lavoie’s example, there is a difference between “You are my best student,” and “You are a terrific student, and I can see the effort you have been putting into your homework assignments this past month to be on time.” The former is praise and does not necessarily speak specifically to anything the child is achieving, whereas the latter is encouragement and acknowledges specifically what the child has accomplished. While praise can promote competition through the comparison of one child to another, encouragement endorses the idea of collaboration and teamwork. It recognizes the child’s “individual contribution to the common good...promotes effort and enables the child to accept setbacks, mistakes, and failures.” In doing so, the student is able to develop a sense of self-efficacy and independence. Meeting with more success will likely spark motivation.

**Interest:** When an adult shows genuine interest in a child’s life. Think about it: when you engage in a conversation with someone, you feel much more important to that person when they step beyond the confines of the purpose of conversation and ask you about your life, family, health, kids, etc. The same is true when kids are asked about their hobbies, friends, or when someone follows up with them about something the child confided. In that moment, they feel important, and it is this importance upon which we can capitalize. The impact of that interaction can motivate a child to stretch beyond their comfort zone to reach heights they have never known. If they know someone is genuinely interested in their lives, that can be the key to their success.

**Gratitude:** when we show gratitude to a child for something he or she has done, we demonstrate to the student his “contribution to the common good” while simultaneously showing him how impactful his behavior is toward others. That sense of accomplishment can serve to motivate a child.

**Enthusiasm:** When a teacher is enthusiastic about their craft, it is often contagious. Students get excited; their curiosity gets piqued; they want to learn more. This enthusiasm is a powerful tool to motivate students!

If you are going to use praise, Lavoie encourages adults to consider these suggestions:

Praise should be contingent: there needs to be an identifiable reason why the child is receiving praise, specifically geared toward improvement, accomplishment, or effort. Further, the messenger should be specific about what he is praising—in other words, name the accomplishment or the behavior you are targeting.

When working independently, schedule formal breaks to allow for a breath of fresh air or the change of scenery.

With a little bit of creativity and imagination, you can create a space built for success!

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**Keeping on Track: Seniors:** Finish up your college admissions essays and your Common App. Still struggling with those college essays? We can help you to choose the appropriate prompt, formulate some ideas, and finish with a final draft that captures the essence of who you are! We can also help you to present your best self on your application. Call today to schedule an appointment. Make sure you have signed up for your SAT/ACT test. The last date to take these tests for Early Action and Early Decision is October 2 (SAT) and September 11 (ACT). Make sure your teachers are ready to write their letters of recommendation. Get your transcripts and test scores (if you took them) lined up and ready to be sent to your colleges. Attend all virtual information sessions being offered through the colleges as well as their virtual tours. If you know anyone who is attending some of the colleges you are applying to, reach out to them to talk about their experiences.

**Juniors:** Do your best. Work hard on your classes. Figure out ways to stay involved at school and to safely contribute to your community. Do not rest on your laurels and assume that colleges will not be looking closely at your activities. Be creative and innovative. Think outside of the box. Attend virtual information sessions and tours of colleges if you cannot visit them in person. Speak with admissions representatives who present at your school. Speak with students you know who attend the schools to which you are considering applying.

## TEST UPDATES

ACT: Here is the link for the latest ACT information:  
[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

SAT: Here is the link for the latest SAT information:  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

Praise should be sincere: kids know phony when they hear it, and showering disingenuous praise will extinguish a student's motivation quickly.

Praise should be given privately: some students are embarrassed by public praise, so delivering it privately ensures the recipient will not be humiliated.

Praise should target effort and growth, not the final product.

Praise can be used to help the student recognize her own enjoyment of a task-“I noticed you looked very pleased with yourself while you were working on the math problem set.” This approach helps the student to recognize the positive feelings that come with success.

Make sure your body language reflects your praise-again, students can smell phoniness. If your body language does not match your message, your efforts to motivate will be lost.

While some students are driven by praise, others are motivated by power. That is not to say a child wants to take over the environment and the power of the adult in charge, rather, she just wants to have some power of her own. These students are very frequently misunderstood and ignite fear and anxiety in the adults with whom they work. Here are some of Lavoie's tips:

Choose Your Battles- as Lavoie likes to say, “You need not attend every battle to which you are invited.” Don't engage in unnecessary conflicts, particularly if no one has anything to gain from it. Instead, **give** the student some power. In group discussions a teacher might give a student a heads up about an upcoming research project the class will be engaging in and ask the student what **she** might be interested in learning about. The teacher then will commit to looking up information about that topic. The teacher can then announce to the class that he had assistance from this student in preparing the information for this presentation. In this example, the student is given the opportunity to influence what is taught in the classroom **and** she is publicly credited.

Use the Minor Choice Strategy- in appropriate circumstances, give the student some choices that will not bear significance on class outcome or run a high-stakes risk. For example, if the class is assigned a hand-written paper, the student can be given the choice to write in black or blue pen, sit in his usual seat or in another appropriate seat, write on yellow or white paper, etc. All of these choices are seemingly small, but they offer the student a sense of control in that moment and could be enough to motivate them to complete the task at hand.

Give Responsibility: start with minor tasks in which you can supervise the student's progress. Handing out papers, being the leader of the line, and collecting signed permission slips are some simple examples. As the student demonstrates mastery of these tasks, they can be given more independence like taking a message to the office, being a group leader in a discussion, etc.

Joke of the Month: How do you keep a bagel from getting away?

Put lox on it!



***Pay it Forward: Do you know someone who is struggling with the shift to virtual classroom learning?? Send them this newsletter or forward us their contact information. We want to help!***

**Contact Us**

<http://www.Academic-Ally.com>

[Hannah@Academic-Ally.com](mailto:Hannah@Academic-Ally.com)  
610 647-3959 ext. 105

Allow Yourself to Lose: if you allow a student to “win” every now and then, they get the sense that they have some power. If a student is not willing to pick up a book that fell to the ground after you have asked her several times, tell her never mind and ask her to join you for a different task that you are leading. By engaging in this directive, you are showing the student there is something more important than her compliance with the directive you were making.

Be consistent with rules, instructions and deadlines: the student motivated by power is longing for structure and predictability. They know what is expected of them, they make a plan, and they meet with success. Lack of predictability can make them feel lost and powerless.

The key to success with the power-motivated student is to ensure he/she is not feeling embarrassed or insulted, especially in public. By providing them with a sense of their own control, they are more likely to respect your authority and work toward success.