

# Agora

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## Self-guided learning - workshop for parents

Self-guidance is one of the attitudes that can, most certainly, be developed at home. Feeling and acting as abled, self-sufficient human beings underlies more effective development of all the other skills in life. This workshop will introduce parents to the concepts such as “growth mindset”, “constructive struggle”, “learned helplessness” and “scaffolding” to the extent that they might want to use it in their day to day communication with their children, without much additional training and learning - anytime and anywhere. Here, I cover the practical tools and give out materials that parents love, because they are so easy to use.

## Workshop objectives

- To understand the importance of **productive struggle**
- To learn about the notion of “**learned helplessness**”
- To be able to support **growth mindset** in students
- To explore effective **scaffolding techniques** at home

## Resources and supplies

- Vocab to deal with feelings and support the struggle;
- Worksheets from Faber&Mazlish;
- Questions to support productive struggle;
- Handouts with tips for resilience from Julie Lythcott-Haims;
- Praise worksheet
- Big classroom
- Projector with a speaker
- Papers and pens

## Skills

In this workshop session, parents will have the opportunity to:

- Communicate
- Analyze
- Identify
- Reflect
- Classify
- Make connections
- Generate solutions

## Assessment

- Involvement in discussions
- Practice worksheet
- Collaboration and exchange on Venn diagram activity



## Flow of activities and learning engagements

Welcome and introduction to the workshop – 2 min.

Whole group discussion “What do we assess in progressive curricula?” – 5 min.

**Activity 1:** Parents will draw their idea of the brain and answer the simple questions about the nature of intelligence. Quick debriefing. – 5 min.

**Activity 2:** Watching a video about Carol Dweck’s research about mindset. Quick debrief. – 5 min. min.

Facilitator’s presentation about growth mindset vocabulary – resilience – failure – neuroplasticity relationship, including a 1 min. illustrative video – 10 min.

**Activity 3:** Pair activity. Parents will explore types of feedback and praise and create two different types of feedback, one that supports fixed and one that supports growth mindset – 15 min.

Introducing “learned helplessness” with a 3.30 min. video and explanation – 5 min.

**Activity 4:** Worksheet activity about practicing acknowledging feelings, taken from Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish workbook – 25 min.

**Activity 5:** Parents fill up a Venn diagram of responsibilities. Quick share – 5 min.

Presentation about scaffolding techniques at home and school, with a short video – 5 min.

Exit tickets – 5 min.

Thanks and closing the workshop (handouts) – 3 min.

## Sneak peek into the resources

### Questions to support constructive struggle:

- Is there any other way to start?
- Do you want to try some other way?
- What steps can you take in order to succeed?
- Can you connect this problem to some other problem that you've solved successfully?
- What about asking a classmate how they're doing the task?
- What do you think you should do?
- What strategies can you try out?
- How can you organize your time best in order to succeed?
- Where can you look for more information?
- How can you connect it to something you know from before/elsewhere?
- I really hope your struggle will pay off.
- I've seen you solving other problems well! I believe you will find a way to succeed this time, too.
- What do you think led up to this problem?
- Is there one or more solutions to your problem?

## Feedback, praise and the mindset

Activity: b) Write down what you would say to your child in the described situations.

Hypothetical scenario	Praise the results and personal traits of your child	Praise the effort, struggle and perseverance
Your child gets the top scores at the entry exam		
Your child fails to enroll to the desired school/university		
Your child brings an average from his summative assessment (4 out of 8)		
Your child gets an easy A on the summative		

## Sneak peek into the resources

### Normalizing struggle

1. **Listen** to the child and **acknowledge** their struggle (Empathy and Validation) **Activity:** acknowledging feelings (25min.)
2. Offer **support**, but **not rescue** (Intervention)
3. Ask yourself:
  - Does this belong to my child or me?
  - Am I doing this to reduce my anxiety and calm myself down?
  - Is this my responsibility?
  - Am I doing this because it's in my best interest or *their* best interest? (Structure)

### Normalizing struggle

Giving children and young adults the idea that;

1. Struggle needs to happen in order to **progress, learn** and come up with **new ideas**;
2. They should not be **afraid or ashamed** of struggling or making mistakes.

Julie Lythcott-Haims: "...'protecting' our children from falls and failures could hurt them." (handout of tips to grow resilience)

Observations of K-12 continuum and attitude development as our children grow. **We are happy to see them being able to more self-control and fit in, but do we ever ask what happens with their courage, creativity and curiosity?** Ref. Sir Ken Robinson

Personal example: the water is dangerous, you're gonna fall, etc.

## Sneak peek into the resources

**Activity:** choose a situation and come up with 5 ways to support your child in solving the problem, without solving it for/with him/her.

**Important:** send the supportive message and use growth mindset vocabulary, as well as the scaffolding questions!

A: A child needs to write his name "Marko" but still doesn't always recognize all the sounds for letters.

B: A teenager needs to write an opinion text, but struggles with vocabulary.

C: A child is shy in front of your friends.

D: A teenagers forgets the mandatory project by the deadline.

E: A teenager is in a conflict with the best friend.

F: A hard homework maths problem.