

PARENT INFORMATION 1

The Learning Highway

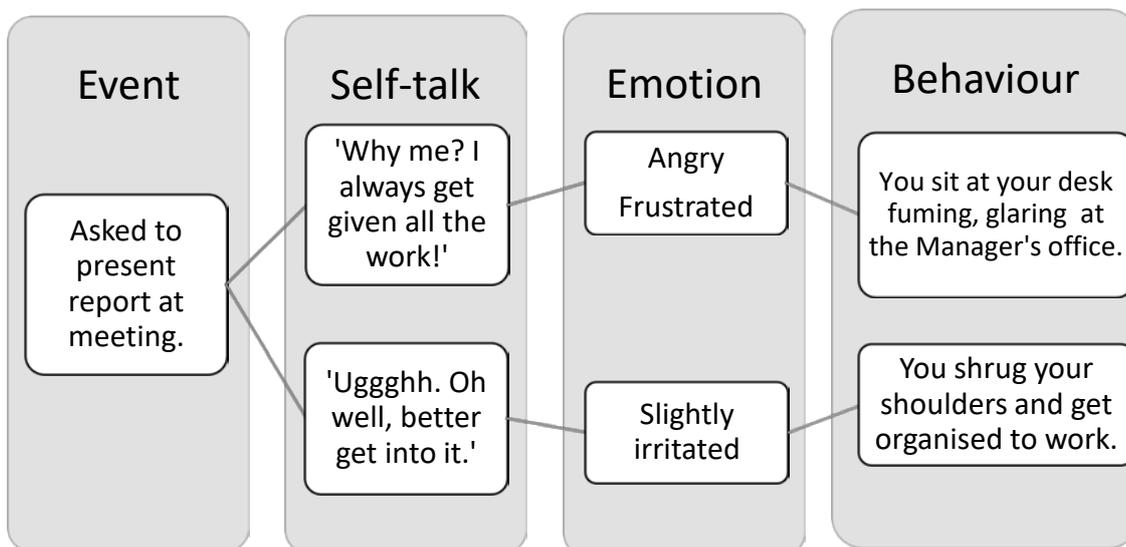
Every child and every adult is constantly learning, but it doesn't have to be book-based learning. It could be learning about life, the changing needs of your child and self, family issues, work, sport... Everyone is on The Learning Highway and travelling towards an outcome of that learning, which we call 'The Learning Destination.'

On The Learning Highway there are the inevitable twists and turns, highs and lows and sometimes BUMPS and HAZARDS. In the classroom these can be:

- The behaviour of another child impacting on your child's learning or emotional state.
- Your own child's behaviour.
- Your child's difficulties with their own behaviours to support their learning – such as planning, organisation, focus and attention.
- Your child's learning of resilience – their ability to bounce back when they make a mistake, find content boring or it just doesn't interest them.

Your child has learned about their internal TOOLS to stay on The Learning Highway – it's called their 'Learning CPR Tank' – which is full of **C**onfidence, **P**ersistence and **R**esilience. All learners need to be confident to ask for help when they need it, work with and in front of others and persistently 'work tough' when they encounter a BUMP or a HAZARD.

Your child fills their CPR Tank, (their ability to bounce back when things get tough or boring) using their self-talk or internal dialogue. When something happens – an **Event**, you say something to yourself – **Self-talk**, develop an **Emotion or Feeling** (which might grow into a mood if it hangs around) which usually leads to a certain way of **Behaving**. Here's an example: *you're given the task of presenting a report to the team at work – with very short notice. Prepare the report and present it TODAY!*



We teach children to think about and change their self-talk, which then helps to change the intensity of their feelings and then their behaviour – as in the example. A HIGHWAY HERO uses ‘CPR Supa Thinking’ - which is positive and helpful self-talk. This helps children to persist when school work is tough or boring, if they sit next to the child who talks constantly, or they have to do subjects that they don’t enjoy at all.

When a learning BUMP - like being distracted - or a learning HAZARD – being asked to sit out of the room due to poor behaviour - happens, we want children to monitor their self-talk and minimise the psychological effect by **choosing** the HIGHWAY TOOL of CPR Supa Thinking.

The automatic tendency for most children (and adults) is to use the opposite thinking - Stinking Thinking which is negative and unhelpful, and can become habitual. This leads to children giving up easily and always expecting the worst - and then often finding it.

Let’s have a look at some examples of negative and positive self-talk.

Stinking Thinking
Negative or unhelpful self-talk:

- ✗ ‘It’s too hard.’
- ✗ ‘It’s not fair.’
- ✗ ‘I can’t do it.’

CPR Supa Thinking
Positive or helpful self-talk:

- ✓ ‘I’ll give it a go.’
- ✓ ‘The sooner I start, the sooner I finish.’
- ✓ ‘I’ll do my best.’

The research tells us that raising awareness of this ‘internal dialogue’, helps both children and adults to self-regulate their emotional responses and their behaviour and it improves learning success in the classroom. This week, talk to your child about CPR Supa Thinking and Stinking Thinking – when it occurs for yourself and them.

REFLECTION POINT:

How does your self-talk affect your life? As adults, our internal dialogue can set us up for social, academic and vocational success, or it can severely impact our effectiveness and productivity. Have you spoken to your child about what you say to yourself when things are tough - when you’re getting ready for a big event and ‘steeling yourself’ to get through it? It is very useful to talk about the helpful things you say to yourself - and how they affect your emotions and behaviour - as well as the unhelpful things you say to yourself - and the emotional and behavioural results of those.