



Courage in the Classroom

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Courage and
Motivation



The Need for Courage

School can be difficult

- ✓ Challenging schoolwork
- ✓ Fast-moving curriculum
- ✓ Peer issues
- ✓ Poor performance/failure
- ✓ Fear of poor performance/failure
- ✓ Difficulties with teachers
- ✓ Pressure from parents
- ✓ Mounting/clashing deadlines
- ✓ Learning difficulties/disabilities
- ✓ Mental/physical health issues



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The Study

**Martin, A.J. (2011). Courage in the classroom:
Exploring a new framework predicting academic
performance and engagement. *School Psychology
Quarterly*, 26, 145-160.**

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Summary of Study

- 7,637 high school students (3 government, 11 independent schools), average age 14 years, 40% females
- Academic courage defined as “perseverance in the face of academic difficulty and fear”
- Explored its role in predicting academic performance (literacy and arithmetic) and various academic engagement measures (planning, task management, self-handicapping, disengagement, class participation, enjoyment of school, and positive academic intentions)
- Cluster analysis of core factors derived a four-group solution comprising:
 - Courage (high persistence, high anxiety)
 - Confidence (high persistence, low anxiety)
 - Avoidance (low persistence, high anxiety)
 - Helplessness (low persistence, low anxiety)



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Summary of Study

- Results from structural equation modeling (SEM) demonstrated that courage and confidence are not significantly different on some academic measures (including performance) but that across the bulk of measures, confidence is more adaptive
- However, courage was unambiguously more adaptive than avoidance and helpless orientations across all outcome measures
- Taken together, although confidence yields the most positive educational outcomes, courage can be considered an educationally effective response in the face or presence of fear
- Implications for practice:
 - (Girls higher on anxiety, $p < .001$)
 - (Boys lower on persistence, $p < .001$)
 - Perseverance in the face of fear can yield positive results
 - Courage may be a bridge to confidence (by maintaining persistence and reducing anxiety)



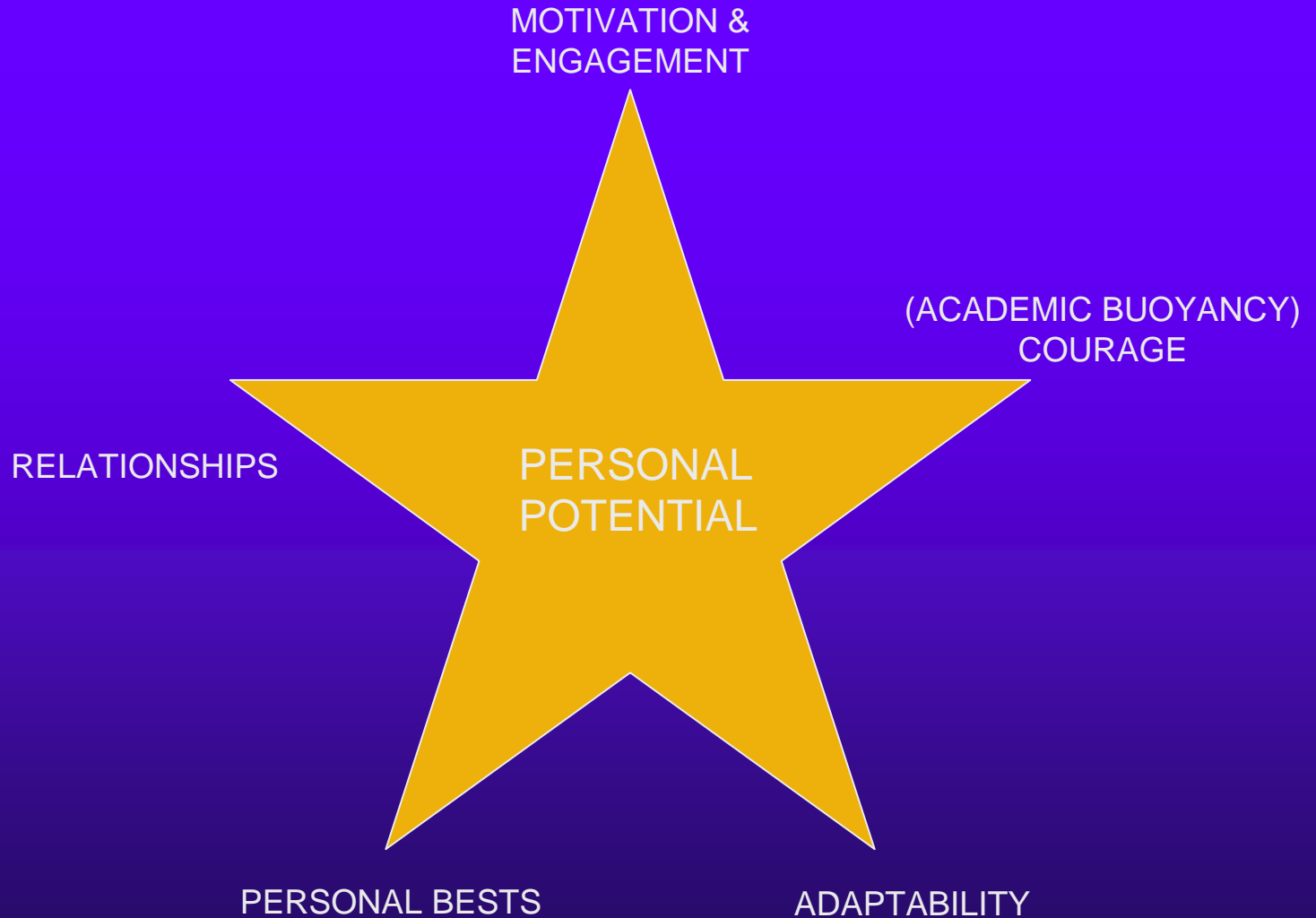
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Courage on the Student's Educational Landscape

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Personal Potential Network



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Today

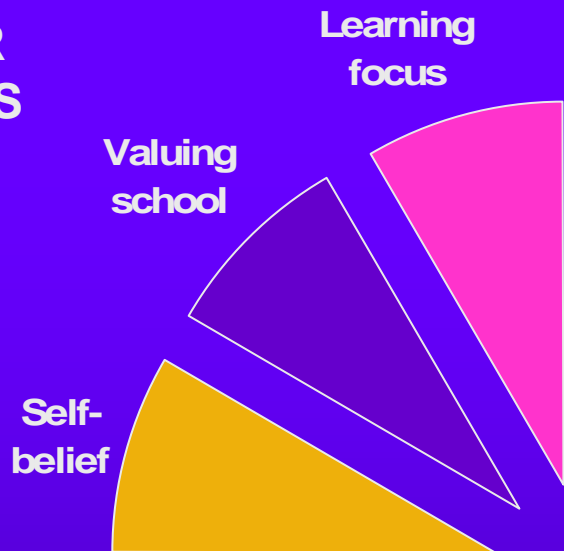


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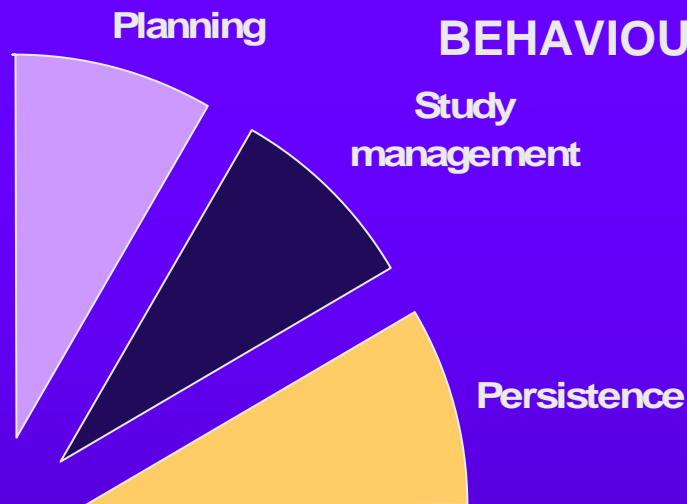


Motivation & Engagement Wheel

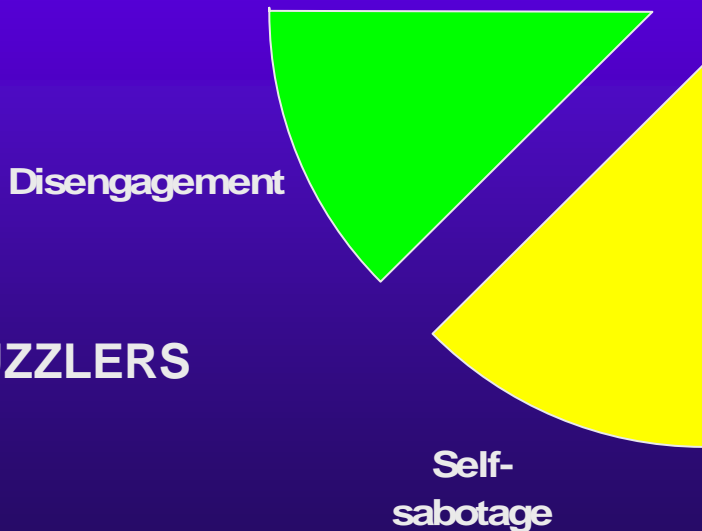
**BOOSTER
THOUGHTS**



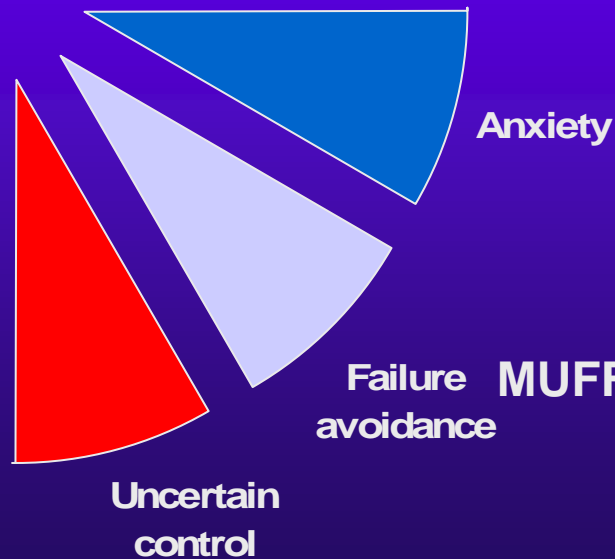
**BOOSTER
BEHAVIOURS**



GUZZLERS



MUFFLERS



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Strategies Targeting Parts of the Wheel Relevant to Courage and Motivation

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- Self-belief
- Persistence
 - Anxiety
 - Control

Increasing Self-belief (1)

Challenge common negative thinking traps

- **Turning positives into negatives**
- **Mega-generalising**
- **Black and white thinking**
- **Mountain building**
- **Mistaking feelings for facts**



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Increasing Self-belief (2)

Strategies for maximising success:

★ 'Chunking'

a) Breaking work into bite size chunks

b) Seeing the completion of each chunk as a success

★ PROCESS definitions of success (PBs, improve, effort, skill dev't, learning)

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Increasing Persistence

- ✓ Encourage students to be clear about what want to achieve (short- and long-term) – REMEMBER: set goals that are:
 - Achievable, Believable, Clear, and Desirable (ABCD)
 - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound (SMART)
- ✓ Talk through previous challenges and how they were overcome – what did you **THINK** and what did you **DO**?

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Reducing Anxiety

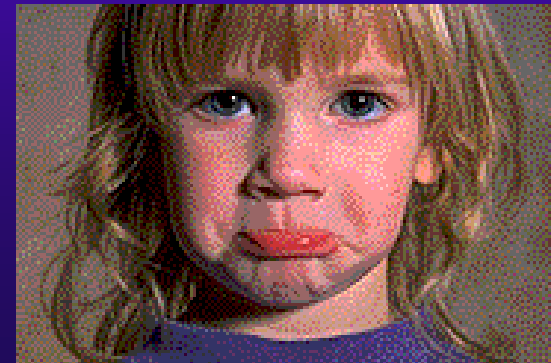
✓ Relaxation techniques

- Breath (concentrate on breathing)
- Sound (repeat a word or sound in mind)
- An object (focus on a candle, tree)
- Movement (yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong)
- Prayer
- Guided meditation (a tape, CD)
- Physical activity/exercise

✓ 'Worry surfing' through:

✓ Leading up to test

✓ Taking the test



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Increasing Control

- ✓ Increase emphasis on 1. effort, 2. strategy, and 3. attitude + reduce emphasis on external factors (luck, easy/tough marking etc.)
- ✓ Reduce uncertainty - clear objectives and expectations
- ✓ Feedback makes it clear why particular outcome and how to improve
- ✓ Show students previously completed examples of good work



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Personal Potential Network



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PERSONAL BESTS

PB Goals

- **Personal best (PB) goals are specific, challenging, and competitively self-referenced targets**
- **PB goals may take two forms:**
 - 'process PB goals'
 - 'product PB goals'

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PB Process Goals

Examples of process PBs include:

- reading one more book for the present assignment than on the previous assignment
- preparing for a test at the weekend when previously no study had been done at weekends
- asking a teacher for help when previously the teacher had been avoided
- spending an extra hour doing homework than usual



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PB Product Goals

Product PBs include:

- getting a higher mark in end of year exams than in the half yearly exams
- making greater reading progress than prior progress
- getting more sums correct in one's mathematics homework



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Personal Bests

- ✓ Personal Bests (PBs) – see www.lifelongachievement.com for PDF Activity Sheets
- ✓ Increase emphasis on personal excellence
- ✓ Reduce focus on comparisons with others



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Building Classroom Success

Eliminating Academic
Fear and Failure

NEW!




CHAPTERS:

- Fear and failure in class
- Disengagement and helplessness
- Fear of success
- Perfectionism
- Courage in the classroom
- Personal bests (PBs)
- Rock-solid self-esteem
- Coping with competition
- Seizing control in class
- Teacher-student relationships
- Building classroom success

Visit Website:

www.lifelongachievement.com

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How to Motivate Your Child

for
School
and
Beyond



Andrew Martin

Visit Website:

www.lifelongachievement.com

CHAPTERS:

- Self-esteem
- Valuing school
- Learning Focus
- Planning and Study Management
- Persistence
- Anxiety
- Fear of Failure
- Self-sabotage
- Disengagement
- Boys
- Gifted and Talented
- Good Parent-Child Relationships



How to Help Your Child Fly Through Life



The 20 Big Issues

• Childcare • When to start school • Gifted kids • Homework
• Single-sex or co-ed schools • Coaching . . . and more

Andrew Martin

Author of *How to Motivate Your Child for School and Beyond*

CHAPTERS:

- Delaying school entry
- Preparing for school
- Coaching and tutoring
- Boys' and Girls' education
- Single-sex vs Co-Ed schools
- Selective schools
- Homework
- Extracurricular activity
- Educational resilience
- Dealing with big exams
- Reading
- Choosing school subjects
- Choosing a career
- Going to university or college
- Having a gap year

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