

Build a Child's Character With The Five Golden Rules for Staying Connected to Children

Unit 1

- A. * **First thoughts first-** In the video you are about to see, Dr. Birchak mentions his physical height as a personal attribute. He says that being different from other children enabled him to appreciate life differently. Every human being is "differently abled" and unique. Name one personal attribute that enables you to value life differently. Identify the time in your life when you realized that this difference was a lesson in life rather than a curse.

B. Video - 18 Minutes

Introduction and Fundamental Difference #1

Introduction (5 minutes)

Fundamental Difference Between Well-Adjusted and Miserable People and #1, Impulse Control. (13 minutes)

Video discussion questions:

1. Dr. Birchak admits he was (and still is) hyperactive, distractable, and a "reformed class clown." As you think about your life energy and your personal interests, can you think of times when it may have affected your ability to efficiently carry our life's tasks? What strategy do you use to effectively channel your energy?
2. "There is one universal human truth we cannot deny- we are wired to have connections to others." Dr. Birchak says that most problems can be traced back to our human connections. Since humans are strong social creatures, we need to nurture these connections, especially in

education. Name one thing you can do to help make education a more nurturing enterprise in our culture.

3. *** Children are living in a world more complicated than ever before (internet, electronics, more people, weapons, etc.). Think about your personal role and name one thing you can do to help the next generation to adapt to this world.**
4. Dr. Birchak recognizes our need to stay connected as he says, "When we lose each other, we lose our will to live, and ultimately lose our sanity." If we continue to lose our connectedness, what else is at stake?
5. Often, adults will describe how life was different when they were a child. Since we can't go backward, it matters little how life was different (unless we are using a historical perspective to problem solve). The only thing that matters is the present time and whether or not we choose to adapt to the changing world, or choose to be resentful towards changing world. Describe one behavior we could utilize that would allow us to better adapt.
6. Dr. Birchak tells a story of going to the principal's office. He describes how the classification of a child's behavior was less complicated in the past. What are the positive and negative repercussions of having complicated IEP's (Individualized Educational Plan) for children?

The Four Fundamental Differences
Between Well-Adjusted and Miserable People
Fundamental Difference #1- Impulse control

7. There seems to be more rage in the world today. Is there more or less rage in **you** today than there was a year ago? Five years ago? Why? Brainstorm at least two ways in which you could reduce this rage (in yourself or others).

8. * Describe your emotional reaction when others fail to exercise impulse control. Create two strategies for how you can more effectively react to impulsive and angry people.

9. * Dr. Birchak talks about the "Deer in the Headlights" reaction when others are hostile. Are you more *overtly reactive*, or *silently stunned* when others are hostile? Does your behavior add a more constructive or destructive dimension to the situation? If you could wave a magic wand and suddenly have the ability to react exactly the way you would like in each of these situations, what would your behavior look like?

C. Reading for the next unit- For the upcoming unit read the Introduction in the book *How to Build a Child's Character- By Tapping Into Your Own* (Birchak, 2004, Royal Fireworks Press, Uniondale, NY)