Sustaining Motivation –
A Delicate Balance
An Exploration of the Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors That Motivate Our Children

With Meryl Silver
December 17, 2013
Meryl Silver, MS.Ed, received her bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Queens College and holds a master’s degree in Special Education from Bank Street College of Education. Meryl has close to 15 years of teaching experience, including four years as a resource room teacher at Yeshiva Har Torah and three years as a learning specialist for P’tach at the Yeshiva University High School for Girls. She has also worked as a co-facilitator for Schools Attuned and is a graduate of the SAFDA facilitator training program. Meryl has also served as a Hidden Sparks External Coach for the Yeshiva of Central Queens and Shaare Torah Elementary School for boys. Meryl coordinates the High School Academic Resource Center project of Teach NYS, which aims to help families access special education services for struggling students in Jewish high schools.
Overview of the Session

This session is offered as an invitation to the participant to begin an exploration of the fascinating and multifaceted topic of human motivation and its effect on our observable day to day behavior.

We will review some recent literature in the fields of education and behavioral economics and attempt to apply these ideas to our interactions with our children.

We will also discuss some interesting strategies that embrace both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that can be employed in helping our children to persevere in activities when the initial inspiration has expired.
Session Goals:

• To encourage parents to reflect upon their own complex motivations and to recognize how their children's motivational style may be different than their own.

• To encourage parents to begin an ongoing dialogue of self discovery with their children that helps them to learn about the personal motivations behind their behaviors.

• To provide strategies that balance the principles of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to use in joyful experimentation as we try to benevolently shape our children's behavior.
What do you consider to be extrinsic motivators?
Extrinsic (External) Motivators

- Rewards
- Praise
- Payment
- Punishment
- Disapproval
- Approval
What do you consider to be intrinsic motivators?
Intrinsic (Internal) Motivators

- pride
- mastery
- service
- autonomy
- self-reliance
- values
- relationship
- flow
- community
The Motivated Brain

- The brain experiences motivation through the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine.
- When dopamine is released, it is spritzed onto large areas of the brain enhancing the signaling of neurons.
- Dopamine is released when the brain perceives the pleasure of an achievable challenge.


**Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us** by Daniel Pink

- The Sawyer Effect
- The Candle Problem: Sam Glucksberg

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Without Monetary Incentive</th>
<th>With Monetary Incentive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.41 minutes</td>
<td>11.08 minutes</td>
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**Mindset** by Carol Dweck

Fixed Mindset vs Growth Mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Mindset</th>
<th>Growth Mindset</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence is fixed</td>
<td>Intelligence is malleable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success is a result of innate talent</td>
<td>Success is a result of effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk averse</td>
<td>Embrace Risk</td>
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Predictably Irrational by Dan Ariely

The Problem with Procrastination and Self Control

Experiment with three conditions:

• Complete autonomy
• Flexible Deadlines
• Dictator Condition
The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg

Keystone Habits = Habits that have the power to start a chain reaction
Willpower is a Muscle

- Cookie/Radish Experiment
- Supportive vs Tyrannical Cookie Experiment

**Question for Reflection:** In what ways can these findings influence the way you interact with your children?
“People often say that motivation doesn’t last. Well, neither does bathing. That’s why we recommend it daily.”

- Zig Ziglar
Impediments to Motivation

- Anxiety
- Shame
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Conflicting Objectives – Considering Social Norms
- Executive Functioning Deficits
Children’s motivation is highest when...

Children have...

- A palpable degree of competence
- Sufficient autonomy
- Set meaningful goals
- Received feedback
- Been affirmed by others

**Question for Reflection:** What is the most motivating affirmation you have ever received? From whom did you receive it?
SCHOOLIES © 2009 by John P. Wood

THIS WILL NEVER WORK. NONE OF US EVEN LIKE CARROTS.
Strategies

There are NO one size fits all strategies but here are some ideas:

• Values Clarification - Personal mission statement

• Foster Self-knowledge with Questions for Reflection:
  I feel motivated to _________ when __________________. I don’t feel motivated to _________ when __________________.

• Model Motivation
Strategies (continued)

• Provide opportunities for mastery
• Provide opportunities for mentoring
• Chinese Auction
• Intermittent Interval Rewards
• Descriptive Praise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative Praise</th>
<th>Descriptive Praise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General – “You’re awesome!”</td>
<td>Specific – “Thank you for sharing your snack with your friend this morning.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused on outcome</td>
<td>Focused on process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emphasis on achievement</td>
<td>Emphasis on effort</td>
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Strategies (continued)

- Charts as Recording Devices

**Kavodik** Eating Chart (*respectful*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Shabbos</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bracha Before Eating</td>
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<td>No eating on the phone</td>
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<td>No eating standing up</td>
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<td>No eating while preparing food</td>
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<td>No eating in the car</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bracha After Eating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use Timer (for one meal per day except Shabbos)</td>
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Silver Medal – Tried and True

• The Cooperative Clickers
• The Berenstain Bears and the Bad Habit
• The College Professor and the Cell Phones

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/7/14</td>
<td>For Parents and Teachers: Passive v. Active Screen time (for elementary aged students) With Jeannie Crowley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/13/14</td>
<td>For Parents: Sibling Sniping, Bedtime Battles, Homework Hassles…Are We Having Fun Yet? With Joanna Faber</td>
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*For more information visit: [www.hiddensparks.org](http://www.hiddensparks.org)*
The Hidden Sparks coaching program is currently in 32 Jewish day schools/yeshivot in the New York tri-state area, Baltimore and Chicago.

Since inception, Hidden Sparks has provided school-based coaching to 16 schools through its External Coach Program and has provided training and mentoring to 80 Internal Coaches from 45 Internal Coach Program participating schools.

Over 3,700 teachers have participated in Hidden Sparks programs. Of that number, more than 1,200 teachers have benefitted from Hidden Sparks training, impacting an estimated 12,000 students.

If you are interested in bringing Hidden Sparks to your school or city, please contact us at: 212-767-7707 or news@hiddensparks.org
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