

Speaker 1 ([00:03](#)):

Welcome to Be Evolved, a podcast for parents and educators who prioritize developing possibility and expansion within the total educational process for themselves and their children or students. We invite you to listen to the podcast with your child or student in mind and with yourself at the center of the learning experience. Ultimately, our goal is to bridge the gap between educational expertise and research, translating it into practical action. Gaining knowledge plus taking action is what it means to be evolved. Hi everyone. Happy November. It is finally getting to feel like November here in New York City. We have had quite a temperate October, and that has made me very happy, I have to say because I am really quite a fan of the summer, but it is cold today and I am definitely feel in the fall at this point in the school year. I think it's very appropriate to talk about today's topic, which is navigating stress points in your child's education.

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So at evolved, we have a suite of services that we call education consulting. We work with families through various stress points that they have in their child's education, and a stress point is a very subjective experience. It just depends on if the experience you're having feels stressful, if it feels as though it's not correct. If you don't know what to do, it's so confusing. You don't feel like your child is doing well in the circumstance they're in, or maybe someone else is telling you they're not doing well. Maybe they've cheated on a test, this is their second time and they're getting kicked out of a school, or they've just broken up with their boyfriend or girlfriend and they won't go to school or they have no friends at school. So you're worried about their social abilities or they're not reading and you don't know what else to do.

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You've asked the school a million times and it's still not working. Or you see that your child is trying so hard to learn this particular subject, but they just continue to get negative feedback and they're getting very discouraged. You might be feeling very stressed about any number of these kinds of things. It's very normal to feel stressed, and I think something that we do very well in our ED consulting work is first just listen to what you have going on. Sometimes it's important to help you process what is going on away from your child, even away from some of your own relationships, and help you to make sense of your experience and to determine whether it's something you're going to do something about or not do something about. So we really stay in that place first where we just want to understand what your perception of this situation is, and we do use something called the zones of regulation, which is a series of colors that are given different types of emotions and that help everybody understand their ability to reason and do learning work.

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So let me explain. Let's say you are a 2-year-old child and you don't get the snack that you want and you below up and have a massive tantrum. You as a parent aren't going to be able to talk to that child and say, but you have to eat the healthy choice foods. That's what we're doing right now. No, because the child is in the red zone, they are tantruming, they are super, super mad. They are very, very, very upset. That is when energy is really high and there's no reasoning with that particular person or brain. Right Now, we go into the yellow zone, which maybe they'll get to after they cry a little bit or have a little energy out, and now they're just going to be a little irritable. They're a little angry that they didn't get what they wanted. They're a little anxious, a little nervous.

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This is where we are when we're in the yellow. In the green is where we are. When we're ready to learn, we're calm, we're ready to learn. We don't have a lot of other emotionality affecting us. You can go the other side too. I call it light blue and then dark blue. It's not necessarily a technical thing. Most people just go right to blue. But I like to say, well, you can be in the light blue when you're just a little tired, but

you're still okay. You can still function, but you are a little tired, so things go a little slower than usual. Or you have just a little bit of low energy because you're sad about something going on. If you're in the dark blue, it really means you're not able to do anything. Either you're on the other side of it, you're just extremely depressed, or you're really so sick and tired, you just can't possibly function.

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So we don't really want parents to be in a problem solving mode when they're on those ends of the zones of regulation. We don't want them to have to plan, organize, do anything until we get them to the green. And sometimes the best way to get to a green is just to talk it out and to share the history, share the patterns that have been going on, share what they do, know what they don't know, get it out. Then we can sort of say, okay, are we here? Are we in a place where we can now really reason and discuss this situation? And sometimes it just helps to do that work first. Then what we do in the consultancy work is we can also help to understand really what is going on with your child to get them to this particular point. They have maybe failed a test a couple times over.

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They've said they don't want to go back to school because they've broken up with their boyfriend or girlfriend or they have no friends and they're not willing to work on any social skills, or they just never got the opportunity to work on social skills, or they have a particular teacher that they're having trouble working with. Whatever the issue might be, we want to understand more about what's going on so we can help parents to develop ways to ask their kids or to ask the teachers to help them to learn how to find some of this out. We also can do our own assessments through our assessment division. We can really inquire more about what's going on to understand the situation. I want to be clear here. What we're doing in understanding is we're understanding we are not taking away consequences. There's a really big difference, and it's really important to understand.

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So if a child fails a test, if a child isn't doing well in a particular subject, if a child has gotten kicked out of school because of two transgressions such as cheating on a test twice or something, then we can't take those things away from them, those consequences. But what we can do is we can help them understand themselves within this circumstance and we can hear from them and help them to take responsibility, help them build skills so they don't get into the situation going forward. And often as parents, we don't want to see our kids struggle. It's really we know they should. Conceptually we understand that concept, but when you're in the moment, it feels really awful. It's pretty bad. And so sometimes as advisors, what we're doing is we're helping families to be okay as they feel really bad. We're helping them tolerate those feelings and we're saying, it's okay.

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I know it doesn't feel good, but it is good. Sometimes you need that to be said to you. And I know I have mean I've wanted very much to take away the pain of my children many, many, many, many times, and sometimes I even have done it and it has not been the best, but I've done it anyway. And I think that's very human and we just sort of are instinct as adults is pull that consequence away. We don't want our child to have it. However, we do want our child to not be in that situation again going forward. And so I think you'll understand what I say next, which is if we don't want our child to have the same consequence again, then we don't want them to do the same thing again. So in order to get that to happen, we have to really build skills with our kids and we have to help them to do that in a way that we can help them with.

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Sometimes we can teach them, sometimes we can show them, but ultimately there has to be also room and space for the child to move through that learning beyond even that control, right? And I know this is a very, very tricky space. I want to describe it a little bit more. I think it becomes clearer when you use an example, but let's say your child doesn't get to go to the tryouts for a sport they really love because to go

to tryouts, they had to bring a form with them and they didn't bring the form with them. And so the coach said, sorry, you can't try out. And so they come home and they tell you, and they're very disappointed. I didn't get to try out, and that means I won't be able to play hockey this season. It's really upsetting. I really wanted to play it and I didn't bring the form in and I'm so upset.

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So right there, and then you as a mom or dad or guardian might feel stressed because you're seeing your child in distress and you're feeling really stressed about this. Now, here's what I want you to think about. Where are you in the zones of regulation? You're going to maybe feel really angry. You're going to feel upset, you're going to feel sad. You're going to feel all kinds of emotions. Just check that stuff out first and get yourself into that green. However you can do, and obviously there's so many different strategies and tools, I can't get into all of them right now, but certainly the basic one is your thoughts control the way you feel. So just check the way that you're thinking. Certainly if you think to yourself, I'm a terrible mom because I did not remind my child to bring their form, that's going to make you feel pretty bad, versus these things happen and I have to teach my child what to do, that will make you feel a lot better.

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So try those kinds of strategies, but get yourself into that green area. Then help your child with that understanding piece. Tell me more. How did this happen? Tell me why it happened. Tell me, did you not know about the form? Did you not print out the form? Did you not understand this was a requirement? How come I want to understand everything? Okay, well then here's the idea. I'm here to help you process this. I'm here to help you take responsibility. I'm here to help you learn how to never be in this situation again. I am not calling the coach and asking the coach to renege on this particular rule. It's not happening. You didn't bring in the form. You don't get to try out. Can we do other things? We can play other places, but we're going to put things in place so that you're never in this position again, and you'll have a real reason to put those things in place because you'll be equally upset that you didn't get to play, right?

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So let's go forward now and let's put together a better plan for being ready for tryouts next year. Let's put it on the calendar. Let's make sure we always check to see if there's a form that you need before you go to tryouts going forward. I'll even help you remember. I'll put it on my calendar too. Those are really great ways of helping your child through a pretty big stress that they're having. Let's talk about another one. Let's say you as a parent know your child is struggling to read. You just know it's been absolutely horrible. They have not been coming home and reading. They're crying. They don't want to do it. You've gone and had multiple meetings with the teachers. You don't feel like you're really moving forward in the best way. You feel stressed, you're feeling stressed about this situation. So you're going to move yourself to the green, right?

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You're going to tell yourself, I'm a good parent because I'm investigating this, right? You're going to give your trusted ed advisor a call and Mary hi, it's going to answer. And I'm going to say to you, okay, what have you tried? What have you tried already to do to investigate this? Let's write those things down. What has worked already? What isn't working? What could you be doing to test this a little bit further? What could you be doing to place your child differently in a different setting? What could we be doing in order to help your child move forward? Notice what I'm doing when I'm consulting. I'm asking questions because when we ask questions, everybody's brain goes to seek for answers. Those answers. So we want to look for those answers. We want to find out what to do in your particular child's case, and that is what Ed Consulting has the potential to do for a family.

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It helps families to navigate these stresses, to help them find the answers to the questions that come up when we start to unpack these stressors. So I want to talk a little bit about a couple of cases that generally,

I'm not obviously talking about civics or anything, but I'm just talking about general concepts of stress that come up in our consultancies. Okay? So first of all, if you have a lot going on at one time, this can happen at a parent conference. This can happen when you may have your child in a situation where something kind of profound happens. Like you find out they didn't go to school for three days in a row, or you find out that they have been avoiding a particular set of assignments in one class. They haven't turned in anything for 10 assignments, or all of a sudden you find out that they texted a whole bunch of really not so great things to their group text with kids from school, and now you're getting called into the principal's office to discuss it.

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Moments this are very, very, very stressful, but they're more stressful than other moments because they sort of open up Pandora's box. They open up so many questions that come up. So for example, let's just take the, my child didn't go to school for three days case, okay? So my child didn't go to school for three days. I didn't know that my child wasn't going to school for three days. They did put it on the portal. I just don't happen to check it every single day. And I found out three days later that my child didn't go to school for three days. So I start asking, where did you go? Who were you with? Now my child doesn't want to talk to me about any of this. So now I'm wondering, are we taking drugs? Are we vaping? Are we hanging out with someone that we shouldn't be?

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What's your goal for school? Well, once I start asking the questions, I learned that yes, we are vaping. Yes, we are taking a drug. Yes, we are hanging out at the park. Yes, we are actually not doing well in our classes. Which was sort of the impetus, by the way, for all of the other stuff to go on because the classes weren't going well. So my child deviated towards things that were not going well. And so now what do we do here? We have now multiple problems to solve. There's so many different things that I could be working on. I could be helping the child with their academic performances. I could be helping the child make better social decisions. I can help the child to not take the drugs or vape. I could help the child with all kinds of things. There's so many things to do here.

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I get very overwhelmed as a parent, what do I do? So in cases like this, it's really helpful to work with an ed advisor because what we were able to do in this particular case with the parent is say, okay, hey, let's categorize these things. Let's put them sort of in some writing down boxes, and we're going to write down what's going on in each of these cases. And you're going to investigate each with professionals that will help you with each part and just keep doing within each of them, do the work that you need to do to keep going within each of these areas. So let's start with the academic piece. Let's get a proper neuropsych. Oh, wait, we can't do that right now because the student spent smoking marijuana. So that will affect the neuropsych. Okay, fine. Let's not do the neuropsych. Let's do some education testing by inventorying what's going on in the classes and give your child a couple of key strategies to make up the work.

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Let's get a tutor involved to really help handhold your child through these subjects and help them to have some successes within that experience that we can really anchor on. Let's do what we can in those areas. Let's try socially. Let's try to sign your child up for some activities that are positive, that will put some positive effort into some of those socializations. Let's go with your child to the things that they like to go to. Let's try to put those things in place. Let's talk with a professional who can help with the drugs and the vaping and things like this, because that will really help build some skills and help your child through those kinds of choices and health issues that are coming up. So sometimes it's just good to tackle what you can within each of the areas. And what we also help parents with is just normalizing the fact that even if you put down these plans as a parent, you're saying, okay, I'm going to work on this and then I'm going to work on this and I'm going to work on this.

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Some things won't go according to what you thought was going to happen. Your child may not pick up the ore and start rowing it through their therapy, or they might not be generalizing those social skills, or they may not be making choices that are the best for them in every single avenue of their learning. But you have provided your child with an experience here through a stressful time that they can really anchor on that will help them in any moment of stress that they have going forward, which is that they have been heard, they've been asked, and they've been heard around what's going on. They have been offered support to increase their knowledge and their skills through what they're challenged with. And they have been supported by a trusted through that challenge consistently. And that means a great deal to kids and to learners. And that has been really quite fun to be a part of in our ED consulting work here.

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And I will say that not all stresses are as profound as I was just mentioning. I mean, those are certainly very stressful, and I think everyone would agree and understand, okay, we're in a really stressful time right now when your child doesn't show up for school for a few days because they've been hanging out at the park and smoking marijuana and doing other drugs. But there's also the other side of things, which is where you just know that something is off as a mom or dad or guardian. There's just a little bit of intuition that you're noticing that your child isn't at their best. And there was a case that we worked on with a child who was just diagnosed with A DHD and the teacher at the school was just because he didn't know any better. He's a very caring person, but just didn't know any better, but was really condemning the child for the symptoms of a HD, like becoming very irritated when the child was being impulsive or when the child was calling out, telling him to stop doing that.

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It's annoying and it's bothersome to everyone really calling out the student on their behaviors that they couldn't control, they couldn't do anything with, they didn't know what else to do, and internalized it really as like, I'm not a good student. I'm not a good person here in this community. And what we were able to do, because the parent really didn't know all of this was happening, but had this feeling that things weren't quite right, they didn't think the teacher was really quite moving through things the way that it could be moved through. And so they hired us to come in and observe the student in the class. And when we observed the student, we did see some of this behavior from the teacher. We saw the behavior from the student. And quite frankly, the way we saw this was, everybody here needs to learn. It's okay.

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The teacher needs to learn and the student needs to learn. And that's often the case in our work. We are absorbing the information. We're learning about this situation, and we're providing an opportunity for everyone involved to level up their skills and learn more about what to do to help the student. And by the way, we're not immune to the learning either. We as consultants are constantly learning because we're taking new cases every day that we're seeing and working with, and we're really working through that learning process ourselves. But in this particular case, we were able to go into the school and just present the question, which was understanding this child has a DHD. How can we help the child to build their skills in your classroom? And just by presenting it in a question format, everybody was just jumping in with ideas and ways forward.

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It was the one thing that changed everything because I've certainly gone into meetings before. I've been part of meetings before where someone has started the meeting by saying, there are all these things going on. It's really not good. We cannot do this. In fact, we have to do this, this, this, and this. And the problem with that approach is that no one is part of the problem solving process. Who's going to carry this forward? And if you want teachers to move forward differently, you've got to give them the agency to create the solutions by first just posing the question. So you're just posing the question, how can my child

go about this differently? How can we all work together to get a different result knowing this child has a DHD? How can we go forward? Well, all of a sudden, there were many different ideas that were posed, and the teacher was very receptive to them because the teacher was also presenting some of them.

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And the teacher was also hearing from the ED consultant who was sharing a lot of wisdom and knowledge and research that can really help this child going forward. And so it was a very open meeting, and I'm happy to say that the teacher was able to make some really important changes. You might be curious about some of those changes. So I'll tell you one of them is that when you have a child with A DHD, it's important to, instead of pointing out their indiscretions like you're calling out all the time, stop doing that. You just say, you have a lot to share. This is great, and I want to share with you something I want you to do going forward. So you sort of tell them that their way is valid and you have a way that's going to work really well within your class, and you want to encourage them to try that one on.

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This is a really great way of talking with kids, and it's also something that this teacher was able to do was to create a list of strategies. I mean, this was a little bit about teaching about the integrated executive function coaching model that we teach here, but you have strategies that you can actually teach kids with a DHD, so they can improve their focus, not calling out, and they can improve that inhibition that they need in order to not call out and really help them build those skills. So the teacher was able to learn about that and started getting really good at teaching kids how to have different skills. So this is some of the work that an ED consultant can bring to your family and to your life if you so want to. And I thought it would be helpful to give you a podcast episode that shared some of this in a contextualized way because it can be confusing.

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A lot of people come in and they're like, what do you guys do? What is the fee for this? I don't get this. And you're trying to explain to them that really what we're doing with our clients is we're working through a learning process. That's the work that we do. So even if, I mean, listen, if it's any of our services, that's what we're doing. And when you work through a learning process with someone, you have to bring a really deep, deep, deep bench and a honed skillset into that experience. And so the people that work here are constantly talking about and thinking about and working within the process of learning from our cases and helping families to move through these challenges and stresses in an even better way. I'll share also, I mean, I'm not immune to this work at all, and I really appreciate a consultant here who told our entire team at one point, parents, you are learning and your child is learning.

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It's the best thing to know about. It's the best kept secret is that that is true. Sometimes we think as parents, we have to know everything. We have to impart it onto our children, and that's really not the case. As your child is learning, you are learning too. And that has been really, really helpful. And I was just in a very, very, very stressful week with one of my children, and it was just as I described before with the kid that didn't go to school for three weeks. It was that big. It was just this big, huge, what in the heck is happening here kind of stuff. And I used the strategies that we use here and am so happy as to how I went through it. It was very stressful. I mean, my neck tensed up that week. It was exhausting, but I knew how to do it.

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I went through this awareness. My emotions are really high right now. I really can't think about this right now. I've got to give it another minute. I got to go talk to somebody about this. I have to ask a lot of questions, like a lot of questions. Don't rush to the finish line. Go talk with the experts. You need a deeper bench, Mary. You need a list. You need a list of people to go to. And I went and I met with professionals and I talked with people and I talked with teachers, and I talked with my kid and we figured out some

things, but at the same time, as much as we figured out, I realize there's a lot of room here that I have to give because my kid's going to go forward from that moment of us giving him those strategies and they're going to get implemented how they're going to get implemented at a certain point.

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We all sort of do that in our own lives if we really are honest, right? Let's say our boss gives us some stuff to do and we're getting some feedback and they're suggesting these different ways of doing it. The way we implement that is going to really be our own right. It's going to be in our own way, but that's okay too. Success doesn't mean that they've picked it up and done it exactly as we laid it out to be. That's what I'm trying to teach. It's like success means that you've asked questions, you've tried to help understand, and you've asked experts and you've built up that knowledge to try to move forward with an increased skillset. That's really what it's all about. So I hope that this episode has been helpful to you, or if you know of somebody who's in a stressful moment right now in school, I just want to really speak to that person and say, you're not alone.

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If you are doing any kind of parenting with kids in school, you're going to hit stress moments. You're going to hit moments when you don't know what's going on. When you see your kids struggle, when they get caught doing something they shouldn't have been doing, when they have low skills in an area, when other kids contribute or teachers contribute to things that are negative for them, you're going to hit stress points. It's just inevitable. And hopefully this episode will give you some good insight into what you can be doing. But also know that as things do here at Evolved, this work that we do here is going to evolve even beyond this episode. And if you engage with us even in December of this year, in March of next year, in January of the following year, I mean, we're going to be moving on. There's going to be even more knowledge and insight and experience that we have because of this work that we do.

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So I'm excited about that. I'm not excited that we have to hit these stress points, but I guess the other thing I'll just close with is if you have stress points, it's like where you grow. It's where you grow the most. And if you're really in it with your kid, if you're really in it and you're like, I'm here, I'm not going to take away that consequence, but I'm here to help you accept it. I'm just here with you through this yucky moment. I mean, it's where the real deep, deep stuff happens, and it's fun to be a part of that, to be honest. It's very, very fun. I really appreciate every client who's entrusted us to work through these stress moments with them, because I know there's a certain amount of question mark there when you're really stressed as to whether or not you should be investing in something like this.

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It's not cheap, it's expensive, and it's a big what if, and you're not really sure is this person really going to be able to get us through this? I mean, there's a lot of questions about those kinds of things, which makes sense. It makes absolute sense. But what I would say to that is, yeah, it's a hundred percent worth it. It's a hundred percent worth the work, and we're committed to doing that with the clients who invite us in to their lives and into their stress points. So I hope you found this episode helpful, and if you did, please don't forget, just subscribe to this podcast, share it with friends. It's really how we get our message out there. We're putting out our calendar for 2025 very soon in December, we'll talk a little bit more about what we have on the plans for 2025. It's going to be a really exciting year for us at evolved. And thanks for listening. Thanks for sharing this work with others and for your support. It means a great deal to me, to the students that we serve, and certainly to the learning work that we develop. Talk soon. See you in December.

[\(29:06\)](#):

Thank you so much for joining us today on Be Evolved. We hope you learn something and that you can take direct action toward helping your student to learn. Well, if you enjoyed this content, please consider

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