THE WAY

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ARE CHILDREN INHERENTLY GOOD INSIDE?

Are Children inherently Good inside? Are you inherently Good Inside?

In her book *Good Inside*: A Guide to Becoming the Parent You Want to Be, Dr. Becky Kennedy offers a transformative approach to parenting, emphasising connection, compassion, and self-awareness. As a school psychologist, I find her insights invaluable for fostering emotional resilience and positive behaviour in children.

Core Philosophy: Inherent Goodness
Dr. Kennedy's central premise is that both parents and children are inherently good. This perspective encourages parents to view challenging behaviours not as signs of a child's inherent badness but as indicators of unmet needs, lack of skills or struggles. By adopting this mindset, parents can respond with empathy and understanding, rather than frustration or punishment.

Empathy Over Discipline
Traditional parenting often emphasizes discipline and correction. In contrast, Dr. Kennedy advocates for prioritizing connection over consequence and skills building over consequences. She suggests that when parents focus on understanding the emotions behind their children's behaviours, they can guide them more effectively. This approach fosters a supportive environment where children feel heard and valued. As parents, we can acknowledge, validate and permit our children’s emotions.

Practical Strategies for Parents
Good Inside provides actionable strategies for everyday parenting challenges:

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- Emotion Coaching: Helping children identify and articulate their feelings promotes emotional intelligence and self-regulation.
- Repairing Ruptures: Acknowledging and addressing moments when the parent-child connection is strained strengthens trust and understanding.
- Setting Empathetic Boundaries: Establishing clear limits with compassion teaches children respect and responsibility.
- Encouraging Independence: Supporting children in making choices fosters confidence and autonomy.

The Role of Self-Compassion

Dr. Kennedy emphasizes the importance of self-compassion for parents. Recognizing one's own imperfections and practicing self-care are essential for maintaining emotional well-being. By modelling these behaviours, parents teach their children the value of self-respect and resilience.

Application in the School Setting

Implementing the principles from *Good Inside* can enhance the school experience for children. When parents and educators collaborate with a shared understanding of a child's emotional needs, they create a consistent and supportive environment. This partnership can lead to improved behavior, academic performance, and overall well-being.

Conclusion

Dr. Becky Kennedy's *Good Inside* offers a refreshing perspective on parenting, focusing on connection, empathy, and self-awareness. By embracing these principles, parents can navigate the challenges of raising emotionally healthy and resilient children. Incorporating these strategies into daily life can lead to more harmonious family dynamics and a positive school experience. For those interested in exploring these concepts further, Good Inside provides a comprehensive guide to becoming the parent you aspire to be.

It is available in hardcopy or audiobook.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions jpetersen@thac.nsw.edu.au

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