

The Power of a Profound Question

I recently added a framed quote to my office that asks: "What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?" The interest and spontaneous answering of this question has been rather fun and quite fascinating. Some of the responses the students have provided have blown me away! I didn't really anticipate anyone actually answering this question and the students' enthusiasm for it has got me thinking about the power of asking a simple, yet profound question. I also thought that this could be a fun way for you and your child to have a really interesting and meaningful conversation with each other. So, I googled some other ideas for questions and here are a few that sparked my interest. You can make up your own, but maybe give this a try and see where the conversation takes you!

Questions for Pre-Teen/Teen Kids:

- If today was the last day of your life, what would you want to do?
- What would you do if you knew that no one was judging you?
- If you could start over, what would you do differently?
- What is the difference between living and existing?
- By what standards do you judge yourself?

Questions For Younger Kids:

- How would you describe a perfect day for you?
- If you could have any 3 wishes granted, what would they be?
- If all your clothes could only be one color, what color would you choose?
- What is something you never thought you could tell me but maybe want to tell me now?
- If everyone in the family were animals, what animals would everyone be and why?



Nutrition and Mental Health

I am definitely NOT an expert on nutrition. Eating a healthy diet is something that I am always working on. However, the more I read about the importance of nutrition and the more we understand about the role of nutrition in mental health, I think it is a rather under-valued area that should have more attention paid to it. The following is a quote from a publication put out by Harvard University:

"Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that helps regulate sleep and appetite, mediate moods, and inhibit pain. Since about 95% of your serotonin is produced in your gastrointestinal tract, and your gastrointestinal tract is lined with a hundred million nerve cells, or neurons, it makes sense that the inner workings of your digestive system don't just help you digest food, but also guide your emotions." (Harvard Health Publishing, 2015).

Think about this....95% of the body's serotonin is produced in our gut! This same organization recommends experimenting with your diet as a critical step in your journey towards better mental health. Eating less processed foods is a good start with this. Pay attention to what you eat and then how you feel. See if you can begin to identify any patterns with your child regarding their mood and what they eat. I know that for my own children, I have one that does not perform best when she eats her beloved pancakes first thing in the morning as opposed to a breakfast that is more protein based. Trying to convince her that it is a better choice to eat scrambled eggs, however, is a struggle that I continue to face and have yet to win so I understand how difficult such a transition can be for all involved!

Again, I am no expert in this area, but if you are interested in learning more, I encourage you to begin looking on the internet and follow reputable sources. A good term to your search may be "nutritional psychiatry" or "food and mental health". If the website is attempting to sell you a product or diet program, be wary and keep looking.



