

Helping Your Teen Learn Emotional Regulation

Thank you for joining me. My name is Kevin Herbert I'm the manager at Magellan healthcare. We've come to learn about emotion regulation how to help your team. I come to you as a licensed professional counselor. More importantly can come to you as a father with all of the joy and pain that goes with being a parent. We all start in different places, when it comes to family, and we have a keen sense of what works for us. Sometimes because of the family we grew up in, sometimes we want something very different. Like nearly half of the children in America, divorce taught me a family can change in a way that I could not conceive that and I learned the family is less about what you get out of it comp than what you put into it. There many kinds of families. The key feature is two or more people who want to be together, and are willing to do whatever it takes to support each other can help each other to grow, and become all we are capable of being. The novel story writes happy families are all alike, every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. When we are unhappy in our family, it is uniquely due to something within ourselves. Or the relationship between us and another person. But when we are happy, there is often a sense of flow, and it looks similar in many situations. The psychologist [Indiscernible] defines flow as a state in which people are so involved in an activity, that nothing else seems to matter. The experience is so enjoyable, that people will continue to do it even at great cost. For the sheer sake of doing it. Like being in the zone. Like a team of athletes working as a single unit. Like a group of musicians flowing with the changes, it is like losing yourself in the most amazing conversation with someone you love and admire. Flow may be fleeting, but it is something that you can have more. More often, when you're prepared, and remove the barriers. Want to talk with you today about how you can prepare yourself to flow with the changes, and model this behavior for your team. In the book the savvy habits of highly effective families can Stephen Covey teaches the importance of these and timeless universal and self-evident principles that can enable family members to effectively communicate about the problems, and resolve them. Had the pleasure meeting Dr. Covey at a lecture, and I will be referring to some of the principles as we go along. And I will have a link to a wonderful video as well as the name of the book in the resources at the end. Covey encourages parents and family members to develop a family vision. That is to know what you want to be and where you want to go together as a family. There is a saying that goes, those who fail to plan, plan to fail. There's also another saying that goes, if you don't decide how things will be, someone else will decide for you. I am like for you, and your team to feel like you have the freedom to choose based on principles and values. Rather than moods or conditions. That you can choose not to be victims come under, or to blame others. It will be easy, it will be worth it. And we will pay benefits in the long run. What does it take to go the distance? Covey suggests that in everything you do, with your family, keep in mind the miracle of the Chinese bamboo tree. After the seed for this amazing tree is planted, you see nothing, absolutely nothing. It takes four years for time issued to come out of people. During those four years, all of the growth is underground in a massive food structure spreading deep and wide. Then, in the fifth year, the bamboo tree grows 280 feet tall. Many things in life are like the bamboo tree. You work and you invest time and effort, and you do everything you possibly can to nurture growth, sometimes you don't see any growth for weeks. Months or even years. But if you are patient, and you keep working and never, and nurturing, the year will, and you will be astonished at the growth and change you see taking place. Covey goes on further to say, patients is faith in action. Patients is emotions diligence it is the willingness to suffer inside so others can grow, reveals love. It gives birth to understanding the even as we become aware of our suffering, we learn about ourselves and earn weaknesses and motives. One of the treatment approaches that I use as a therapist to help those are having a hard time managing their emotions and developing effective interpersonal relationships is called the VP. Or dialectical behavior therapy. It is a therapy that I found

the juice the changes hard. And we must balance the desire to change with a desire to feel validated and supported. We will talk more about validation and a little bit. As Stephen Covey pointed out, this requires patience. With that said, the author recognized there were also small things we can do in the moment to reduce our suffering, and increase our sense of peace and [Indiscernible]. So she combined the power of cognitive therapy with the principle of mindfulness. We will talk about those a little more in a bit. I will be sharing with you a few of the simple exercises that embraces this patient vision of growth and stability while addressing the immediate need to managed the stress. Many of the exercises can be remembered with helpful acronyms, the first two that I would like to share with you are except, and improved. I'm looking on the screen and I see ACC EPT and there is a [Indiscernible]. I will tell you what the accept stands for. Except as a way to tolerate distress. And so any types of things that are going on the least we can do is find a way to get through it. And so accept stands for activities, contributing, comparisons, opposite promotions, pushing away, other thoughts, and other sensations. The skills training manual has specific exercises for mastering each one of these. One of the key components of skills training is recognizing that most of the time we already have some grasp of the skill. Even if we don't have a name for it. And so consider how could you manage a stressful situation by finding some activity to focus on? Looking at how you contribute to the situation. Is there another emotion that you could access? Can you create distance between yourself and the person or problem and so you're better prepared? Is this something else you could be thinking of? Perhaps you could focus on the physical sensations instead of thoughts. Another thing you can do is use your five senses to soothe yourself what is something good you do that makes you feel good? The other acronym is improved. This one takes it beyond distraction. By focusing on imagery, meaning, prayer, relaxing actions, doing one thing in the moment, taking a brief vacation, and self encouragement. What helps you to find a deeper appreciation of the moment that you find yourself in? That should give you a few things to consider. As we explore the challenge of being an adolescent in a world full of distractions. Philosophers and poets went back to the beginning of history and recognized that appeared of time roughly between the ages of 12 and 20 is full of chaos and energy. In modern times, psychologists have explored how human beings grow and develop over time to and found the age of and lessons presents a unique set of challenges to the individual and family. In his theory of psychosocial development, psychologist Erik Erikson notes there is a dilemma in which the young person is striving to develop a sense of identity. Often unique, and sometimes at odds with the parents or society. Perhaps you have experienced this with your child. Another researcher revealed a lot about how we deal and develop as individuals in a relationship since John Bowlby who explored the importance of having nurturing relationships early in life after witnessing the effects of parental separation during the turmoil of World War II. He and others have developed what's known as a task, attachment theories explore how parents and partners build trust in developing nurturing relationships with children. In social learning theory Albert [Indiscernible] it is more than just pods, cause-and-effect it is more than reward and punishment that we learn best with. We recognize that human beings most important way to learn is through modeling behavior. So we talk more about how you can model behavior to help your team. First I would like to talk what we are up against. Just about everybody is familiar with one of the first modern theories of behavior. Sigmund Ford. He was a physician and neurologist to believe that much of our development is complete by the age of five. Which makes it difficult to change how we behave. However, we have learned a lot since before it's time. With the introduction of brain scanning technology, we have learned a lot about the role of the brain in our thoughts and behaviors can fMRI allows us to see what the brain is doing well it's alive in real time. We have learned that it takes a lot of tight time, lifetime for the brain to develop. This change in structure helps the brain process information faster and more effectively. Structurally, their different sections of the brain that oversee different behavioral functions. The brain typically developed from the bottom up, and from the back forward. The base of the brain develops first controls the functioning of our organization communicates with the

body and regulates all of the key functions like Lee. In the middle part of the brain what's known as the limbic system handles the motion. It is responsible for satisfying her basic needs and wants. In the top part, that wrinkly stuff, is known as the cortex. It is the part that allows us to proceed and think and move through the world in a performance for way. In a purposeful way. Another factor you want to hear of, is hormones. The release of hormones these chemicals that affect the body and brain in several ways includes our behavior and they help guide our development. During puberty, it can create desires and behaviors that are difficult to manage. I will mention the brain develops from back to front. What that means is the parts of our brain that have developed to satisfy our needs and desires [Indiscernible] that an adult uses to control their impulses. So the very front of the brain the prefrontal cortex that is what we are patiently waiting on his parents and gently encouraging the growth of our ability to manage her emotions and behavior known as executive function, is in this part of the brain and it is typically not fully developed until the mid-20s. It turns out other parts of the brain can sometimes make up the difference so that a team knows what they're supposed to do in a situation, but it is not ingrained in the brain in a way that allows an adult to react quickly. Instead, teenagers must through course of action and practice it repeatedly and even then, we are waiting on parts of the brain to continue the development. Another important part of the nervous system things how the brain responds to and controls the body. You can think of it as the automatic. It is the part that is almost entirely out of our control except for blinking momentary breath holding. And a key part of the system that you may know is the fight or flight system. It helps us to respond to threats in the environment, and to satisfy her survivable nose. Survival needs. When you have the experience, and we have our needs met, and our environment supports it, we can choose how we react. What does this mean for you and me? It means body imbalance between what we can and cannot control. The Y cannot control the function or anybody for that matter, I can create an environment that promotes the ability and cooperation. Instead of getting caught up in my stress and pushing down to only come back up later, I work with my body, face my fear and conquer it. The author once said repression is not the way to virtue the people restrained themselves out of fear, their lives are diminished. Only through freely chosen discipline can lights be enjoyed and still kept within the balance of reason. Psychological research has provided many ways to manage stress and behavior. Stress is a necessary component of growth and development. We couldn't function as living beings without reacting to our environment. Stress occurs when we exert effort to deal with the environment and attempt to satisfy unfulfilled needs. Each one of us can easily account for the things we find stressful. We can think of ways that stress affects us. That could cause humans fear, anger, status and worry. Numbness, frustration. Changes in appetite. Difficulty concentrating making decisions. Difficulty sleeping or nightmares. Physical reactions such as headaches, body pain, stomach problems, skin rashes. And it can also make chronic health problems or mental conditions even worse. It may also tend to increase the use of substances to [Indiscernible]. Let's ask ourselves, do stressors cause our distress? A wise mind would say no. What can we do when stress turns into distress? First we can begin with our ABCs. Affect, behavior, cognition. It turns out the feelings and actions and thoughts constantly flowing in response to the stressors in our environment and research in this dynamic process has shown if you can influence one of these, there may be a chance you can influence the others. And you can step out of a downward spiral and even create an upward spiral for yourself. Adolescence is a time the multiple stressors. Our child will look to us and their friends to learn how to manage these changes. To fight their fears and master the course through life. As parents, we can promote and model self-control for teens. So let's talk specifically about emotion regulation and what you can do to help yourself and those around you. Modern treatment considers emotions to be necessary. Their way of responding to the perceived needs and supplying energy to meet the needs. Technical definition, emotional self-regulation or emotion regulation, is the ability to respond to the ongoing demands of experience, with full range of emotions, in a matter that is socially tolerable and sufficiently flexible to permit spontaneous reactions. As well as

our ability to delay spontaneous reactions. The skills that help us regulate our physiology to regulate our experience and actions. That are associated with emotion. And she has developed many exercises for teaching these. For instance, learning and introducing the idea there is a [Indiscernible]. Sometimes one of these minds is willing our behavior. It could be like a pendulum swinging between the two. We can get caught up in that. Especially when there are strong emotions, strong beliefs, or homelands, hormones that play the there is also wise mind by asking ourselves what would a wise mind do in this situation? We need to step outside of the fight between reason and emotion can and rest in the place of calm observation. Emotion regulation can also be defined as extrinsic and intrinsic, external and internal basically these processes are there to monitor and evaluate and modify her emotional reactions so we can regulate our feelings and regulate other people's feelings. Emotion regulation is an internal or interpersonal process like a battle between the lines. And it interpersonal process that affects how we get along with others. Carl Rogers said the curious paradox is that when I set myself just as I am, then I change. Many people are unlikely to embrace change unless they have support. Unless they feel heard, validated, that is acknowledged for who they are, what they bring to the situation. Adapting to change the process that responds well to acceptance and validation. Roger believed that by using the core conditions of empathy [Indiscernible]. The client would feel safe enough to access their potential. They could move toward what he called [Indiscernible]. To find the answers within themselves. What can we do as parents to create that kind of relationship? What do teens and parents disagree on? Feel free to put some examples in the Q & A. Appearance, looks change over time, parents and kids have always disagreed on what they look is. Curfew. Grades. Of course now electronics and phone use. Expenses like water and electric. I'm sure you heard the saying, were you born in a barn? Let's not leave the door open. Girlfriends and boyfriends romantic interest. Noise, religion and church. Substance use, as well as ideas such as [Indiscernible] and honesty. He notes the common dilemmas between parents and adolescents are being to lose versus being too strict. Number two, making right problematic behavior versus making too much of typical adolescent behavior. Or number three, pushing away versus holding onto. Her workbook is on a worldview that fosters a capacity to consider opposing perspectives and work toward achieving together. She calls this walking the middle path. The philosopher [Indiscernible] encouraged us to be candid beautifully. Sometimes a parent needs to be directed. Sometimes a parent needs to be frank. We can do this in a way that respects and values the relationship. We can accomplish this with patience and understanding, we can find a middle path. This is a time of change for everybody. Especially your team. Changes and animal, especially your teen. Change is inevitable. You need a stable guide. Like stress, conflict is a normal and healthy part of life. Especially in adolescence but not too much. Expect to push back at times but remember, you have the power and you have to community, the community to back you up. Ultimately, it is better to observe boundaries in her child will appreciate it. Remember, don't take it personally if your team pushes back. Your role is to remain calm and remind your teenager the boundaries and expectations. If you communicate to your teenager that you need them to listen, behave cooperate, they may leverage or advantage your underlying parent. If you find you are having difficulty keeping a cool head, get help for yourself, a practice self validation. It is less about her agreements come than it is about how we resolve them. It requires empathy, genuineness and collaboration. Using empathy we put ourselves in another person's position and validate their concerns from the perspective and realize your teenager is struggling. Being genuine honest about her position and limitations. Through collaboration, we settle on a plan that satisfies all. A few coworkers are stretching your child, you have not resolve the conflict that chances are you may have damaged your relationship in skills training, we talk about a three-legged stool to stand for the key factors of interpersonal effectiveness. There are three new acronyms to help us. What happens when the school is missing a leg? It falls over. We need these three things to be in balance. Leg number one is getting what we wanted in any relationship there things we want to it helps to get clear on what that is before we find ourselves in conflict. We can do this with dear man, describe what it is you want for yourself so we

can express it to others in a clear way? By knowing what you want and how to communicate it, you can assert your needs and wants. Reinforce this by revisiting it often come and create reminders at home. Stay mindful, we will talk about that more. And appear confident. Remember, it is hard to get what you want if you see uncertain. Finally, negotiate until you get what you seek. Keeping the relationship. Earlier I said that you could damage the relationship is they acted too harshly and getting what you want. To build a healthy relationship you need to give it that is be gentle, act interesting, validate, and use and easy demand. Keeping your self-respect. This is just as important. If you focus too much on getting what you want, your desires undermine your values. Same thing could happen if you put the log, the relationship above all. You can respect yourself and reduce vulnerability through negative emotions by remembering please master. Take care of yourself, prevent illness, eat healthy, avoid mood altering drugs, balance sleep, exercise, and build personal mastery and effectiveness. I think please master is summed up by the [Indiscernible]. On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law. Help other people at all times, and see myself physically strong [Indiscernible]. We have to work on ourselves so we have the energy and presence to help others. Victor Frankl this famous powerful [Indiscernible] survived the consecration can't. When he had nearly everything taken from him, he was bought as low as a human could be. He realized they had not taken everything. Listen to these words. Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies our freedom. In our power to choose our response. In our response, lies our growth, and our happiness. No matter how dire the situation seems, we have a choice in how we will respond to and how we will go from that moment forward. What can we do to find that space where freedom lies? Before we can regulate our emotions, we need to be able to label our [Indiscernible] research has found it is not necessary maybe even detrimental to be checking our mood. It is better to be prepared to quickly assess and decide if it is right. Just like we got cleared what we want to from relationships, we need to get clear what the emotion is that is active, and to take proper action. If you have them remote control, if you have a remote control, [Indiscernible]. We can realize in this moment that there are things we can do to tolerate and manage the distress. And press the pause button to react. Pressing positive, we realize we have a place and power that is beyond the situation. This is a way of practicing the skill of mindfulness. When we do this with empathy and validation, we are extending the space of peace and freedom to those we care for. How do we practice? We begin by practicing mindfulness. John Cabot the Prater stress reduction clinic defines mindfulness as the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose in the present moment nonjudgmentally. You are already in the moment whether you like it or not. Ask yourself, what are you paying attention to? Are you doing it on purpose? The key element is nonjudgment. It is judgment that turned stress into distress. Turns pain into suffering. What happens when we choose to reserve judgment? Just like a map it is not the thing it represents, our thoughts are the entire reality of the present moment. What we think about ourselves and others in the situation influences how we preserve, perceive the situation. Research by [Indiscernible] has shown challenges increase emotion dysregulation. It makes us harder to manage emotions. It can interfere with clear thinking and prevents learning. Furthermore, self-care and self validation are shown to enhance emotion regulation. The validation of others helps to maintain interpersonal interconnectedness. Realize emotion is like a wave, it goes up and down. When we are caught up in a wave of emotion, it encourages us to get on a surfboard. Provide the wave until it passes. From that space, between stimulus and response, we can embrace our motions by piece, model call in mutual respect and choose freedom for us. Was we let the emotion subside, that we can reengage. We can have a conversation about what happened. What are some common outcomes? It was referred to as typical adolescent behavior. Let's talk about some uncommon concerns. There is a very real threat by the pandemic. How is your child coping during COVID? Invite your child to talk about how they are doing. Maybe there are hopeless or angry. They will benefit from more support. Keep in mind adolescents and young adults HI to hide their struggles because of fear or shame. Older children may show signs of distress, changes in

mood that are not usual for your child. Ongoing irritability, feeling of hopelessness arrange frequent conflicts with family and friends. Maybe they are stepping back from personal relationships. If your outgoing teen is showing less interest, but my because for concern. Loss of interest in activities they previously enjoyed. Difficulty falling and staying asleep, change in appetite, problems with banking, thinking. Changes in appearance, a lot of us have gotten a little lax on the grooming. Some things to look at. Any risky behavior like drug use or alcohol. Other things to consider his family history or any history of substance use? Any history of self harm or have your children expressed thoughts about death or suicide? If they are talking about it, that is a good thing because we want to know. And it can be frightening, and you can certainly reach out to your EAP or professional to get guidance. I was wondering if there would be time at the end and I think there may be. I have guided visualization exercises. I want to give you a chance to process what you heard today. The group and get calm and centered. I'm going to guide you through this. And you are welcome to look down or close your eyes are just kind of settle yourself comfortably in your chair. I put this together especially for this webinar. Close your eyes, and imagine that you're the captain of a spaceship. You can travel fast distances of space and time. Look around for a moment. Familiarize yourself with your surroundings. Think of how you would like to explore the depths of space. To see how far you can go. Set a course, and fly to the edge of the universe. Relax, and breathe as you make your way to that place. In less than a minute. Then enjoy the solitude for a moment. Before heading back.

[Pause]

Heading back, on the way back you realize that this ship could make that trip instantly that you immediately make the jump to that solitary place once again. And spend another moment resting in freedom that space creates. Just you and your breath. Now it is time to return home to do what only you can do. You can enter the next moment with the freedom to choose and the peace of mind to stay the course. And the knowledge you can posit in this way whenever you need it. And it only takes a minute. Thank you for your time today. I appreciate it.

I do want to point out that he has listed the resources for you today. I hope you are feeling relaxed. I want to remind you that your EAP is a service available to you 24 hours a day seven days a week. It is also available to your household members. We have coaching for 18-year-olds and up, that pertains to some of your teams. Feel free to contact us. You can contact us on our website. If you don't know your specific web or phone number, please reach out to the HR department. With companies from an entire EAP customer so I don't have all of your information. You can find it through your company. Looks like we have a few minutes for questions. I will go ahead and find some questions for Kevin. Looks like someone is asking about an older teen who is struggling with ADHD and low self-esteem. What are your suggestions?

It depends on what the, a lot of people talk about do I have ADHD some people have gone and got tested and treated. And it is really important to understand especially for the parent and the teenager, what ADHD is, and there is a gentleman by the name of Russell Barkley, and I included a book in the references that talks about how to work with teenagers and this gentleman has done amazing research, and ADHD is less about attention deficit than it is about the way that the brain handles itself in different situations. There are things you can do to change the environment, that will be more important at a lot of things. Create an environment that sustains somebody who has that difficulty comes and then of course many of the things we touched on today can help build relationships that can address the self-esteem issue. Being surrounded by people who esteem you have the power to improve your self-

esteem. And if there are some negative thoughts, having a conversation about that or seeing a therapist can help out with those things. Any other questions?

I do want to let people know I'm getting lots of people who wanted to know about the recording. Want to remind you it will be available in 2 to 3 days so you will want to contact your HR department. We will have a handout with the recording and the transcription. With the question here about how do you handle kids managing two different standards in two different homes? You have a divorce situation in there one set of standards and one in another. Any suggestions?

It goes back to what we were saying earlier about things we can control things we cannot control the in my time working with families going through divorce and separation teaching coparenting, we do the best that we can to get both homes on the same page but sometimes you just cannot. The divide is because of the parent's and completely different worldviews. Sometimes you help your team find a way to adapt, you make the home that they're returning to one that is welcoming not necessarily trying to one up or better the other parent, but just do everything that you can where you can get while you have control over it, and for that teenager, having again introducing them to things they can do to support themselves and used to tolerate the stress when things get out of hand. Nurture a relationship so they can recharge their batteries when they return.

That was a great question. I had a similar situation. It is part of life. Thank you. How about that somebody asking how can we make changes in our relationship with our teen that we have these current habits that we've been in. Communicating back-and-forth with this person we've had these interactions and habits, what are some small ways that parents can start working with the kids right now.

Obviously if you are caught up in a stream that the child is, it can be difficult to pull ourselves out of that. Reaching out to a parent coach or seeing a therapist, somebody that can provide a next her mind for you to piece together how things got the way they are. And then as far as sort of in the moment things, because back to that family vision we started with. Obviously it has been a while, habits are starting to be ingrained, there is a compromise somewhere, there is something that allows you to move in that direction of reconciling that relationship it and so little things that we can do for connection, they may not be responsive at first, we make that date and then we tried to create changes in our environment that will promote that. If we run out of ideas or struggle to implement, get some help. Even if it is just from a family member or friend.

Do want to say we have lots of people who are asking questions that are fairly specific to we recognize that the teen years can be challenging. They are learning to be their own person, and so each of you have unique circumstances that you are dealing with. Kevin may not be able to answer all of your questions today. I know he will be able to because there are too many. I want to let you know is you can use your EAP. If your question was not answered, I do want to let you know that there is help out there. There are many resources in the presentation. Contact your HR department if you need to get help. We have one last question. I've someone who has come kids who are maybe having irrational or distorted thoughts or overly anxious about something. The parents are thinking, I see my child and I do not know why they are anxious. What ideas do you have for that?

What are some things that the team can be doing on their side, all of the things that were introduced today are things that you want to make sure you have command of for yourself so you can introduce it to your teen and I love the idea of walking and meditation to which leads me to the answer that I have

for this question which is our body has that fight or flight system, and it wants to be grounded in reality. But because of social media, television, things we hear and gossip and really worry about things that aren't directly of threat, start to weigh on the person. They start to feel incompetent and and feel like how can I manage this? The first thought is to tell them, no no no, you're wonderful and great. The fact of the matter is if the body is in control, and so going for walks, meditating, re-engaging in activities that have been previously put aside. Making a connection and attempting to do things together to try to get into a real place. Encourage them to put down feet , the phone and step away and try to do something connects you with your body in a probable way. Engage in exercise, go for walks anything you can do so you feel what it's like to be you in the moment doing things. That is a good place to start.

Thank you. Do want to let you know I will have the survey pulled up. Please rate your satisfaction with the webinar. Click the radio button in front of your answer. That will tell you the results. We are not broadcasting those. You will be able to see your vote. I want to let you know some people have mentioned it is hard to get teenagers to EAP, I want to set an expectation with that. Sometimes it is family [Indiscernible]. There may need to be assessments. I want to to ask about those services. Don't forget, it is important to take care of yourself. EAP is a great place to do that. We are at the top of the hour. Please go ahead and download the certificate of completion. Thank you so much for sharing your words of wisdom today. We appreciate it.