

Fostering Children's Wellbeing with the R2E Method

with Dr. Viktor Paul Giangrosso

November 7, 2023

Audio Transcription from November's BioBites

Host, Jessica Frank (JF): Today's topic is about children's mental health and what are the current statistics about mental health and kids, and how can we begin to steer the ship in a new direction towards health and happiness. With us today is Dr. Viktor Paul Giangrosso. Dr. Giangrosso is a published author of two books on Body Mind Wellness, a licensed physical therapist with more than 17 years of clinical experience, having graduated with his doctorate from Stony Brook University in 2006.

He's been a group meditation facilitator for more than seven years, and is the creator of the R 2 E method. And also, he is an abstract expressionist artist fund fact. After a 30-year battle with depression, including two hospitalizations for suicidal ideation, he found ways to truly heal from the inside. He gradually went off medications by using his clinical, educational, self-reflective and spiritual experiences to reconnect to himself.

As a result, his professional and personal mission is now to reconnect and empower children, caregivers, and educators in mind and body through his books, educational workshops, and his art, which you will see today. So, without further delay, everybody, I'm going click buttons, pass the mic over to Dr. Viktor, and away we go. Take it away. Dr. Viktor.

Dr. Viktor Paul Giangrosso (VG): Okay. Thank you, Jessica. Sorry for the delay. it is great to be here. I'm really excited. this is a lifelong dream to be talking about myself and my R 2 E method, with transparency to help children in our country to help educators, parents, clinicians, to, understand what's happening in our country. So, that being said, the screen is blank, and that is intentional.

So, we're going start off, if it is safe to do so and you feel comfortable, please close your eyes and imagine in your mind a blank canvas, paper or computer screen, like the one before you. Now, now, on that screen, you can create anything pure potentiality.

It's always the beginning. So, from this place, I want you to take the most beautiful, peaceful breath you can possibly take right now.

Now, I want you to, using the muscles in your belly button, in your, in your core, pull your belly button in towards your spine, gently, just pull it straight back, no forcing, and then release. And then lastly, from this place of pure potentiality of just the beginning, think the most beautiful thought.

You can think a word, a sound, an image, your choice.

Now, those three steps are the basics, the fundamentals of the R 2 E method, or the reconnect to empower method. Now, those are three separate components. By the end of the presentation, we will go into layering them and get into more complexity with them. So, from that perspective, I want to share with you two incredible thoughts from two incredible human beings.

Thich Nhat Hanh, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967 by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Said, because you are alive, everything is possible. And Nelson Mandela, it always seems impossible until it's done.

So, here we are, BioBites, fostering children's wellbeing with the R 2 E method. I'm Dr. Viktor, and I'm really happy to be here. Today's focus will be on the following five components, presence, compassion, and curiosity. Who am I? What is reality in America? 2023, where I'll discuss the tragic four, and what is productivity?

And introducing the R 2 E method. So, on the right you can see a, a painting. That painting was created by, the four of us, my family and I, my wife and two children. And it became the cover of my second book, which is entitled to Awakening the Mystery of You and I.

So, I handed that canvas to my children. If you remove the, the center part, the two which I did separately, I handed my children who were nine 12 said, just paint something. Here are the brushes, here's the paint, paint whatever you want. So, my daughter, who's 12, took a piece of masking tape, and right across the middle where the purple is now divided the canvases, this is mine, and this is yours, Derek. And my daughter was very hesitant to paint her part, the top part. She ended up painting the top part. She seemed nervous, and I was really grateful for the opportunity to hear why she was nervous.

She said, I, I don't, I don't think it's going come out right. And I said, why? She said, well, my teacher in kindergarten criticized something that I painted. I said, okay, well, this is art. So, paint whatever you want. And this is the beautiful painting she created. And, my wife painted the middle part the purple stripe, and I did the, the middle, middle part, presence, compassion and curiosity.

I see these as missing in adults for our children today. Presence, compassionate curiosity is a stable, grounded, regulated nervous system. And I see the, these three things, presence, compassionate curiosity as the most powerful force on the planet.

When we provide these inner experiences for our children, we empower them. We listen to them, we hear them, we see them. We give them what they truly need, which is attention attunement. And how do we get there? We'll, we'll, we'll get to that. But it really comes down to internal self-regulation versus external control.

Now, internal self-regulation, meaning we regulate our emotions, we regulate our body and posture, our breathing, our thinking versus external control.

Pharmacological management domain, one thing as well as many, many, many systems of control that I see. And we'll get to it further into the presentation as a major cause of why children are so dysregulated and falling.

Subject to the, the tragic four in our country today, we are overfed and undernourished. And by overfed and undernourished, I mean food, but also technology, social media information. We are bombarded, and children are bombarded, and they're responding in not so good ways.

So, what does it mean to be fed or nourished? Provided with resources to learn how to self-regulate in mind and body. After all, when you're an adult, you're out there at your business meeting, you're teaching, you're running a company, you're coaching a sport. You are there with yourself. You're regulating your feelings, your thoughts, your body. That's what we need to prepare our children for. And how do we do that?

We do that by being self-regulate ourselves, and it comes down to abundance versus a scarcity mindset. Our country and our, our, our, our global population for that matter, seems to base productivity or progress on technological and economic growth, which are important.

The reason I'm sitting here right now on my computer is because of technological growth and as well as economic stability and growth. However, are these adequate measures of productivity if our children are falling prey to the tragic four? Are we making progress as a nation, as a world?

We have so much to give, and our abundance comes from that mind state of abundance. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the resources we have, our bodies are minds, the very things that we can control so much as out of our control. But what is in our control? This body mind that is looking back at me at the camera. So presence, compassion, and cur, curiosity and meditation. Meditation's been around for thousands of years, has an incredible impact on the brain and our nervous system to heal.

It brings about clarity. There have been numerous studies, scientific studies, showing the many benefits of regular meditation practice. And one particular study indicates that the more we meditate, the more our executive function, our ability to think clearly.

Those areas of the brain increase, whereas the areas of the brain responsible for fear addiction grow smaller, even after eight weeks. In one particular study, regular people meditation practice for eight weeks. Incredible, incredible change. And what arises when we meditate, we breathe mindfully. We focus inward is the clarity.

We, we experience results in, in ability to understand rather than judge. And we can understand our children, we can empower them by being present and listening and understanding who they are and what their struggles are. I've worked in geriatrics. I worked in geriatrics for 16 plus years as a physical therapist. And it's amazing how it's, how important it's to be understanding and not catch judgment.

Because throughout our whole life cycle, we're always learning. When we're first born, we're learning, we're learning to breathe, learning to move as we do, and then we learn to express ourselves in other ways. But that doesn't change. The chronology changes. The growth changes, the appearance changes, but the learning has always happening. So, it has to be an understanding of where we are, our children, our, adults. Everyone throughout the whole life span over, over judgment.

So, who am I? Why are you listening to me? I am professionally, I'm Dr. Viktor Paul, Giangrasso. And on the left, you can see four pictures. So, the lower left, it's interesting for me to look at, that was me in 1991. I was a senior in high school, and I competed in a natural teenage bodybuilding competition. I didn't like the way it looked at all. I look now, I'm like, wow, I look pretty good, <laugh>. Um, but back then, terrible insecurity.

And I'll get into that. On the next slide above that, was back in 2018, I was my heaviest ever struggled with obesity on and off for many, many, many years. very heavy and felt interestingly better in myself, but still not, not healthy physically. And then to the right of that is my R 2 E method, logo that comes directly from, if you look below my second book to, so my first book is Opaciphobia and Other Inner Reflections.

I published that in 2019. And the second book is entitled to Awakening the Mystery of You. And I, I pen that under the, the name Viktor Paul, and I'll get into that as well. So, I'm a body mind wellness practitioner, licensed physical therapist, practicing for 17 plus years, mostly in geriatrics, but more recently peds. And I love working with children. I love working with parents and teachers and administrators.

It's just such an amazing transition from working in geriatrics. I'm also a group meditation facilitator. So, I work in, um, different businesses, corporations, to help them to slow down, learn how to breathe and be more productive both personally and professionally. Publish author I already mentioned of those two books you see, and also creator of the R two method, which is what we're eventually going get to demonstrating at the end of the presentation.

So that's who I am now.

Professionally, who was I or who I was? Well, I was born Paul Giangrasso. In June of this past year, I decided to move my first name to my middle name and add Viktor, which I won't get into now. Why? But since I was a child, I just love the name. But, after a 30-year battle with depression, including two hospitalizations for basically being suicidal, I was placed on four different psychotropic medications to stabilize my mood.

And at the time, I was also on, hypertensive medications to stabilize my blood pressure. So, I was on six different medications, for many years. Also, lifelong

struggle with body dysmorphia, body image stuff. It's not just for, for young girls and anorexia, thinking you're not strong enough, not built enough, don't have enough muscle, all that stuff. So that binge eating disorder, I've struggled with that as well for many, many years for many, many reasons.

And as you saw in the previous picture, obesity, struggled with that many, many years. So, a lot of, um, mental dysregulation and physical dysregulation. So that's who I was. So that has brought me to here to, to be sitting with you today, sharing, sharing my story, and, my art two method, and talking a bit about what's going on in our country with, with children. So personally, and professionally, my mission is to prioritize children in America by empowering parents, caregivers, educators, and clinicians with practical tools and a transparent window into my life of struggle and triumph over significant mental and physical dysregulation.

So, to the right are three pieces of artwork. Jessica, I mentioned my abstract expressionism. That was an integral part of my healing, being able to communicate what I was feeling inside, both in books and also in abstract art. the three pieces to the right, the one top left I did in PT school, 2004.

The bottom the circles, is, I did that in 2007, is in my second book. And the one to the right, very right, is my latest, my latest piece. So that's, that's the progression of my art. And again, my art, my writing, writing, everything I really do is dedicated towards personal healing. I was so severely dysregulated for so many years. I found a way out. And, um, these three paintings are just this small sample of, of, of, of how I did that.

So now we're at the reality of America right now. And what I came to know as the Tragic four through my research, through the CDC, major media. And I discussed this more, in depth in my second book. So, the first one is the growing physical health crisis. Obesity, prevalence in children and adolescents is still too high, as per the CDC in 2022.

Secondly, the growing mental health crisis. And this was on cnn.com in 2022. As well. Study finds huge increases in children going to the emergency room with suicidal thoughts. And remember, I was one of those, individuals twice. Thirdly, the rising rates of developmental disabilities. also 2022, the CDC reported there was an increase in developmental disabilities among children in the United States. And, it,

it's, it's scary. And lastly, continued gun violence in schools. This was, a major inspiration for me writing my second book.

And then it just blossomed to other things. But I was just so destroyed by the violence that keeps happening and our country. And then most notably in schools, just why would a place where children are supposed to be or feel safe and be safe to learn, to experience such trauma, which just destroys communities. So more than 311,000 students have experienced gun violence at school since Columbine in 1999.

That was according to the Washington Post in 2022. And then even more recently, 2023, this article just completely disturbed me. A boy, six stole his mother's gun from home, but his backpack and shot his teacher. Now, that to me is just, there's so many things wrong with that situation. But the beauty of that, if you can pull anything, beautiful from that situation. I read that article and the teacher was reportedly wounded and yet still making sure the children were okay.

So, what is productivity? I, I question that word. I alluded to that earlier. Economic and technological growth tend to be kind of the standards of how we measure productivity and progress. But again, from what I've just shown you about the tragic four, are we progressing as a nation? There's a major problem that must be addressed directly and finger pointing by different political parties, specifically about the gun.

Violence is not getting us anywhere. We have a responsibility to guide children to wellbeing as adults on this planet. That that's what I see my responsibility is. So positive change in the wellbeing of children is possible in the microcosm within ourselves. Our day-to-day, interactions with others, with our children, regulating our nervous systems, learning to breathe effectively, think clearly, be in our bodies, take care of our bodies, move healthily, effectively and show a good example.

That's the microcosm. And listening, again, listening, being attuned to our children, providing that present, curious, compassionate, um, vantage point that heart. And in the micro macrocosm, the positive change we can have in the wellbeing of children isn't the healthcare and education systems. And I put also and beyond because it comes down to, I believe our government needs to step in and, and really make a change. Some major changes in, in what we're doing. 'cause what is being done is not working.

So, introducing the reconnect to empower method. Now, when we first started the presentation with the blank screen, we went into breathing posture and mind posture. Now, this is not new, okay? So, Dr. Viktor, what are you telling me? Think positive thoughts. Breathe and be more, you know, aware of my body. Okay, what? You're not teaching me anything new. Now the thing is, is that it's about awareness.

It's not something you learn intellectually. It's not something, yeah, I got it. I understand. And you move on to the next thing. This is a lifelong, endeavor to continue to reconnect to these three parts of ourselves that are fundamental to our ability to move, think, breathe, interact with others. They're just fundamental. That doesn't change, like I said, throughout the whole life cycle, working in geriatrics for 16 years, I saw that is not going away.

And that was one of the really major catalysts that got me back into taking care of myself physically. I said, wow, this body's not going away. I need take care of it. And I can't really control much of anything else. So let me get that, let me get that. Right?

So, developing an awareness of an inner awareness of breath posture. I call it breath posture. 'cause it's, it's dynamic. It's not static, it's not. We breathe this way, we move this way, we think this way. It's, it's dynamic. It's, or it's organic. It, it, it moves, it flows. So, it's an awareness of the flow of air in and out through our nose, our mouth, our throat, our chest, and into our abdomen. It's a, it's an awareness and it's a moment-to-moment awareness. And then body posture, it's about developing an awareness of the four posture muscles.

The muscle groups that I see are essential for stable movement begins at the base of the spine, the pelvic floor, moving upward, transverse, abdominus, different from the rectus abdominus, which is, which is the sexy muscles. The six pack, this is the transverse abdominus is the one that wraps around your whole abdomen spine, providing incredible support, moving upward, the scapula thoracic muscles or basically where your scapula is. Scapula, r scapula, maintaining, a, a neutral position.

And also, the, it's very dynamic. This the shoulder girdle, shoulder complex. So, maintaining that in a healthy position. And lastly, moving upward into the, the head and the neck capital flexion and cervical extension. Just maintaining a healthy alignment of the cervical spine.

And again, it's about building an awareness. And, and I, I, I can guarantee that when I mentioned body posture, many of you may have come up, you know, oh, is my posture okay? And it's really about cultivating an awareness of that in your, in your day-to-day life and spending time, working through that because injury prevention, effective movement, achieving a, a sense of, physiological, physiologically efficient posture, your energy, you might not, you might need less coffee.

And lastly, mind posture, develop an inner awareness of thought. And it's known as mantra mantras. The word been around for thousands of years, but it could be a word, a sound, a phrase. It could be a, a verse, a religious practice, non-religious practice, whatever it is, whatever. We all have thoughts regardless of our belief systems. So, the R 2 E method or reconnect 2 empower method really is an integration of these three things.

It's a, it's a layering of these three things. And again, people do them in piecemeal, go to the gym they work on, maybe work on posture, go to physical therapy, work on posture, go to meditation, work on meditation, work on breath, work on thinking, going therapy, working through thought processes. What, what thoughts are, are creating my, my issues. This is a way of bringing it all together and regaining a sense of connection or reconnection to ourselves in body and mind. And again, let me tie it back to children.

When we do that as, as adults, and we interact with our children from that vantage point in the microcosm, microcosm and the macrocosm, things change. You know, we are, we are change, and we must be the change we wish to see in the world. I believe Gandhi said that. So, we can change the world.

We create the world, and it starts by changing our world and change the world. But I can change my world, which is my body, my mind, and those around me. And that changes the world. And the big picture. So, reconnect to empower. Let's, let's demonstrate, let's do what we did the first slide, the blank slide, but we'll, we'll bring it all together now. Only incorporating one postural muscle. So, I want you to, again, to pull in your belly button towards your spine, or that's the transverse abdominis muscle.

Now engage that again, not forcefully, just build an awareness. Feel what it feels like to pull in that muscle to stabilize and support your spine. Then from that

perspective, from that vantage point, take a nice, deep, beautiful breath in and think that thought.

We'll do that again. I want you to do it simultaneously with me. So, I'll be quiet once we, I give you the cues. So, you're going pull the belly button in. You need take a deep breath in, and you're going think that positive thought simultaneously. I'll give a moment to all for us all to do that.

And there's something about that silence that's just so beautiful, isn't it? So much potential there. So quite simply, the R 2 E method is a posture of the heart. And now what that means is when we slow down, when we're present, compassionate and curious with ourselves like we just did, that enables us to be present, compassionate and curious with others, namely children.

And we teach them, and we can teach those in this method as well.

I visualize this in schools as a way to start the day off, getting grounded in what's real, that body, that mind, and then prepare that individual human system to take in information and make it applicable to their lives. If there's some kind of purpose, there's some meaning behind it. Because after all, it, it comes down to shifting away from social media, shifting away from the distractions, shifting away from excessive video games and things that aren't really nurturing or nourishing children.

Again, overfed, undernourished, overstimulated. Bring 'em back to themselves.

You know, John F. Kennedy, our president in his inaugural address in 1961, he asked us that question. I wasn't born yet, but I've heard it many times, ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.

Now think about that. What if we could align children with that vision 60 years later, really serve, have them ask that question. What is purpose? How can I serve my community, my family, my world? Think of the change that can be made if we ground our children in what's real, that heart beating in their chest, that air passing through their lungs, that body they're walking around in or wheeling around in a wheelchair or however they get around ground in that reality, because the changing be made.

So, in, there's a word in Chinese called *sin*, and it's the heart as a center of human cognition. I, I just love that. And also, in Japanese heart, mind, or inner nature. So, they don't separate thinking and feeling heart, mind, the inner experience. And is that not what's fundamentally real as a human being?

And the inner experience of, of our, our thinking, our feeling, our sensation, our movement, that's where everything happens for us. It's not out there. Sounds are out occurring out there, or I should say vibrations or light's coming from outside of us. But it's ultimately, it's our processing when we're creating that every moment right now, we're creating that experience with the incredible, incredible, apparatus called the human body.

Well, it seems I'm at the end here. I'm looking forward to some questions. Um, that's my family right there. That was me and my wife Lauren, and, my son Derek, and my daughter Emma, last week for my 49th birthday. And, we call ourselves the power of four. And, um, we appreciate your present, present, compassionate and curious heart. And, if you notice underneath the power for it is parentheses 31, 12 2.

Because let's face it, we're not always present, compassionate and curious with each other.

So that is a reminder, especially my wife and I, 31 years of friendship, 12 years of marriage and two children. So that's a reminder of we're getting a little crazy here because, you know, life happens and stress happens. Um, yeah, so I really appreciate you all tuning in and listening and, um, hearing my message. And I want to thank Amanda Darbani and Colin Barry and Liz Wiley and Jessica Frank for leading me to this point.

And, um, I really appreciate, really appreciate everyone tuning in. I want to thank Stonybrook University for both my bachelor's and doctorate degree philosophy department and physical therapy. Little, little different philosophy, physical therapy. I want to thank, the Great Woods Zen community that I'm a part of now. Amazing, amazing people doing, family retreats and, um, all kinds of amazing things right on the water and beautiful acres of land in Charlotte in North Carolina.

I want to thank the, Stanford University Compassion Cultivation training program that I participated in two summers in a row in New York City, life changing and incredibly, incredibly healing for me. I learned self-compassion from the, the

program that was co-founded by his Holiness of dialogue. And I want to thank Chester County Schools is where I work right now. I work a great school district, great people. I love working with children, a lot of children with special needs. I love working at the teachers, the parents, the administrators.

It's just a wonderful experience. So, I've gone on and on and I've spoken enough. <laugh>, thank you so much.

JF: That was awesome. Yeah, I see some, some comments coming into the chat about you sharing your personal story. So, we really appreciate that now you feel confident and, um, empowered literally, to bring it forward so that other people can, um, either gain insights from it or also gain inspiration from it. I will ask you to stop the screen share on your end if you could. And I have a lot of questions that I've been writing down, and we have a couple that were, um, sent in advance, but please feel free, anyone, if you're still curious or some, or about any of the topics so far, the slides drop that into our chat.

JF: Cool. Okay. Um, so one question that I had was, how young can you be to do the R 2 E method? Is there an age range?

Well, the, the simple answer is, in order to follow the instructions, mainly, they need to be cognitively able to understand. Um, so that's kind of, it kind of varies on, you know, both age and cognitive capacity based on, you know, if they have a diagnosis. Um, but yeah, adults are the focus and getting it to the adults and then getting it to children as young as possible so that they can really reconnect with each other.

JF: Okay, yes, that makes sense. Um, what is, one question was submitted. If you could go inside a child, let's pick maybe a 10-year-old child, what is happening inside of their body, physiologically?

Sure. So, the benefits of meditation been long documented, so just causing a, a healing response, a slowing down, a more, peaceful response puts the body in a state of receptivity and, um, curiosity, which is the, the nature of children really is to be curious and, explore their environment. So, but physiologically speaking, I can speak to the muscular aspect, the postural aspect. there has been some research that has discussed something called, *myokines*, which are called hope molecules.

And when a muscle contracts, those hope molecules are released into the bloodstream and they can actually create an elevation in mood.

JF: Is that spelled M-Y-O-K-I-N-E-S,

I believe? Yep.

Okay. I'm just going put that into the chat. I don't, I haven't looked it up, but I just want to make sure I've got it in there so I can share. It looks okay. Cool. Okay. Um, is there a chronology? I don't, I didn't get that from what your presentation told me was that you can, um, kind of mix and match your practice. Mm-Hmm.

<affirmative> if you're, you might want to focus on your body, or you might want to focus on your mind, or you might want to focus on your breath, but you can kind of pick and choose. So it's not like, step one is this, step two, is this, step three is this and never deviate. Is that fair?

Yeah, it's, I mean, it's, it's like the flow of life. We're kind of in the middle of this thing, so whatever works in the moment, but at the same time, I think it works best when the core or the postural muscles are engaged first, that way that's set, then the breath follows and the thought goes along with the three.

Okay.

It's a way of reconnecting all three in the moment. And I feel like it, it'd be tough to do the breathing while the posture's not engaged. But again, it's, you know, I, I use this method personally with weight training, with yoga, with, you know, a lot of different activities. And it just kind of depends on where I'm at in the moment.

JF: Okay. Um, and another question. My brother has bipolar disorder and has been on his medications for most of his life. He has a son who also is experiencing some of the symptoms described in those, the tragic four basically. Um, but a lot more suicidality, depression, anxiety, um, anger and violent lashing out. Is it fair to say that you, that you have to start, what I'm guessing, guessing is start with the adult first or is there any way or time or situation where you might start with a child?

Well, let me just say this first. Um, if anyone's experiencing suicidal thoughts, there are danger to themselves, others violent behavior. I'm not suggesting avoid medication. I'm not suggesting avoid talk therapy. those are instrumental. They

were, they saved my life, to be honest with you. What I'm suggesting is there's a way, those things are being overused. I think it's kind of like one of those things where, you know, if the only tool you have is a hammer, then everything looks like a nail. So, it's like, there, there are so many other things that we've done, but if they are unstable and they require some medical intervention, pharmacological intervention by all means.

Um, but yeah, with something like that, with, with a, a, a parent and the, the child, that's something they could do together in, in tandem with other, other, other, interventions. Obviously, nothing's piecemeal. You know, we're all, there's so many different things to be done, but I'm suggesting that this is something that can help regulate children, proactively. Um, I feel the suicide prevention movement is a little bit too late if someone's suicidal. There've been, had some pretty bad mind-body habits for many, many years, and there's a way to get in there way early and be proactive about grounding us in this mind-body wellness, healing state.

JF: Okay. That's fair. Um, why is reframing productivity so important? I know you spoke to the productivity being like a real big issue. I'm going to say that our focus is less on the human experience from childhood through adulthood and into old age, but it's, it's all about, you know, success or, um, material wealth and acquiring a, acquiring, you name it, just acquiring <laugh>, right? Period. Acquiring period. Right. Um, how is that message going to get across? Like, that's a huge, huge, I would say that's a big mountain to climb. So, do you have some thoughts on that? Like, how is that going to move the needle?

I discussed that extensively in my second book to awakening the mystery of you and I. Um, so it's hard to encapsulate that now, but I, I will do my best. I mean, we, we're in love with our, with our technology. we, we, and I feel it's a big distraction, and I feel it's disconnecting children from their nature, their, their, their purpose. Um, there are wonderful, amazing ways that technology can be used and financial, resources are obviously required necessity to a certain extent.

But my question is, are those adequate measures of productivity in the sense that what are we building? Are we building, a way of progressing children towards actual progress? Or are we building, these, I love metal music, symphony of destruction. Are we creating a symphony of destruction? Are we, are we bringing all this stuff together? Are we distracted by avoiding, um, is it, is it a trauma response

to just continue to avoid our body, avoid our mind in favor of what's easy, what's convenient, what's, what's comfortable?

And, um, that's not what our country was grounded in. Con convenient comfort is grounded in a lot of sacrifice to get this country to, break away from England and establish its own nation. And, um, so again, there's a lot to it, obviously. Um, it's hard to encapsulate it here, but, it, I think it's important the question because, productivity is a word that's thrown out around a lot in, in, in, um, in business. And, my question is are, are our children doing okay?

Mm-Hmm, <affirmative> to me that's, that's true. Productivity are, are we doing okay? Are children doing okay? And are they getting what they need? Is the system providing our children with what they truly need? Or are they becoming kind of like another consumable? Scary to say, but yeah.

JF: Tell me about the mantra. Um, about, I mean, I've worked with meditation for a long time and I've been a meditation practitioner and a teacher as well. And, um, when I've also taught it, sometimes the response is, well, um, I'm not able to connect with one or I, that kind of, that's kind of real vague for me. I don't have anything hard and fast, like, what is the most beautiful word or thought or connection I have?

JF: It's very, it seems like that can be a hang-up for people. Is that, I mean, I know that that feels like it's really connected to the R 2 E method, and I also want to point out, like at times there may be a switch, like someone's got a mantra for, you know, one month and then they're going be like, oh no, this is my mantra now. It's my mantra now. Absolutely. I love this one better. Or this is my connection. Now. Can that, can you flex with that? Can you be free with that? Can that change, can that alter, can you, and how do you get past some, uh, maybe a block or a, or a lack of connection to something like a mantra or an inner guide?

Yeah, I'll, I'll answer. Those are two questions, it sounds like. So, um, absolutely flexible. I have so many different particular thoughts, sounds versus I use, and it just depends on my circumstance. It depends on where I'm at in my life. It depends on what I'm trying to accomplish. it really depends. It's really just a way of getting my thoughts back on track. that's, that's the way I look at it.

Um, to answer the other question, I've done meditation workshops where I've introduced mantra and they say, you know what? I don't really like that. I, I prefer the breath aspect because I have a tendency to overthink. And if I start thinking of mantra, then off I go, there go my thoughts. So, so whatever works, whatever's going to get you into a state of peace and focus and calm, that's what I would always suggest. I would never tell someone, no, you have to do this, you have to do that. That, again, it's about internal regulation, not external control. So, whatever's going regulate you as an individual, I'm giving, I'm providing tools, but you use them the way that you know works best for you.

JF: Okay. At the very beginning when we had the blank screen up, I closed my eyes and did the breath and drew the abdomen back. My mantra or thought was this like, global peace, like global peace, world peace, you know, it's the bumper sticker, it's a T-shirt, but it's also, you know, pretty, it would be pretty amazing <laugh>. Yeah, that's awesome. World peace. And then it was really funny 'cause the second time we did it during the middle of the presentation, it was internal. It was something I needed. It was me. I was, it was almost like, oh, my heart needs this right now.

JF: And so it's, it changed for me in the, like, the half an hour. So yeah, you need have that flexibility and, um, in your system so that you're not set or rigid with thinking or feeling or emoting or, um, rigidity with the body because rigidity with the body equates to rigidity in the mind, and nothing can happen unless there's flexibility. No change at least can happen unless there's flexibility.

Absolutely.

JF: Um, let's see. I want to know, like literally <laugh>, walk me through how you work with a school system. You're in a school district, so how can, how, how do they work with you? Do you reach out to the school district, you connect or you connect with teachers. Then do you do workshops on a monthly basis, daily basis? Are you in different grade levels? Can you speak to that?

Well, at this point I'm doing pediatric physical therapy in the district.

JF: Got it. Okay.

So, I use the R2E method in my daily practice with children. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, just working with, like children with, for example, cerebral palsy and trying to reconnect with certain muscles that they haven't used in years because of either not getting appropriate services or for whatever reason. Um, and I do a lot of breathing techniques, a lot of thought mantras, trying to reconnect with certain muscles, you know, like, I am strong. Come on, I am strong. He may hear you say it, think it, breathe it, and then, and then little by little, ooh, that muscle's starting to wake up, I'm starting to get a little bit of a connection there.

So, when the mind is in alignment, when the breath is in alignment and the muscles start to, you know, depends on where the person's at. Someone with CP is different from someone that might have an emotional issue, it, it, it aligns. It starts to align. So, yeah.

JF: All right. That makes sense. And then, um, I wanted to also ask, that triggered a question that I had what you just said. What are those, what are those big muscle groups that you had, they were abbreviated in your slide. Can you just run through those really quickly in their full words?

Absolutely. So, starting at the, the, the head and neck, it's cervical head, cervical flexor. Okay. Cervical extensor. So, it's really, it is called a chin tuck in physical therapy, capital flexor cervical extensor, right? Mm-Hmm. And it's, and it's not a forced posture. It's, it's a comfortable, you find like in yoga, they use it the edge. You find your edge, right? And then scapula thoracic moving downward below into the shoulder blade area. There's the rhomboid muscles that bring your scapula back this way.

Yep, exactly. Re retract, scapular retraction. Um, and then also lower or part of the trapezes, when you did it, you went up like this. Mm, you want to relax those upper traps. This, a lot of people hold stress up here. You want to engage the lower trap, and that requires palpation. And that's where I come in of showing, okay, you want to activate these muscles as opposed to these muscles. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>. So that scap thoracic musculature, and then lower, again, is transverse abdominis. That's the big sheet muscle that surrounds the abdomen into the spine. That's what provides that, that core.

As opposed to the, the, the, the pretty abdominals and then lower yet are the, pelvic floor muscles, you know, basically the muscles responsible for holding back urine, feces, things like that. Those are also important to engage, for a lot of reasons.

JF: Okay. Thanks for opening that up again, because we will be sending out the slides, to everybody, so they'll get a copy of the slides, but I just want to make sure they know what those stood for.

JF: How can someone set up an appointment with you? Do you see people virtually, are people able to do workshops with you online? How does that work?

It all depends on location. I could do a lot, I do a lot on Zoom, but also, I'm in the South Carolina, North Carolina area, so I, I'm willing to travel to, to different sites in Charlotte. Okay. Yep.

JF: So just go onto your website. I'll drop that into the chat.

Yeah. Viktor paul.com tells a little bit more about the big picture of my story, and, and then there's also R 2 E method.com, which goes into the actual R 2 E method. And you can contact me on both my email addresses available on both.

JF: Okay. All right. Um, let's look through my list here, see if I have any other questions for you now. Um, yeah, the family, the family unit, I, I know you work with families or together as a unit so that the information is, um, connected, made the connection between parent, child, child and parent, um, and also caregivers. If there's a caregiver in the, in the, in the household or, um, caregiver and parent.

JF: Is that the understood method rather than, I mean, I guess I'm talk now I'm talking in, in a big circle, but basically, is that primarily the way things would land in the household unit, um, as opposed to just tracking with the parent only, and do you know what I mean? That made sense? Absolutely. Yeah.

No, absolutely. The, the meditation workshops, the meditation facilitation workshops are geared more towards adults and parents. The R 2 E method is absolutely geared towards parents and children doing it together, you know, learning, learning how to use it together, regulating themselves, regulating each other, you know, developing compassionate, present, curious, foundation of their home. Really.

JF: Awesome. Okay. Cool. That just makes sense to me as well, because, yeah. Um, and um, I have this weird existential question at the end. Um, do you feel that perhaps we have started, or, or nearing or maybe even within a new paradigm shift in our culture where our current model and status quo is simply falling short of achieving any real goals, but it's actually causing more harm and it fails the majority of people.

JF: Um, would you agree with that? Do you think that's coming to fruition? Do we think that we're starting to wake up to this, or do we still think that there's a lot of people walking around and un disconnected? I'll use that word, because that's a big word in your field. Yeah, yeah. Disconnected, or do we think that we're starting to head in the right direction? Is the compass beginning to swing towards wellbeing?

I, I believe so. Um, Eckhart Tolle wrote a great book, and he discussed many years ago called something called the Flowering of Consciousness. And I believe that many people are waking up to this. There are still many that are asleep. Um, but either it's going to be changed by those who are awakening or those who are not, will be forced to change because they'll have no other choice. Hmm. I think this, the system, the way it's going is just a need.

It requires, it requires change. Yeah. It can happen one or the other, whether we're in control of it or not, something we'll create it.

JF: Okay. I like that answer. I think that's a great place to, to, yeah. Leon, I'm going bring out Leon <laugh>. Hi, hand raise. Go for it.

First of all, Viktor, thank you. Um, Viktor and I know each other personally. I've read both of his books. They're phenomenal. If you haven't read 'em, read 'em. Um, but getting to that last question, Viktor knows my story. My daughter suffers from anxiety, depression. She's been hospitalized for suicidal ideologies eight times, I believe. Um, and one thing I learned, and Viktor you touched on it, is as a parent, I didn't listen and I over the blame part of this whole scenario, but my daughter was 95 pounds.

She was about five foot five, and she thought she was obese. And I took it as, eh, it's a girl. They're always thinking this. Didn't really understand what she was saying to

me. Yeah. So, you know, Viktor knows I've started parental support groups when I lived on Long Island. Now I'm in the Carolinas as well, and I'm going, Viktor and I are going to be working together.

Um, but as far as what you were asking about how our society looks at it, I'm trying to get my daughter a test to check, to test something. Not one doctor takes our insurance and these tests are going to cost me out of pocket about \$9,000. And there is no way around it. But her therapist thinks she needs to have this test done, some sort of brain scan. I am not a doctor I don't want, and we need to bring this to the forefront. Viktor and I have talked about it numerous, numerous times. You know, I can't afford to test get my daughter tested, and that's sad.

And if I can't afford it, how many other PA families can't afford it? Yeah. And we need to bring this to the forefront. So, Viktor, thank you for doing what you're doing. You know, you know, I respect the hell outta you. Excuse my language people, but I'm a New Yorker <laugh>. Um, and I love the work you're doing. I just really wanted to get on there before the end of this and, and thank Viktor for sharing his story. 'cause it's his story, not a doctor writing the book. And you are a doctor, but you know what I mean. Um, yeah.

Two different things going on. Yep. <laugh>. Yep.

Um, and it's helped me help my daughter, which is huge. So thank you again, Viktor. Um, I can go on and on and I won't do that to you, Jessica. <laugh> <laugh>.

JF: Well, actually, um, since we're right around our time in a moment, I'll stop the recording if anybody else wants to come on and, um, stay hi or say something to Viktor, we can do that. But we'll just close out the recording now. I just want to say thanks to everybody who joined today, and again, we'll have this information sent out to you, within a week. And, please go onto the Marion Institute website and, click and like, and share and do all the things you need to do in order to get this message out. So, all right, I'll stop the recording.

Resources:

<https://viktorpaul.com/>

<https://r2emethod.com/>

###

Any medical information contained herein is provided for informational purposes only; it is not advice, nor should it be treated as such. If you have any healthcare-related concerns, please call or see your physician or other qualified healthcare provider. Educational information provided by the Marion Institute, any employee of the Marion Institute, or its guest presenters is NOT intended as a substitute for a healthcare provider's consultation. If you have a health concern, please do not delay in seeking medical guidance from a health care professional. The Marion Institute, its employees, and its guest presenters make no representations, nor any warranties, nor assume any liability for the content herein; nor do we endorse any particular product, provider, or service.