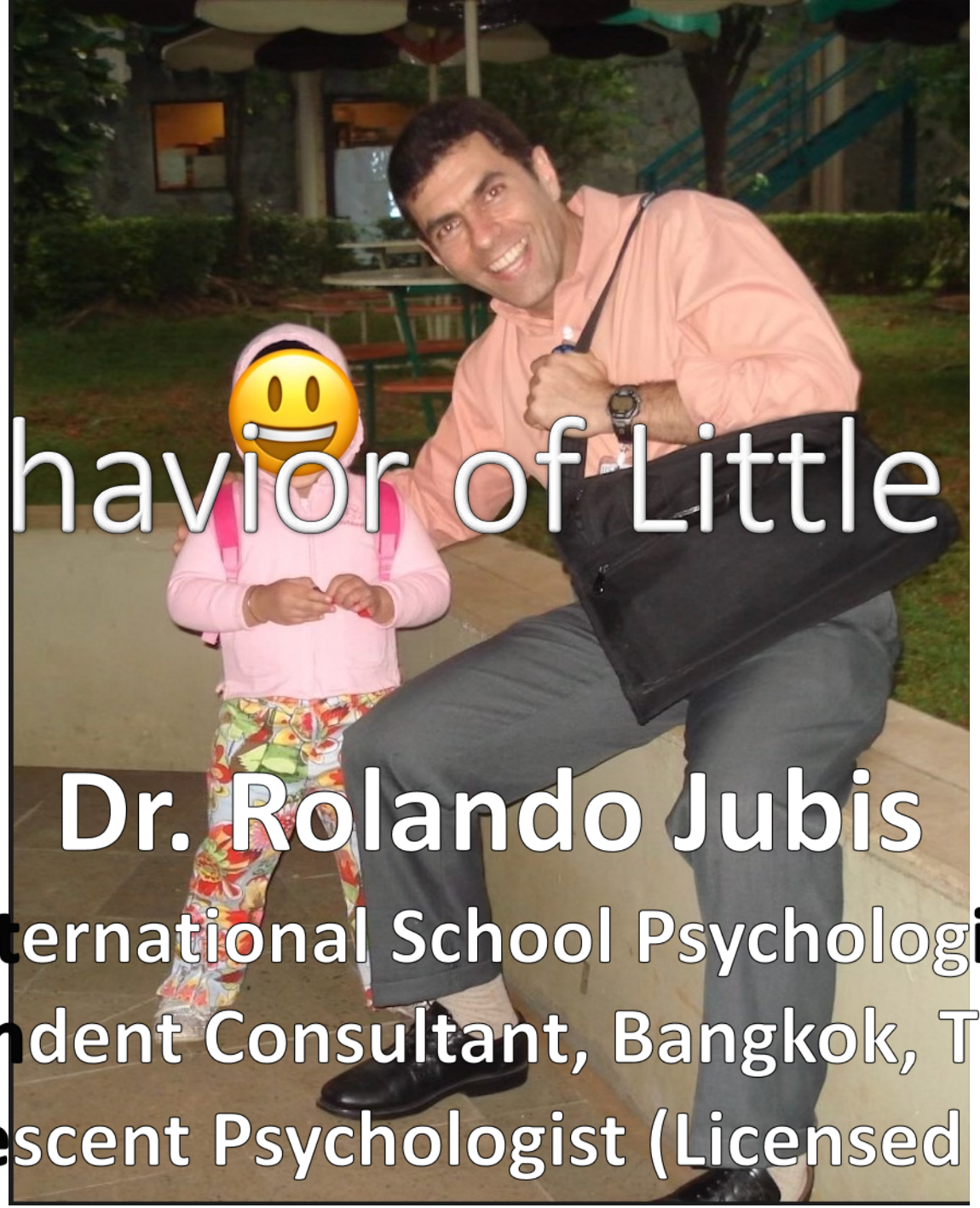
The Behavior of Little People



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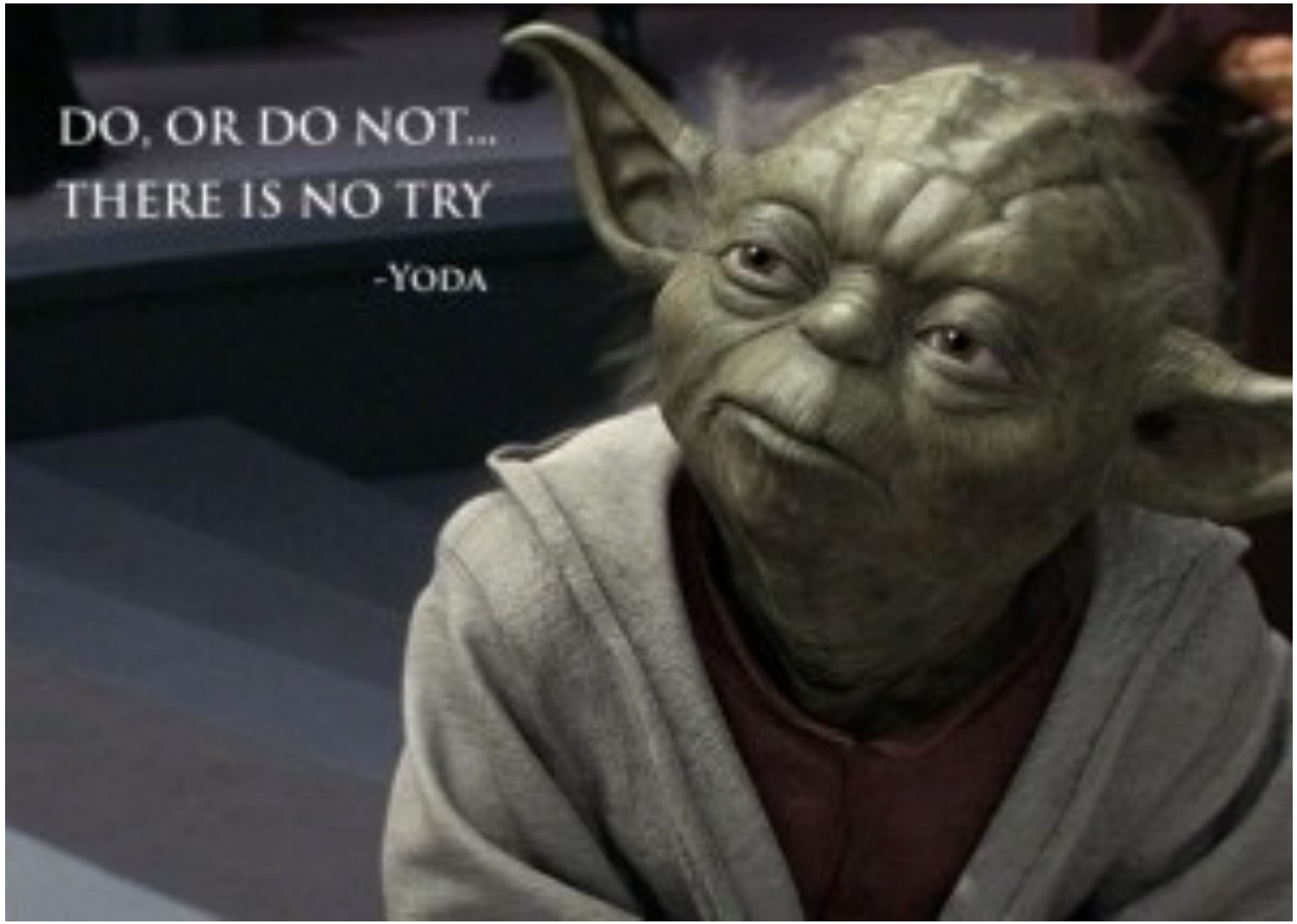
GOAL for today

Can we enhance parent **skills** for addressing child needs and managing behavior?


DO, OR DO NOT...
THERE IS NO TRY
-YODA

- **MAIN IDEA**
  Parent as….
  - Detective
  - Scientist
  - Problem solver

YOUR TOOLS AS AN EXPERT

- EYES
- EARS
- TOUCH
- INTUITION / FEELINGS
- THINKING SKILLS

BEHAVIOR?

- What we do.
- Relative in time.

1 second, 1 minute, 1 year…

- SERVES A PURPOSE (not necessarily conscious or aware of it)

WHY…

(PURPOSES OF BEHAVIOR)

- Meeting a physical need (hunger, thirst, nutrition imbalance, temperature regulation, sleep, elimination, etc.)
- Seeking balance in a body system (Gastro, circulatory, etc.).
- Coping with overwhelming environmental stimuli
- Responding to changes in expected routines or in the environment
- Seeking stimulation
- Seeking mastery
- Seeking interpersonal interaction
- Coping with Emotions – dissapointment, fear, anxiety

MANAGING EMOTIONS

- Anxiety – seeking control, predictability, security
- Fear – abandonment, injury, loss, failure
- Frustration/Anger – dissipating emotion, calming
- Sadness/Despair/Grief – impoving mood

What strategies do we use to cope with emotions?

- Escape from situation
- Seek a comforting location, activity, person, thoughts, etc.
- Engage with others
- Come up with a plan for future experiences – requires restraint
- Use internal or external language to manage

How we shape our children’s behaviors

Our superpowers as parents/teachers to coach children to build skills

1) Fixing our eyes on someone or a behavior
2) Responding with actions
3) Ignoring,
4) giving them time to work through their feelings on their own
5) Showing a (strong) reaction (emotionally)
6) Touching, holding, grabbing, hitting
7) Responding with words/sounds

LANGUAGE…

1) How many words?
2) Emotional tone
3) Clear message
4) Say what you want to see

How do you know what the PURPOSE of each behavior is?

- Detective work – observe analyze
- Scientist – hypothesis testing, take time, trial and error, revise hyp.
- Teamwork with other parent and consulting peers and specialists
- Stay practical – we may not understand every behavior but if we find a way to help our child, then we succeeded.

example

- ANGER then SADNESS/GRIEF – Provide nurturing at stage of sadness
- but careful at stage of Aggression lest we reinforce it.

What gets in our way the most?

1) Emotions

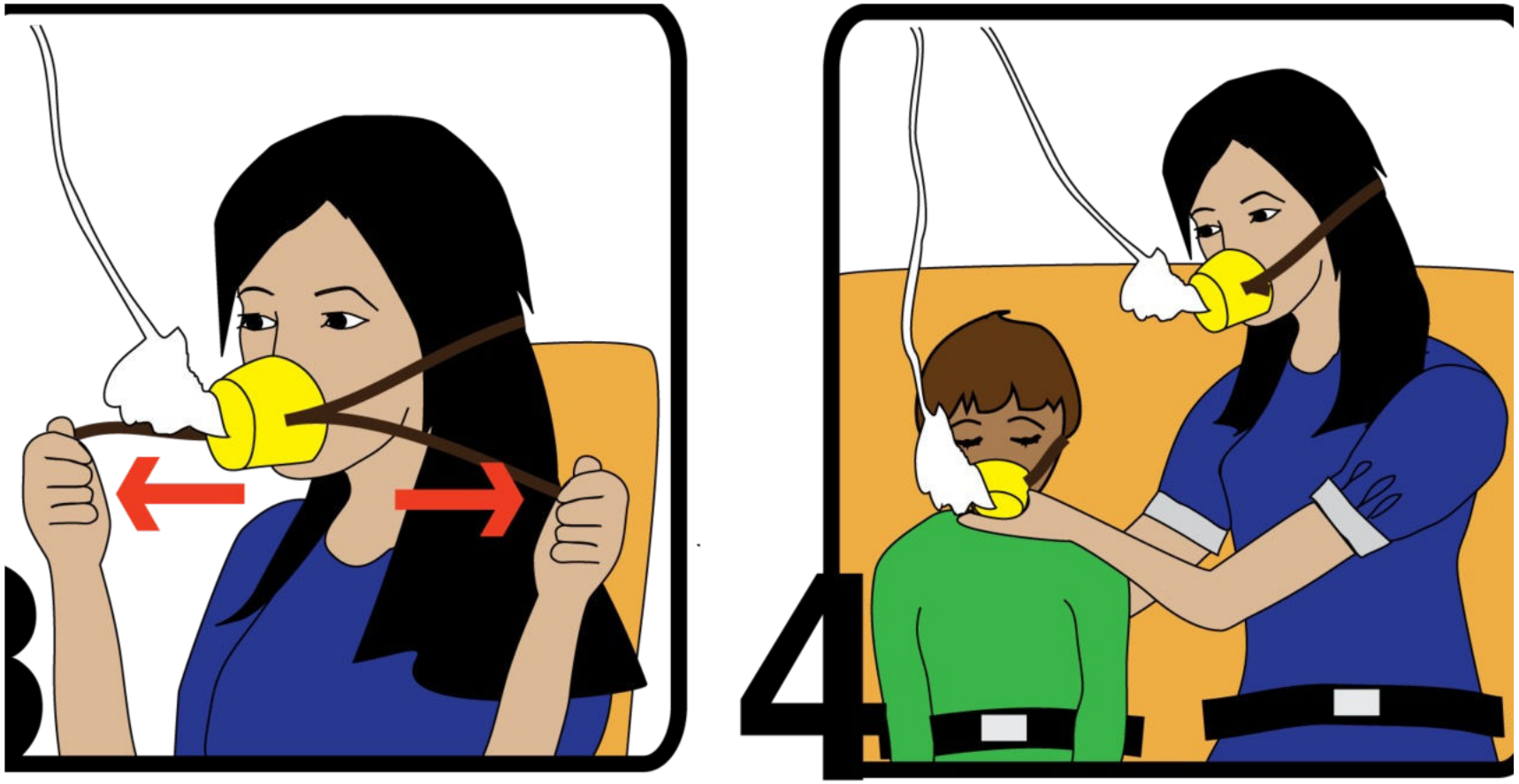
2) Anxiety,

3) Anger

4) Guilt

5) Grief

6) Trauma

They can push our buttons…

Take care of **yourself** so you can take care of them