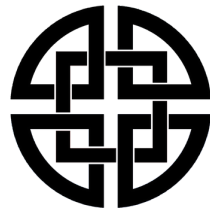


STUDIO VIA - SCHOOL OF DANCE

# DANCE PARENT 101

Tips, Ideas, Lessons and Coaching



**STUDIOVIA**  
*School of Dance*

## COVENANTS

Over the course of 10 years in business I have developed the “Studio VIA Covenants”. The covenants have 18 words and statements that are important characteristics for success in dance (and life).

Each week we talk about one of the covenants and focus on the “Bold Words”. Before we start dancing we talk about how in class we demonstrate that specific characteristic. We then talk about the results of these actions. (EX. RESPECT: What would a dancer look like who is being respectful? What would a dancer look like who is NOT being respectful? How will each of these dancers have a different experience in class today? How will each of these dancers have a different experience on stage at the end of the season?)

When a dancer is unfocused, distracting others or not working hard, I refer to the covenants for correction. (EX. Are you showing your classmate you respect their time? Are you showing your teacher you respect the material they are giving you? Etc.)

I also refer to these covenants to increase their work ethic, teach them to be coachable, and to persevere through higher demands as they get older and more advanced in their training. The ultimate goal of our covenants is through dance training, coach the kids to have a positive mindset that they can take with them the rest of their lives.



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# COVENANTS

1. We seek **RESPECT**, not attention. We show we respect ourselves, our teammates, our teachers, our studio, and our art through our actions and our words.
2. We are **FOCUSED** when we step into the studio and remove the clutter, outside pressures and distractions from our lives. We are in control of our emotions and are disciplined enough to stay physically and mentally in the moment at every rehearsal.
3. We are **DISCIPLINED** and we do what is right for our team, our studio and for the honor of our art regardless of what others are doing. We are not blindly obedient but have the inner strength to reject pressure that violates our performance standards. Discipline is not a punishment but a positive expectation of our team culture.
4. We are fully **COMMITTED** to our teammates, our teachers, our studio and ourselves. Our commitment is voluntary and our teammates can count on us no matter what – absolutely unconditionally. We are committed to continuous improvement and finishing what we start.
5. We have **PASSION** and love for dance, performance and competitions. We share our passion of dance with our words, actions and examples through positive attitudes every day. We celebrate with our team and not against our opponents.
6. We are **LOYAL** to Studio VIA, our team and our teachers. We always stay true to the place that gave us our dance family and will fearlessly defend our teammates, our teachers and our studio.
7. We are **HONEST**, have moral courage and compete ethically because we uphold the reputation of Studio VIA in the dance community. We are morally tough enough to confront actions that violates our team covenants without hurt feelings because we know we are challenging our teammates to be better.
8. We are **MENTALLY TOUGH** and are not afraid to be challenged. We quickly learn and recover from mistakes and ask questions when we don't understand. We will face more talented dancers, but we are more prepared because we are mentally tough and ready to compete.
9. We have a strong **WORK ETHIC** and accept full responsibility for our own fate. We are willing to submit ourselves to physically demanding work and reject the idea that forces outside our control determine our results.



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# COVENANTS

10. We are **COACHABLE** and take correction as a compliment. We have enough inner confidence to not feel criticized or singled out and look at correction as an opportunity to improve.

11. We are **SELFLESS** and we put the needs of the team ahead of our own. We give up on a quest for individual glory and commit ourselves fully to the group effort. We are inclusive and not exclusive. We have more love for our team than for ourselves

12. We are **LEADERS** who lead by example on and off the stage. We choose to do what is right rather than what is popular.

13. We are **CONFIDENT** because we are successful due to our preparation. We display quiet inner confidence based on our focused, specific and efficient rehearsals.

14. We are **MOTIVATED** daily to have intentional intense practice. We motivate ourselves and our teammates with our desire for success and passion for dance.

15. We our dancers of **INTEGRITY**. Our 'yes' means 'yes'; our 'no' means 'no'; our word is good, our handshake seals the deal and our signature has value. Our choices are not always easy but they are simple.

16. We **PERSEVERE** in the face of adversity. We maintain purpose in spite of difficulty and learn to come back stronger. Failing doesn't make us a failure, it gives us an opportunity to learn and grow.

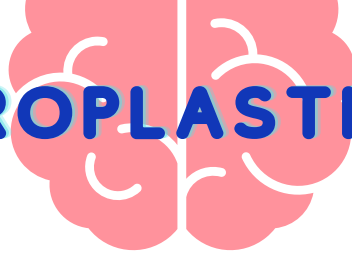
17. We are **PRESENT** at every rehearsal. We keep our minds on current tasks and do not stay with past mistakes or future concerns.

18. We are **ACCOUNTABLE** and take full responsibility for our choices and actions. We think before we act and look to ourselves when things don't go our way. Excuses transfer responsibility and weakens our work ethic. We choose to keep our word and honor our commitments.

WE VOLUNTARILY COMMIT TO THESE COVENANTS FOR THE LOVE OF OUR TEAM AND THE RESPECT OF STUDIO VIA.



# NEUROPLASTICITY



Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change and grow throughout a person's life. It is also the science behind growth mindset and the reason we can develop skills and knowledge through effort, practice and persistence.

Like a physical muscle, the brain gets stronger the more it is used. The brain is a "pattern-seeking" device. When the neurons in your brain are activated in a particular pattern, it's faster and easier for your brain to follow the same pattern in the future. This means when you use your brain to complete a task, the brain "remembers" the task and the next time it becomes a little easier.

As kids develop "habits" and create their own viewpoints through their life experiences, we want them to develop positive, healthy thoughts and reactions. It is important that kids understand they have power over their brain and they can choose their reaction. For example, if a child has a negative attitude when faced with challenge and the attitude goes uncorrected, they are more likely to continue to have that same reaction when faced with a challenge. This will eventually develop into a pessimistic personality and negative outlook that becomes habitual. Even if a child starts with a negative attitude, but is coached to choose a positive attitude they can retrain "how" they approach challenge. Through continued practice they can develop an optimistic and healthy outlook on challenge which will ultimately lead to improved emotional health and more success in their future.

The bottom line is our brains aren't static. Through repeated practice and continual challenges, we can build pathways that make our brains stronger, smarter and healthier.

When children understand their brains are capable of changing and reshaping, their perception of their own abilities also changes in a positive direction. It becomes much easier for them to understand growth mindset and embrace mistakes, obstacles and challenges as exercise for their brains.

## **HOW TO EXPLAIN NEUROPLASTICITY TO YOUR CHILD:**

When you were born, your brain came with neurons – a type of tiny cell. When you learn things, your brain sends messages from one neuron to another. If you do the same thing enough times, your brain eventually makes a connection (or path) between the neurons. (Think of it like a dot-to-dot picture. Your baby brain just had dots floating around and your experiences made them connect. When you learned to say "bottle" two dots connected. The more you said "bottle" the darker the line got between the dots) This makes activities easier and you can do them quicker and better.

Sometimes we build pathways between dots that aren't the most positive. When we are challenged by something and find it easier to give up. Or when we are told we aren't doing something correctly, we get angry and pout. If we keep doing those actions the line between those dots in our brains gets stronger and we create a habit that is negative. Usually these negative habits lead to negative emotions (we get jealous of others that do things right, we get angry at ourselves when we can't do something we gave up on)

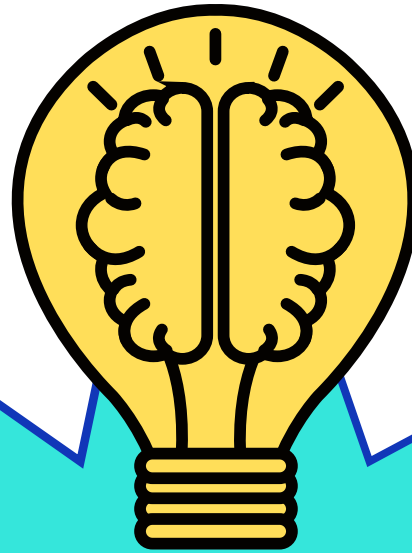
The cool thing is our brain has an eraser and we can erase those lines between the dots if we decide to use it! The darker the line, the harder it is to erase but then we can make new lines with better healthier choices.



They LOVE  
to learn

They keep  
trying until  
they succeed.

They know  
progress  
takes time.



They learn  
from  
feedback.

They ask  
for help.

WHAT HAPPENS  
WHEN SOMEONE  
HAS A GROWTH  
MINDSET?

They put  
forth  
effort

They get  
inspired by  
others.

They view  
mistakes as  
opportunities

They LOVE  
new  
challenges

They are  
not afraid  
to fail.

# PARENT GUIDE

## To Growth Mindset

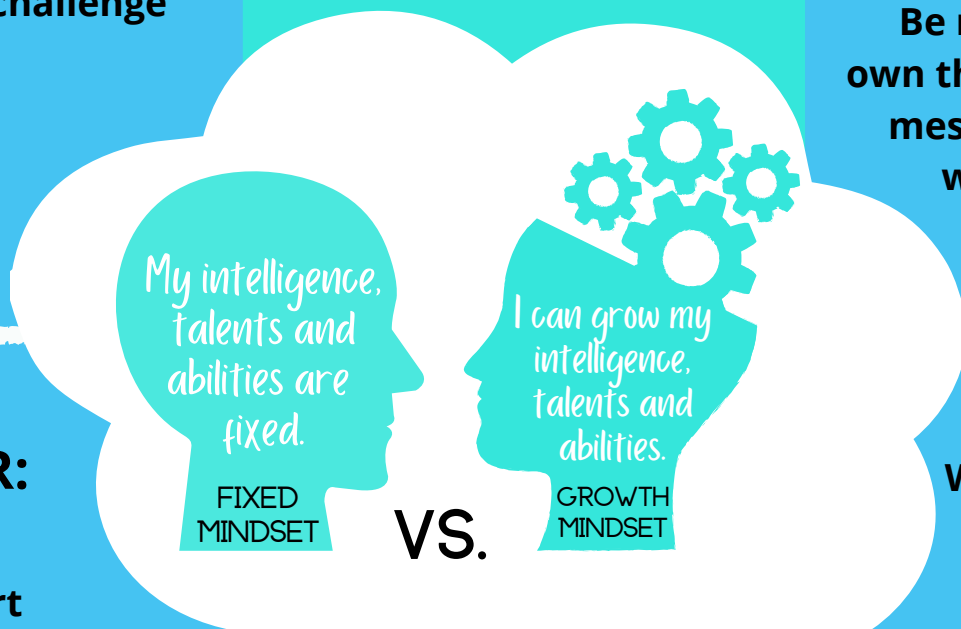
YOUR BRAIN IS LIKE A MUSCLE. WHEN YOU LEARN, YOUR BRAIN GROWS.  
THE FEELING OF IT BEING HARD IS THE FEELING OF YOUR BRAIN GROWING!

### PRAISE FOR:

Learning from mistakes  
Rising to a challenge  
Effort  
Progress  
Hard Work  
Persistence

### NOT FOR:

Talent  
Being smart  
Born gifts  
Fixed abilities  
Not making mistakes



VS.

**FAILURES AND  
MISTAKES = LEARNING**

### RECOGNIZE

### YOUR MINDSET:

Be mindful of your own thinking and the messages you send with your words and actions.

### ASK:

What did you do today that was hard?

What mistake did you make that taught you something?

### THE POWER OF "YET"

You can't do it YET  
You don't know YET  
If you learn and practice, you will.

### SAY:

Mistakes help you improve  
You can learn from your mistakes  
Let's see what other strategies you can try.