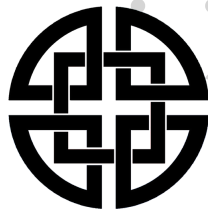


STUDIO VIA - SCHOOL OF DANCE

DANCE PARENT 101

Tips, Ideas, Lessons and Coaching



STUDIOVIA
School of Dance

WEEK 4: FOCUS

COVENANT:

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.

QUOTE:

"Focus on the step in front of you, not the entire staircase!"

IN THE CLASSROOM:

This week we will talk about focus. For a dancer to be fully engaged in dance class they must be able to shut off any extra and unnecessary thoughts when they walk in the door. A lot happens in a day before they come to the studio, but all those extra thoughts only distract them from achieving their full potential in class. I tell the dancers to "leave it at the door" and get in the habit of switching off their extra "stuff" when they walk through the studio door. They can't study for a test while in class, so don't worry about it. They can't write a paper when they are in class, so don't worry about it. They can't solve the argument they had with a parent during class, so don't worry about it. The extra stress and negative emotions from all the extra stuff only leads to more stress in the dance studio and lack of focus.

Second we are going to talk about staying fully engaged in class for the entire duration. When your body gets tired and your brain is full of dance steps, it is easy to start to lose focus. Maintaining focus during long rehearsals is also a skill that needs to be practiced. I will be encouraging the dancers to take inventory of their brain near the end of rehearsal and have them check in with their thoughts. Are they still fully engaged with the material and paying attention to detail or are they going through the motions and not making the most of practice?

HOME EXTENSION:

Focus goes beyond the dance studio in everything we do! Help your dancer identify how often they lose focus on daily tasks and bring awareness to it. When doing lists of chores or homework have them start with the thing they don't want to do first so it gets done right away.



HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD STOP COMPARING THEMSELVE TO OTHERS

Many children focus on their peers instead of themselves and their own progress. As a result, their self-esteem can suffer a LOT! Explain to your child there will always be someone worse or better than them at things at any given moment. And it doesn't matter one bit.

There's no reason to compare ourselves with others because **FIRST**, our accomplishments and results do not make us more or less valuable or important. We're all equally worthy of love, attention and kindness just because we were born. It doesn't matter who is better or worse - we're all equally worthy human beings.

And **SECOND**, in order to grow, we need to focus on building our **OWN** skills and getting better rather than competing with others. You can say: "Our personal growth and learning are always about us and no one else. You might not be the best and that's okay. The important thing is you are better than you were last time!"

To help your child focus on their own progress, you can ask: "Can you think of something you can do now that you couldn't do last year? How do you feel you did compared to last time? Did you make progress?"

The more we encourage children to focus on **THEIR** own progress and wins, the less they'll compare themselves to their friends or others they see in the media.



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THE POWER OF LISTS!

Everyone has those days when you can't seem to turn your brain off. Whether it is during dance class or right before you go to sleep, your brain keeps going and going. One thing I found helpful was to make a list of everything I was thinking about and take care of it in the morning. The minute I wrote it down, it went out of my brain. Have your dancer write a list of things that can distract them during class and all the things they need to "LEAVE AT THE DOOR".