

Real Talk for Real Teachers Episode #19 - Navigating Lockdowns from Dr. Becky Bailey's Perspective

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SUMMARY

Dr. Becky Bailey discusses the importance of integrating self-regulation and emotional management into active shooter drills and lockdown procedures in schools. She emphasizes a shift from traditional discipline methods based on fear and punishment to a model that promotes self-regulation and communication, ensuring that both educators and students can manage their emotions during crises.

- *Conscious Discipline is a trauma-informed program that combines social-emotional learning with self-regulation techniques.*
- *Effective lockdown procedures should include teaching physical actions, self-regulation strategies, and clear communication.*
- *Self-regulation is crucial for managing stress responses during emergencies, allowing for better emotional control.*
- *Misbehavior should be viewed as a form of communication rather than disrespect, prompting educators to teach missing skills.*
- *Drills should prepare students without traumatizing them, focusing on procedures and emotional support rather than fear-inducing simulations.*
- *After a drill, it's important to debrief, express gratitude, and engage in activities that promote positive emotions and connection.*
- *The goal is to create a supportive school culture that prioritizes emotional well-being and effective communication.*
- *Educators are encouraged to start implementing these practices immediately, both in drills and everyday interactions.*

[Music] welcome to real talk for real teachers I'm dr. Becky bagel the creator of conscious discipline expert in education child development a lifelong teacher and learner for those listening who are not aware of conscious discipline it is a comprehensive trauma-informed self-regulation program that integrates social-emotional learning school culture

and discipline conscious discipline is a brain based program that helps educators use current neuroscience understanding in regard to the impact of stress and trauma on learning it provides the seven powers for conscious adults to help teachers regulate their emotions enough to see conflict differently and the seven basic skills of discipline that our --power teachers to respond to conflict and upset in a way that instills life skills in

children so what are real teachers real teachers are just

that real people real teachers are dedicated compassionate people often overlooked by our society not just in pay but in gratitude real teachers watch legislators at all levels of government point out how our system is broken and failing real teachers listen as non teachers tell us how we need to teach what we need to teach and how well we are doing it and yet real teachers get up day after day and serve children and families in our societies with an open

heart and open mind well folks today in this podcast you get me so I am my own guest speaker and I'm going to be talking to you about what I think we need to do for active shooter drills and lock downs we've heard already the perspective of a principal in the podcast number one we heard the perspective of teachers in podcast number two about this situation and we've heard from a parent and from a child in podcast three so now I'm here

to add a little something to all that and sum it up for us all so basically we can say there's three phases that we need to address in regard to a lockdown it's before it ever happens during its happening and after it has occurred so those three phases are essential that we address and I'm going to address them each separately as we move forward so at each phase of a lockdown we have three things to consider one teaching the

physical procedures where do I walk what do I do where do I lay on the floor what can I say what can I not say to some way to self-regulate breathing inner speech talk how do we help manage ourselves in this situation so that we don't allow our stress response to take over and make it impossible to recover from three communication what communication can be given back and forth can I share any

information certainly in phase one you can share a lot of information you can answer a lot of what-if questions you can say what we're going to do this you can teach the procedures everyone will we will cover the window with piece of paper lights will go out I will get my cell phone you will lay over here so you can be very specific I encourage you to use those in visuals and have a visual routine this is what we will do so that

every child even children with autism children with ADHD they can embed that information into their mind then we're going to have some self-regulation at each stage of the game the first one is you're going to teach everyone before you even just when school starts that when someone is in distress when you're in distress when you see a friend in distress you're going to be a star and wish well before we go on we need to truly understand that we are genetically

wired to survive when the survival system is activated the higher centers of the brain just shut down they're not needed all reasoning goes out the window what happens is we shift down to the lower centers of our brain and in order to truly manage these lockdowns we also somehow must know how to come from the lower centers of our bring back up to the higher centers of our brain so that learning can continue

in the educational system and this process of going from the lower centers to the higher centers our brain is called self-regulation all phases before during and after of competent lockdowns require knowing the procedures and how to self-regulate we typically focus just on the procedures themselves have you've heard people mention and that's not enough we can't just say let's practice the procedure here's how we go through it you're going to cover your window and

then you're going to lay down so no one can see you and etc etc we need way more we must do more and we can do more we don't have to wait for gun laws more metal detectors funding for security we can do this now right this very minute now self-regulation is the ability to self-regulate your thoughts feelings and actions in service of a goal all of us need to upgrade this skill if you're like me just try to eat better and

exercise more or work less and see how quickly you sabotage those goals because your thoughts get crazy or your feelings get out of hand think of the number of people in our country that suffer from anxiety disorders and depression those are lack of self-regulation skills and then think about the number of people who are impacted just from domestic violence 20 people per minute in the

United States and one in three women have experienced abuse at the hands of someone that said I love you so it's time it's not just for the lock down it's not just for this it's time in our world that we all shift shift from obedience and compliance to teaching children how to self-regulate and be wise and in order to do that again we must upgrade our skill set so before we

even can move forward into what we do in each phase of these lock downs let's think of what it's going to take for all of us we need to ask ourselves and answer honestly as possible are we as a country are you as a person willing to shift your discipline from an external rewards and Punishment model to a comprehensive self-regulation model or are we so invested in externally controlling

others that we can't imagine how we could control herself just because it's never been seen before us the problem with punishment is not that I have any argument pro or con it's just that it doesn't work and the reason it doesn't work is because it relies on fear and what happens with fear is that throws you down into the lower centers of your brain which work on conditioned habits so as we rely on fear we throw

them down into part of the brainstem that's just gonna have them repeat this process where we will act more like actually animals I mean we have in the lower centers our brain we're very similar to our animal kingdom when we rely on external controls like rewards and punishments we are really relying on fear fear to manage other people and when you rely on fear you need credible levels of threats and we know this for some kids a level of threat is I'm gonna

send you to timeout and they're like oh no no no no no no nothing just keep loving me for some kids who've been abandoned and have a harder start in life we can say I'm going to kick you out of school okay fine I'm gonna take away everything you have fine I'm gonna call your parents please do that so some kids their level of credible threat now becomes police officers so if we continue on this march down this notion

that we must rely on fear to control ourselves and other people ultimately we're going to end up with a credible level of threat police officers not just at every school police officers in every classroom police officers with every child you can see that as we can Jr this path it's going to end up in sabotaging our culture so what we want to do is start using a practice that brings them up to the higher centers

their brain and once we get them to the higher centers of the brain we can actually teach a new skill so when this situation happens again you know what to do now you can't just teach it once because that would be like saying okay here's how you spell cat C A T you got that moving on you have to do it over and over and over until the child actually gets the skill so instead of pushing I say move please instead of

hitting when I'm angry I take a deep breath and then say move please so we can do this and it's an essential part of all of school so are you willing asked yourself can you shift from external controls to building these internal controls called self-regulation that we learn how to manage our own selves our own thoughts our own feelings and our own behaviors can we make that shift second we need to change how we view misbehavior I mean right now for

the most of us it's like misbehavior is some kind of disrespect you know they're being disobedient they're trying to make my day hard they're just being disrespectful little heathens and when we do that we miss what they're telling us because all behavior is some form of communication and we know that with babies I mean little baby reaches their arms up and we go you want me to pick you up and the baby goes oh you want

your diaper change but when they come to and they stomp their feet and fold their arms and go no all of a sudden there are heathen and disrespectful as opposed to a child who has not yet learned how to handle the frustration of God getting what you want so we must shift from relying on these external controls to building these internal controls we must shift from viewing misbehavior as disrespect to seeing as yet a form of

communication and a call for help that way we can reach our most difficult children at a young age and set their course into a better trajectory to live amongst us in society in a helpful way so those are the two big questions each of us must ask ourselves can we shift from relying on fear to a reliance on love now bad love I don't mean an emotion I mean I am willing to bring the best of myself to each

situation in other words I can manage my emotions enough so I can show up as a helpful coach for you as a helpful adult as an adult ready to negotiate problem-solve and move forward in life you have to ask that second are you willing are you willing to see misbehavior all behavior is some form of communication and misbehavior would be a call for help and can we see it as oh what skill is that child missing are

they having trouble handling anger frustration disappointment and think of the skill in terms of managing emotions if so then we've got a good shot at how to handle a beautiful very safe active shooter drill and lockdown in your school now for some of district leaders are for some schools there's this talk and discussion about making the drills more realistic like a true simulation where they have gun shots firing and

blood and smoke and stuff just remember how the brain works the more in danger do you feel the more scarier things become the more you feel hopeless helpless to do anything the more you're setting our children up to be traumatized in school now trauma means that you've overloaded my circuit capacity now again that would be child specific so some children have come to school with different sorts of trauma to

begin with and now we've added trauma to them where they feel helpless and hopeless some kids come and they can go oh wow we just had a simulation they had a couple of guns fire and yoohoo yoohoo so you have to be very careful that what our practices do meets the needs of all children that walk into our building and with 70% of all people in the United States experiencing some trauma I think it's better that we use a practice that

prepares them for the worst but doesn't have them experience the worst before it happens now let's take that big picture and move it down to some specifics so what are we going to do before the drill well we need to practice the procedures we need to infuse self-regulation into all parts of our school culture in our classroom culture and that's what conscious discipline goal is to change that culture in that climate so that

problems are solvable when we rely on punishment problems are never soluble they're only hidden from view and we can't infuse this into our schools through books and literature and puppets in a little video we have to truly change our minds and our skill set and so we're going to start right now before you do anything else teach everyone in your school we call it be a star which stands for smile take a deep breath and

relax so we're going to be a star and wish well wish well means I'm going to open my heart and send loving energy through me to everyone in front of me so the first thing you're going to do before this drill ever happens right when school starts as anyone who finds themselves in a state of distress everyone in the school is going to learn to breathe be a star and wish them well now that we do before we ever talk about

fire drills any drill any procedure that's just the first thing so if you're a teacher you teach this to your class Dylan's having a hard time reading let's be a star and wish him well Mattia is upset because she forgot her lunch money let's be a star and wish her well as parents we teach our children to do this for our siblings or for ourselves oh my gosh I forgot the car keys I can't believe it

alright come on come on family let's all breathe and be a star and wish each other well I need some help in calming down if you're a teacher at the school you do it for your coworkers miss Abel is irritated beyond what we can even imagine so let's all breathe and wish her well or the district has just down a horrible piece of information that you think oh no not more paperwork please no more paperwork and you're

gonna breathe in which district leaders well and by doing so we keep the climate calm but we're also training children when life doesn't go your way when you feel distress what's the first thing you do breathe and wish well so when you're in a lockdown what are we going to do breathe and wish each other well you're teaching a skill they can use during a lockdown as well as teaching them procedures of how to do it now let's

focus on the phase of during the lockdown again we're focusing on procedures self regulation and communication so during the lockdown procedures what are the procedures you don't want your cell phone on because it'll light up and maybe a shooter could see the light and aim at that so your specific school procedures I can't go over those because they're specific to each classroom how many windows you have etc but you go over those you practice them you practice them and then

self-regulation what do we do to self-regulate during a lockdown well certainly you as a teacher can lead them in deep breathing you also need to teach them how to manage their inner thoughts just as you need to manage your inner thoughts and one thing we offer in conscious discipline is called active calming and it asked you to replace that oh my gosh what are we gonna do I don't know what to do I'm all that in your

head with I'm safe keep breathing I can handle this I'm safe keep breathing I can handle this and teach the children you're safe keep breathing you can handle this and I want you to all do this as adults I want you to just kind of put your fingers your thumbs on your chest and go my state and I want you to stick those fingers out go dictates your state my

state dictates the state of my children so this is essential that we do this first as they say on the airplane put your oxygen mask on first but the children as you've heard through all the podcasts are watching your face they're watching your non-for they're watching your reflection of your interstate on your body so you can't fake this I'm safe keep breathing I can handle this and also keep your eye on certain children that might need an

extra assistance during this time you watch their nonverbal language you watch their face and their face will tell you their interstate and their eyes so watch carefully move yourself closer those kids who need extra assistance are put them by someone who can self-regulate better so they're constantly calming down turning off the fight-or-flight response in their body so in case something else comes up you'll be wise enough to make the best next move and you want to in this phase to

communicate to students all information that you can share if you know that it's a loose bank robber who just ran through your parking lot that they've captured you need to share this with your students so the more information that you can give them the lower their anxiety will be anxiety comes out in these questions what if what if what if what if and the message of anxiety says get more information you don't know enough so the more you can share the

better for all now in the after it's over it's over now theoretically we've got to get these kids back to class safe enough to start learning either that day or the next day or at least the next week they need to get back to the point where they are not in a trauma state where they can actually move past this experience and integrate it and that requires a four-part process one you get back to the classroom and you're going

to start with some deep breathing together let's all just take a few deep breaths now that was very scary it's over now it's over let's just take a few deep breaths then you're gonna do debriefing and you're gonna start with how was that for you what was your experience and you need to share yours - mine was I was very scared so I calmed

myself down so I could remember to take the keys and my phone and whatever I

needed so that I could guide you so I was constantly calming myself down but I did feel my level of anxiety and fear come up but I quickly managed it so I could keep you all safe what was your experience also as you finish this debriefing time end it with some gratitudes boy I'm grateful that that was just a drill I'm grateful that I sat next to Robert because he was just such a calming influence I'm grateful

that I had got to text my mother and she texted me back I am so grateful that the teacher kept us breathing and her face was soothing so we knew that we were safe so in that debriefing with some gratitudes three now it's time to dance sing move so that sounds funny but you've got to get some energy moving and you've got to upgrade into a higher part of the brain so you need to generate some semblance of positive emotions if

possible so you do some moving some dancing and have the children turn face to face now maybe the little ones in pre cake aren't practiced enough to do that but as you get older they can turn face to face and someone if you're in conscious discipline you'd have a school family song you're used to doing this so the kids need to get up and connect move and sing then and all that with some deep breathing again so after you sang

and carried on and then have everyone sit down take some more deep breaths and then try introducing some light playful interactive work some kind of review a fun game to review something don't try to add new information let's just review so those are your steps those are your steps for each phase of a lockdown those are your steps for tomorrow and actually you don't even have to wait for tomorrow those are your steps for right now start

right now when traffic cuts you off breathe and wish them well start right now when you get home and the dishes are in the sink and not in the dishwasher or wherever they're supposed to be breathe and wish well before you open your mouth keep yourself as much as possible in the higher states of your brain so that you can make wise choices and wise decision so there you have it that's our summary on lock downs or active shooter drills

there are necessity right now and we need to make significant changes in our educational process of how we deal with misbehavior how we deal with discipline how we deal with classroom management how we infuse social-emotional learning not as a prescriptive 30-minute class on respect but infuse it all in our schools so there you have it conscious discipline is a way to do this we spoke to people who have been using conscious discipline and they had already embedded

some of these practice and they found that if they did the active shooter drills and the lockdowns went fairly smoothly so you might ask to--what's Becky up to now well I'm in the process of welcoming over wait for it wait for it 1624 people from all over the world to our week-long summer Institute's that's 1624 people and that's a celebration they're willing to step out of this deep embedded belief that

punishment changes things and they're going to shift or started that process already from how do we shift from just rewarding those who behave good or punishing those who we believe behave badly to see in children see in that communication and teaching the skill they're missing and the reason they can do it is because they know how to manage their disappointment their anxiety their frustration so they're in for a big transformation they've already started

it can't wait to be on that journey with them I never leave a summer Institute without myself personally being changed so that I can be more of who I've meant to be so for the rest of you for everyone listening until next time I wish you well for more episodes of real talk with real teachers by dr. Becky Bailey visit consciousdiscipline.com forward slash podcasts you can also subscribe to this podcast on itunes stitcher or your

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