

Collaborative and Proactive Solutions: Successfully Treating Oppositional Behavior in Children

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An Introduction to **COLLABORATIVE PROACTIVE SOLUTIONS**

FROM THE EXPLOSIVE CHILD BY ROSS GREENE PH.D.

www.LivesInTheBalance.com

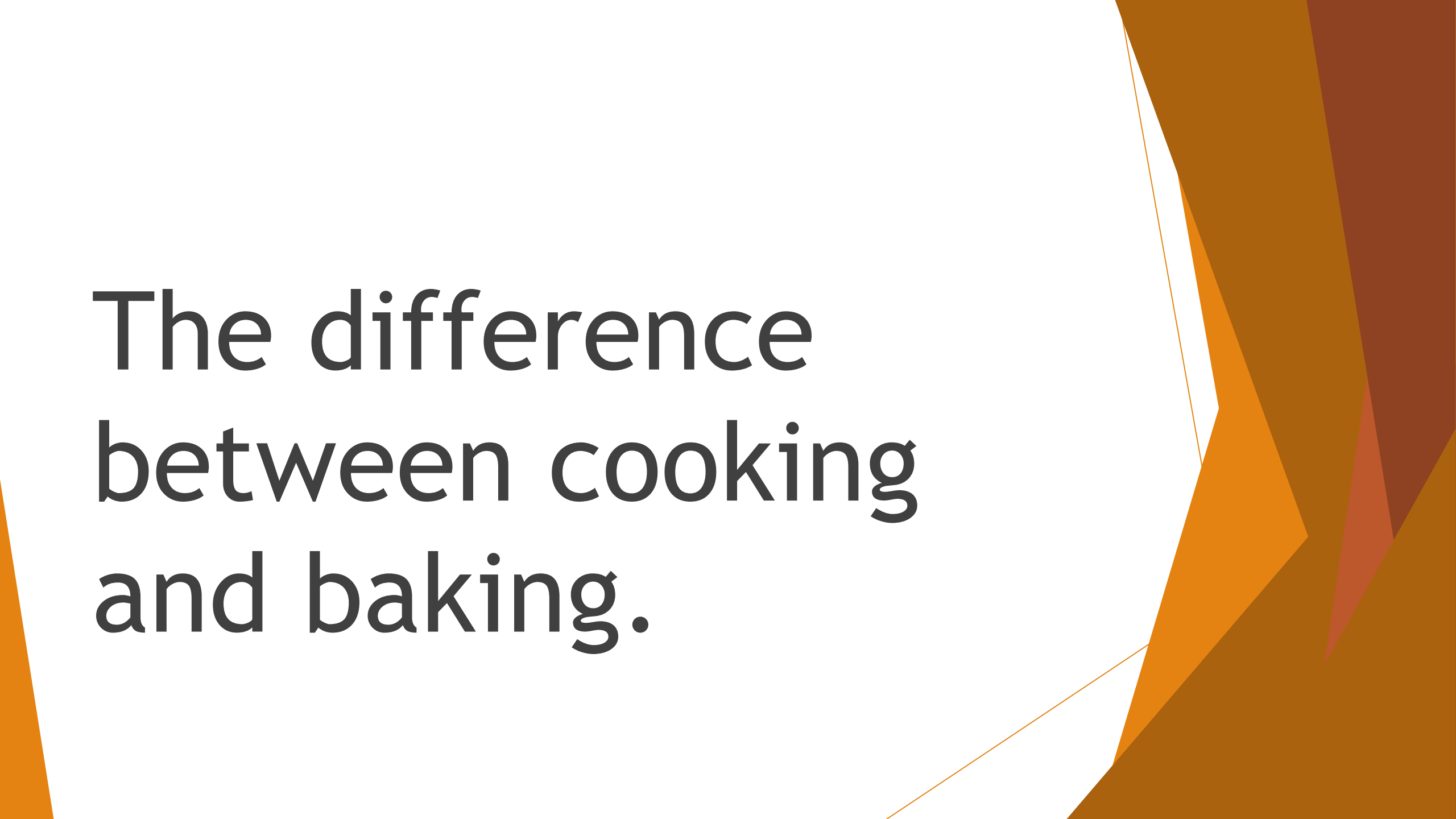
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The difference
between cooking
and baking.

The background features abstract geometric shapes in shades of orange and brown, primarily on the right side, creating a modern, layered effect.

CPS History

- ▶ Ross Greene Ph.D. Virginia Tech 1989 Faculty appointments at Virginia Tech and Harvard The Explosive Child and Lost at School
- ▶ Collaborative Problem Solving - Collaborative Proactive Solutions
The Explosive Child first edition 1998, now in its 5th edition
- ▶ www.Livesinthebalance.com includes resources, research/publications, information for parents, professionals and educators.
- ▶ Five-year NIMH-funded outpatient study of the model at the Va. Tech Child Study Center published Spring 2015 proving it's efficacy.

Step 1 of 4 With Parents

CPS Background

Child Behavior Basics

Why do children
behave badly?

Why Do Children Behave Badly?

- ▶ Neurobiological Causality for Children's Behavior
 - ▶ ADHD
 - ▶ Anxiety
 - ▶ Depression
 - ▶ Bi-Polar (?)
- ▶ Treatment: Medications

Why Do Children Behave Badly?

- ▶ Traditional Assumptions About Child Behavior: Maladaptive or challenging behavior works due to “functionality” (consequence) of behavior (eg) escape or reinforcement.
- ▶ Traditional Solution: Set in place consequences to teach the child that maladaptive behavior will not work.
 - ▶ “If - Then”
 - ▶ Reward and Punishment

Why Do Children Behave Badly?: PMT, The “Traditional” Method (what to do)

- ▶ Parent Management Training (PMT) by Russell Barkley PhD training parents In:
 - ▶ Establishing effective contingencies
 - ▶ Using clear and direct commands
 - ▶ Differential attention (reinforcing target behaviors)
 - ▶ Contingent reinforcement
 - ▶ Response cost
 - ▶ Time Out

Why Do Children Behave Badly?: The “Traditional” Method, Type 2

- ▶ **Psychodynamic**

- ▶ Interpretation of motivation of behaviors.

Why Do Children Behave Badly? (Greene's model)

- ▶ Alternative to Traditional View of Child Behavior:
- ▶ Behavioral Problems Due to: Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems
 - ▶ Behavioral challenges: when the child's skills are surpassed by the stress of the environment/situation.
 - ▶ Alternative Solution: Teach the parents how to help the child proactively collaborate to find a solution that is acceptable to both.

Why Do Children Behave Badly? (Greene's Model)

- ▶ Children behave badly due to delays in development of crucial cognitive skills:
 - ▶ Flexibility and adaptability
 - ▶ Frustration tolerance
 - ▶ Problem solving
- ▶ The goal of CPS is to increase the child's skills deficits collaboratively

Why Do Children Behave Badly? (what to do)

▶ Collaborative Proactive Solutions, (CPS)

Ross Greene PhD posits that we:

- ▶ Define the problem in non-behavioral, non-theoretical, non-"why," theory free format.
- ▶ Use of Empathy to align with and learn the child's point of view
- ▶ Review of child's and parent's concerns
- ▶ Invite to collaborate
- ▶ Brain storming to find a collaborative solution, review as needed.

**KIDS DO WELL IF
THEY CAN**

You're making it difficult
for me to be the parent I
always imagined I would
be.



som^{ee}cards
user card

Collaborative vs Behavioral Methods: Comparing Pros and Cons

▶ CPS Pros:

- ▶ Engages and maintains child in the process
- ▶ Eliminates the “power struggle” against which challenging kids push
- ▶ Empirically based

▶ CPS Cons:

- ▶ Initially time intensive
- ▶ Resistance from parents/teachers (takes time and struggle with loss of control)

▶ Behavioral Pros:

- ▶ Quick Initial Effect
- ▶ Empirically based (particularly Applied Behavior Analysis - ABA)
- ▶ Establishes/maintains traditional structure of parental control

▶ Behavioral Cons:

- ▶ Based on adult theories and beliefs that ignore the child’s experience
- ▶ Stimulate oppositional behaviors
- ▶ Power based -
 - ▶ Can alienate children
 - ▶ Over entitle adults

Collaborative vs Behavioral

comparing pros and cons of each method

▶ CPS Over Time:

- ▶ Engages
- ▶ Communication based
- ▶ Collaborative

▶ Behavioral Approaches Over Time

- ▶ May increase Alienation
- ▶ Increases Severity/Frequency of Consequences
- ▶ Ongoing Negative Messages to the Child

Collaborative Proactive Solutions Focus

- ▶ Focus on problem solving, not behavior modification
- ▶ Focus: “When” “Where”
 - ▶ not “Why” kids behave the way they do or “what” they do.

Step 2 of 4 With Parents

Lagging Skills and Unsolved
Problems

CPS In Practice

- ▶ Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems.
- ▶ ALSUP
 - ▶ Springboard for discussion with parents, then with the child
 - ▶ What are parent expectations of the child?
 - ▶ Define specific, not “clumped” problems
 - ▶ Learning how to “unclump” problems takes a bit of time, but helps lead to specific solutions.
 - ▶ “Not hitting your sister” is not a lagging skill.
 - ▶ “Not hitting your sister” is not an unsolved problem.

CPS In Practice

- ▶ Prioritizing ALSUP questions
- ▶ Understanding Plan A, B and C.
 - ▶ A: “I’ve decided”
 - ▶ C: from the ALSUP
 - ▶ B: Where we start with CPS
- ▶ “What’s up” with “what’s up?” -how to formulate neutral questions
- ▶ Having patience with “I don’t know” and restating the problem softly, patiently.



CPS Implementation

- ▶ Plan A: “I’ve decided that....”



Plan B: Specifics

- ▶ 1. Empathy
 - ▶ Present the “difficulty” (problem)
 - ▶ The challenge of waiting.
 - ▶ Focus on empathizing with the child’s definition of the problem. (“active listening”)
 - ▶ “What else?” - ensuring the child has completed or refined his/her definition of the problem
 - ▶ Review of child’s concerns

Plan B: Specifics

- ▶ 2. Define Adult's Concerns
 - ▶ Not a review of the behaviors
- ▶ 3. Invitation: Brainstorming and selecting realistic and mutually satisfying solutions
 - ▶ Have the child begin the brainstorming process.

CPS Implementation

▶ Plan B:

▶ Collaborative

▶ Not parent/teacher/therapist driven-
but collaboratively with the child's
input

▶ Not “theory” based

▶ Proactive

▶ Before, not during crises. CPS is NOT a
model for crises intervention.

CPS Benefits

- ▶ Ability to return to “Empathy Step” as often as necessary - no escalation of consequences.
- ▶ Keeps kids engaged.
- ▶ Less likely to result in “I Give Up” responses from adults.

Step 3 of 4 With Parents

Modeling the Method

CPS in Practice

▶ James

- ▶ HFA with Depression r/o Psychosis
- ▶ 1st session “Sounds like you’ve been having difficulty talking with mom and dad after school, what’s up?”
 - ▶ “I don’t know” monosyllabic or grunting responses.
 - ▶ After 1/2 hour of restating initial question and milking his minimal responses with the “Empathy Step” he exclaimed “Finally, Someone is listening!”

CPS in Practice

▶ Ilene

- ▶ RAD, ADHD, Depression
- ▶ Aggressive verbally and physically to mom in dad's absence
- ▶ Non-compliant with assistive technology in school; with chores and homework at home
- ▶ Currently: grades up, rare aggression, compliant with homework and chores, using assistive technology reliably

CPS in Practice

▶ Abraham

- ▶ 8 y/o with ADHD, well managed by meds, but with very difficult bedtimes
- ▶ 2 consultations with parents 6 months ago, parents and Abe continue to collaborate on bedtime challenges successfully.

CPS in Practice

▶ John

- ▶ ADHD, RAD, sibs all severely abused sexually and physically by different adults in biological home, adopted at 6 with sister now in residential treatment
- ▶ Mom read The Explosive Child after sister went to treatment, and said CPS was working great with John -no need for f/u

CPS in Practice

- ▶ Clay: 14 y/o with ADHD and ODD. Mom learned method quickly and well. Significant reduction in tantrums at home. Successful collaboration over transition from video games; sibling aggression and rudeness to parents.
- ▶ Mom thanks me for “reminding her” that she and Clay could speak when they renewed CPS method 8 months later.

Step 4 of 4 With Parents

Coaching the Parents

Programming for Independence

Coaching for Independence

▶ Coaching in

▶ Understanding role of ALSUP

▶ Formulating questions by focusing on unsolved problems and not:

▶ Focusing on behavior

▶ Creating an obvious “solution” with the question

▶ Using “Why” and “theory” questions

Coaching for Independence

- ▶ Coaching in
 - ▶ Empathy Step
 - ▶ Drilling “Cheat Sheet”
 - ▶ Clarifying the child’s concerns
 - ▶ Clarifying parents’ concerns

Coaching for Independence

- ▶ Coaching in
 - ▶ Invitation to collaborate
 - ▶ Problem solving so that everyone gets what they want
 - ▶ Commitment to review and return as needed to re-clarify problem and continue collaborating

Questions?

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