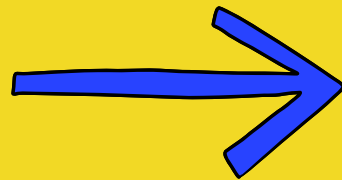




WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF YOUR FACE?

Communicating
with Adolescents



OUTCOMES

What's the Purpose of Your Face

- Learn and be able to utilize the B.R.I.E.F. strategy to increase the quality of conversations with adolescents
- Identify conversation crashers that can deter the progress of a conversation

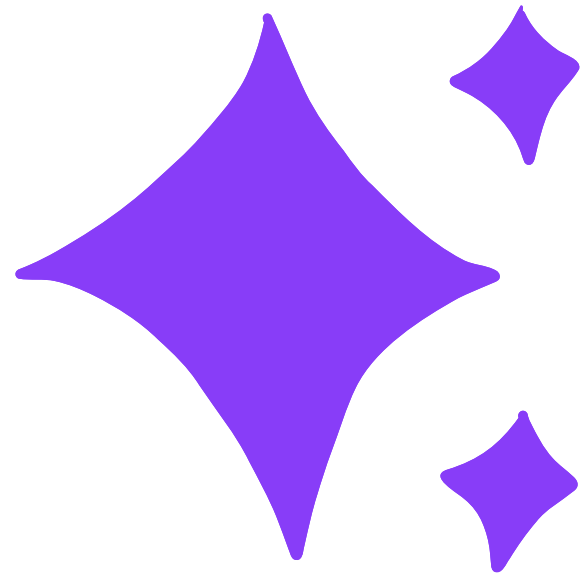


CRISTIN NOWAK

Professional Experience

- 4 years Ele teacher
- 3 years MS teacher
- 6 years MS admin
- 4 years HS teacher
- 6 years HS admin

Currently assistant principal at
William Chrisman High School



MOVING INTO ADOLESCENCE

01

Normal and necessary work of pulling apart from their parents

02

Begin **establishing their own identity** -- apart from their adults

03

Have to **talk *with* them**, not *to* them, or *at* them.

04


Kids will learn to make smart decisions **with practice**.

05

Age of male risk taking is the **highest at 14.38**, missing the data for females, but we can make inferences

06

We (adults) need to be ***assistant managers***.

The background is a vibrant yellow with several colorful, organic shapes: a pink shape in the top-left, a green shape in the top-right containing a yellow starburst icon, a green shape in the bottom-left, and a purple shape in the bottom-right. A white, wavy line is on the left side. The text is centered and uses a bold, sans-serif font with alternating colors for emphasis.

**“KIDS WHO FEEL COMFORTABLE
TALKING WITH CARING ADULTS
ABOUT THEIR PROBLEMS ARE
HEALTHIER, HAPPIER, MORE
RESILIENT, AND BETTER POISED
FOR SUCCESS.”**

-Michelle Icard.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?



PURPOSES OF CONVERSATION

1. Practical -- Making plans, solving problems
2. Emotional -- I want you to empathize and understand; don't solve the problem
3. Social -- How do we relate to each other



**“IF TWO PEOPLE ARE
HAVING DIFFERENT KINDS
OF CONVERSATIONS AT THE
SAME TIME, THEY WON'T
HEAR EACH OTHER”**



**SO... HOW DO WE TALK
TO THEM -- OR GET THEM
TO TALK TO US?**

PLEASE REMEMBER THIS...

*** IF THEY'RE PUSHING BACK, THEY'RE NOT
READY FOR A GOOD CONVERSATION**

*** YOU CAN FORCE A LECTURE, BUT YOU
CAN'T FORCE A CONVERSATION**

Be B.R.I.E.F

B

BEGIN PEACEFULLY

Unemotional observation
Ask students to explain
Make a scheduling request.

R

RELATE TO YOUR KID

Consider the endgame?
Avoid words that will make them
immediately defensive

I

INTERVIEW TO COLLECT DATA

Get a better understanding of your kid's version
A neutral fact finding mission

E

ECHO WHAT YOU'RE

HEARING

It sounds like or I'm hearing
Summarize
Use their words

F

Feedback

Offer suggestions, make new rules
Don't pile on other problems

BEGIN PEACEFULLY



- Hardest part is getting started without the teen shutting down.
- Begin with unemotional observation
 - "So, it looks like report cards came out - I saw your grades weren't as we expected."
- Ask if they can explain to you
 - Your grades look different than what I expected. Are they what you expected? Is there anything you need to tell me?
- Make a scheduling request
 - "Reports cards came out today and I think we should debrief. Is before or after dinner better for you?"

RELATE TO YOUR KID

- They start defensive!
 - AND most can't accurately read facial expressions or interpret tone of voice.



RELATE TO YOUR KID

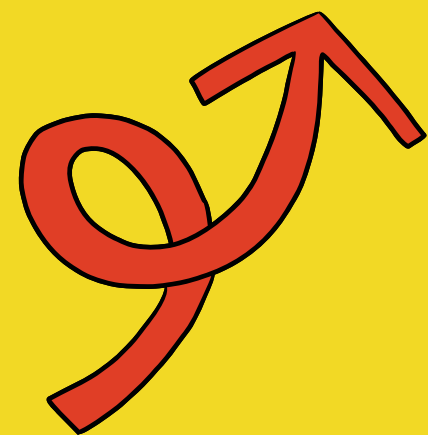


- BREATHE! Even when you want to say all of the things. . . .
 - “It’s tough when you finally have to be honest, but I find it feels better to stop hiding things from people who want to help us”
 - “This is hard. I’m sure you feel a bunch of emotions right now. Don’t worry. Together we can figure out where to go from here.”
 - “I remember times when my grades dipped and it felt awful to get behind. It will take some hard work to pull your grades back up, but with focus and support you can do it.”

INTERVIEW TO COLLECT DATA



- Get a better understanding of their version of the truth
- Be a good, slightly detached district attorney
 - “At what point did you realize your grades were slipping?”
 - “What do you think were the biggest reasons for the slip?”
 - “Did you consider talking with me about it?”
 - “What did you think would happen when I got the report card?”



**ARE YOU SURE ABOUT
THAT 5 MINUTES?**

ECHO WHAT YOU'RE HEARING



- This is about part validation and part comprehension
- Sounds Like...
 - "It sounds like you had an idea your grades were slipping, but felt like you could handle it on your own?"
- Summarize Key Facts
 - "Okay, so you thought your grades were still on track and this comes as a surprise to you too"
- Use Their Words in a Question
 - "Am I right that you feel like this is mostly the teacher's fault?"

FEEDBACK

- You finally get to provide feedback! Offering suggestions, guidance, or making new rules.
 - Most open to feedback when you ask if they're open to it.
 - There will be times you can't wait and you have to put the strong boundaries in place -- in these cases, don't ask.



**DESCRIBE THE WORST
MANAGER/BOSS YOU
ever HAD**

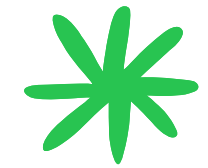
**WHEN MIDDLE SCHOOLERS
AND TEENS ARE ASKED
WHAT BOTHERS THEM
ABOUT THEIR PARENTS --
IT'S THE SAME THINGS!**



We need TO BE ASSISTANT MANAGERS

During their tween and adolescent years the prefrontal cortex takes a break -- kind of like when a manager at a store goes on break. They need us to act as assistant managers, not take over, but to support them.

MAKING MISTAKES



INABILITY TO READ FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

- Research from a Harvard teaching hospital
 - Small study, but very important for those who interact with adolescents
 - Adults were put into an MRI and showed photos of people's faces. They were asked to identify basic emotions by reading their faces. Adults were able to do this ***nearly 100% of the time.***

MAKE A PREDICTION ABOUT THE TEENS!

ONLY 50%

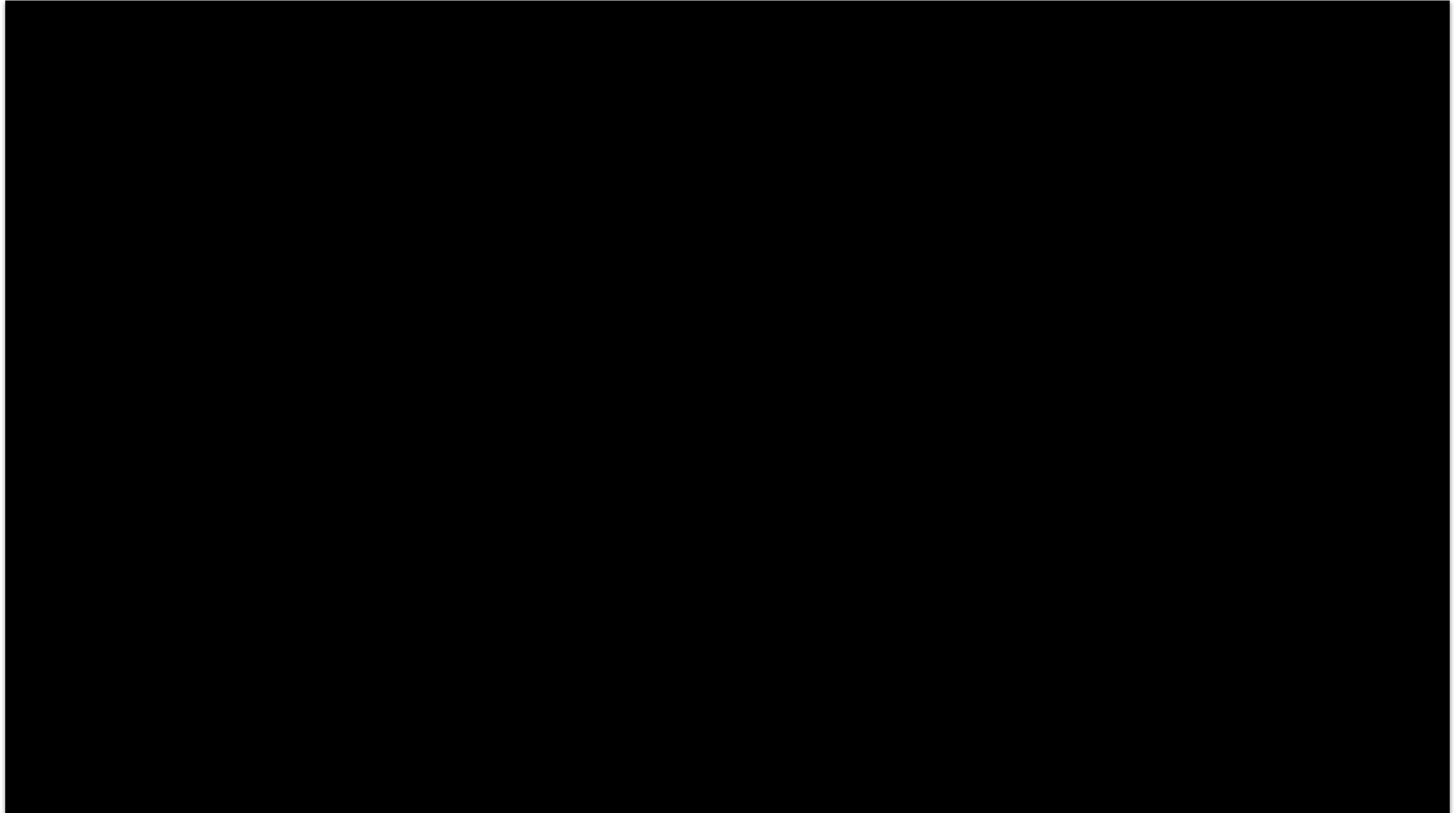
What's the difference?

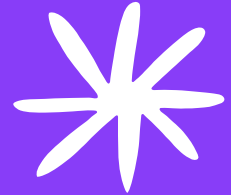
- MRI showed that the adults used their prefrontal cortex to read expressions
- Teens used their amygdala - the part of the brain that houses emotions and helps decide how to respond

The shift doesn't happen until early to mid-twenties!



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?





**WRITE A LIST OF ALL THE
REASONS WHY YOU
FURROW YOUR BROW**

Or someone else if you are not a brow furrower

THE BOTOX BROW

- An expressionless face is better!
- This will be perceived as “not judging”
- Also known as “soft eyes.” And you can’t yell with soft eyes



OTHER THINGS TO DO



- Appear disinterested -- inevitably when busy, this will be when they will want to tell you the most
- Multi-task -- cooking dinner, driving a car, sorting mail, grading papers, responding to emails

PERSONAL EXAMPLES



CONVERSATION CRASHERS

01

Don't make assumptions about how they feel, has felt, or will feel.

02

Don't be indirect about what you need

03

No empty threats -- and don't threaten therapists!



CONVERSATION CRASHERS



04

Don't be passive-aggressive. This tends to be our way of acting as victims

05

Don't make yourself the center of the story

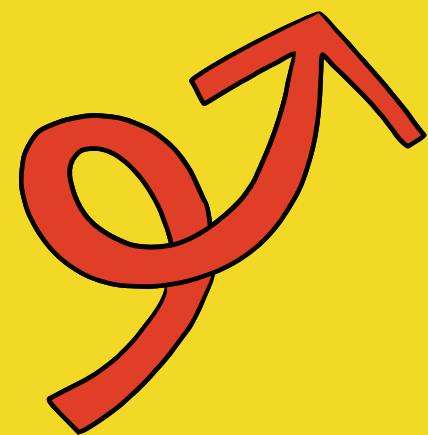
06

Don't drag it out. Do you want the last word or to end in a way the other person can come back to you?

IN SUMMARY

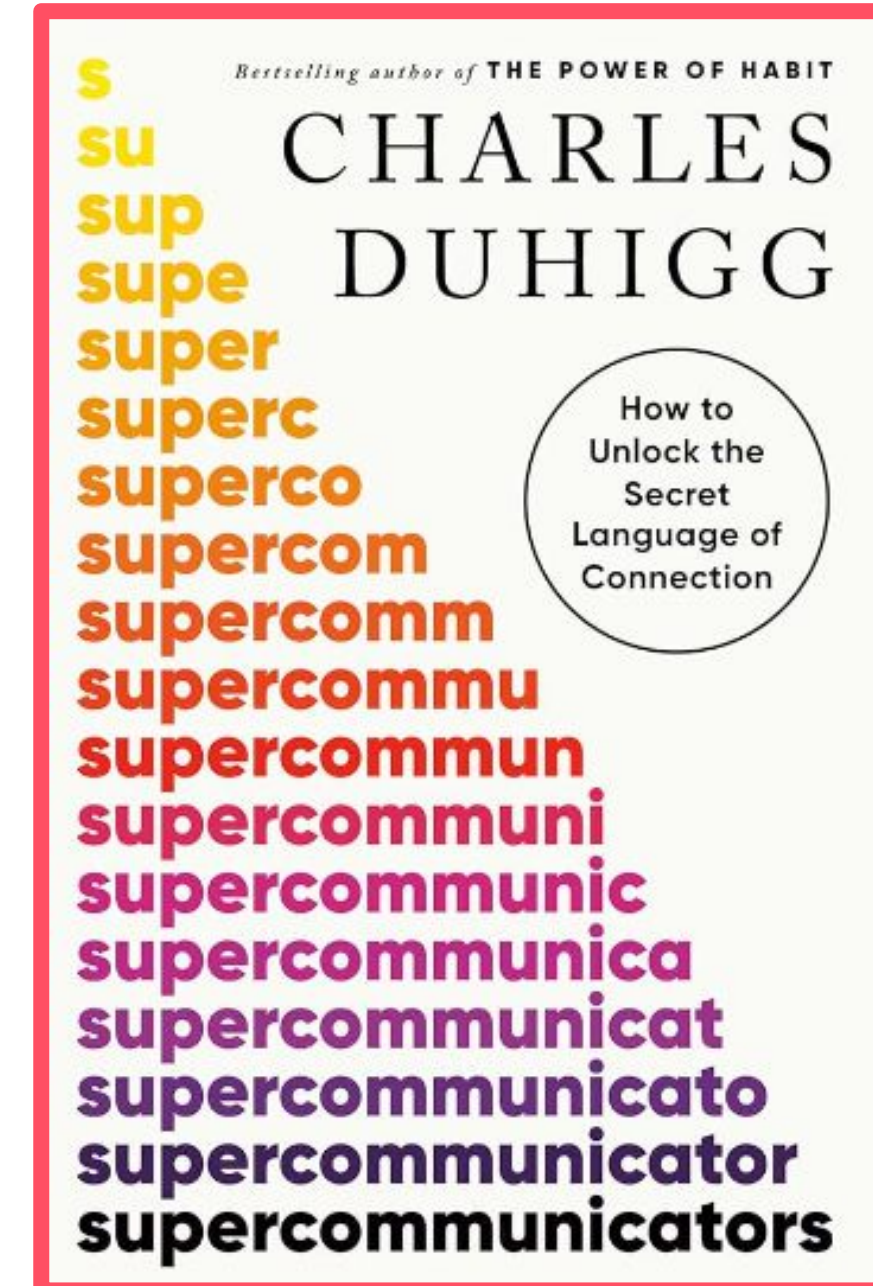
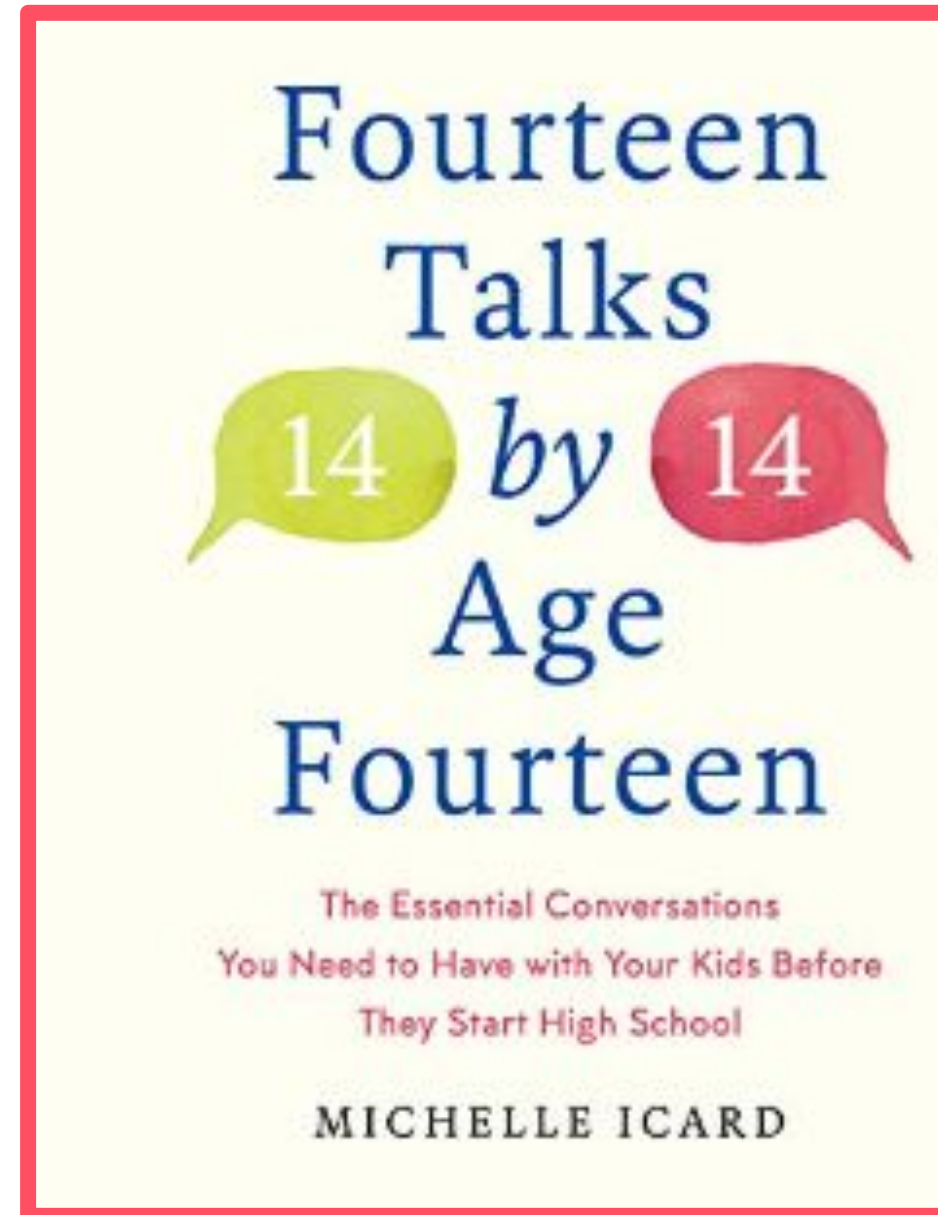
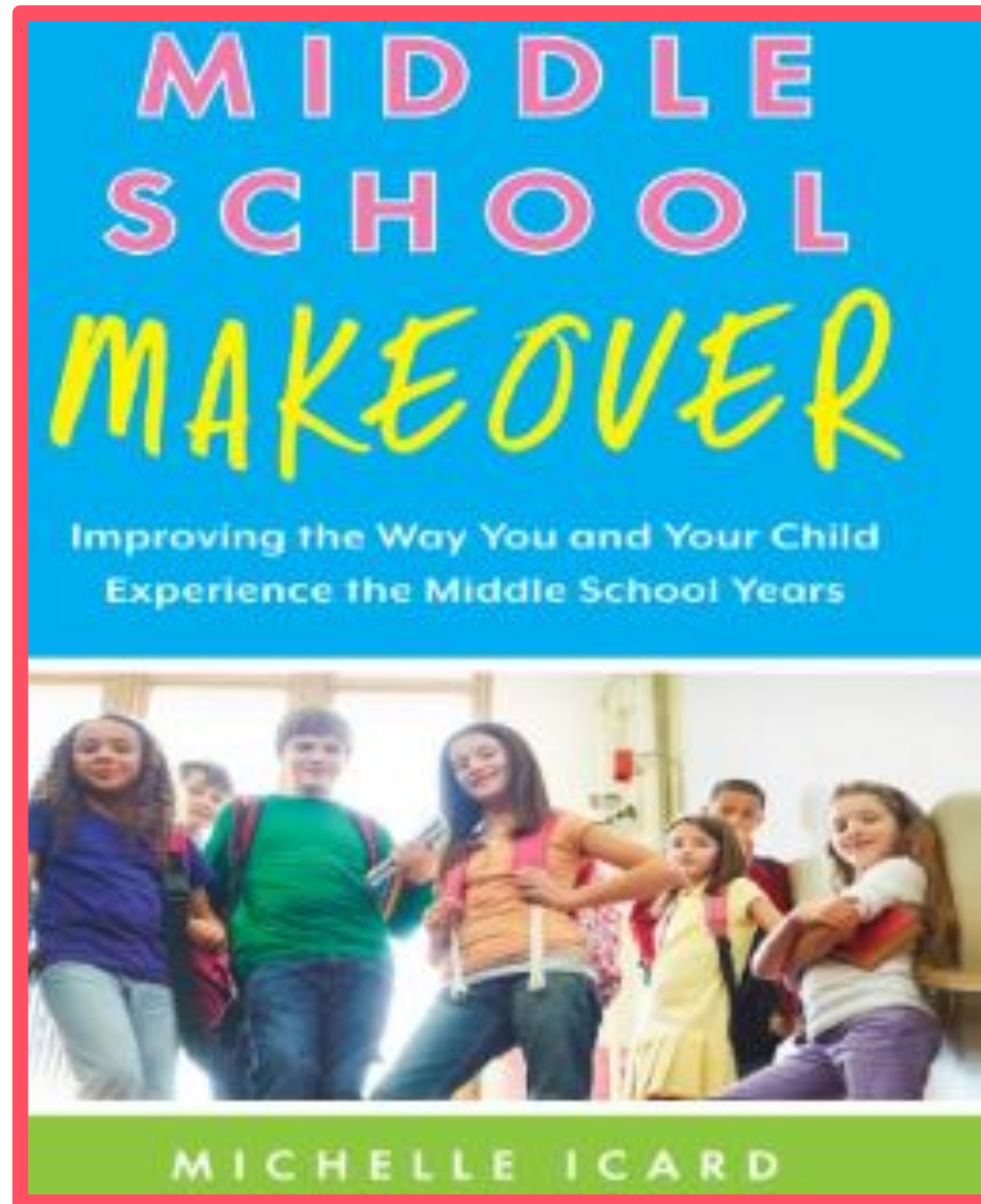


- They're supposed to be breaking away
- Be B.R.I.E.F.
- Be an assistant manager, not the boss
- Botox your brow and be distracted
- Avoid conversation crashers



**HUMANS ARE MORE
COMPLICATED**

References



THANK YOU

What's the Purpose of Your Face

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- 816-520-0880
- @cristinnowak

- Thank you for completing your session feedback survey in the Guidebook app!

