



to build

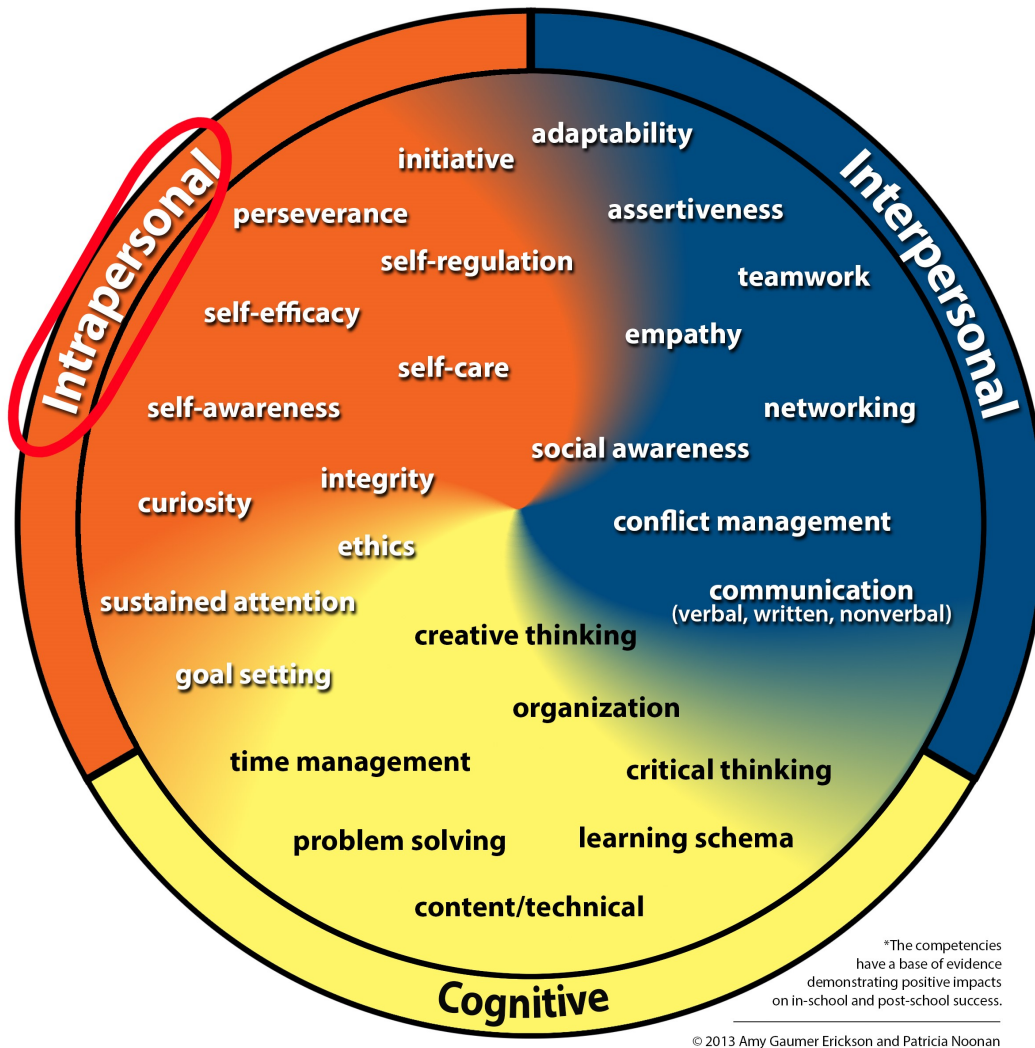
Intrapersonal Competencies

with your **Teen**

— A GUIDE FOR PARENTS —

Intrapersonal competencies help teens graduate from high school and succeed in careers and college. These competencies occur within the individual mind or self, such as **self-regulation**, **self-efficacy**, **curiosity**, and **integrity**.

College and Career Competency Wheel



For more information, visit:



Intrapersonal competencies can be taught and reinforced on a day-to-day basis. And teaching intrapersonal competencies has a huge impact. Research shows that students with these competencies:

- Sustain attention in class better
- Have improved retention of subject matter
- Attain higher salaries and advancement
- Are better able to avoid drug use
- Experience less bullying and victimization

(Dignath et al., 2008; Duckworth et al., 2007; Durlak et al., 2011; Nota, 2004; Ursache, 2012; Winkler-Eskreis et al., 2014)

To develop intrapersonal competencies, teens need to practice them. Educators and families can partner to teach, practice, and reinforce these concepts at school, at home, and in the community.

10 Quick Tips to Help Develop Your Teen's Intrapersonal Competencies

- 1** Ask your teen to predict his or her grade on several exams. Then discuss with your teen the actual grade versus the predicted grade. Discuss why the prediction was successful or not successful. If your teen predicts a bad grade (e.g., "I'll be lucky if I get a C on..."), ask why they think that. This helps build **self-efficacy** (i.e., belief in your ability to achieve goals and meet expectations).
- 2** Don't admonish or criticize your teen if they aren't successful at accomplishing something. Instead, ask why they think they weren't successful and what they would do differently. This helps reinforce **self-regulation** by getting your teen to reflect on why something didn't work and to identify strategies that might work next time.
- 3** Ask what your teen's top **goals** are for the quarter, the summer, or a class. The goal could be getting a position on a sports team, getting a role in a play, or getting a part-time job. Ask your teen what they think the hurdles will be to achieving the goal. Brainstorm with your teen ways to address any hurdles. This makes it more likely that your teen will **persevere** in trying to accomplish the goal.
- 4** Explain to your teen that intelligence is not fixed but can be grown with effort. If your teen tells you that they can't do something or aren't good at it (e.g., "I will never be good at math"), ask why they think that. Talk about the brain as a muscle that grows stronger with exercise. Don't reinforce the negative self-concept with statements like "I know—I was never good at math" or "Our family is good at a lot of things, but math isn't one of them." Reinforcing the concept that ability can grow builds **self-efficacy**, which helps the teen take on and master challenges.
- 5** When your teen takes on a large endeavor, either at school or at home, spend some time discussing how the work will get done. Ask your teen what steps they will take to stay on track, and how they will handle obstacles or setbacks. By helping your teen think through strategies for completing a long-term project, you will help instill **perseverance** and an appreciation for the importance of finishing what you start.
- 6** Encourage **curiosity** by pointing out an unusual object to your teen and then asking questions about it. For example, many parking lots now include charging stations for electric cars. You could ask questions like "Why do you think they picked that location?" "How do you think the station works?" You can also have spontaneous discovery expeditions around your neighborhood or backyard and challenge your teen to find something odd or unfamiliar, then discuss it. See how many questions can be asked and answered.
- 7** Working on activities that are challenging but intrinsically rewarding will help teens build **initiative**. When your teen shows interest in a hobby, like woodworking, scrapbooking, or painting, invite them to help you with a large project featuring that hobby. Make sure that it will take several weeks to complete, and ask your teen to help with the planning. Once your teen understands what needs to be done, turn them loose to complete tasks. Your teen will learn to take **initiative** by making choices about activities and taking actions, and they will also learn to **persevere**.
- 8** Teens will often find themselves in situations where they need to apply personal principles to make tough choices. You can help your teen act with **integrity** in those situations by making your expectations clear and by candidly discussing the challenges of adhering to a personal system of beliefs when there are factors like peer pressure. You can use current news to talk about the types of decisions an individual made that resulted in them acting with, or without, **integrity**.
- 9** Attach a copy of the competency wheel to your fridge, and as you see your teen demonstrate an intrapersonal competency, give positive feedback by saying something like "All the concepts on this wheel are skills that you will use in college or in a career—you just demonstrated this competency!" Give specific examples about how your teen's behavior illustrated the competency.
- 10** If your teen has a job, ask your teen to look at the wheel to identify which intrapersonal competencies are most important for doing well at their job. Ask your teen to identify 1–2 areas for improvement and discuss.

FREE College and Career Competency Resources available at: