

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Nov. 12-18 NAEYC Washington D.C.

Nov. 12-23 The Giving Tree is up in the lobby to donate pacifiers "chupetes" to babies in need **Nov. 22, 3:00**

Thanksgiving Feast and Pot Luck (parents welcome)

Nov. 26, 3:30 Nature Park Private VIP Inauguration for English for Fun community members.

Nov. 30 10:30 Educational Round Table at English or Fun with major community and educational leaders participating. This will be streamed live on our YouTube channel and you can connect via google hangout for your comfort and enjoyment. There is limited space for attendees due to the popularity of speaking candidates. More information will be sent home next week.

Nov. 30 13:00 (PC) Nature Park ribbon cutting ceremony with Desert City

DEALING WITH FEARS

Reflection for this Week: Children Develop the Same FEARS as Their Parents

Jill hated snakes until she was in her last year of college, before grad school. She decided to overcome the FEAR with a friend by learning about his pet boa constrictor. She realized that her mom conditioned her to hate and FEAR snakes. She worked at the FEAR until it was non-existent thanks to research on the human mind and FEARS and the tools from her psychology classes.

Then, thinking she is doing things so perfectly in her own home based on that psychology and child development background, Jill thought she was in the clear! April, 2018 she started the Red de Industrias Creativas masters program at IED...and her glass was shattered! Jill started to analyzing her own need for perfection based on a serious FEAR of making mistakes and a FEAR of disapproval and how limiting it has been in her own happiness and celebration of her successes. Jill is always searching for the next challenge because she has to prove to herself that her teachers were wrong about her intelligence and that small-town rural California society was wrong about the ability of girls. So what Jill does is never enough to conquer her own FEARS and need for approval from teachers. She had to unknowingly face her FEAR through an elevator pitch presentation for the RIC final exam and it caused so much stress because she could not get on a stage for 3 MINUTES and tell everyone that she is an educational entrepreneur who deserves her success because she is really smart and she studies a lot and she knows what she is doing! Jill created such drama about the situation and in front of her own children, of course! For weeks, she had tears of FEAR pouring out at the thought of getting on that stage, she had meltdowns in front of trial audiences...in front of her husband, and twice on stage in front of the entire class in the RIC. Total and utter FEAR! She wondered...did a long list of mediocre teachers really help do that to Jill's self-esteem or was this 100% Jill's issue? Did she seriously start English for Fun so that NO child would suffer at the hands of teachers who are destroying self-confidence when they are supposed to be empowering children and building strong adults? See..we all have FEARS that hold us back (no tears although she cried until an hour before the big presentation). Jill is determined to fix her issues and not pass that pressure along to her own wonderful children!

Now down to the business of YOUR kids...this week our reflection is all about FEARS in childhood and parenting and how children overcome FEARS so much better than we adults do. If we adults could apply the same child-like principles to FEARS, we would get out of the prison of our own FEARS that hold us back in real life!

This all started 3 weeks ago when our classroom changes occurred and it put the entire center into an adult-filled frenzy. It was our first "traumatic" experience in our learning community and as adults, our reaction to FEAR of abandonment took over and we wanted someone to "blame" for what happened (understandably so as it is a part of the grieving



process). We worried that our children would be scarred for life and we forgot that resilience is the most important life skill that we teach to children as they grow.

We know that Growth Mindset is why we send our children to English for Fun:

Carol Dweck- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnknBJyer3Q>

We also know that it is best to teach real life lessons in a safe space which if you ask any English for Fun student what they feel in our space, they will say, “Secure”, “Awesome” and “I can be friends with anyone.” (analysis by Olivia Sanza). But between the Adults Gone Wild mentality, a serious flood and a few unsuccessful casting calls for the classroom replacements, we kept facing new challenges. And in true English for Fun style, we did what we do best. We pulled together in creative ways to make sure that the children had a magical experience each day. We showed GRIT and resilience and we did not give up because that is what EFF models for children. WE did what was necessary to move forward because we know how to react and come out on top during times of “crisis”. And we had FUN along the way!

Last Tuesday, Jill woke up early and came running to EFF for a meeting at 8:00am and instead of exhaustion and FEAR, she was excited for her arrival. She could not figure out why, considering the challenges that presented themselves over the last weeks (luckily we shielded you from half of it). As Jill was in nap time, flipping through photos of the day to use for Tadpoles and Instagram, she passed through silly photos of her and Sara in the classroom that very morning and she began to get choked up. She realized how important Sara is in her life and how the distance meant that she does not see Sara daily and she has not had the privilege to be next to her for 3 years now. Sara is a person that Jill loves to work with and Jill used to go running to work daily in El Viso to be with Sara, elbow-to-elbow, without realizing why she loved her job so much! And she realized how much she loves Sara and how lucky English for Fun is to have Sara in our community. She realized how happy Sara makes her and how safe Sara makes the kids feel. And Jill realized that she was excited because she got to spend the week working with one of her favorite people in the world! It was gratitude, safety, relief and FUN in one photo memory. Recovering again and again from the trauma caused by fickle expats has built a bond between many of us in the community of English for Fun (parents, employees, suppliers and children) and it helps us react well to anything as long as we are together. Maybe it is the dopamine that fight/flight causes, maybe it is the rush a new challenge brings about or maybe it is trusting someone implicitly and knowing that regardless, together we will all be ok... This is the true meaning of OUR learning community, English for Fun!



WE reflected deeper on FEAR as a teaching team. The human resources surprises brought about a lot of changes and work and it triggered some FEAR-based emotions that we adults all have routed inside. Since the team at English for Fun has lived through 10 years of the hard learning experiences of managing expectations for parents while balancing out the sometimes unrealistic expectations of expats, who we have no idea what really brought them to Spain when mobility is unnatural in their home countries. Our EFF reaction to changes in staff has become second nature and we have learned to understand that offering a global world within our doors is a magical opportunity for our learners but it comes with difficulties because mixing 16+ different cultures under two roofs is not easy. We overcame our FEARS and we learned that we are always better off in the long run when conflicted people go away and that we always come out better than we were before. So as an organization, we no longer give self-

centered expats the reaction and the drama that they hope for when they decide voluntarily to walk out the door after signing a working contract and committing to a full school year (September-June). It is their own FEAR that leads them to make a commitment and not keep it, especially with the excellent working conditions that we obviously provide at EFF (reality-the class sizes/support, the awesome families, the dedicated colleagues, the beautiful spaces and the “teach what you want in English while having FUN” should be a teacher’s dream). But, if our parent’s FEARS lead them to choose to give these said expats the reaction that they hope for (tears and attention and begging for mercy and scapegoating others), instead of what they truly deserve which is a disappointed conversation about accountability and questioning how an adult can make a commitment to their children and then act so selfishly after they took an oath as a teacher to behave in a different way. If community members do not have the hard conversations, then these “professional” teachers will continue to behave badly out of FEAR in every educational environment that they enter because their “need to be needed” and to drive emotionally dramatic situations in order to prove their own worth will trump their need to educate children and act like REAL professionals at work.

Now...back to raising humans who are going to be good at ADULTING...

Where did this reaction of FEAR in the Itsy Bitsy Spider come from in our classroom?

We wondered:

1. Are fears as simple as a hereditary situation that we can consciously learn to control as parents and teachers so we do not set our children up to live in fear of something unnecessarily?
2. Can we practice overcoming our own FEAR through our children to help us all grow together?
3. How do we work to make peace with a FEAR or something that has scared us our whole life if we want our children to live in freedom with us?
4. Is anxious parenting a phenomenon that we have to learn to control because it leads to FEARful adults who are unwilling to take risks in their lives?
5. Do we set our own children up for failure by our reaction to FEAR of environmental circumstances and change?

At English for Fun, as part of Continuous Development, we are avid readers of anything involving raising great kids and parenting for success. You have seen the book collections (one day we will show you the collection of parenting books waiting to be read next to our beds). We thought you might like these articles filled with helpful tips on where fears come from and how to avoid projecting our fears so our children can live with more emotional freedom than we do:

<https://www.goodtoknow.co.uk/family/overcoming-fear-how-to-stop-passing-fears-onto-kids-178>

https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/child-psychology/anxiety_disorders_in_children/fears/#.W-fr4xNKj-Y

<https://childmind.org/article/how-to-avoid-passing-anxiety-on-to-your-kids/>

Here are a few of our favorite books you can check from the library at English for Fun- Growth Mindset by Carol Dweck Growth Mindset (GRIT) vs. Fixed Mindset (FEAR) Enough as She Is by Rachel Simmons A great read for parents raising girls not to FEAR Dare to Lead by Dr. Brené Brown and anything by Brené (even YouTube videos) Learning How to Learning by Dr. Barbara Oakley (MOOC course on Coursera)

Our favorite parenting blog is Sunshine Parenting, who visited English for Fun last November and we are hoping she will come back again soon. She has great book reviews and helpful tips to raise happy adults. Audrey is an expert on helping kids overcome FEARS and helping parents through FEARS as well. Jill was interviewed in Episode 35 about “unplugging” her

family and how it changed home for the better. Here is Audrey “Sunshine” Monkey’s podcast info:

<http://sunshine-parenting.com/category/podcast/>

<http://sunshine-parenting.com/2018/05/04/ep-35/>

Watching the children engage in their play is our favorite activity at English for Fun. This week, whether it was spider based cross-curricular learning, self-portrait drawing and self-awareness, pumpkin, gourd and fall scientific and artistic observations, fine-motor development with tubes and tongs and pencil holding, or music and rhythm and the classroom band, or a nature walk to investigate the almost finished outdoor classroom, we were busy using our English while having FUN!

We observed Alan moving from one activity to the next at lightning speed and showing no FEAR of anything whatsoever. He scaffolds constantly and he has a knack for organizing items. Alan figured out how to line up the balls inside of the toothbrush holder and he became interested in how to make the balls all the same size when they clearly were not. He even used tricks to match them up so that everything looked exactly the same (stacking the smaller balls on the ledge to be higher up)

Alba-Took the small spiders for a walk but she wanted nothing to do with the larger spiders until they were a part of our Itsy Bitsy Spider props for the song. Then she acted out the story with spiders that are bigger than she is.

Alejandro-Brought Spiders over for a concert in the new Music area and he serenaded Spider with an invented song and instruments to accompany his music. But his sheer joy near the new swing set was priceless-sorry spiders!

Francesca-Helped us add Spider to our circle time by singing to Spider in our “Where is...?” song and we realized that Sammy Snake is Spiders friend (Sara’s too) “Ssss”. Zoo Phonics was introduced into our Twos classroom with all of our names and Spider was no exception! See our “Where Is...?” book for the newest pages.



Lucas-Slowly worked to make peace by starting with the small spiders. He put one in his pocket daily to become comfortable. He literally was overcoming FEAR using textbook skills without reading those psychology college books! By the end of the week he was helping the large spiders from a distance and he was thinking positive thoughts about them instead of giving them a look of sheer panic.

Olivia-Sunggled the spiders every morning and pet them when she walked into the classroom. She and Gaby held the big spiders and showed them the cozy area with the light table which is her personal favorite.

Olivia-She helped us film a video of our spider peace party and we posted her interview skills on the internet.

Mateo-Managed to come to school with all of his life changes and model a love for spiders that became contagious in our classroom. When he and Lucas were doing a read aloud of The Very Hungry

Caterpillar by Eric Carle to the giant spiders, we knew that he was helping us all make peace





with our spider friends. Our new book, *The Very Busy Spider* by Eric Carpe was a fun story to use our props with as well.

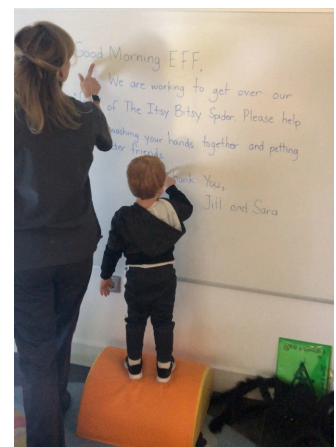
Next week stay tuned for Spider care as we will bathe our spiders, brush their hair and teeth, dress them, make jewelry for them and get them ready for an exciting day at school!



As a culmination to Halloween, we feel successful about our newfound love for insects and especially our friends, the spiders. Instead of allowing these FEARS to continue, we took action against our minds and we won the battle. We ended these unfounded spider FEARS after we nearly had to eliminate *The Itsy Bitsy Spider* from our Circle Time routine. WE said, “NO WAY” because that song is simply AMAZING and it is a childhood classic and it deserves for every child to love it all the way into adulthood.

In case you are working on overcoming your own FEARS, here are some tips. Our strategy was simple. We found ways to bond with the spiders by treating them as proper members of our classroom. First, we invited them into our classroom and they spent the morning on our circle area with the gross-motor climbing blocks (class favorite) and then they joined us for outdoor exploration and we took them by the hand and we gave them tours of our beautiful park. We let Spider bring lots of friends to class so she would feel comfortable in a new place and we created habitats for the spiders to feel at home, helping us learn more about someone who is different than we are. That helped us practice empathy and compassion with our spider friends. We then incorporated them into our important subjects. In math centers we sorted and counted our spider friends. In sensory exploration (with a lovely spider perfume), we dug them out of the sensory tubs and “took them home” by placing them into the webs. During literacy we taught them Zoo Phonics and we identified the “S” friend connecting Spider to our print and we taught Spider the letter sound and we even allowed Spider to participate in circle time. We bonded with Spider kinesthetically by acting out the *Itsy Bitsy Spider* with all of the many friends she brought to class. We even took our spider to lunch and snack to teach her table manners and proper eating habits at The English for Fun Cafe.

A final thought to all of this worry about FEARS. It highlights the biggest



elephant in the room. Why is parenting so hard?? No one told me how careful I had to be while shaping the lives of MY little gifts to the world. I realize more and more every day that Nico and Olivia did not chose to be here and that it is my job to help them navigate a world that thinks very little about them while making decisions that effect children directly. As parents, we have to make our children emotionally strong enough to navigate the REAL world. A world where maternal and paternal support is no longer a priority, a world filled with failed educational systems and self-centered individuals who are forgetting that they serve the people and that it should be a collaborative effort to prepare the world for the future we leave for our children. Know that we are a learning community and we are here to help you with this process. English for Fun forces everyone who will listen to take children more seriously. We hold people accountable and we expect them to take the future more seriously. It is simply good business for societies to raise happy children who become strong adults.

Insecurity and instability in adulthood are usually based on problems that occurred in infancy and that is the period of life that we celebrate, 0-6 years. That is the time when you are forced to blindly trust everyone around you because you cannot take care of yourself. Know that you ALL are doing a great job as parents if you think that parenting is hard and you are FEARful.

Also be confident in the fact that English for Fun is a pedagogical methodology that focuses on raising secure and strong and successful adults. It is an educational movement that you have chosen to take part in. One where we are a collaborative learning community and together we are working as a TEAM to raise children who will grow up ethically to be confident and intelligent adults. They WILL be people who are happy and secure and brilliant. They will be adults who will RIP THE WORLD APART without cutting corners to get there because they are just like their own amazing and dedicated parents. Keep up the great work families and we promise inside of English for Fun to give 120% everyday for your kids! English for Fun is where ftomorrow's leaders THRIVE!

Best,

Jill and Team English for Fun

More articles of interest for you

When is the right time to remove pacifiers:

<https://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/development/behavioral/bye-bye-binky-ending-the-pacifier-habit/>

<https://www.babysleepsite.com/sleep-training/pacifier-weaning-stop-baby-toddler-how-when/>

<https://www.serpadres.es/1-2-anos/educacion-estimulacion/articulo/2-anos-dejar-chupete>

Use The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein as a resource to get the children excited to share and help our FEARS. It is only 2 days of "sleeplessness" for everyone involved if you are strict and consistent-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BYaJG8h7qc>

Lets break this self-soothing habit that is more of a comfort for parents after the age of 2 than the children who use them! Lets not allow our FEAR to keep our children from autonomous behaviors.



