



Edition: 11

28 March 2019

ST PETER'S GIRLS PREP SCHOOL

FROM THE HEADMASTER

I was delighted to hear, from a number of parents, that the tips in the newsletter article entitled *Dealing with Anxiety in Girls*, a few weeks back, were useful.

This week, I would like to share extracts from Jo Boaler's new book: *Limitless Mind: Learn, Lead & Live without Barriers*. (Harper Collins: 2019). This book challenges the traditional mindset of how we teach and learn Mathematics.

VALUING DIFFERENCE AND GROWTH

(By Tanya LaMar, Doctoral Student Stanford University)

*Nicholas Letchford grew up in Australia, a quiet boy who loved to build and solve puzzles. In Nicholas' first years of school his parents were told that he was learning disabled, that he had a very low IQ and that he was "the worst child they had seen in 20 years". 2018 was an important year for Nicholas and his family. It was the year that Nicholas' mother Lois published her book: *Reversed: A Memoir*, describing their teaching and learning journey together. It was also the year that Nicholas graduated from Oxford University with a doctorate in Applied Mathematics.*

Nicholas' story of overcoming the odds that were stacked against him is inspiring but his journey – from a boy diagnosed with a learning disability to an adult with the highest academic achievement—should also remind us of the dangers of writing off any students in school, because they show signs of weakness.

A few decades ago scientists believed that our brains were fixed—either at birth or by the time we were adolescents. This led to the schooling approaches that fill schools—of identifying learning disabilities, providing accommodations and working around them.

Now the scientific world has new understandings, particularly regarding the incredible plasticity and adaptability of the brain. Scientists have discovered that every time we learn we form, strengthen or connect brain pathways, in a process of almost constant brain change.

*When schools emphasize a narrow way of thinking, students who think differently turn away from the subject or worse, become labeled as having a disability. It is fairly typical for schools and homes across the US and world to offer mathematics as a **subject of memorization**.*

This comes about in part because of the testing culture that is dominant in the world. Teachers know that they can teach students to memorize methods and be successful in narrow tests. The memorization approach starts early—with teachers asking students to memorize tables of multiplication facts, often from 1st grade onwards. Mathematician Francis Su describes the memorization of the 12x12 multiplication table as one of the most meaningless activities possible. Students who undergo such experiences learn early on that mathematics is a shallow subject needing fast recall, and for that reason, they turn away from it.

There are many problems with the memorization approach to mathematics. One is that some students are not good memorizers. These students do not have less mathematics potential and often they are students who think creatively and visually, have strong reasoning and logic, and who could contribute greatly to the discipline of mathematics. Sadly, such students are not valued in memorization classrooms, and they quickly get the idea they are not “a math person” which changes their learning from that point on.

For some students weak memorization of math facts, which often stems from anxiety, leads to a learning disability diagnosis and years of special education classes and low self-esteem.

One of the most important and yet most neglected reasons for underachievement is math anxiety, a psychological condition that often develops in the early years and snowballs as students move through school. Ashcraft describes math anxiety, as the feeling of tension, apprehension, or fear when people work on mathematics. Neuroscientists are now showing that mathematics anxiety is widespread, that it impedes the functioning of the brain and it can be passed on by teachers and by parents. Before deciding that a student has a “learning disability” it seems important that we consider the ways that mathematics anxiety may be affecting a student’s learning and achievement.

Many children in the US, and beyond, grow up thinking that either you can do math or you can’t. When they struggle, they assume they can’t. From that point on any struggle is a further reminder of their perceived inadequacies.

Researchers now know that when people with math anxiety encounter numbers, a fear center in the brain is activated—the same fear center that lights up when people see snakes or spiders. As the fear center of the brain becomes activated, activity in the problem-solving centers in the brain is diminished. It is no wonder that so many people underachieve in mathematics—as soon as people become anxious about it, their brains are compromised.

When mathematics is taught as a narrow subject, with one way to be successful —follow and reproduce the teacher’s methods—only a small number of students are successful. When mathematics is opened and teachers work to recognize and value all the ways of being mathematical including making conjectures, problem solving, communicating, reasoning, drawing, modelling, making connections, and using multiple representations—many more students are successful. A more open mathematics approach has been shown by multiple research studies to bring about more equitable and higher achievement

An important shift that needs to be made in the school system and in homes concerns the way in which students and teachers react when students struggle. Neuroscience and educational research shows that times of struggle are some of the most productive times for brains, and they should be celebrated. If students face struggle and think that it is a time of challenge and brain growth, rather than assuming they are failures and not “math people” (or substitute any other subject), their learning pathways will change. This takes different messages from teachers and parents, especially around times of struggle.

This paper is not giving the argument that all students have the same potential or that some students do not have learning differences that need special attention, but we are claiming that many students develop the incorrect idea that they cannot be successful when mathematics is taught in a narrow and closed way, because of the narrowness of the approach. All students benefit from a multi-dimensional mathematics approach that values different ways of seeing and working, that is true to the discipline of mathematics, and that focuses upon the big ideas of mathematics and the connections that link them. A connected, meaningful and multi-dimensional mathematics experience should be a right for all students.

Apologies in advance for the poor performance of the Headmaster in our upcoming Staff Variety Show 😊

Nibe nempelasonto emnandi!

Darrel Webb (Headmaster)

PARENT CONSULTATIONS WITH SPECIALIST TEACHERS

The Grade 4 to 7 girls are participating in student-led conferences at present. We are so proud of their approach and willingness to share their experiences with their class teacher/ mentor and their parents. Confidence is developing and personalised goals are being set which gives girls ownership of their learning. They are also involved in the feedback process, which improves communication around progress. Our girls are now more familiar with interviewing techniques and are more able to think on their feet!



To supplement these experiences, specialist teachers are available for short consultations, if you feel the need for additional feedback after the student-led conferences.

Date: 9 April
Venue: Royce Hall

The teachers involved in cultural subjects will be available from 14:30 to 15:30.

Marguerite Schmitt	Music
Andrew Steyn	Sport
Belinda van der Watt	Art
Cara Eggett	Pastoral Care
Kerryn Schmidt	Ed Tech
Mel Aspeling	Drama

Teachers who specialise in academic subjects will be available from 14:30 to 18:00, but no formal appointments may be made for these discussions. Please keep your conversation short, i.e. about 5 - 7 minutes.

Kim Gordon	Grade 7 Maths
Ron Thackwell	Grade 7 English; Exploration and Learning
Rick Wilson	Grade 7 English; Exploration and Learning
Rose Nkomo	Grade 7 and 6 isiZulu
Ronel Schoeman	Grade 7 and 6 Afrikaans
Candice Ellis	Grade 7 and 6 STEM
Tony Blackhurst	Grade 6 Maths
Kirsty Morey	Grade 6 English

Kerryn White
Wilna Coetzee
Boitumelo Ledwaba
Pam van Gass

Grade 6 and 5 Exploration and Learning
Grade 3 - 5 Afrikaans
Grade 3 - 5 isiZulu
Academics

Tea and coffee will be served while you wait. If a further, lengthier discussion is needed, please make a separate appointment with the relevant teachers, via email.

Pam van Gass
(Deputy Head: Academics)

INDIVIDUAL AND CLASS GROUP PHOTOGRAPH ORDERS

The photographer has given us an extension for photograph orders!

You received your daughter's individual photograph (a 'thumbnail' version), attached to an order form. Individual photos are not displayed on the photographer's website – for security reasons.

All group photos can be viewed and accessed on the website: www.lifeimaging.co.za

Username: stpeters

Password: spg123

(These details are on the order form)

Please read ordering instructions very carefully to avoid frustration!

Photographs which are ordered using the order form - must be paid for via EFT (banking details on the form). Proof of EFT should be attached to the order form when it is returned. **NO CASH CAN BE ACCEPTED.**

The new deadline for orders is **Thursday, 4 April 2019.**

Jean Macleod
(Marketer: Girls School)

VALUE OF THE WEEK: RESILIENCE

Helping our children to build resilience could be one of the greatest gifts a parent can bestow on their children. We can't change that they will face challenges in their lives, what we can do is give them the skills so these challenges are never able to break them. We can help them to build their resilience.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from stress, challenge, tragedy, trauma or adversity. When children are resilient, they are braver, more curious, more adaptable and better able to exist and survive in our world today. The good news is that resilience is something that can be nurtured in all children.

Building small humans into healthy, thriving adults is not about solving all their problems for them. We all want to protect our children, we don't want them dealing with discomfort, but at times stumbling blocks can be beneficial to our children. A little bit of stress is life-giving and helps them to develop the skills they need to flourish. Strengthening them towards healthy living is about nurturing, within them, the strategies to deal with that adversity.

We as parents can help children build resilience and confront uncertainty by teaching them to solve problems independently. We need to help our children to bounce back.

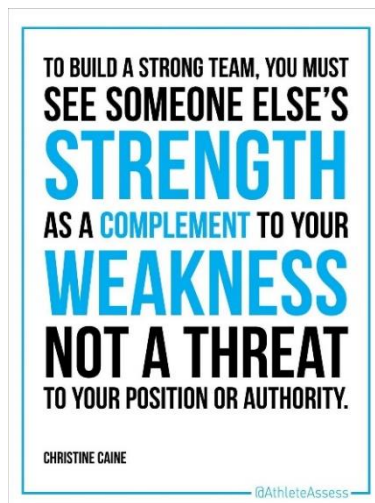


Consider the last time your child experienced a discomfort, a failure, a friendship issue or a trauma that left her deflated. Did you blame someone else or the world? Did your child lose motivation or hold a grudge? Perhaps, instead you helped your child to bounce back.

Cara Eggett
(Director: Pastoral Care)

FROM THE SPORTS DESK

Food for thought...



CROSS COUNTRY – TIC Mrs Fleming (lfleming@stpeters.co.za)

Please note that the cross country course will start and finish on Feathers Field, with the rest of the course taking the girls through the PWC bike park. We strongly encourage all the girls to participate. Not only is it an event that the girls will thoroughly enjoy, but it will also help to develop the girls' fitness, leading into netball season. Thursday, 4 April is the final cross country event.

The distances are as follows:

Grade 3/4 – 1.8 km

Grade 5/6/7 – 2.2 km

TENNIS**Optional tennis**

The optional tennis practices will continue as per the extramural timetable. Please could all girls playing tennis meet at the astro tennis courts for their sessions. Please ensure that your daughter has the correct shoes and hat when attending the practice sessions!

Tennis Ladder – Girls are able to challenge to get on to the school ladder, from which the school teams are selected. The team practices are held on a Tuesday morning from 06:30-07:15 on the astro courts.

SPORTS TOUR

We wish our netball and tennis girls all the best of luck for their upcoming tour to Eunice Primary in Bloemfontein to participate in the All Girls Sports Festival. The girls will be competing against schools from across the country.

NETBALL – TIC Mrs Makola (kmakola@stpeters.co.za)

- The Grade 5-7 teams playing at the Saints Prep Sports Festival will be finalised by Friday, 29 March.

GRADE	COACHES	PRACTICE DAYS	PRACTICE DAYS
GRADE 3	Mrs Eggett, Miss Mashabela, Coach Gontse, Coach Lebo, Miss Maloi	MON(11:20-12:10)	WED(14:00-14:45)
GRADE 4	Mrs Schoeman, Miss Keeve, Coach Lindo, Miss Ledwaba, Coach Zodwa	MON(14:45-15:30)	TUES(14:00-14:45)
GRADE 5	Mrs Fleming, Coach Nadel, Miss Moecheni, Coach Zodwa, Coach Lebo, Coach Lido	MON(14:00-14:45)	TUES(14:45-15:30)
GRADE 6	Coach Meagan, Coach Gontse, Mrs Coetzee, Coach Vuyiswa	MON(15:30-16:15)	WED(14:45-15:30)
GRADE 7	Mrs Makola, Mrs Cronin, Mrs Clarke-Buchanan, Coach Naledi	TUES(15:30-16:15)	WED(15:30-16:15)

PARENTING THE SPORTY CHILD IN THE 21ST CENTURY

HeronBridge College will be hosting a seminar on *Parenting the Sporty Child in the 21st Century*. Please see the covering letter below for more details.

Sport Scientists, Sport Psychologists and Biokineticists are raising concerns about children's development and growth in sport. Their research has focused on the increased frequency of injuries caused by repetitive movements as well as too much load on the young and developing body through the impact of children focusing on a select sport from a young age. These factors have contributed to the premature peaking of these athletes and ultimately, the high dropout rate of adolescents from competitive sport.

As parents and educators, we aim to develop active, healthy children, who remain so throughout their lives. With this aim in mind, HeronBridge College would like to invite all parents and coaches to our Sport Conference on Saturday 6 April from 08:00 until 13:00 where a panel of experts will offer advice and guidance on raising a sporty child and keeping them active for life.

The panel will comprise:

Lindsey Parry: Sport Scientist Coached Carolyn Wostmann, Comrades Winner <https://coachparry.com/>

Charles Malanga: Sport Psychologist <http://www.cimpsychology.co.za/>

Justin Jeffrey: Biokineticist <http://adjustability.co.za/>

Hennie Le Roux: Springbok rugby legend https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hennie_le_Roux

The cost of the conference is R100 per delegate and tickets can be purchased using the QR code through Quicket. Please note that this conference is also being made available to our neighbouring schools.



We look forward to spending the morning with you discussing this important topic.

*Alison Ritchie
Parent Liaison*

Andrew Steyn (*Director of Sport*)

SECURITY QR CODES

If you have not yet received a vehicle QR code (to be cut out) via your daughter and have not filled in the Google form, please use this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/NX1PEDAYmpKMctxR2> in order to supply the necessary details. We will issue a disc electronically, using your captured email address - once we have updated the database.

Most parents would have received two branded plastic disc holders. Please note that we have allocated two complimentary disc holders, per family. If more are required, please obtain holders or stickers (as you would for a car licence disc) from alternative sources. If you have not received a disc holder, please contact Jean Macleod at jmacleod@stpeters.co.za.

Thank you for assisting us to make the St Peter's Campus a safer place for your children.

Lance Camphor (*Security Manager*)

Vijay Maharaj (*Campus Deputy Head: Compliance*)



Nespresso Coffee Machines at Mvukuzane and Gunn Pavilions

Just a reminder that Nespresso coffee machines are available in the Mvukuzane and Gunn Pavilions for parents who would like to enjoy a cup. The cost of the coffee remains at R15 a cup. Please note that this is based on an **honesty** system, and payment is via SNAPSCAN ONLY. Instructions are provided next to the Nespresso machines.

Complimentary tea and instant coffee is also available, for your convenience.

Enjoy your coffee!



WINTER UNIFORM

- We recommend that all new St Peter's pupils start coming to the School Shop to get their winter uniform requirements for next term.
- All current pupils should try on their winter uniform and update any items that no longer fit.
- We have scarves and beanies in stock. These can be embroidered with your child's full name (at a cost of R40). These particular items tend to be left lying around!
- We have not been able to get gloves this year so should you see navy gloves, whilst at the shops, we recommend that you buy them!

Nadia Thompson
(School Shop)

LOST PROPERTY

A watch was found in Mrs Kim Gordon's Grade 7 classroom a few weeks ago. The make is Swatch. If you have lost a watch, please contact Nwabisa, at Reception, to describe the colour and style.

ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL 2019: Wednesday, 3 April 2019

The St Peter's Girls Prep School Orchestra, Rock Band and Grade 7 Marimba Band have been invited to participate in the *Kingsmead Junior Schools Ensemble Festival* on Wednesday, 3 April 2019.

This event is the first event of its kind and we are delighted to join in and display our girls' hard work and talent. Girls need to be at Rosebank Union Church, Sandton (dressed in their No 1s) by 16:30, with their instruments (if applicable). We have arranged for a **one-way** bus, to leave St Peter's Girls Prep at 15:45. The concert will end at 19:00 after which parents are to fetch their children from the Rosebank Union Church, Sandton.

If you wish for your daughter to make use of the bus service, please complete the link below. Only girls who have completed the link will be allowed to go on the bus. <https://goo.gl/forms/EpzsiGtYqtWtmNFU2>

15:45	-	Bus Departs from St Peter's Prep
16:15	-	Girls arrive at the church
16:30	-	Rehearsal/Sound check
18:00 to 19:00	-	Concert

The girls are welcome to bring a healthy snack.

There is no charge for this festival. We encourage parents, siblings and friends to come and join us in this celebration of talent and hard work.

Marguerite Schmitt
(Director of Music)



Sign up for Holiday Netball Clinic



Date: 26, 29 & 30 April

Time: Grade 3 – 4 **08:00-10:00**

Grade 5 – 7 **10:30 – 13:30**

Venue: St Peter's Girls Prep Netball courts

Hosted by: Mrs Makola & Mrs Schoeman

A holiday netball clinic is on offer - to help girls with pre-season training and to improve their netball skills. We will be focusing on agility, footwork, on-court playing techniques, shooting techniques, defense and many other skills.

We also include certain life skills development, personal growth and skill improvement. We teach the children the following aspects:

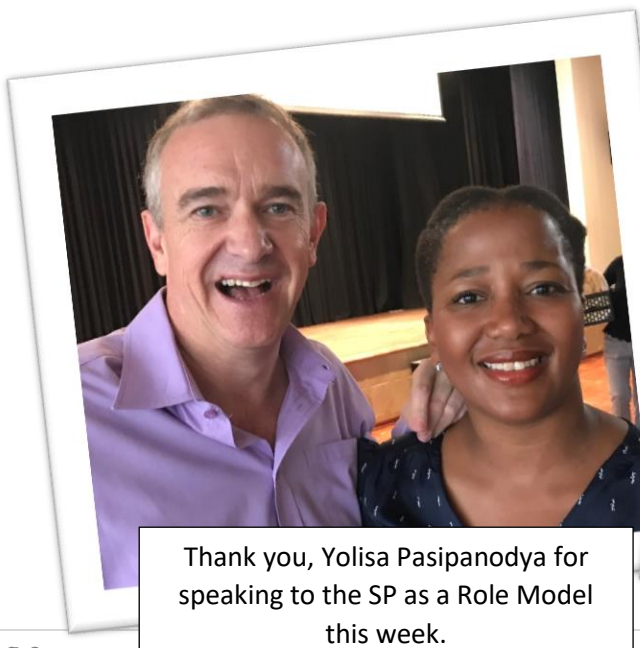
- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- Building individual character
- Acceptance of cultures and personalities
- Mental strength
- That sport is fun!

Cost: **R110** per child **per day**. Bookings can be made (with payment in cash) to Mrs Makola or Mrs Schoeman

Ronel Schoeman rschoeman@stpeters.co.za

Tumi Makola kmakola@stpeters.co.za

THIS WEEK



Thank you, Yolisa Pasipanodya for speaking to the SP as a Role Model this week.



Our pretty, new arch in the garden!

CHARITY



Bob Martin
SINCE 1892
Official Sponsor

Calling all Super Dogs!

DOGS UNITE!
For Guide Dogs

The only dog walk of its kind- where your dog is the hero of the hour and every hero will be presented with a cape!

Date: 7 April 2019

Venue: PWC Bike Park JHB
(1A Libertas Street, off Sloan Street, Bryanston, Sandton, 2191)

Time: 07h30-12h00

Keep a look out on our website
www.guidedog.org.za

 **GUIDE-DOGS ASSOCIATION**
South Africa

Make sure to buy your tickets at our webshop
www.guidedog.org.za