



Growing **G.R.E.E.N.** Family InterActions Strategies for Cooperative Family Communication

Learning to Communicate
to Successfully Navigate Challenges Together
as a Stay-at-Home Team

**-Herb Hein, MMSc, CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist
Hein Speech-Language Pathology, Inc.
Herb@HeinSLPinc.com**

&

**Jocelyn Burke, MA.Ed.
Program Director of ClubXcite
jburke@exciteway.com**

**Webinar on
50th Anniversary of **Earth Day**, April 22, 2020**





"Our Brains Growing **G.R.E.E.N.** to Be our Better Selves in a Better World"-artwork by Natalie Hein

On **Earth Day**, it is a perfect opportunity to start learning strategies to "grow" your **G.R.E.E.N.** Home Team or to take steps to make your Home Team even better.

What does it mean to "grow" your Home Team?

What are some strategies to guide the formation and development of that Team?

What does it mean to act **G.R.E.E.N.**?

G.R.E.E.N. is an acronym that stands for the words **G**rateful, **R**espectful, **E**mpathetic, **E**asygoing, and **N**avigating. When we act in these ways, we are using our human brain to think and make our best interaction choices.



We contrast and analyze **G.R.E.E.N.** behavior vs. **R.E.D.** behavior! We do our best positively reinforce **G.R.E.E.N.** behavior whenever it occurs!

G.R.E.E.N. Behavior	R.E.D. Behavior
G rateful	R ude
R espectful	E gocentric
E mpathetic	D isruptive
E asygoing	
N avigating	

How can we encourage this **G.R.E.E.N.** behavior so our Home Team benefits?

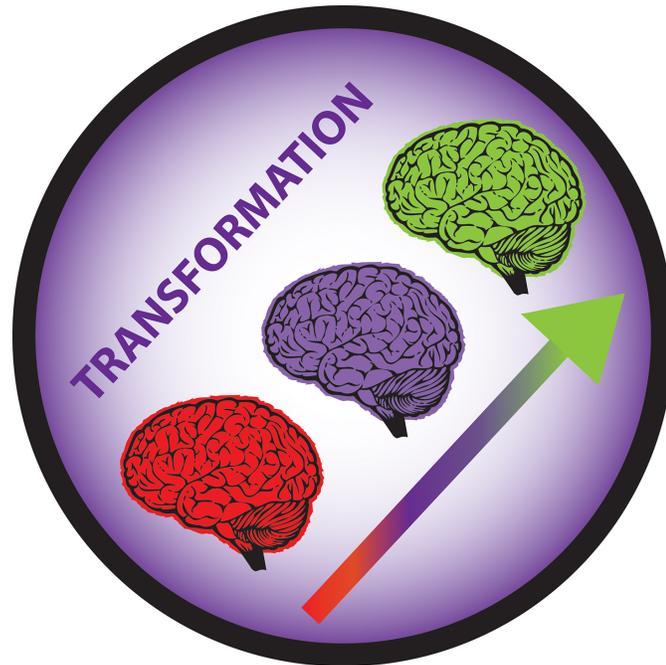


What is the Home Team? The Home Team is everyone living in the same house, sharing the same space!

Due to our being asked to stay-at-home for our health and for the health of others, we are isolated with the people in our home.

We cannot physically be with our friends, our teachers, and often, even other family members who don't live with us. If we are by ourselves, we can only connect through phone or computer connections or at a six-foot distance.

However, if we are lucky enough to be living with someone at this time, we have the opportunity to make the most of that relationship. We can even make a **transformation** in that relationship! That is what we are talking about now.



Some of our children were previously successful in connecting with others, but some children had difficulties doing so before this pandemic, making it important for families to learn some concepts and strategies to help develop this skill to successfully interact.



Thought Transformation Scene Changer



Name _____ Date _____

1. The Scene at first, before G.R.E.E.N. Thought Transformation.

a. Write or draw how I am acting with other people in this scene before the G.R.E.E.N. Thought Transformation.



b. What feedback am I getting from others about my actions?
he is getting labeled.

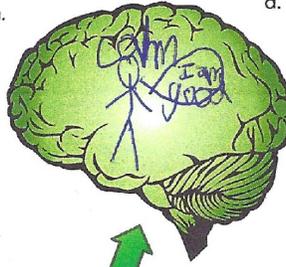
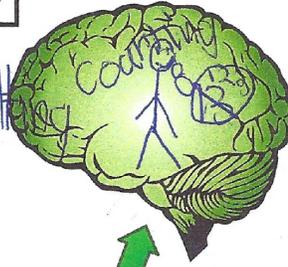
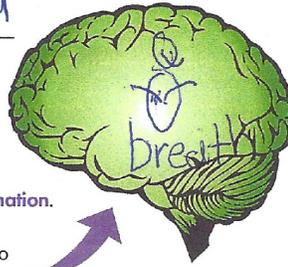
c. How are all the people in this scene feeling, including me?
so angry

2. Get the Power!

Change the scene!

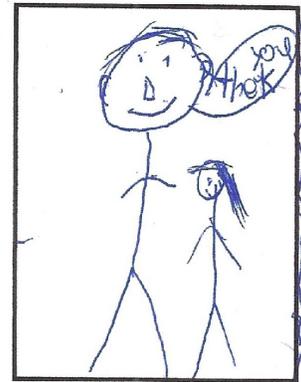
Be open-minded to make a Transformation.

Think of Guiding G.R.E.E.N. Thoughts to make it happen!



3. The new scene after G.R.E.E.N. Thought Transformation.

a. Write or draw what is happening in this scene after G.R.E.E.N. Thought Transformation.



b. What feedback am I getting from others about my actions?
Positive

c. How are all the people in this scene feeling now, including me?
good

4. Is this new scene better?

yes no
Why? he is not having a tantrum.
green green

5. This page shows a powerful Transformation from red to green



How do we start making the Home Team?

We use language to communicate ideas with each other. Since we are human beings, we have the capability of using language to bring us together.

We set up a time to have a Home Team meeting! We attempt to make the experience productive, but also enjoyable. We choose a time that would be best for everyone.

We can start to use words to:

- name our Team
- explain why it is important to support our Team
- establish **Common Team Goals**
- establish Team Rules (such as not using cell phones during Team meetings, or taking turns when talking to each other!!)



WHO IS ON A TEAM WITH YOU?



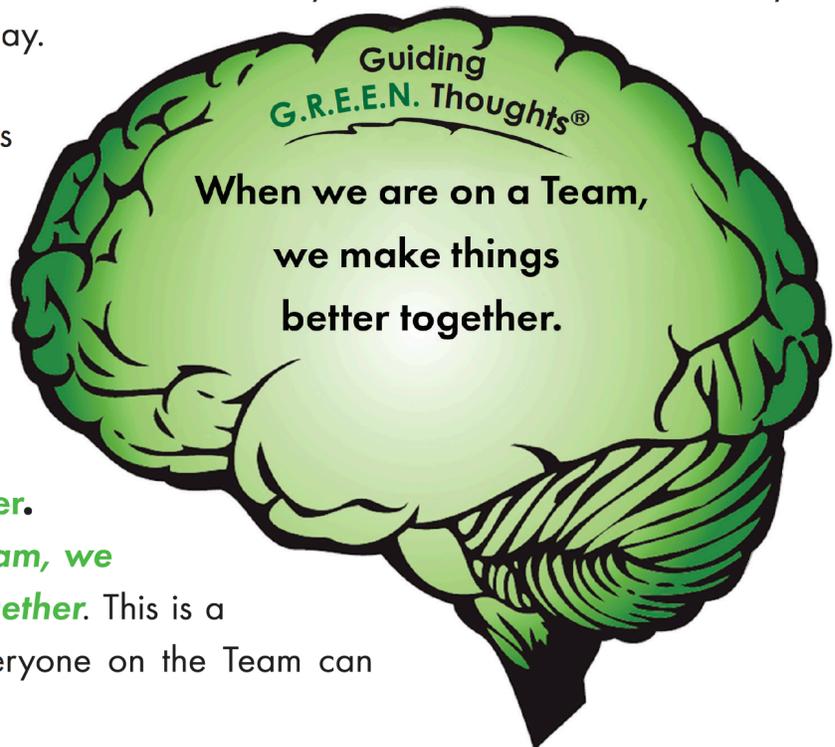
You make the world better when you think of other people. in addition to yourself. You can be more **civil** and help your part of civilization be more civilized! You have more **power** when you realize that you and the people around you are all on the same Team!

Who is on your Team? Who else should you be thinking about besides yourself?

You may not always think about how important your actions are to the Teams you are on. But it is important to understand that you can make a difference to your civilization every single day.

When everyone does their part to help the Team, then everyone can win! When everyone can live, play, and work well with all the other people on their Teams, things get **better**.

When we are on a Team, we make things better together. This is a guiding thought that everyone on the Team can have in their own minds.





Common Team Goals for the Home Team

- We make a peaceful place to live.
- We show that we care about each other.
- We support each other so we can grow to be our best selves.
- Everyone can have a turn to share ideas.

OUR TEAM NAME _____

OUR COMMON TEAM GOALS

Reasons for Home Team Rules

Your Home Team develops rules so everyone in your home feels safe, respected, and appreciated. Everyone on the Home Team likes to feel that they can move **forward** and have their best lives doing the important things they want to do. When members of the Home Team **support** one another, they feel good about moving the Home Team **forward**. When you don't follow the Home Team rules, the Team gets stuck—people on the Team cannot move **forward**. They will not feel safe enough or respected enough to move in their best directions. The Team loses some **power** because it becomes **disconnected** and distracted. To help the Home Team stay **powerful** and move **forward**, everyone must make the best choices and follow Home Team rules.

Discuss:

What Home Team rule do you think is important?



OUR HOME TEAM RULES



Everyone on our Home Team uses **self-control** and follows our Home Team Rules.

Here are our Home Team Rules.

Everyone on the Team follows these rules so our Team can be great and **powerful** and keep moving **forward!**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

MONITORING OUR USE OF LANGUAGE IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT!

We have to consider that different people on Home Teams may have varying skill levels for understanding and expressing language. It is important to use words that make sense to each of the different Home Team members so it is easier to participate in Team building.

If a child does not understand our words,

- use simpler words
- use fewer words
- use visual cues to help the child see what we are talking about

As much as possible, use language that focuses on this Team concept. Focus on using different pronouns!!

Use the pronouns “we” and “us” instead of “me” vs. “you”.

We explain to our children and everyone else on the Team that, now more than ever before, we are focusing on being a Team, and we tell them why this is important!

Why is it very important for us to focus on being a great Team now?

- It helps reduce a sense of isolation
- It helps to develop a sense of belonging
- It helps to develop that we can trust that we can feel safe when we are together
- with our thoughtful Team-centered actions, we are not only benefiting ourselves, we are benefiting the Team!
- If we make a **positive** change in how we act with our Team, it benefits all of us! This is the reason for all of us to act in a **better** way.

AS GUIDES, WE MODEL HOW TO NAVIGATE DIFFERENT SITUATION

We are patient as much as possible

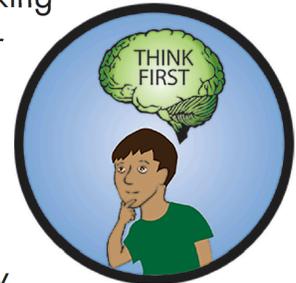
As guides, we are patient with this process. We feel like we are making progress if we make small steps or “approximations” to our goals.

We model acting calmly

We also need to consider that we all can do our best thinking and our best interacting when we are calm. We model being calm with our family, and guide or coach all Team members to act in a calm way as much as possible too!

From The Guide’s Guide to Growing G.R.E.E.N. InterActions:

This program encourages participants to calm down before taking action so that their actions will be better for the Team. When our brain is in an agitated, excited state, we are less likely to make wise choices. In this state, our words and actions are more likely to be driven by our impulses. They are less likely to be put through our self-monitoring filter that asks, “How will this affect the others I am with?” As a guide, it is your responsibility to advise participants to delay choosing words or actions until they have time to allow their brains to return to a more calm, thoughtful state.



We instruct and model **thoughtful** vs. **impulsive** behavior

We teach what it means to be **thoughtful** and contrast that with acting in an **impulsive** way. We point out when we are being thoughtful and also point out when we need a calming break ourselves to Think First!

From “Self-Calming Strategies” chapter of the InterActive Lesson Book of Growing **G.R.E.E.N.** InterActions



In order to make the best choice in a scene, **survey the scene** really closely. This includes taking a **look at yourself!**



Ask yourself these questions:

- *Am I calm enough right now to Think First?*



- *Am I calm enough to listen to others?*



- *Am I calm enough to make **safe** choices that are not **impulsive**?*



From “Thinking First to Make the Best Choices” chapter of the InterActive Lesson Book of Growing **G.R.E.E.N. InterActions**



With your human brain, you can learn to Think First about your thoughts and about what you are going to do *before* you take any action.

Thinking First keeps you from acting in an **impulsive** way.

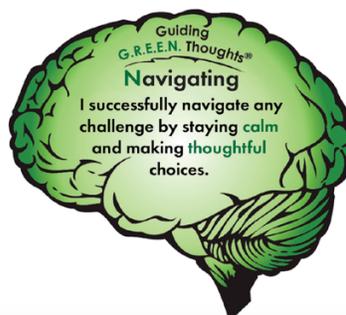


Many other animals often act **impulsively**, meaning they take action *without any thinking at all!*



(Jambi, Herb's dog)

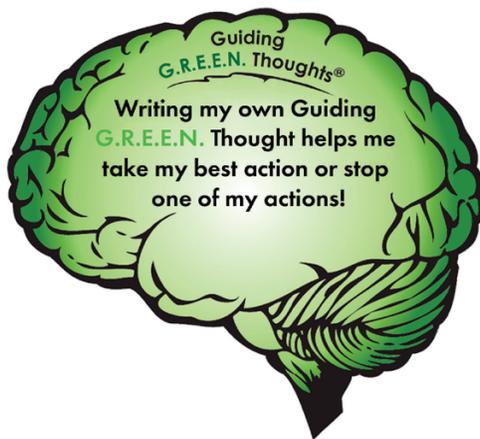
We guide ourselves and others on our Team to Think First before acting, by finding & using thoughts that can give us the power to make our best choices in different situations.



We guide those on our Teams to remember they have powerful human brains. With those brains, we are able to think thoughts, which I call **Guiding G.R.E.E.N. Thoughts®**, that help us think about making our best choices “in the moment”. Within lessons in my **InterActive Lesson Book**, I present and explain how specific **Guiding G.R.E.E.N. Thoughts** can be useful in different situations. We choose these thoughts and help guide our Teammates to choose personally powerful thoughts that allow for

improved interactions. By reading the pre-printed thoughts, or writing our own, we take the time to review them and practice thinking about when they can be useful. That way, “in the moment” when they can be most helpful, it is easier for us to remember these thoughts and have them help us make our best choices of action for ourselves and for our Team.

While numerous **Guiding G.R.E.E.N. Thoughts** are presented throughout the **InterActive Lesson Book**, 36 universally useful, pre-printed **Guiding G.R.E.E.N. Thoughts** are available on our website in the **Box of Guiding G.R.E.E.N. Thoughts** along with blank ones for writing additional ones that are personally relevant and powerful.



13.4 Powerful Self-Calming Strategies



1. Remember that you have **Personal Goals** and **Common Team Goals**. Find the **power** to remember your **goals** and the reason you want to calm yourself to reach those **goals**.



2. Think about the **positive** consequences when you stay in control.



3. Use the strategy of controlled breathing when you Brake to Take a **5** Break to help you calm your body and your mind!



4. You can listen to the song “Brake to Take a **5** Break” to help you use the controlled breathing strategy to calm your body and your mind.

5. Use the strategy of “visualization” to picture a peaceful place and become calmer.



After you have become calm again, you will be ready to do your best for yourself and the Team.