



Preparing your children for a powerful life

Understanding Bullying

Leading martial artist
Andy Dickinson talks
with Felicity Garland from
Evolve Counselling about
the issue of bullying
among children and
young people.



Andy Dickinson



Felicity Garland

Andy: *It's my pleasure to be with Child and Adolescent Counsellor Felicity Garland to discuss the topic of bullying this morning. Bullying is something which is fairly close to my own heart because I really believe that one of the biggest reasons I got into martial arts in the first place was because of couple of significant situations in my primary school years, and early high school years. This prompted me to get some more power into my life in a way that would help me to handle bullying situations as they came up.*

I chose to look at bullying as a way of entering martial arts, as a way to get stronger and learn self-defence, but I understand there is a whole psychological side to understanding bullying which is in effect your expertise.

Felicity Garland: Sure!

Andy: *So, bullying is something which is quite prolific in our society, and it's something which has been obviously been on the front page of the newspaper quite a lot over the past couple of months, and it's something which I think it's very, very important for parents to have a good understanding of because no one likes their own child to be bullied.*

I guess the first question is, what exactly is bullying? Because bullying can be a form of teasing, it can be something that is violent; it can even take place over the Internet these

days. So, what is a kind of rule of thumb or a beginning place as far as how we can understand what exactly bullying is?

Felicity Garland: Sure. Well, bullying is quite difficult to define because it does cover a whole range of behaviours, but I guess the most important factor is intention. So bullying involves acting with an intention to threaten someone, to intimidate or harm, to instil fear, and thereby gain power over that other person. You mentioned the word violence before; bullying is a form of violence.

Therefore, it must be responded to in helpful ways in order to stop that cycle of violence. You mentioned a few of the forms of bullying there. So bullying, yes, it may include physical force, it may be verbal bullying such as ridiculing someone or threatening, humiliating or name-calling, things like that. Bullying can also take nonverbal forms. I have met a lot of children and young people through my work as a Counsellor who have experienced being excluded or isolated from their peers.

Andy: *So it could be quite insidious.*

Felicity Garland: Absolutely, yes, or even damage to someone's property. That's also a nonverbal kind of violence.

Andy: *Did you find it tends to be more than just a one-off event; sometimes it can be on going...*

Felicity Garland: Yes, absolutely, and yes, bullying usually occurs more than once towards the particular targeted person and it can happen many times a day or lasting for months or even years. Some of the adults who have seen me for counselling have been subjected to literally decades of bullying.

Andy: *And you mentioned that it could take different forms. How do you differentiate between just common teasing and something which is actually considered to be bullying, because teasing particularly with children, it could be sort of a fine line between the two?*

Felicity Garland: Absolutely! Sometimes it's difficult to really pinpoint. We tend to want to put a label on things. But I think ultimately it comes back to that intention. If a child is treating another child with the intention to harm them in some way, be it emotionally or physically or otherwise, in order to gain a sense of power, then that is different to just mucking around when the other person is okay with that. Having said that, it is important to look at the effect it is having on the recipient and whether or not they feel threatened regardless of the other person's intention.

Andy: *So I guess it comes down in part to the recipient, whether it is teasing or bullying, the definitive line is how it affects the person involved.*

If they feel that it's something which is going to affect them or intimidate them, they feel they need to create some action around that particular behaviour. I suppose that would be one of the things that need to be addressed.

Felicity Garland: Absolutely! So along with the intention of the person doing it, it is also as you say really important to consider the effect that that's having on the other person.

Andy: *The media publicizes bullying a lot, latches onto it, and it will put it on the front page of the papers. As you are dealing with bullying issues with children and adults, how common is bullying?*

Felicity Garland: Yes, that's a good question. I think it would be fair to say that almost everyone has either been bullied, has bullied others or has witnessed bullying during the childhood, especially at school.

Bullying is commonly associated with the playground, but it's definitely not unique to childhood and adolescence. Adults use bullying just as commonly if not more so than children and young people. But I guess the terminology is different. So when we think of things, like we call it road rage, or sexual harassment, or racial slurs, things like that, they are all forms of bullying.

Andy: *Really?*

Felicity Garland: Definitely. So I had a little bit of a look at the research that's been done in the area, and recent Australian research indicates that 20 to 25% of children aged under 15 experience bullying on a regular basis.

Andy: *And that would probably be fairly conservative.*

Felicity Garland: I think so, yes, that's what I was also thinking, that's probably quite underestimated.

Andy: *There would be a lot of playground incidents that would never be recorded.*



Felicity Garland: Yes. Also it's said, that one in five Australian children have been found to use bullying as a means to get what they want, again that's possibly a bit of the conservative figure. But yes, I mean overall I think most people will experience some form of bullying in their life-time and everyone has the capacity to use bullying approaches or to experience it.

I guess the reason why it is so widespread is because it can be an extremely effective way of getting what you want. Using forms of violence or power like that is very good at getting the outcome one is looking for. So long as it continues to be effective the child or the adult will keep using those methods. So it's not until it becomes ineffective, which means some kind of response is put in place that shifts that cycle, that it will stop.

But yes, it really can run in a cycle, and it's a cycle that can become quite difficult for the person using the bullying to shift because it does instill that sense of power and that's very difficult to step away from.

Andy: *Do you think that people that are bullied have learnt that behaviour from someone else or have they seen that behaviour as you say. Is it something which has been instilled in them through a process of using*

that tactic in order to gain what they wanted?

What I am saying is, for example a child may see a parent bullying someone over a parking spot, and imagines that to be the norm and thinks that yes, if he does raise his voice he can get what he wants.

Felicity Garland: Look for sure! And in my work, in counselling families and young people, I have never had a conversation where blame has been helpful. So I am not interested in blaming children or their parents for the fact that bullying is taking place. However, what I do know is helpful is to invite everyone in the family to take responsibility for reflecting on how they might have been contributing to a situation.

So in the case of bullying, I would ask parents, how they might have contributed to their child's understanding of how they relate to others? How might they have perhaps inadvertently role-modeled behaviours that have influenced their child's use of bullying behaviours, you gave the example in the car park. Little things like that.

I actually worked with one parent, one dad, who was able to identify that his "explosive" temper at home was not giving the messages that he wanted to give as a parent about

respecting others. And he bought his child to come and see me for counselling because the child had been suspended on the grounds that he got another child in headlock and threw them down and his father just couldn't think of where this came from or how this could be. This father was not physically violent towards his son but through our conversation he identified that his explosive temper was part of teaching his son what is acceptable and what is not in terms of relating with other people.

Many families I have worked with are really committed to creating a harmonious family environment, and they really don't know where this behaviour has come from. So obviously there are lots of other influential factors to consider, it doesn't always mean that the parents have had a role, but it is a possibility.

Andy: *Bullying was significant certainly in my life. One of the things that had affected me was that I felt like there was no one I could talk to about the situation. I thought it was fairly helpless, because I didn't really know what it was, because a five or six-year old doesn't really know what bullying is, they just experience it, and the effects of that bullying might be reflected in the change of personality. We are talking about back when I was six or seven-years-old. But I feel that that has significant enough effect on me, to want to understand it a little bit more and to work out how we can understand the effects of bullying on other children. So we can maybe see the effects of what's going on without having to say anything because it's hard for them to label the behaviour and say, "hey mum, I am being bullied at school."*

Felicity Garland: Absolutely.

Andy: *But what kind of effects are we looking for, what are the effects of bullying over a period of time?*

Felicity Garland: Sure. Well firstly I'll comment on what you began saying there, in your own personal



experience that you felt you had no one to talk to. Well that can be a really common experience and alongside that, often when a child is experiencing bullying, there can be a lot of shame around it. The child will attribute their own meaning to their experience of the bullying, which might include such ideas as "I have failed in some way" or "I am not good enough" or "I am not normal like the other kids" or "I am different to the other kids and that's a bad thing".

Andy: *Yes, I guess in my situation, because we basically came from England and I have an English accent and I was white and freckle-faced and I was different. They were really picking on me about my accent and the way I was speaking. For me, I actually wanted to change the way that I was speaking so I wouldn't attract that attention. So I can see what you are saying.*

Felicity Garland: Yes, and so certainly by naming the behaviour that brings the behaviour as central to the problem rather than the child experiencing the bullying. So by reminding the child, or certainly this is part of my intention when I am working with the child experiencing bullying, to name it for what it is, and to try and support the child to step away from those negative conclusions they were making about themselves on the

account of the bullying happening. Name the bullying as the problem, not the child experiencing it.

I mean you asked about the effects, certainly there is widespread consensus that bullying can be harmful to not only the physical wellbeing of children but also the emotional and mental wellbeing, whether it is that they are experiencing bullying or whether it is that they are choosing to use bullying themselves. So everyone is affected differently. It's hard to say definitively what's going to be happening but there are certainly some common experiences that parents can keep an eye out for which may indicate that this is happening.

So firstly, what are the potential effects for the person experiencing bullying? Well, frequent exposure to bullying has been linked to feelings of helplessness, powerlessness or worthlessness, lower levels of confidence and these effects are actually what enable the bullying to continue, because these feelings of powerlessness position the child to feel that they are unable to stand up against the bullying.

Children might therefore be finding it hard to concentrate at school or they might want to start avoiding school life altogether. So these effects have obvious implications for learning. Some of the young people that have come to see me for counselling have been at the beginning of high school, and it has come to their parent's attention that they are truanting, they are skipping school and this has been linked back to the fact that bullying is actually happening.

Andy: *So maybe something is inwardly happening, but the effect of that maybe the child is making excuses about not wanting to go to school?*

Felicity Garland: That's right.

Andy: *And as long as you dig a bit deeper and ask some questions... Don't you feel that also there needs to be a fairly good relationship between*

the parent and the child for that to happen?

Felicity Garland: First, the talking has to happen.

Andy: *Yes, so I guess this is where you come in.*

Felicity Garland: Well, counselling is not necessarily for everyone! Also, some families I meet with say that they already have a fairly good level of communication with their kids, but sometimes, as I mentioned, the shame that the child may be carrying about the bullying might be getting in the way of them actually telling their Mum and Dad what's actually going on, or they might be worried about how their Mum or Dad might react if they find out other kids are picking on them.

Andy: *So when you talk about shame, do you mean the shame of the child, about how they feel, not being able to stand up for him/her self?*

Felicity Garland: Yes. How they feel.

Andy: *And so there are self-esteem and confidence issues around that?*

Felicity Garland: There can be.

Andy: *How can they relate to that?*

Felicity Garland: Yes, the shame might start getting in the way of confidence and have them forming ideas like "I must be the loser kid, because I am the one that gets picked on, whereas all the other cool kids, all the popular kids, they are all bigger than me and I am less than them".

Andy: *I remember in my own situation, I hope you don't mind me giving you some of my own examples, because it can help some of people who listen to this. I think I was six or seven-years-old, and as I said, we just come out from England to Australia, and I remember this other boy, he was older than me, he was a year older than me. He was constantly at me and niggling me and pushing, I mean physically pushing me around, and I*

remember him saying to me that he wanted to fight me.

This is a significant memory I've got. I remember right back to when I was of that age, this is how much it stuck with me, and he said, "Look, well, I will meet you after school at 3 o'clock and we'll fight then and because (for whatever reason) we can't fight in school time". I am pretty sure that I didn't go, I am pretty sure that I went straight home. But there is the other side of me that would like to think that I did go and he didn't turn up.

So I have got these two scenarios banging in my head but I am pretty sure that I didn't go. I think I just went home. There were a couple of girls over there that told him to stop picking on me. But there was a sense of shame that I didn't go. I didn't know that what that shame was because it was a sense of shame and that has stayed with me, and manifested in other ways as I got older. So there can be significant effects like you said on a person being bullied.

Felicity Garland: Yes, there can be a range of significant effects in these situations. I once worked with a young woman in year 7 whose family actually brought her to counselling because she was repeatedly washing her hands and cleaning her teeth. Now they were of the opinion that their daughter was experiencing some sort of obsessive compulsive disorder, and they focused on this as the problem. What was uncovered in my conversations with this young woman was that she was being acutely bullied by this particular group of girls who would follow her after school. She had been pushed down stairs and was being harassed and intimidated in all sorts of ways physical and verbal ways.

Now as we addressed these things together, the washing hands and the cleaning teeth began to diminish a little bit. However, after a few sessions we sort of got to a bit of a stuck point, and I am thinking 'there is something missing here, what am I missing?'



During one of our sessions to follow she disclosed to me that her group of friends who she had been very close to since the very beginning of primary school had all shunned her because she was now being known as the 'kid who gets bullied'. So we were then able to explore her experience of a strong sense of grief and loss, as she really missed the friendship she once had with these girls.

So not only was she being bullied, but she also had no friends to support her. So that is understandably really tough for a child or young person. Just to finish on that story, after we uncovered that grief, we were able to start to look at the hopes and values that she holds, such as peace and friendship. We explored what she has to offer as a friend, regardless of whether these girls from her past are her friends or not. We started to build on other ways that she knew herself, inviting her to stand outside this idea of herself as 'the kid who gets bullied'. We identified that the bullying was the problem, and that she is not the problem. After some time she began taking steps towards starting new friendships that were meaningful, and to form some new ideas about her own identity and sense of worth in the world.

Anxiety is a common effect as well, anxiety might range from a child who is a little bit worried about things and then there is the other end of the spectrum where a child is experiencing full blown panic attacks at just the thought of going to school. Certainly, a prolonged experience of bullying has been found to increase the likelihood of depression. Now this is not in all cases, I don't want to be alarmist about these things, but certainly it is possible. And in a relatively small amount of situations bullying might lead to suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts and even death. Now again I want to say this is uncommon, I don't want parents to panic, but I guess this just really points to the seriousness of the issue.

And just before we go on, I wanted to make a distinction here. These effects that I have just listed do not define the person being bullied. They are often situational. So for example, you know your child to be outgoing and confident at home, it's still possible that at school they may experience life a lot differently.

But most importantly as a parent, it can be really helpful to avoid letting the effects of bullying colour the view you have of your child, or to obscure the other things you know about them because inadvertently, if you are relating to your child as a victim of bullying, this will simply further support them to believe that they are unable to stand up for themselves.

Andy: *With my own parents, they were supportive around the situation, but I really had to find my own way. A good many years later I actually became involved with martial arts. I guess the other side of the coin is that when we are dealing with bullying, there is the person who is actually doing the bullying, so we need to discuss what the potential effects of the person choosing to bully others because obviously they have got some issues as well.*



Felicity Garland: Yes, look in some situations definitely, a young person, like the young boy, I spoke about earlier who got the other kid in a headlock and threw them to the ground, well he ended up getting suspended and attained this reputation as 'the angry violent kid'. But he, in the lead up to that, was being heavily taunted, these comments being made, derogatory comments about his family. Whilst this does not excuse or justify his behaviour, it points to the importance of seeing things in context.

Andy: *And so his behaviour was also in response to bullying?*

Felicity Garland: Yes, that's right. As I mentioned earlier as well, studies have proven that children and young people who use forms of violence, including bullying, are likely to continue to use those forms of violence in their relationships as an adult unless something is put in place to shift that cycle. So for a person choosing to use bullying practices, there can be huge implications for their experience of relationships later in life, for their understanding of how to treat others obviously and also huge implications for their views of themselves. Being feared by others can become almost like a default position, and getting used to instilling a fear in others, that can be really detrimental over time.

You will notice that I have used the words: "the person choosing to use bullying". It's really important to remember that bullying is a behaviour. I do not define people as bullies. So if a child is referred to me for counselling, who has been practicing bullying, I don't see that kid as "a bully", because I know that there are a lot of other things that that child stands for, which stand outside of the purposes of violence.

Andy: *So that's a really good one...*

Felicity Garland: Yes. And every child that I have met who is using bullying, well, I have met other kids too who are using other forms of violence but if my question is timed well, when I have been able to ask that child: "You are telling me that everyone is calling you a bully or they call you the violent or the angry kid, is this okay with you?" Well, I can honestly say that 100% of times, their answer is "No, this is not how I want others to see me". They prefer not to be known as the bully, or as the violent kid, or as the angry one who people are scared of.

But as I mentioned earlier, bullying and these forms of violence can actually become bigger than the person using them. A person using violent ways of being can find it really difficult to step away from these practices. Violence is a very powerful strategy, and due to it's effectiveness it can be hard to give up. But most importantly, if you notice anything that concerns you as a parent, just talk to your child, let them know what you've noticed and ask them to tell you about it.

Andy: *Don't blame them.*

Felicity Garland: Yes, blame is never helpful and only serves to bring defences up and close helpful conversations down.

Andy: *Just ask them, communicate clearly with them about it and then get your own ideas about what is good behaviour. I suppose the form of bullying which I am not familiar with, but a lot of Y-gen people are*

more familiar with is the idea of Internet bullying and email bullying, what they call 'cyber bullying'. A lot of times, a parent has no idea that it's happening. I think that's a fairly insidious form of bullying because it's very indirect.

Felicity Garland: Yes and in many of those cases, make sure they don't press delete! I have met young people where there have been SMS text messages or emails, really threatening in some instances, and the police have become involved and those emails or those messages have become very important evidence. But yes, sometimes it is a hidden form behind the guise of technology, where sometimes parents who aren't so computer literate tend not to go and so they may not be aware that that kind of stuff is happening.

Andy: *What part does the parent play when it comes to the child that is showing characteristics of bullying?*

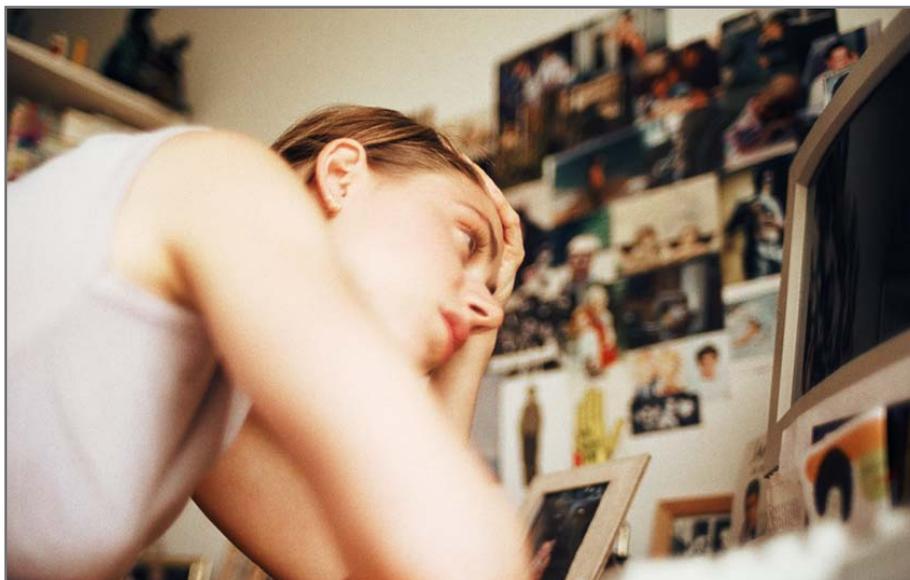
Felicity Garland: Yes, I guess we have kind of touched on this earlier. Sometimes parents yes, unknowingly or knowingly on some occasions, but often unknowingly may be modelling behaviours that influence their child's understanding of how to be in the world and how to gain what one wants, and how to relate to others.

Andy: *So support from the parents is really important.*

Felicity Garland: Yes.

Andy: *Sometimes parents might not tune into the signs. We are in a fast paced society, where everyone is moving a million miles an hour, kids go to school, come home, do their homework and go to bed, there could be things that are happening which fly under the radar, maybe there is less opportunity for conversation between the parents and the child, so they can go on without maybe noticing.*

Felicity Garland: Yes, yes... and children and young people might be choosing to hide certain things from their parents too.



Andy: *A lot of the time it's just not brought to the attention, of the parents until the school actually calls them up and tells them what's going on.*

Felicity Garland: Yes, and similarly for parents. I meet parents whose children have been using bullying against other children, it has come to the attention of the school and speaking about shame, I don't know any parents who want their kids to be known as the bully. So there is an element of shame sometimes for parents, because society often wants to blame the parents for everything that's happening and certainly sometimes yes, the parents may have had a role as I said earlier, but sometimes there are other factors influencing the child's decision-making.

Which brings me to my next point, I always believe that whilst parents or others may have a role in the bullying taking place, ultimately it is the young person's choice and it's important that they take responsibility for their choice to use bullying and to understand the seriousness of what they are doing.

So yes, in my work with children and young people I will invite them to reflect on those choices and to help them to see that it is a choice. People sometimes say "Oh! But I have got no

control over my anger." But that anger is often expressed in a calculated way at specific times which indicates yes there is control there, there is choice. But again, when I am working with the child who is using bullying, this behaviour is the problem, they also have the freedom to change!

Andy: *I guess bullying is something that has been around and will continue to be around, it's not something that will be stamped out, maybe as a human race as we all evolve, maybe it will kind of slowly reduce. But all we can really do is just deal with Band-Aid issues when it comes to bullying, it's so prolific. So, I guess, making sure that the individual is carried forward by doing things like we are doing now and then ensuring that there is a model in place or information in place you can tap into.*

Obviously the most important thing about a child being bullied is the communication they have with their parents. But what can a parent do to support their child when they discover that they are actually being bullied?

Felicity Garland: Sure, that's a really important question. I guess all the parents I have met in a counselling context, who have found out that their child is being bullied, often their reaction is to feel angry, frustrated and protective.

Andy: *Absolutely. I will give you an example, my own son Tom was being bullied at school and certainly something rose up inside of me.*

Felicity Garland: Oh yes, absolutely.

Andy: *And it's very primal.*

Felicity Garland: That strong desire of wanting to protect is common, but it is extremely important for the parent to have a keen awareness about how they are going to respond. In a perfect world, as we say bullying would not exist, but the reality is that it does and it maybe something that this child will face again later in life.

So the experience of bullying ideally wouldn't be happening at all, but if it is happening it can be used to support your child to learn helpful ways of being in this life. It's also a great opportunity for parents to do some good role modelling for their kids. So as parent you might feel tempted to become vigilantly protective and this might actually translate into bullying type behaviour.

So for example, using a threatening approach to the parents of the child who is bullying your child, frustrations with the school's response sometimes, parents might be responding to the school or speaking about teachers in ways that are mimicking the very thing that they are angry about happening in the first place.

So it's understandable that parents want to fix it up, fix it on their child's behalf and obviously it is really important to advocate for your child and I am not saying that parents shouldn't do that, but it's also equally important for the child to play a part in addressing the issue because if the child is able to feel some sense of control in the situation, then this will help them to develop the skills that they may need in life to stand up for themselves. Whereas if they feel like Mum and/or Dad are just taking over and they do all the cleaning up, again there is the child left feeling as

though they haven't been able to take a stand.

We spoke a little earlier about parents inadvertently relating to their child as a victim, and this is also really unhelpful. So by taking over and not letting the child have a voice or not letting the child assert themselves in some way, this just reaffirms the child's position as the victim. We spoke also a little earlier about kids making conclusions about themselves as not being good enough, for example. So by separating the experience of bullying from the child who is experiencing it, this gives some space to say that the bullying is something that's happening in their life, but it does not define who they are.

So as I say, making sure that this experience of bullying doesn't colour the child's world and the child's view and the parent's view of the child, it's important to remember to keep an eye out for the other areas in the child's life where they are being assertive, or they are taking control because often these things get rendered invisible because the focus gets stuck on the bullying itself, rather than the child's responses to it or the other initiatives they are taking in life.

So an example of something that a parent might want to do to support their child to respond to the bullying might be something like encouraging your child to jump online and look at some websites that talk about bullying. There are some really good websites out there, youth-friendly ones, which are purpose-built for children and young people to get support. One I would recommend is www.reachout.com.au and then there is also www.kidshelp.com.au which is actually the Kids Helpline website; they have great little fact sheets and tips and things like that and you might even want to sit with your child and ask them to do the research and have a look at it together.

Andy: *Because I run a martial arts school, a lot of parents bring their children because they have been*



bullied or they are being bullied or they are afraid of their child being bullied. Part of what we do is teach children how to defend themselves and one thing which has really come up for us within the martial arts school is we don't breed bullies.

Martial Arts doesn't breed bullies and this question comes up very rarely with the parent. Will my child use their martial arts for bullying? Felicity, do you have many parents talk about martial arts during counselling sessions?

Felicity Garland: Not really, to be honest, it hasn't come up with the families that I have met. Certainly through meeting you, this is something that is really interesting for me to have thought about. The idea of parents bringing their kids to martial arts, obviously well intending, meaning that they want their kids to be able to look after themselves.

But also that's potentially a mixed message for a child by condoning violence. So that's why I really appreciate the fact that you are looking at doing this project because to make that distinction that martial arts is okay and it's fine and it's something that can be really healthy for a child but violence against others is not.

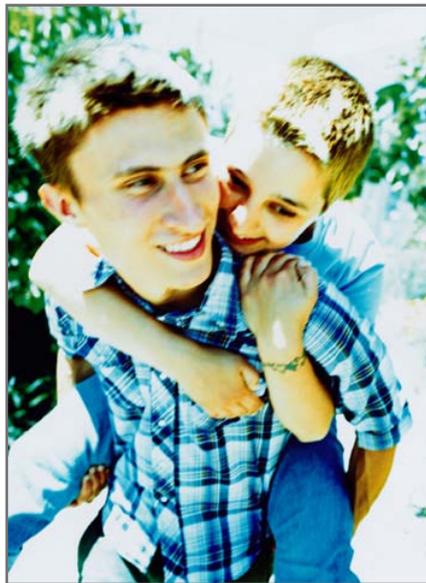
Andy: Absolutely, and this is the key distinction that we make within our own martial arts school and I am sure that many other martial arts schools do the same, is that the martial arts for children is about self-esteem and confidence building and about having a strong ethical code which overlaps over any form of physical self-defence.

I have had countless stories of students that have done really well in bullying situations, where they have been able to diffuse a situation without any form of violence whatsoever. But on the other side of the coin is that some of them are being physically assaulted because they have stood by this moral code and not defended themselves.

So it's a fine line. I think that the martial arts is a good start for children but it must be remembered that it is self-defence only and it must be a good company with a very strong moral.

Felicity Garland: Yes, absolutely and that ethical moral code that you speak about in terms of martial arts, I think is great in terms of life as well. Supporting children, young people, and adults for that matter, to uncover what it is that they value and what ethics they hope to connect with in life is one of the main intentions of my work as a Counsellor. How do they want to treat others and how do they want to be known by others? If a child is trying to decide how to respond to bullying, well if they can reflect on their own values and ethics, then they might more clearly see what action they can take that would fit with what they are really committed to in life... and if that means choosing nonviolent ways of being, then great!

Andy: So I guess that the real benefit of studying martial arts particularly the way that we teach it is that we inadvertently prepare children for bullying by instilling this moral ethical code and particularly the idea of confidence and self-esteem. I believe they will have a really good blueprint to fall back to and refer to. I think



this is where we have been very successful and the only real gauge that I have got is my own son and as a parent I see the way that he's developed, the way that he's handled bullies and by using the martial arts as a kind of a reference point, to deal with the situations.

Felicity Garland: Definitely and just coming to mind as you say that, for parents as well, often I have parents share their dilemma during a counselling session that they don't know how to respond because this bullying is happening and they feel called to do certain things which they know they might regret. So I invite those parents to reflect back on the values that they hold as a parent, the hopes that they hold for themselves as a parent, and what they see as their role as a parent. When their decision for action is informed by these things, then they are able to find a way forward that really fits for them.

Andy: Perfect. I think today we have had a really good overview on what bullying is and what constitutes a person being bullied and how parents can get involved.

But one thing we haven't discussed today which I think we'll save for our next talk is what some of the steps that the child and parents can take in an actual bullying situation. Again

that is a really kind of interesting conversation and interesting topic because I am sure that a lot of people have different ideas about that. On one side of the coin you have got the complete submissive side where, the parent will say, you have just got to turn around and walk away.

But on the other side of the coin, the father will tell his son, you are being bullied son, you have got to turn around and you have got to hit the bully. So there is a whole range of topics in that whole kind of a conversation.

Felicity Garland: Absolutely, yes that's a very large, large area and what will fit for some, might not fit for others.

Andy: Absolutely, but I am definitely of the opinion after all these years of teaching martial arts and having been associated with bullies myself, is that the nonviolent path is absolutely first choice. One thing we tell our own students, at the end of the day, if you have to defend yourself because your life is in danger, then so be it.

So I look forward to that conversation with you in the future.

Felicity Garland: Oh yes.

Andy: Thanks Felicity, great to have you.

Felicity Garland: My pleasure.

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