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Editor's Comment

This issue, the first of Volume 11, reflects the application of RT/CT principles in a wide variety of situations. The first section deals with the application of RT/CT in educational settings. The article by RENNA presents a systematic approach to a potentially difficult student group. The article by PARISH places the focus on teachers. HOGLUND continues his discussion from the last issue of the need for the application of Deming's principles. BARTH moves the focus to the college level. PETERSON/WOODWARD/KISSKO provide an interesting comparison between graduate students and basic week students. Finally, PARISH extends ideas presented in several earlier articles. These last two articles address the need for data-based material on the use of RT/CT.

The second section provides an interesting combination of diverse ideas and applications. FATES describes a community-based approach to an increasing problem. DUNCAN similarly demonstrates an activist approach to similar kinds of issues. McINTOSH explores an important area — teen sexuality — especially in light of current statistics. BARLOW presents a picture of rehabilitation counseling that can work equally well elsewhere. KATZ looks at the therapeutic relationship. MICKEL provides an important cross-cultural look at RT/CT. LUNDGRANT describes a unique application of RT. Finally, WUBBOLDING continues his series on professional issues.

THE USE OF CONTROL THEORY AND REALITY THERAPY WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE "OUT OF CONTROL"

Robert Renna

Integrated into the process of reality therapy and control theory is the main focus of what Dr. Glasser terms the "Counseling Environment". Those of us who choose to work in helping professions must strive daily not only to improve our techniques as practitioners, but more importantly, to better develop our relationships or "involvement" with our students or clients. Making friends and getting involved as a "Need-Fulfilling Person" in their lives is first and foremost in any environment that offers real support and "The Procedures that Lead to Change" (Glasser, 1985).

Understanding that involvement is fundamental in the practice of reality therapy, we nevertheless often come to realize that developing and maintaining what Carl Rogers termed "unconditional positive regard" with persons who present seriously explosive behaviors is quite difficult and no doubt one of our greatest challenges as counselors and teachers.

There are no easy solutions for helping persons meet their needs when they are using angering behavior to disrupt, particularly when this behavior has a high intensity, frequency and duration. However, in our desperate search for new ideas, through trial and lots of error, we come to realize that the experience in working with disruptive "out of control" students has both a "limit and a gift" and is quite paradoxical in terms of the opportunity for building involvement.

The "limit" is somewhat obvious. You can get hurt, if not physically, certainly emotionally. The "gift" is what I believe to be one of the best means of establishing true and deep involvement with a person who perhaps has had very little if any at all by using the adverse situation as "the best opportunity for growth" (Vey & Yukl, 1982).

What follows is my attempt to describe techniques which have been effective on the "front line" application of crisis intervention, suitable for many different student/client populations in a variety of settings, i.e. public schools, private residential schools, hospitals, clinics, etc.

I will begin by describing in control theory terms what happens to our students and us when we find ourselves in an "out of control" situation. Next, I will discuss how the process of reality therapy, and in particular the self-evaluation of present behavior - "Is it Helping?", can only be successful when students are better utilizing the "thinking" component of their total behavior. Lastly, I will explain how the establishment of more effective behaviors through crisis work requires that BOTH the helper and...
student together explore the "picture" or event as perceived by the student and then attempt to "reframe" the event thus helping the student change his/her perception. Once this occurs, students are "ready" to use both their thinking and doing behaviors more responsibly by self evaluating and entering the planning stage.

As stated above, using effective discipline techniques with people who are highly disruptive and/or aggressive is very difficult. Intellectually, we all understand that when persons are extremely upset and agitated it is our job to help them settle down and relax so we can "talk things out". However, usually when confronted with such behavior at one time or another, "all of our training goes out the window". Generally what occurs is what is com-

![Diagram of The Pupil's Conflict Cycle](image)

**FIGURE 1.** The Pupil's Conflict Cycle

monly called a "conflict cycle" or "power struggle" (Long, 1986). When this happens, we tend to replace our picture of "helping with a new picture of "winning". (see figure 1).

In a client/counselor or student/teacher confrontation the interaction between the two quite often follows a circular process in which the acting out total behavior of the student is influenced further by the total behaviors of the teacher and in turn, the behaviors chosen by the teacher continue to influence and exacerbate the student choice for angering. During a stressful incident, this circular process becomes a conflict cycle, creating additional problems for the helper and student. Once in operation, this negative interplay between student and teacher or client and counselor is extremely difficult to interrupt. The key to the interruption is to learn how "not to struggle in a power struggle" (Long, 1986). To do so, we first have to view this stressful situation in control theory terms.

For students, the stressful incident occurs when one of their basic needs (love, power, freedom, fun, and survival) are not being met. Like all of us, they have a picture in their head of what they want. When they do not have it, they send a "pure pain signal" to their "scales" and this in turn drives their "car" to behave to get what they want. What they want may or may not be realistic, but in terms of the intervention in the early stages this is not important and must be viewed with a "low level of perception" by the helper. The behavior that is chosen is almost always ineffective and thus not being need fulfilling, they continue to behave choosing to escalate into sometimes serious aggressive organized behaviors.

For the counselor/teacher, the situation is quite similar. All of us chose to work in our professions to satisfy needs. For some it is belonging, for others it is achievement, for many it is both. As counselors and teachers we have a picture in our quality world as being an effective need fulfilling person. When we are confronted with a student who is acting out we also send a "pure pain signal" to our controlling station. What we want: to be an effective helper is not what we have. What we have is a stressful situation over which we very often feel we have little control. In control theory we learn that we must behave when our scales are out of balance and so, like our students, we also at times can choose ineffective behaviors to gain control. When we do, we meet the students' aggressive behaviors with "counter-aggressive" behaviors, and in effect we "mirror" the angering and thus perpetuate the power struggle. When this occurs, we have "two scales out of balance" with both people choosing ineffective behaviors such as: yelling, swearing, threatening, hitting, throwing, etc. This of course leads to an atmosphere of confusion, frustration, fear and bitterness. Students merely reinforce the "failure identity", of the helper and the professional literally becomes "fractured", choosing to use sarcasm, blame parents, doctors, administrators, etc., and worse of all, gives up on the person needing help. With scales still out of balance, the helper continues to behave in ways that don't meet either person's needs, and this eventually leads to "burn out" or illness for the helper.

The way out of this conflict cycle for both the student and the counselor or teacher is to first focus on the use of the "thinking"
component of the total behavior. I believe that when persons are “out of control”, they cannot “calm down” unless they are able to “get their thinking wheel in gear”. Using Glasser’s analogy of the car in control theory, when persons are “out of control” they are in effect “speeding in reverse”. They are operating on feeling and physiology predominantly and have very little actual awareness of both the doing and thinking components of their total behavior. They are literally “flooding their engines with emotion”. To change the acting out behavior, helping persons calm their “body talk” and feel better, we must initially “re-direct” their “car” or “turn it around” if you will, THROUGH THE THINKING WHEEL. (see figure 2)

![Figure 2: Speeding In Reverse](image)

In my experience, this is very difficult to accomplish in a direct manner. Have you ever been really angry at someone and that person says “calm down”, or “cool off”!! Does that work. Of course not. In fact, if you think about it, in most cases, it only serves to send another “pain signal” and the result is that you “hit the roof”!! The same is true when working with persons who are using intense anger. Asking them to “stop it” or to evaluate their behavior: “What are you doing”? “Is it against the rules”? before the thinking component is intact is most often in my experience premature and ineffective.

It has been said on many occasions that the “keystone” of reality therapy lies in the ability of persons to make value judgments that their behavior is not helping and then to make a commitment to change. I believe that the essence of control theory and reality therapy lies in the many variations of helping persons use their thinking component through key questions that lead to self evaluation, planning, commitment, and ultimately new effective “doing” behaviors. How then do we help students who are “out of control” (speeding in reverse) begin to use the thinking and doing component of their total behavior predominantly as they move toward control?

The re-directional techniques which I call “cognitive hooks” are helpful in helping students to “slow down and turn their car around”. The key to cognitive hooks is first and foremost to attempt to focus on your own “thinking” behavior during a situation that may be highly emotionally charged and often quite scary. The best way that I have learned to do this is to first concentrate on viewing or “entering” the problem from a very low level of perception. There should be no overt attempt to show any bias or appear judgmental about the behavior. (Vey & Yukl, 1982) As stated before, direct attempts to calm persons down are most often unsuccessful by using confrontation or even asking direct questions relating to the problem in a supportive way. Remember, when “out of control”, they are probably not using their thinking component enough to respond. Offering direct support or problem solving is premature. Understanding that in an explosive situation you will have a tendency to choose to be frightened, you must remember that the more frightened you are, the HARDER you must try to use your thinking component with a “low level of perception”. When entering a confrontation it often helps me to use my thinking behavior versus my feeling behavior and physiology by asking myself: “How is Johnny going to help me choose to act like him?” This helps me become more aware of the “conflict cycle” as I say over and over again to myself: “think, think”!!

As you enter the situation or address students: When students are escalating or escalated:
- ask them a question
- make a statement
- give them a task
- ask them to do or help with a task
- do a task yourself
- do the opposite of what is normally expected — use paradoxical techniques. (Wubbolding, 1988).

Any of the above can be used. They should be somewhat unrelated to either the incident or what is currently happening. Remember, the idea is to place a “cognitive hook” into persons’ behavioral systems that are currently operating on pure emotional feeling and physiology. In doing so, you are in effect trying to help them choose to use the thinking component of their total behavior to gain control. Remember not to stop the process until students are able to begin to answer direct questions regarding the stressful event. If continued, students will begin to use their thinking behavior more and calm down.

Examples:

A student is highly agitated and threatening to hurt someone. Instead
3. "COGNITIVE HOOKS"
   STUDENT/CLIENT
   1. ANGERING
      DISRUPTIVE
      "Out of control"
      HIGH: INTENSITY
      FREQUENCY
      DURATION
   2. STAFF
   3. REDIRECTIONAL TECHNIQUE
      USE "THINKING"
      LOW LORI PERCEPTION
      REGAIN CALM
      LISTEN TO YOUR "SIGNALS"
   4. INDIRECT VS DIRECT
      PARADOXICAL
   5. MOVEMENT FROM "FEELINGS / PHYSIOLOGY" TO "THINKING"
      COMPONENTS OF TOTAL BEHAVIOR
   RESULTS:
   STUDENT / CLIENT IN CONTROL

of a confrontation or a supportive "relax, we can work this out" — say "I'm going to have a (cup of coffee, soda, cigarette, etc.) do you want one"? or — "Hey, that's a nice watch (shirt, tie, pants, etc.) you have — where did you get it"? — I've been looking all over for one like that — — "do you mind if I tidy up a bit"?
— "can you help me move this table for a minute — then you can get back to what you were doing ...
— "Hi — sorry to bother you — I've seemed to have lost my pen — have you seen it? — it's one of those new retractables — got it on sale at K-Mart — can you help me look for it? — I know it's here somewhere.

The point is to use your own creativity and style while focusing on a "low level of perception" until the person is re-directed from angering to listening, talking, or constructively doing. This may happen quickly or it may take awhile. In my experience, it generally works with all students regardless of age, size, values, skills, or potential for serious aggression. The paradox is that the longer it takes, the greater will be the involvement with the student. The reason for this I feel is that students sense that no matter how "crazy" they are acting, you have not given up on them nor have you allowed their acting out to push you away by letting your fear overwhelm you. The message that you care is very powerful and one that is very rarely forgotten.

ART FORMING (see figure 4)

Once the student or client has calmed down you have achieved the first goal of crisis intervention which is to reduce the level of emotional preoccupation while facilitating constructive thinking. (Vey-Yukl, 1982) The next step down the "road to responsibility" is to help students explore how they "saw" the problem initially and secondly, help them "reframe" or reform this "picture" perceptually by utilizing their "total perceptual components", or how they see, hear, feel, or even "touch" the problem that tipped their scales.

In control theory terms, "Art Forming" takes place within persons' sensory and perceptual systems where both their Total Knowledge Filter and Valuing Filter operate. Because their thinking component of their total behavior is now intact, the "picture album" can first be explored through their perceptual filters and through the use of the senses and "imagination"; reframing the picture will be made possible through direct change in the behavioral system. (Wubbolding, 1988)

STEP 1: "GETTING THE PICTURE"

Once students are calm, you can begin to help them "paint the picture" or perception of what happened from their point of view. It is important to remain non-judgmental with a "low level of perception". This helps to:
1. express empathy
2. assess "phenomological status" — total student perception and memory of event
3. assess "locus of control" — whose problem was it? Look for any hint of self responsibility.
Some sample questions to ask:
What did you see? Hear?
What happened? What do you remember? What was done to you?
What did you do then?

Explore Total Behaviors:
How did you feel? What was it like?
What were you thinking? What was that like?
What were you doing? What was that like?
Do you remember what your body felt like?

STEP 2: "REFRAMING: CHANGING THE PICTURES (RELABELING AND REDEFINING)"

Knowing that students are calmer and you have increased your involvement, questions begin to move toward helping students change the way they see, think, and feel about the problem that occurred. You are attempting to help students think in new ways about the problem other than what they have described to you. It is most helpful at this point to "intentionally look for new ways to think about the problem". (Wubbolding, 1988)

Sample questions to ask:
What didn't you like? What would you rather have happened? How would you have liked the situation to be?
What would you take out of the event if you could? What would you put into the event if you could?

QUESTIONS NOW BEGIN TO CENTER AROUND THEIR BEHAVIOR. IF STUDENTS START TO ESCALATE — THE PROCESS OF COGNITIVE HOOKS MUST BEGIN AGAIN.

Begin with a check on their current total behaviors:
How do you feel now? Better or worse than before? What are you thinking about now?
What are you doing now? What would you like to be doing instead?
What does your body feel like now? Are you calmer than before?

Then ask:
Do you think you could have looked at this problem differently; how? (Offering some alternative ways of "seeing" the problem by the teacher/counselor is very important at this point.)
Do you think you could have controlled this problem? (Tell students that you think they could have!!)
How? (Again, offer some suggestions)
How can we make this situation better? What did you do that you wished you didn't do? What else could you have done?
Is there anything that you wanted (me, them, others, etc.) to do differently?
STEP 3: “THE ROAD TO RESPONSIBILITY”

QUESTIONS CAN NOW ZERO IN ON WHAT STUDENTS REALLY WANTED, THE BEHAVIOR, SELF EVALUATION, PLANNING AND COMMITMENT.

Questions:

How do you see the problem now? What was it that you wanted (or still want) that you didn’t have?

How would you like it (event, class, life, relationship, etc.) to be?

Why is it important? If you had what you want, how would your life be better?

Can you control this? What else have you tried to get what you want?

Has it been working?

Did what you do today help you or hurt you to get what you want?

Do you want to figure out a better way? Are you willing to try something else? What do you think needs to be done here to fix the problem?

Do you really want to try something different that will help you and not hurt you or others? (higher level of commitment)

CONCLUSION: REALITY THERAPY ACTION PLAN

At this point it is time to make a plan with students to “go back and do it right.” In situations where students have hurt others or frightened others, I believe that part of the plan should include some form of restitution appropriate to the event, people involved and the setting.

In closing, it is important to understand that crisis intervention with “out of control” individuals is one of the most difficult tasks to perform in any helping profession. To be successful, I believe that the intervention should have a reality therapy based approach that recognizes both the dangers of the “conflict cycle” as well as the necessity of first using the “thinking” component of our total behaviors. This we recognize as something that needs to be developed because in times of extreme stress our natural tendency is to operate predominately on feelings and physiology. We can only help our students and clients “slow down and turn their cars around” if we first do the same. When we are able to accomplish this most difficult task, we can then through re-direction help them use their thinking component more effectively.

With their thinking component intact, students and clients with difficult problems of angering can learn with our help to “reframe” their perceptions of events and eventually learn more responsible ways to meet their needs.

Lastly, Glasser’s belief in the counselor’s commitment to “never give up” because there is always hope for change is one that is both EASY to forget and ESSENTIAL to remember when working with people who “lose control”.

References

THE INFLUENCE OF ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS IN THE CLASSROOM AND BEYOND

Thomas S. Parish

The author, a frequent contributor to the Journal, is Professor of Education at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

Where are the two most important points on the compass? The first point of significance is where you are at right now. According to Meyer (1972), you can be placed anywhere with a map and a compass, but until you know where you are at it will be impossible for you to plot a path that will get you to any particular destination. The second significant point on the compass is your target or destination, for if you don’t have a goal you may walk around aimlessly, never finding anything very worthwhile. Said somewhat differently, if you aim at nothing, you're probably going to hit it (i.e., nothing).

Attitudes and beliefs are much like the points in the compass. That is, we need to carefully assess our present attitudes and beliefs to see where we are at with regard to ourselves and others, and then we need to determine where we ultimately would like to be. According to one old saying, “attitude determines altitude” (author unknown), so how far we go or how high we fly is often a function of what we tell ourselves. This is in keeping with Henry Ford's famous quote, “If you think you can or you think you can't, you're absolutely right.”

In many respects, our attitudes and beliefs are like lens filters in cameras, but they are actually in our minds. So we must first ascertain what our lens filters currently say. For instance, do you seem to say to yourself, “I (seem) to go through life with the feeling that I’m the one wearing the ‘KICK ME’ sign” (Wilson, 1979).

or “Last night I counted my blessings and I found out half of them were missing” (Wilson, 1979).

or “Sometimes I think if it wasn’t for bad luck ... I’d have no luck at all” (Wilson, 1979).

or “I don’t recall what I wanted to be when I grew up, ... but I’m sure it wasn’t THIS!” (Wilson, 1979).

Lens filters or sayings like these obviously convey rather negative, pessimistic attitudes and beliefs which may easily prevent the beholder from achieving his or her dreams as long as they persist.

In contrast to such negative filters, individuals need to cleave to more upbeat ideas or notions like the following:

“By perseverance (even) the snail reached the ark” (Charles Haddon Spurgeon; from McWilliams & John-Roger, 1988).

or “People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don’t believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can’t find them, make them” (George Bernard Shaw; from McWilliams & John-Roger, 1988).

of “Don’t worry about whether or not you have a good opportunity, just be sure to be good to every opportunity” (Author unknown).

or “We may not be responsible for what happens to us, but we are responsible for the way we react to what happens to us (Parish, 1987).

Truly, our attitudes and beliefs do affect us mentally, physically and emotionally; so it is crucial to ascertain (a) what they are, and (b) what do we want them to be?

So it is that some of our attitudes and beliefs actually slow us down while others serve to help us to succeed, and if we wish to change our perspectives we must start by changing the lens filters in our minds. For instance, whenever we run into adversity try to remember to image a room filled with cans. Why a room filled with cans, you ask? Because as everyone knows SUCCESS comes in CANs, while FAILURES come in CAN'Ts. You see, it’s like playing tennis without a racket in your hand. Just imagine (before you ever reach the court) how you’ll feel (positive, of course) and what you need to do once you’re there, for in so doing you’ll enhance your chances of achieving success.

As it is in tennis, so it is in life ... and in teaching too. Just remember that in each of these instances we need to conceive it, believe it, and achieve it ... or said somewhat differently, we need to image it, plan it and do it.

While some may scoff at this notion that teachers need these positive attitudes and beliefs in order to enhance their success in the classroom, imagine for a minute two different teachers. One believes that

S/He has the power.
S/He has the vigor to motivate,
the fullness to laugh,
the courage to control.
S/He has the power to uplift
and to create,
and, when s/he is red hot.
the intensity to inspire. (Trujillo, 1987)

In contrast, imagine another teacher who feels powerless and small and/or overwhelmed or inadequate. While it may be true that both of these teachers teach, they both teach more than the content of their curriculum. Specifically, the former teacher teaches/shares/conveys a positive attitude and creates value as s/he does so. In contrast, the latter teacher teaches/shares/conveys a negative attitude and a diminished value as s/he does so.

As stated by DeBruyn (1991a) we are known by our attitude during a problem, i.e., our reputation is actually a reflection of how we think under fire. That teachers are, indeed, often under fire has been attested to in various ways. For instance, teaching is currently considered to be the third
most stressful profession in the U.S., preceded only by air traffic controllers and medical personnel (Batten, 1985). Additionally, Glasser (1990a) reported that teachers are frequently stressed by one or more of the following conditions:

1. Expected to do the impossible — i.e., to teach the academically unmotivated student.
2. Inadequately paid, especially for their level of competence.
3. The system of rewards is often perceived to be unfair.
4. Schooling doesn’t currently receive strong cultural support in our society.
5. The curriculum has become fragmented, objectified and standardized, and consequently has become less relevant and interesting to all concerned.

In light of these conditions, Glasser (1990a) has boldly stated that teachers have “the hardest job there is (p. 17). In Glasser’s estimation, even medical doctors have it easier than teachers since doctors’ patients are more cooperative and are willing to do as they are told since they see their doctors as “need satisfying people.” Teachers, on the other hand, confront resistant students on a daily basis, and are rarely treated as though they are need fulfilling people.

Why are teachers treated so badly? According to Glasser (1990b), students often perceive teachers as coercive, unfriendly and hostile. Many of these students perceive the school environment as negative and unfulfilling of their needs. Teachers, of course, are simply trying to execute administrative directives, but often find themselves in an adversarial position with many of their students who find the tasks (both in-school and out-of-school) boring and of little value.

What has happened to bring this situation about? Well, Maslow (1951) contended a long time ago that individuals would be more motivated to achieve their potential and become self-actualized if, and when, their various needs are met. Unfortunately, however, fulfilling needs like love and belonging and self-esteem within our schools have not enjoyed a high priority. Instead, achieving minimum competencies and reducing discipline problems have been the goals that have received the bulk of the attention from school administrators and staff. As a result, Glasser (1990a) has reported that fewer than 15% of all students are currently doing high quality work and that the completion of school work is on the decline. Specifically, a recent Kappan poll showed that 79 percent of the elementary teachers surveyed and 85 percent of the high school teachers surveyed complained that their students were not completing their assignments, despite their (coercive) efforts to get them to do so.

Where has all the quality gone? Why are students so unmotivated? Could it be that teachers are dropping the ball? Don’t we all realize that students don’t care how much teachers know, until they know how teachers care? That this is so was recently addressed in a recent article by Parish and Parish (1989). Specifically, students were found to more likely complete difficult school-related tasks if they believed their teachers cared for them. Truly, teachers’ attitudes toward their students could be one of the most powerful levers teachers have to motivate students. Besides teachers’ concern for their students, teachers can and should do other things that both fulfill students’ needs and/or convey to students that what they teach is important. The following list of questions (see Table 1) was derived from William Glasser’s (1990a) book entitled The Quality School. Kindly peruse these items and come to understand that teachers’ attitudes, beliefs and actions convey messages, and that with each “yes” by your students to the following questions means that you may more likely instill or retain their interest in school and school-related tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Deeply interested in the subject matter?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Deeply interested in his/her students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Likely to conduct class discussions rather than straight lectures?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Able to relate to students by teaching on their level?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Able to comfortably interact with students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Unlikely to threaten and/or punish?</td>
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<td>7. Able to inject humor, variety, and/or drama into his/her lessons?</td>
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<td>8. Likely to treat students with kindness and courtesy?</td>
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<td>9. Likely to ask students to do things that feel good?</td>
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<td>10. Likely to seek input from the class regarding possible courses of action?</td>
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The more yes’s checked, the more likely it is that teachers will be admitted into their students’ QUALITY WORLDS.

Of course, teachers aren’t the only people who can help individuals meet their needs. Many others can too. Teachers, however, may need to monitor these different caretakers and/or circumstances and intercede when they deem it to be appropriate. In other words, teachers need to strive to be their students’ friends, and friends are those who help others to like themselves. As teachers function as friends, students will more likely listen to and trust them because they will have learned that they work diligently to fulfill their various needs and help them to feel good about themselves (Glasser, 1990a).

Of course, teachers may not wish to adopt this role of caretaker or friend. They may not understand that by doing so their students may come to perceive them and the school as need fulfilling. As this happens, students’ attitudes and actions are likely to be affected. This is in accordance with the notion that the student body of a school reflects the staff of a school as they intensify feelings and project the moods and demeanor of the faculty (DeBruyn, 1991b). That this is so is attested to by Brown’s (1980) findings regarding students who were from either single-parent or two-parent families. Specifically, children/adolescents from single-parent families, as opposed to those from two-parent families, were significantly more likely to demonstrate:

1. Lower academic achievement
2. More discipline problems
3. More suspensions
4. More geographic mobility
5. More truancy
6. More Title I program involvement
7. More expulsions
8. More dropouts

Why do these students from single-parent families do so poorly in school? According to Glasser (1990a), "the idea that students who do not do work believe that no one cares for them is very strong with all students" (p. 105). There is at least one other reason, though, that explains why such attitudes and actions are adopted by students. Basically, it's the boss-management belief held by many teachers and administrators alike that seems to interfere with effective teaching. Glasser (1990a) contends that this boss-management approach to teaching contains four basic elements. They are:

1. The boss (teacher) sets the task and the standards for what the workers (students) are to do, usually without counseling the workers. Bosses do not compromise; the worker has to adjust to the job as the boss defines it.
2. The boss usually tells, rather than shows, the workers how the work is to be done and rarely asks for their input as to how it might possibly be done better.
3. The boss, or someone the boss designates, inspects (or grades) the work. Because the boss does not involve the workers in this evaluation, they tend to settle for just enough quality to get by.
4. When workers resist, the boss uses coercion (usually punishment) almost exclusively to try to make them do as they are told and, in so doing, creates a workplace in which the workers and manager are adversaries. (pp. 25-26)

While these four elements, noted above, describe the role of bosses and workers, they can be directly transferred to the roles of teachers and students, respectively. This being so, it should be readily understood that while boss-management thinking and associated tactics promise greater control, both in the workplace and in the schools, such is not often the case. Instead, bosses and teachers often become adversaries of workers and students, with those in the latter two groups usually ignoring, avoiding, ridiculing or disliking those in the former two groups, rather than befriending them (Glasser, 1991a) ... The basis for this struggle between bosses vs. workers and teachers vs. students is predicated upon the attempt by bosses and teachers to manipulate or coerce workers and students, respectively, into complying with their wishes, with little consideration given to the workers' and/or students' wishes and desires. How unfortunate!

So what's a teacher (or a boss) to do**? As noted earlier, leaders (like teachers and bosses) must concern themselves with fulfilling needs — everyone's. As teachers concentrate their efforts on helping students meet their short-term and long-term needs, the struggle between teachers and students will likely cease. As pointed out by Glasser (1980), "People don't learn what they don't want to learn, but teaching becomes effective as soon as people who hurt discover that they can learn a better way" (p. 51). So teachers must concern themselves with teaching better ways of fulfilling needs, but not try to make students into robots as they do so. Rather, it's really a two-way street. For example, DeBruyn (1991a) has noted that if we want to be listened to we must first remember to listen, and if we want to possess power we must first share power with others. Teachers who conduct themselves in these ways never have to threaten or coerce their students. As pointed out by Glasser (1990a), they simply maintain flexibility as they effectively fulfill students' need for love and belonging, worth and power, as well as fun and freedom. In addition, they attempt to share lenses filters (e.g., attitudes and beliefs) with their students and set a proper example for them. Such teachers are not only widely accepted by their students, but by their students' parents and peers. For it is plain to see the desire in their hearts as well as their positive attitudes and beliefs that are aimed at helping others as they can, but not at coercing or forcing others to do that which lacks rhyme or reason.

Perhaps one of the ways that teachers can identify specifically what needs to be done in order to help students better value their school experience is through completing a self-assessment checklist for their troubled (or troubling) students. This checklist, developed by Joycelyn Parish (1990) asks:

1. What are you currently doing to help _______ learn?
2. Is it working?
3. What do you need to do differently?
4. Does _______ feel successful (Power/Worth) in your classroom? Does he or she feel more competent or skilled as a result of having been there? What type of feedback do you provide _______? Have you considered _______’s current level of understanding?
5. Does _______ enjoy coming to class? Does s/he have fun there?
6. Does _______ feel that s/he is among friends (Love and Belonging) when s/he is in your classroom? Are you _______’s friend? (As noted earlier, a friend is someone who helps you to like yourself.) What are you doing to help the student to achieve this end?
7. What freedom does _______ have in your classroom? Do you have a “production line” approach to teaching? Or do you consider each student and how best to communicate the content of your class to that student? Do you confuse learning with getting assignments in?

As we meet students' needs for love, power, fun or freedom we should be able to convey to them the perception or belief that they have value. According to Glenn (1988), all students (everyone for that matter) wish to perceive themselves as capable, important and powerful, as well as develop self-discipline and good interpersonal skills. Our goal, therefore, is to help students in being valued in these ways.

Of course, all of our students may not be equally proficient in learning. In such instances DeBruyn (1990a) recommends that we adjust accordingly and avoid a mismatch between teaching method and learning style. Always,
however, keep the thought in mind that all students can learn, and whether they do or not may depend upon our knowledge and skill as well as our attitude and beliefs toward teaching them.

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Footnote

*Notably, in the Brown (1980) study 18,000 students were surveyed, and all of the students that were expelled from school were from single-parent families.

THE COST OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIOCRITY AND FAILURE

Robert G. Hoglund

Businesses and education are facing budget constraints for a number of reasons. The national and local economic recession, unnecessary spending, increased fuel costs, etc., are all given as reasons for the cutbacks. W. Edwards Deming believes that 85% of all business problems are due to ineffective management of the system.

An aspect of education that gets lip-service, but little real attention or understanding from the reform movement, is that quality, in the long-run, does not cost more money. Granted an initial expenditure to correct ineffective practices may be necessary, but costs will ultimately drop when a true focus on quality is implemented.

Emphasis on the student as a consumer, providing facilities, supplies and materials are a must if real learning is to occur. Management must focus on providing these ingredients and providing the guidance, support and freedom for teachers to carry out their mission. Deming, a world leader in the area of quality, strongly believes that management must constantly improve the system of production and/or service.

Gonzales High School, located in the Salinas Valley of California, is one school that has begun to move toward quality by looking at the system and targeting areas in need of improvement. The enrollment is approximately 1000 students. The community is basically agriculturally oriented as evidenced by the sign as one enters the town “Welcome to Gonzales - Heart of the Salad Bowl”. More than 80% of the students are Hispanic and slightly more than 90% are minorities.

Student learning was one element that was targeted for evaluation and improvement. The chart of student grades for the spring semester at Gonzales High School illustrates the cost of failure. (See Figure 1). The real cost of the failing grades was almost $128,000 for one school year. These failed classes had to be repeated, if required for graduation, or replaced by a different elective class. What most fail to realize is the cost per pupil remains constant for success or failure.

The $128,000 potential savings could be an incentive for a school to make decisions related to lower class-size, new and/or additional equipment and materials, updating of teacher training, rewriting lessons, providing consulting time, etc.

Further analysis provides data that suggest mediocrity consumes almost half of the cost per section expenditures. With the cost per section at $7000.00, with a staffing ratio of 29.65, the number of sections that were
taught that students received C’s or less is 93.76. Therefore, 93 sections at $7000 equals $651,000 for mediocrity and less. As Glasser, in the Quality School Video, states, we don’t want “C” surgeons, “C” dentists, “C” cars or “C” hotels. We want products and services that are well above “average” expectations and performance.

The state of California, like many others, is managing for the short-term in order to cut a state budget deficit. With budget cuts, Gonzales faces a loss of teachers, counselors and the combination of two separate roles into a Principal/Superintendent position.

If the failure rate is already better than 90% and “C’s” and lower are over 48%, it is logical to project that failure will increase after spending cuts that eliminate or decrease services, increase class sizes and limit access to the school library. All of these were necessitated by budget constraints.

With more failure, more economic waste occurs. This doesn’t include the possible implications of increased social programs that are necessary to serve those that are uneducated or unskilled.

This is explained by Deming’s Perversity Principle that states that when a business or service tries to increase productivity and cut costs by imposing restraints on a system, you will only succeed in increasing the costs elsewhere in the system.

These defects (failures), to use business terminology, have already had as much capital (cost-per-pupil), raw materials (desks, papers, books, etc.), and labor (teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.) as the acceptable (passing) products. However, now they are added as rework! No matter how much they are reworked, they rarely end up as good as those that were right (successful) from the start.

We many times confuse minimum standards as acceptable quality, but these statistics indicate the true financial cost of continuing traditional management practices and systems. Furthermore, by discussing monetary considerations, the real educational impact of students failing and/or achieving at mediocre levels has only been touched upon.

Ultimately, “Quality management produces fewer defects and lower costs.” If we can’t afford to do it right, how can we afford to do it over?

### References


The Quality School Video - The Educational Theories of William Glasser, M.D. was produced by The Culver Academies of Culver, Indiana. It is available through the Institute for Reality Therapy.
SOME THOUGHTS ON INCORPORATING GLASSER'S CONTROL THEORY IN THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM

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Last fall I ventured into the college classroom as an English composition instructor. While I enjoyed my students and felt that we were having some positive classroom experiences, some of the comments I overheard from my colleagues disturbed me. "Only 10 kids in my 8:05 had their homework ready today. I told them that if they didn’t start doing their homework I would . . . ." "I’ve got six dumb jocks and four foreigners in my 12:30 section." or "I got into a huge argument with one of my students today who disagreed with my interpretation of an O’Connor short story."

Although I was not familiar with Dr. Glasser’s work at that time, I intuitively felt that those comments reflected something amiss in those teachers’ attitudes. I wanted to ask them, "Do you really think that threatening your students with some sort of punishment for not having done their homework really is going to help them learn? For that matter, is the homework relevant to them and to the learning process?" "Why are you labeling these students before you’ve had an opportunity to assess what they’re capable of doing?" "What do you have to gain from arguing with a student about interpreting a short story (except to prove that you’re the ‘boss’ and you’re right)? Wouldn’t you provide a better learning experience (and learning atmosphere) by simply pointing out that interpreting literature is a highly subjective matter? If the student is really off base in his interpretation, perhaps he lacks some important background information about the story. Wouldn’t it be more productive to provide that information in a non-threatening manner and then let the student have an opportunity to rethink his position in a non-confrontational atmosphere?"

I spent a couple of semesters soul-searching about my teaching philosophy: “Am I too ‘soft’? — too influenced by my adult education background (Carl Rogers and Malcolm Knowles in particular)? Do I need to be more of a ‘boss’ in the classroom?” In any event, Dr. Glasser’s ideas, particularly those in The Quality School, were quite reassuring. I think I have perhaps unknowingly begun to implement some of his ideas in my classroom and will continue to do so, but with a better knowledge of what I’m doing and why. For example, I always attempt to treat my students as adults, and in the way I’d like to be treated if I were in their position — “college is voluntary; you’re here because you choose to be; I can’t make you come to class or complete your assignments, but you understand that this is a required course and an important one; I’ll give you the clearest and most relevant writing assignments I can and do my best to provide classroom instruction and outside help to enable you to do your best; I realize that most of you aren’t experienced writers and I won’t judge (grade) your first writing efforts, but will give you the feedback you need to help you produce quality writing; I’ll only ‘grade’ a piece of work when you’re satisfied that it represents your best effort; and I’ll give as much deference to your individual ‘voice’ as a writer and not ‘judge’ you because I may disagree with your choice of topics or the opinions you express.”

Some of Glasser’s ideas may not be particularly applicable to the college classroom. For instance, I haven’t experienced discipline problems, nor have I noticed much of a problem with motivation (students who don’t want to be in college in the first place usually just stop coming to class; the rest have a pretty good idea of the importance of the course and, in any event, grades seem to be a powerful motivator for those students with good grades in their Quality World). Nevertheless, several of Glasser’s theories are very applicable to the college classroom and to the teaching of English composition in particular: 1) teachers should attempt to create a classroom environment where students’ needs are met; 2) teachers should understand that their students’ quality worlds differ from their own and learn to be tolerant of those differences (teachers should refrain from “labeling” their students) (1984, p. 81); and 3) teachers should endeavor to help their students develop a picture of “quality” schoolwork and incorporate it into their quality worlds and, as a corollary, teachers should refuse to accept low-quality schoolwork (1990, p. 97).

1) Creating a classroom environment where students’ needs are met. Glasser identifies four basic human psychological needs: the need to belong, to have fun, to be free, and to have power (1986, p. 23). The more students’ needs can be met in the classroom, the more motivated (and successful) they will be. He suggests that the teacher can set the stage for a need-fulfilling classroom environment by creating a “warm and friendly and totally non-coercive" atmosphere where the teacher assumes a non-adversarial “leader" role as opposed to the traditional “boss" role. (1990, p. 52). In Glasser’s ideal classroom, the teacher would give students a degree of freedom and power by soliciting their input on classroom decisions. By moving away from the “boss" image, teachers can learn to cede some of their power to their students. “. . . the lead teacher spends a small part of almost every class asking for students’ input on how more can be learned or what can be done to make the class more enjoyable.” (1990, p. 54). Similarly, teachers can empower their students by soliciting their “help and advice” (even though it may not be that easy for a traditional “boss" teacher to admit that he or she doesn’t know everything). “Nothing gives students more of a sense of power than advising the teacher, and the more they can help you by doing something that you seem unable to do for yourself, the more important they will feel” (1990, p. 126). For example, last semester I had my students read “Death of a Ball Turret Gunner" by Randall Jarrell. While I could have attempted to explain what a ball turret is and how a gunner is positioned inside, I simply turned the task over to two of my students who are military history buffs. They gave a much more thorough and accurate explanation than I could have. The two students felt good; I felt good; and the rest of the class learned something. It was a win-win situation for everybody.
This leads to another point in Glasser’s theory: a teacher can create a healthy classroom environment by taking a friendly interest in his or her students and helping students see the teacher as a “real” person. “From the beginning, show interest in students’ personal lives and reveal some facts about your life and some experiences you have had that may intrigue them” (1990, p. 126). I always have my students introduce themselves at the first or second class meeting and later ask them to interview their classmates as an exercise to prepare for a paper that requires them to interview an “interesting person” on campus. In addition, I ask them to write a few paragraphs to introduce themselves to me, in case there is something they might not want to reveal to the entire class. And of course, I always introduce myself to my students — let them know who I am, and tell them something about my family, my interests, and my academic background. Making an effort to learn something about your students’ lives not only tells them that you think they’re important people, but it can also help you teach them better. For instance, I try to give writing assignments that are as open-ended as possible, but some students invariably have a hard time coming up with something to write about. The more I know about their lives, the better position I am in to help them decide on writing topics. I often find myself questioning individual students about their hobbies and jobs and pet peeves, to help them come up with topics. Likewise, the more I know about my students’ interests, the easier it is for me to call upon their expertise and ask for their help as the need arises (e.g., to explain military aircraft).

2) Teachers should understand that their students’ quality worlds differ from theirs and learn to be tolerant of those differences. Glasser notes that the pictures in our quality worlds are uniquely individual. “No two of us could possibly have the same pictures because no two of us live the same lives” (1990, p. 60). Problems arise, however, when we automatically pin a “value label” on someone whose “quality pictures” don’t coincide with ours. As he observes, “The less we label, the more we will be in control of our lives” (1984, p. 83). We need to practice tolerance, which for Glasser means “making an effort to accept that others... have different pictures in their heads” (1984, p. 72).

As important as it is to help students frame a picture of “quality” writing in their quality worlds (and to understand the importance of developing writing skills) — see Section 3 below — teachers need to be sensitive to their students’ diverse quality worlds and to the “content” in their papers. For example, an early writing assignment in Comp. I is the typical “memory” paper — “write about a significant happening in your life.” I hear English instructors complain about the “trite” and “unimaginative” papers that their students write in response to this assignment: about their high school graduation or the death of a grandparent or the “big game.” However, if those instructors would make an effort to enter their students’ quality worlds, they might be more tolerant of some of the “trite” subjects their students choose to write about. After all, how many college freshmen have accepted a Nobel Prize or lived through a near death experience? Most of these students are ordinary kids and if the death of a grandmother or a championship basketball game is the most memorable happen-

I encourage my students to write about things they’re interested in, even if those interests may seem insignificant to someone else. I would rather have a student write a paper about fishing lures and have some fun writing it and draw upon his or her personal experiences and handle the topic thoroughly (and well) than have him or her struggle with “abortion” or “euthanasia” or some other “big issue” that he or she may not be capable of handling competently. In other words, give these kids some credit for what they know (the “pictures” in their unique quality worlds); don’t expect them to share yours.

I also think it would behoove all teachers to take Glasser’s advice about avoiding “labeling” students (1984, p. 83). Not only does “labeling” others (according to our often rigid value systems) result in our stereotyping students (and often overlooking some of their outstanding attributes), but it impedes the teacher’s efforts as well. The value systems that drive us to label others also limit our freedom, enabling us to see only what our value-filtered “sensory camera” allows us to see (1984, p. 80). For instance, if I walk into a classroom of new students and my sensory camera labels the athletes as “dumb jocks” and the sorority girls as “airheads,” I’ve lost my freedom to evaluate those students on the basis of their work. “The fewer value systems we have in our cameras, the less we will label what we see and the less pressurized we will be to act. With less pressure, we will have the time to figure out flexible and creative behaviors...” (1984, p. 86). How much more “free” and flexible and creative is the teacher who walks into a room full of new students with no preconceived notions about their capabilities.

3) Developing a picture of quality schoolwork. Glasser notes that “the quality of academic work like history, English, and math is not apparent to most students until they begin to do it” (1990, p. 63). This is especially true in the case of freshman English where there is often a tremendous gap between what “passed” for a quality composition in a small rural Kansas high school and what is considered “quality” writing at the university. I have talked to many freshmen who are puzzled and disappointed that their first attempts at college writing miss the “quality” mark. They write their first college paper like they would have written a high school composition, but discover to their chagrin that it doesn’t meet college standards. “This would have been an ‘A’ paper in high school.” This certainly bears out what Glasser says again and again in The Quality School about our schools’ low standards of quality and students having become accustomed to minimal efforts being rewarded with good grades. I think this “English composition culture shock” I have noticed is perhaps just one manifestation of that disparity of standards.

Glasser suggests that teachers can help resolve this problem by teaching their students how to identify “quality” school work (or replacing their pictures of “high school quality” compositions with a picture of “college quality” work). “Until a student or worker becomes aware of what quality is and has experienced enough to find it need-satisfying, there is little chance it will be pursued with determination” (1990, p. 63). However, before we can...
even begin to help students see that writing well can satisfy their needs, we need to help them recognize "quality." Glasser suggests "posting quality papers for students to inspect" (1990, p. 62). How can we expect students to recognize a "quality" piece of writing (whether theirs or someone else's) if they have had little exposure to "quality" (or had an opportunity to discuss the attributes of "quality" writing)? I also think that it is important to use peer-generated "quality models" for students. By only exposing students to models of professional writing, the standards may appear to be so impossibly high as to discourage students. "I could never write anything like that." However, by using "quality" papers written by other college freshmen as models, the standards may be more realistic and may seem more attainable.

Furthermore, Glasser believes that students should be given opportunities to assess their own writing as well as their peers'. The teacher should then have students discuss what makes a paper "good," noting particularly any discrepancies between the teacher's assessment and theirs. "From these discussion students learn to judge what determines quality work" (1990, pp. 62-63). I anticipate incorporating these strategies in my classroom by emphasizing self-assessment of student writing (which will undoubtedly require more individual conferences) and spending more class time discussing the attributes of "quality" writing.

Glasser asserts that teachers should give students ample opportunities to improve their work. "If we are not going to try to improve what we do, there is little sense in assessing it" (1990, p. 63). Certainly, when I took freshmen Comp. in 1966, the prevailing pedagogy in English composition was to have students write essays which teachers evaluated. If you didn't do well on an essay, you were stuck with a bad grade, the rationale being that you would ostensibly "learn" from your mistakes and not make them on the next writing assignment. However, composition theorists now view writing as a recursive process, recognizing the importance of revision — the student drafts a composition, gets feedback from the instructor (and perhaps from peers as well), and revises it, the ultimate goal being to produce a "quality" piece of writing. This philosophy fits well with Glasser's proposal for "quality" schoolwork which calls for "much reworking and improving" (1990, p. 100). Again, it seems unfair to expect a heterogeneous group of college freshmen to come to school with a "picture" of "quality" writing. If their individual pictures do not coincide with the college's standards, how can we expect them to meet those standards unless we help them redefine their pictures of quality writing?

One of my goals (incorporating Glasser's concepts) for the fall semester is to have my students start writing immediately, but not assign a grade for their first efforts. Instead, I plan to carefully read each paper and make tactful and supportive suggestions for improvement. As I have learned from my students' reactions, there is nothing more disheartening to a student than to have handed in what (by his or her standards or "quality" picture) was a "good" paper, only to get it back covered with red ink. Rather, my goal would be to diagnose problems (discrepancies between the students' ideas of good writing and the English Department's standards). By gradually introducing students to models of quality writing and through comments on their papers, I would hope that they would come to see on their own that what they had thought was good writing (or at least what passed for quality at their high schools) may not pass muster at college. Indeed, I have "defused" a number of upset and bewildered students who couldn't understand why their "this-would-have-been-an-A-in-high-school" paper only merited a "C" in college by simply showing them a "quality" paper and allowing them to note the differences between the two and guiding them to diagnose the problems with theirs.

By following Glasser's suggestions, I think it is possible to help students put a "picture" of good writing in their quality worlds. But, more importantly, teachers can help them to realize that they can produce quality writing. As Glasser puts it, "By always asking for some improvement, the students will begin to recognize that what is wanted is higher quality work and that even if they did not do it at first, it needs to be done and they can do it" (1990, p. 99). Glasser (1990) states that teachers should begin to implement this "quality" approach by refusing to accept low-quality schoolwork. I agree with his philosophy and intend to implement it in my classroom next fall. However, I believe that freshmen need to be "oriented" to the higher college standards before their work is "refused." Indeed, I have found that once students come to realize that college standards are higher and different from what they had been accustomed to, that they can't get by with writing a page and a half of whatever pops into their head, that they're going to have to put more effort into revising their writing — that the English Department requires "quality" work — they are usually quite willing to do whatever is necessary to meet those standards.

Finally, once you've presented your students with a picture of "quality" writing, how do you get them to put "writing" into their quality worlds? Obviously, grades may be motivating forces for some college students, yet a surprising number of students seem to be satisfied with "C's." As Glasser points out, "There is certainly no basic need to do schoolwork" (1990, p. 42). And it probably goes without saying that English composition doesn't initially interest or motivate many students. As a matter of fact, it's common for students to complain, "I hate to write," "I never know how to start," "I don't have anything to say," "I've never been a good writer." Glasser observes that "No human being is unmotivated" (1990, p. 42). But how can you motivate students to want to do something that they may have built up years of resistance to (or had a record of failure with) i.e. help students begin to place quality work in their quality world.

I can't answer that rhetorical question with any great profundity, although an experiment I attempted last semester may suggest at least one way to help students see the value and importance of learning to write persuasively. Students were asked to write a problem-solving paper: find a problem and propose a feasible solution. I learned that all of my students were either currently employed or had had summer jobs, and nearly every one of them had encountered problems of one sort or another in the workplace. I presented them with a "model" paper written by a college student...
that was framed as a letter to her boss, suggesting that he adopt a new form of management. A majority of my students chose to write similar papers and produced better than usual work. They were interested in the subject; they knew a lot about it; and they had a personal stake in the outcome (I urged them to actually send the papers to their bosses). Students proposed such things as reorganizing and labeling merchandise in a hardware store, keeping a small-town restaurant open more hours on the weekend, suggesting a different manner of allocating tips to waiters and waitresses, staggering break times for movie concession stand employees, and doing away with non-productive busy work. I don’t know whether any of my students’ letters were responsible for effecting the changes they sought, but at least they may have come to understand that writing persuasively is important and, if nothing else, might help them get something they want sometime.

Generally speaking, however, perhaps the best way to help students choose to add writing to their quality worlds is to help them see that writing becomes a needs-satisfying experience for them. I believe that with some thoughtful and creative planning, it’s possible to devise writing assignments that are fun, that allow students some freedom and power, and that let them feel that they “belong” to a writing community. (I think the latter point is particularly important since many students seem to feel like “outsiders” when it comes to writing.) In any case, my planning will center around Glasser’s need theory as I attempt to assign work and conduct classes that satisfy my students’ needs. I also plan to incorporate some variation of a learning-team model, perhaps in the form of writing workshops described in Control theory in the classroom (pp. 98-99).

All of this I plan to do because I believe that it will help me to be a better teacher and my students better learners. Furthermore, I would suggest that all teachers should do likewise (if they are not already doing so) because minimum standards and boss-type management are taking our educational system in the wrong direction. After all, our students are our most important product, and Control Theory offers us the best way to produce a better product, i.e., leaders of tomorrow.

References

A COMPARISON OF BASIC WEEK STUDENTS AND INTRODUCTION TO COUNSELING GRADUATE STUDENTS ON FOUR BASIC NEED FACTORS
Arlin V. Peterson
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Control theory (Glasser 1984) has added academic credibility to reality therapy within various professional counseling circles, and The Quality School (Glasser 1990) has rekindled the interest and enthusiasm of school people. Students enrolled in master’s level counselor education programs today are being introduced to reality therapy in greater depth than was the case in the past. Counseling students are also becoming aware of the certification process offered through the Institute of Reality Therapy (IRT).

The training programs offered through the IRT and counselor education programs have some parallel features. Both programs are attempting to provide information, skill development and personal growth opportunities for students. The notion that education programs should assist prospective counselors to meet their basic needs as defined by Glasser (Glasser 1984) in order to gain the psychological strength to help future clients meet their basic needs would not be argued by most R.T. trainers or counselor educators.

Student recruitment and selection are quite similar, yet different. The IRT attracts students from most helping professions wanting to improve the services they provide. Also, individuals looking to improve general human relation skills and management techniques often attend intensive RT training weeks. The IRT does not require a person to have a degree and there is no prerequisite necessary to enter the IRT training program. However, the majority of the participants do hold degrees, and many have advanced degrees.

Counselor education programs at the master’s level, in contrast, recruit persons seeking entry into one of the helping professions. Naturally, these students are required to have an undergraduate degree. Also, students must meet the university requirements for graduate school. The degree requirement does not usually specify any major field of undergraduate study, but the graduate school requirements typically include a minimum Graduate Record Exam score and a certain undergraduate grade point average.
Although this difference in student recruitment and selection is in evidence, no research has been conducted to determine if student selection criteria have any impact on students meeting their basic needs.

**METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of the study was to compare Basic Week trainees and Introduction to Counseling graduate students on their perceived needs, time invested and success achieved in satisfying the four basic psychological needs.

The subjects for the study included 57 graduate students enrolled in one of two Introduction to Counseling classes taught by the senior author, and 95 trainees that took the Basic Week of training and also enrolled in the correspondence course offered by Texas Tech University for college credit.

The instrument used to collect the data was "Pete's Pathogram". The pathogram was first used as a clinical instrument to provide a graphic illustration for clients of the energy they were exerting to meet their basic needs (Peterson and Parr, 1982). The historical development of Pete's Pathogram as a research tool was documented in the Fall 1988 *Journal of Reality Therapy* (Peterson and Truscott, 1988).

After computing the measures of central tendency, the data collected were analyzed by using the t-test to determine significant differences in means both between groups and within groups. Table 1 reports the results of the t-tests performed between the trainees and students on each of the 12 measures collected. In addition, the profile of results for trainees is found in Figure 1, and the comparable profile for students can be seen in Figure 2. Table 2 reports the data gleaned within the groups on each of the 12 measures. On all tests performed, the .05 level of confidence was accepted as statistically significant.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Significant differences were observed between the trainees and graduate counseling groups in both the belonging need and power need (see Table 1). As can be seen from Table 1, students had a significantly higher perceived need for belonging ($x = 7.44$) than did the trainees ($x = 6.81$). The students, however, were not significantly higher than trainees in the time spent or success achieved for belonging. A measure of the "satisfaction" that a person feels in meeting the belonging need was also investigated. This "satisfaction" measure was defined as the perceived need for belonging minus the success achieved in meeting the need (i.e. satisfaction = perceived need - success achieved). Although only approaching significance ($p = .055$), there was observed to be a difference of .58 between the trainee and student groups on this satisfaction measure. This would lead to the conclusion that students have both a higher perceived need for belonging and a lower sense of satisfaction in the ways that they are attempting to meet those needs.
Table 1 also reveals two significant differences between the trainee and student groups concerning the power need. While they showed no significant difference in the perceived need for power, trainees spent significantly more time in fulfilling their power need ($x = 5.68$ vs $x = 4.93$) and achieved significantly more success ($x = 5.18$ vs $x = 4.56$) than their student counterparts. This might lead one to propose that the RT training has led to a feeling of empowerment for the trainees that students are missing in their academic program. The students report the same perceived need for power that trainees report, but they don't seem to feel as able to do things to meet that need. Because of this helpless feeling, they may be avoiding spending the time and effort necessary to attain the success they desire.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and T-Tests for RT Students and Graduate Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>RT Students</th>
<th>Graduate Students</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Need</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Power</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>.03*</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Need</td>
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<td>4.32</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at .05 level

*Plot – Perceived need, time invested and success achieved for all four genetic needs.
Many within groups differences were found in both the trainees and the students (see Table 2). The perceived need for belonging exceeded the perceived needs for power, freedom, and fun by a significant amount in both groups. Though all differences were found to be statistically significant, the students differed at a magnitude roughly twice as great as the trainees. This points to the finding that the perceived needs of the trainees were much more balanced than those of the students (see Table 1).

It should also be noted that this greater balance was found to be present in the time spent and success achieved for trainees. The time spent by trainees on their belonging and power needs were not found to be statistically different from one another, but both of these significantly exceeded the time invested in freedom and fun. Students, on the other hand, spent significantly more time in fulfillment of their belonging need than they did on power, freedom, and fun.

Both groups reported that they attained significantly more success in the area of their belonging needs than for any of the other genetic needs. Neither group reported any significant differences in the success that they attained among the power, freedom, and fun needs. This finding should be tempered, however, by the earlier cited “satisfaction” measure that tended to indicate that although this belonging satisfaction success level is higher in magnitude than the other success measures, the discrepancy between the perceived need for belonging and the success attained is quite high for students ($x = 1.70$). This may indicate that their feeling of satisfaction in the area of belonging is not as high as the success that they indicate.

Possibly the most interesting finding is that, overall, the trainees seem to report a more balanced pathogram than the students. This might tend to indicate that the Basic Week training is, in fact, helping trainees to meet their basic needs. Another fact that should not be overlooked is that the trainees will typically have a better understanding of the basic needs as defined by Glasser (Glasser, 1984) than the students because of the greater intensiveness of their study of Control Theory.

### IMPLICATIONS

The finding that students in counseling have a high perceived need for belonging as well as a tendency toward low satisfaction in this area is crucial for persons involved in planning academic programs. Efforts should be made to allow for opportunities for students to work with one another apart from the usual competitive framework. Cooperative learning teams could be a vehicle to facilitate a sense of belonging. The intensive nature of RT training weeks may be giving participants this sense of belonging that graduate students miss out on.

Graduate programs in counseling may also need to consider including in the early courses some training in Control Theory or at least some information on the genetic needs and the importance of putting time and effort into fulfilling each of these needs. Often students neglect some areas of their lives in order to find the time for school, studies, etc.

Another important implication of this study is the fact that graduate students in counseling are in need of the sense of empowerment that RT trainees seem to be getting from their training. Again, this may be due to the training in Control Theory that the RT trainees have had. Graduate students, on the other hand, may see graduate school as a seemingly endless undertaking in which they have little control or power. Graduate programs might need to consider allowing greater involvement of the students in decisions that affect them.

### References

HELPING STUDENTS TAKE CONTROL VIA AN INTERACTIVE VOICE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

Thomas S. Parish

The author is on the faculty of Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS., and is a frequent contributor to the Journal.

According to Glasser (1980), "People don't learn what they don't want to learn, but teaching becomes effective as soon as people who hurt discover that they can learn a better way" (p. 52). This statement suggests that people will be more receptive to information taught if (1) they can see that it applies to their lives, and (2) that they, by acting accordingly, can meet some need (Parish, 1990). That this is so has been documented in various counseling settings (see N. Glasser, 1980), residential treatment facilities (e.g., Yarish, 1986), and classroom settings (e.g., Parish, 1988a, b, c), but can the same teaching strategies be used via an interactive voice communications system (i.e., Telenet) that fails to allow significant direct contact between the teacher and the student? To date, only one such study has demonstrated that this is possible (i.e., Parish, 1989), so the present study will seek to add further insight as to whether or not this is so.

METHOD

A total of 32 undergraduate and graduate students, enrolled in a course entitled "Motivating Students" taught via Telenet from a large midwestern university, voluntarily participated in the present study. Briefly stated, these students were familiarized with the concepts of Reality Therapy (Glasser, 1967), Control Theory (Glasser, 1984), and ways to overcome the various conflicts of life as proposed by Parish (1990). Before and after this information was presented (over an eight week period), students completed two questionnaires in a counterbalanced fashion. These questionnaires were the Personal Attribute Inventory (Parish, Bryant & Shirazi, 1976) and the Love/Hate Checklist (Parish, 1988d). The former instrument required students to describe how they perceived themselves in positive and negative adjectives (i.e., self-concepts), while the latter instrument surveyed them in terms of how they acted (i.e., lovingly or hatefully).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Precourse-postcourse comparisons revealed that students enrolled in this class apparently (1) did learn the information taught and consequently (2) did change their self-concepts and actions toward others accordingly. That this occurred via an interactive voice communications system (i.e., Telenet) that prohibited for-the-most-part person-to-person contact is attested to by the t-values on both the Personal Attribute Inventory (t = -9.51, df = 130, p < .001; Xpre = 4.09/Xpost = 1.15) and the Love/Hate Checklist (t = -9.10, df = 131, p < .0001; Xpre = 5.16/Xpost = 1.02). These results provide support for the conclusion reported previously by Parish (1989), and further suggest that teachers can achieve similar results by teaching such concepts beyond the counseling setting and/or traditional classroom. Perhaps we may even be able to implement these strategies on a broader scale via public television or radio, and in so doing help millions of people take more efficient control of their lives.

References

HOMELESSNESS - A FREEDOM NEED
OUT OF CONTROL

Megan G. Fates

The author is a school psychologist in the Provincetown/Truro schools in Massachusetts.

The local newspaper brought to its readers in headlines what many of us who work with children already knew to be true. In the winter of 1991, the Lower/Outer Cape Health and Human Services Coalition announced that over 16 families in our small Lower Cape Cod towns were officially listed as homeless. However, the Coalition also cited the report did not count local residents at shelters 50 miles away. Nor did it include those families without their own housing; these families who move from friend to friend, or relative to relative.

The Lower Cape Outreach Council added to the above report. Those figures, they stated, “do not include people living under the pier in Provincetown, in the woods, or squatting in vacated cottages.” Also omitted, their spokesman continued, were “the so-called throwaway kids, the teenagers forced from their homes by abuse or other dysfunctioning. These homeless young people seem to find each other and create squatting-clusters.”

We knew of students in all the above categories and were well aware that the problems of homeless children were no longer confined to urban centers or even suburbia. Homeless children were real people in our small rural resort communities.

It is only in the past five years that homeless children have become a reality in our two small seashore resort towns. With that realization has come the understanding that if we are to provide for these children, it must be done on a local level with the cooperation of many of the towns’ known and unknown resources and personnel. This was not the problem as originally perceived.

When the first homeless students were discovered to be local, not transient, children, it was felt this must be some aberration, and that state authorities and designees would immediately come to our rescue. The unvoiced thought was the parents would be told to reclaim their offspring, chastised softly but with counseling, supportive services, visit by social workers, and ‘school understanding’. How naive we were and how quickly we became hardened to the fact that only ‘school understanding’, whatever that was, was possible.

Provincetown schools are located at a tip of a peninsula 120 road miles from Boston; 52 miles from Hyannis, the county seat. The burgeoning population of the Cape and resultant demographic needs are centered around Hyannis, while those towns that are most easterly become proportionately smaller, less industrial, and more distanced from services. The ‘end result’ is Provincetown, with the smallest high school in the state despite educational merger with her neighbor, Truro. The smallness, geographic intimacy, and family-like atmosphere is appealing and in many cases rewarding to those who choose to work there. The drawbacks are obvious: the 52 miles to a hospital and related medical support services, lack of ability to easily share with neighboring towns, and very limited social service resources. Add to this limited public transporation in a town where many do not own cars, or in the case of children unable to drive; and a town economically dependent on a summer economy to get it through the other three seasons.

During the other seasons, there can be a heavy dependency on unemployment checks, state housing and fuel assistance, and food stamps. These are also the months children should be in school, minimally 6½ hours staying warm and eating lunch, as well as learning and participating in school related activities. We were soon to find the non-academic reasons for coming to school (food, showers, warmth, comraderie, caring teachers, and safety) were keeping our drop-out rate low.

Our first homeless students of concern were three unrelated teenagers who lived with one birth parent and for various reasons were no longer welcome at home. These students were well known to the school staff. The reasons for leaving home included difficulty with the other adult in the house, parental lifestyle changes, inability of the teenager to conform to home rules, and boy friend/girl friend pressures.

In the past, a call to a relative, neighbor, minister or priest temporarily gave a student cooling off time elsewhere in a classmate’s or relative’s home. Then, a few days later, tempers would cool, and reorganization would take place with the parent and child making attempts to work things out, all usually possible in a small town that prides itself on solving its own problems. For the first time, this was not the case as now either or both parties refused all attempts at reconciliation.

The student over sixteen became a particular challenge. Placements in temporary homes by the local agency were non-existent. Foster parents weren’t looking for noisy teenagers who come with stereo equipment, friends who drive, a need to telephone constantly, and have their own sets of ideas about survival - and probably will not reunite with their parent(s). No matter how likeable the student, these obstacles and the dearth of appropriate homes created an immediate problem. The court system, despite its desire to help these older students, was also at a loss. A student couldn’t be jailed for being kicked out of his home.

As this dilemma boggled the minds of the school and community, these first students began to find their own solutions. They found other students who lived in precarious home situations and began to band together. Some moved into questionable living quarters together using money from parents glad to see them 'safe' but not in their homes, or the students utilized their earnings. (Winter jobs were and still are hard to find). Others moved into other students’ homes where parent(s) might be working at night or so involved in their own lives that supervision was missing or minimal. Local churches, agencies, and civic organizations could not pump food and
clothes into such places - as they were. Medical needs could sometimes also be met by putting pressure on the absent parent or utilizing mandatory school insurance for sports and activities. All this was stop-gap as most of the “new living arrangements” fell apart within a few months and new ones were created. Many of the students were caught between coming to school and taking care of their new survival needs. This often took weeks as new relationships were formed, new living arrangements made, and money reconsidered. The daily absentee list became a big clue in understanding the new structures.

As the school was getting knowledgeable about this type of homeless student, a new more difficult kind of student appeared who would soon outnumber the previous variety, and eventually include them in their count. They were “The New Kids on the Block”. These were the youngsters who came to the end of the world in the custody of a young adult unknown to the town. The custodian could be a sibling, boyfriend, girlfriend, relative or “interested party”. Each student usually had a sad story that involved a dysfunctional family, the need to get away, and the desire to start over in a pretty, socially active summer resort town. Time would also reveal each came with some kind of document (or would get one) denoting a young adult was the legal custodian. Follow-up phone calls where possible revealed natural parents unable and unwilling to take care of their children, agencies overloaded, and schools glad to know where the child now was. And, of course, more of the child’s disruptive past was consigned to paper.

As the days grew shorter and colder, so did the relationship between the transient student and caretaker. Boyfriends found new girlfriends; older siblings ran out of summer money, and the student was now a drag on the other young person’s life style. Many ‘custodial parents’ gave up helping the student, became involved in a seamier part of life, and/or simply disappeared. This was made more difficult for the school by not having the lifelines of family and neighbors heretofore known and utilized by the school personnel. The school had lost an invaluable commodity: knowledge of its town’s children and its corollary - utilization of resources with other town agencies. A new network was needed. It was time to address this new wave of adolescents’ basic needs and hope we would also address the town’s as well.

The school administration with the urging of the basic caregivers, providers, and responders called a class-meeting for adults. Invitations were sent to the police department, clergy, recreation commission, senior citizen center, PTA, school committee, service groups, select persons (the governing body), town nurse, medical center, and town social service agencies. It was chaired by a caring school superintendent. The beginning agenda was simple: identifying the population. Without naming specific students, it soon became apparent there were more students than we knew and they were more creative than we had imagined in finding ways to stay safe, warm, and fed. Some were transients who were regularly replaced by new children; others were our local students who lived covertly with relatives and friends while maintaining a home address. One student was driving her boyfriend’s car 50 miles daily and working at a mall at night to pay for the gas. Another was ‘camping out’ nightly in different woods.

At the end of the meeting we had the beginnings of a fund, a treasurer, and an agenda, as well as additional meeting dates. We also had newspaper coverage which would become a mixed blessing.

The next meeting quickly ascertained the lack of foster homes in the area. Only three certified homes by the county social services existed. All three were ‘filled’ and one was very questionable. As a result, the group decided local safe emergency homes was the priority with hopes that some might become long range foster homes. Each person was to come to the next meeting with names of possible emergency caretakers. They could be monetarily helped by the newly created fund, and trained by some of those sitting around the growing class-meeting members. It seemed the fun and freedom needs of our students were being met, in some cases negatively; while the needs for belonging and power were not being addressed by positive role models. Without such, the choices these adolescents were being forced to make would be limited and often self-defeating. A lot of work was in store for the group if we were to make an ongoing impact.

We now divided into sub-committees.

1) Sources of emergency food and clothing
2) Sources of money
3) Legal limits, concerns, and responsibilities
4) Academic needs
5) Sources for helping emergency foster homes - including training plans

The first four were completed, although time consuming, but the fifth would give us the most difficult time. As the emergency home committee worked, we were beset with immediate problems:

a) how to maintain confidentiality
b) appropriateness of the placement
c) rules for the student that fit the new home
d) support services for the new parent if the student needed to stay a length of time.

Our new volunteer parents would need more than a big heart. They would need help and in some cases more advanced parenting skills.

The parent group began by inventorying and interviewing each potential foster parent. A checklist was created, amended and finally honed to ascertain what foster parents were really willing to do. Among the hard core questions were:

1) What age child do you favor? Why?
2) How would you handle your biological child’s interaction with such a child?
3) How long could you realistically keep another child in your house (weekend, a week, a month)?
4) What would you do in case of an emergency?
5) How do you discipline?
6) What rules are important to you?
for others as a social worker. Other students think of the service, marriage and the work force as solutions rather than survival.

Positively the state has made universal health insurance possible for a small percentage of older students who heretofore could not receive dental, eye and medical help. The state has set up a homeless agency but we have yet to benefit from its creation. Many forms are filled regularly but none of the agency’s largesse - if there is any in this monetarily strapped state- sees Provincetown. This is further evidence that if the students are to be helped it must be done locally and on a personal level. We have learned single parents, gay parents, and senior citizens make good resources. All a further definition of community, and for me: Every Friday I know when I go home any student who needs food, bed, and a little love can have it in a safe home. And Monday there will be people to help create a new plan.

**SUMMARY**

As a result of working with the problems of the homeless in our 2 small communities I would recommend to others that they begin tackling their problems by utilizing the ideas presented.

1. Recognize this is a societal problem. You are not alone, nor can you solve it alone.
2. Form a group that consists of all facets of your community to brainstorm ideas.
3. Identify all your local resources.
4. Pick one area that you can change (We chose safe homes for a short duration).
5. Continue to meet regularly.
6. Begin networking with outside resources for legislative, economic, and academic assistance.
7. Publicize your concerns, meetings, and successes (where possible).
8. The Jonathon Kozol book in the bibliography has an excellent appendix listing resources, legislation and additional research. It is an excellent beginning for any group working with homeless children.
9. Don’t give up - there are more children growing up who will depend on your group efforts.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

REALITY THERAPY/CONTROL THEORY
IN A TREATMENT FOSTER CARE NETWORK
Darlene Duncan

The author, reality therapy certified, is coordinator of Lifeboat Treatment Foster Care Network in Brookville, Ohio.

A treatment foster care network is a group of specially recruited families which provide a community-based family and child centered program. It utilizes a collaborative planning approach to provide family milieu services, combined with complementary community services, to meet the diverse needs of multi-need children who require out-of-home placement. Preble County, Ohio Children Services Board, with the help of other county agencies, has developed a program called Lifeboat Treatment Foster Care Network. Lifeboat is staffed by "professional" foster families who are selected for their maturity, knowledge and skill, and are trained to provide the milieu of services required for multi-need children. The children served are between the ages of 10 to 18 and are also involved with other youth-serving agencies in the county. They and/or their families are chemically dependent and may or may not be in recovery. One member of each foster family takes on the role of professional advocate, serving the Network as a whole as well as linking needed services for the youth in their home. These Youth Specialists then develop a networking system to provide mutual support as well as developing the power to participate as part of the family case management system.

The children served by Lifeboat have been given numerous labels by the system. They are unruly, delinquent, emotionally disadvantaged, learning disabled, severely behaviorally handicapped; they have behavioral disorders, attention deficit disorders, and many others. These children have not learned to meet their basic needs in responsible ways and have resorted to less effective acting out behaviors in place of more positive ones. The child care system identifies these children as unattached, rejected, distrustful, failure oriented, unmotivated, inadequate, submissive, inferior, irresponsible, selfish, affectionless, hardened, and anti-social. Lifeboat sees these children as needing to learn new behaviors to better meet their needs. We have based our program on the principles of reality therapy/control theory.

The first step in developing a treatment network is in the recruitment of foster parents. Once suitable families are committed to the concepts, the next step is in the training. We have consulted with the Institute for Human Services in Columbus, Ohio to help us in this process. In order to empower the Youth Specialist, we require a 60 hour, intensive training program which includes instruction in the following topics:

- Philosophy of treatment family networks
- Working with primary families
- Network policy and administrative procedures

How to read a psychological report and understand the "professional treatment members of the team
- Working with the DSM III and medications
- Where do these children come from
- Communication
- Family system
- Impact of fostering on your family
- Discipline, separation and placement
- Child development
- Crisis Intervention and mediation

In addition to this, we offer an initial 6 hours introduction to reality therapy/control theory which is taught by a certified reality therapist. This initial training is then expounded on in the weekly Network meetings which all Youth Specialists are required to attend. In these 5 hour meetings, we spend time learning problem solving skills based in the reality therapy techniques of WDEP described by Wubbolding (1991). This is, what do you want, what are you doing, evaluation, and a plan for new behavior.

We also use roleplays in these meetings as a way to not only learn reality therapy but to practice the skills learned and to try out options that will be dealt with in a given situation with the children. Reality therapy techniques are also used in our team building activities where we participate in outdoor adventure experiences such as a ropes course, trust falls, backpacking, and whitewater rafting. The same format is also used throughout the time the Youth Specialists are employed by the Network to assess and evaluate their performance and commitment to the treatment foster care philosophy (Appendix A).

Because we are dealing with people who are chemically dependent, we require a 12 hour program to teach not only the Youth Specialists, but also caseworkers, casemanagers and probation officers how to teach kids to self-diagnose, self-treat and to assume responsibility for recovery from the disease of addiction. This training is conducted by a faculty member from the Institute for Reality Therapy. Not only is lecture a part of this training, but also demonstration and roleplays are utilized. Participants are actively involved in experiential activities whereby they are practicing what they are learning.

Lifeboat Network has a reference library of numerous books and tapes on reality therapy which the Youth Specialists may borrow at any time. We also encourage them to begin the certification process to become certified reality therapists.

However, teaching reality therapy to the Youth Specialists is not enough. We also believe the children in our care should be able to demonstrate that they are responsible for their behavior. We do this initially with an Adventure and Wilderness Camping Program led by a certified reality therapist. This program begins with day programs to teach the basic skills necessary for wilderness camping, such as hiking, backpacking, campfire cooking, etc., and then several two day trips to practice what has been learned. This is culminated with a week long Wilderness Camping Experience. We also take the youth whitewater rafting, ropes courses, and
other Adventure type activities. The key to all these activities is again the use of reality therapy techniques.

Available to the Youth Specialists, the Network library has curricula developed for use with both middle school children and adolescents to teach the youth how they can use control theory principles in their lives. Therefore, the children in our care are firmly grounded in reality therapy and can apply it in their own behavior choices.

The children are in placement an average of between 6 months to 1½ years. At this time, they usually return to their primary families. Because we spend so much time in teaching the youth reality therapy and control theory, it would stand to reason we must also teach the primary family the same skills. We do this subtly at first in the modelling behavior of our treatment families. We also invite the primary families to have fun with the Network at picnics, pot lucks, and other activities including the outdoor adventure programs. The approach can be applied in various ways in all the activities the Network plans. The Network Coordinator, along with the Youth Specialists, teaches the primary families problem solving skills. Before returning the child home, we offer the 12 hour reality therapy and recovery program to them. After children are returned to their primary family, the Network keeps in touch with them and helps them for an indefinite period in learning how to take a look at what they are doing, evaluating what they are doing, and helping them to make a plan for responsible behavior.

This is a new program. We are encouraged and confident of its success. Our goal is to treat individuals with dignity and respect, aiming all our policies toward strengthening the family unit. We have developed a treatment alternative to children traditionally placed in out of county institutions, away from their families and their friends. It is the goal of Lifeboat to teach both the child and the primary family the skills and foundations in which the child may return to the family in as short a time as possible. It is the goal of Lifeboat that the child, once released from the system, not return to the system.

The treatment families are the hub of the program. They are professional caregivers, trained, qualified and offering treatment oriented family environments for children in need of treatment services. Based on the use of reality therapy/control theory, we believe "that everyone is responsible for his or her own behavior - not society, not the environment, not heredity, not the past, but each person now. Reality Therapy is helping people learn how to take a look at what they are doing and then teaching them to evaluate their behavior and to make a plan to do better. It is accepting responsibility for what one does. It is not looking for blame or finding fault or dwelling on the past or feeling sorry for oneself. It is accepting that one is responsible."

Appendix A

SELF EVALUATION

W WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM YOUR JOB? OTHER NETWORK FAMILIES? NETWORK COORDINATOR?
1. Is your job satisfying to you?
2. Where do you want to be in a year, 5 years?
3. What do you want that you are getting? Not getting?

D WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN YOUR JOB? IN WHAT DIRECTION IS YOUR BEHAVIOR LEADING YOU?
1. Do you want your behavior to be a model for the youth and that they would behave in the same manner?
2. Do you want your behavior to be a model for the natural or primary family and that they would behave in the same manner?

E EVALUATE WHAT YOU WANT IN RELATION TO HOW YOU ARE BEHAVING?
1. Is what you want realistic or attainable?
2. Is what you are doing helpful as far as getting the job done?
3. Is what you are doing helpful to others?
4. Is what you are doing helping you to get what you want?
5. Is what you are doing in line with or against the explicit rules of the Network and Agency?
6. Is what you are doing acceptable, i.e., in line with common sense even though it might not be against an explicit rule?
7. Is what you are doing helping the Network and the Agency achieve its goals, provide a high quality program or service to the community, and maintain a positive reputation in the community so that you can maintain a secure job for yourself?
8. Is the plan realistically attainable and helpful?

P IF YOU SEE YOU NEED IMPROVEMENT, WHAT WILL YOU DO TO IMPROVE?
1. Where do you go from here?
2. What will you do differently today?
3. Keep this plan simple, attainable, measurable, immediate, consistent, controlled by you (SAMIC2).

(Adapted from Managing People [1990] by Robert Wubbolding)

REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING
SEX AND TOTAL BEHAVIOR

Maureen McIntosh

The author is a nurse counselor at the Reproductive Health Clinic, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

As a nurse working in a reproductive health clinic, I have a mandate to help adolescents take responsibility for their own sexual behavior. Yet, I hear comments almost daily that we are giving teenagers all kinds of information about sex, and still they don’t change their behavior. It is my own frustration signal on hearing these comments that motivates me to write this article.

Information alone does not help adolescents take responsibility for their sexual behavior. In 1986, when I was first introduced to reality therapy, I soon realized I now had the tools needed to assist adolescents to take responsibility for their own sexual behavior.

It has been my experience working with the parents of these teens that it is very difficult for adults to see their own children as sexual beings and, as a result, we avoid the subject and depend on the schools to do the job. Being able to discuss sexual issues with our children openly and honestly gives adults a great deal of power when dealing with adolescents. If we can discuss a sensitive issue such as sex, then it is safe to discuss other issues that are just as important. Most adults definitely have an agenda in this area. They do not want their children to be involved sexually and spend a lot of time hoping their children won’t “do it”. Many never address the subject, which leaves some children to perceive that if you can’t talk about it then it must be dirty or pretty bad. This may lead to difficulties later in adult sexual experiences.

It is of utmost importance that we address the wants of the teenager. Most will say they want to have sex because it proves their manhood or womanhood; some say it is because they love the person they are with, others say they just like having sex; others believe it is what they are supposed to do. Rarely does the teenager bring up the quality of the relationship; yet the majority of teenage girls admit that they don’t even like having sexual intercourse. Most will admit they choose this behavior to keep their boyfriend.

Knowledge about sex is very important, but the key to successful sexuality education is teaching the students what to do with the information they are receiving. Knowing about behavior is important, as Glasser (1990) in his book The Quality School states:

- It is always what we want at the time that causes our behavior.
- What happens outside us has a lot to do with what we choose to do but the outside event does not cause the behavior. What we get and all we ever get from the outside is information; how we choose to act on this information is up to us. Therefore, the information that the students get from the teacher, which includes how it is given, is very important. In fact this whole book is about its importance. But the students are the ones who make the ultimate judgment about how important it is to them. The more important they think it is, the more they will do what they are asked and the better they will do it. (p. 41).

The information students receive from the teacher (adult) needs to be accurate and up to date. How this information is given is very important. It is important to have their needs met in the classroom. Some suggestions to facilitate this in a sexuality class include having the students set some ground rules that will assist them to have their needs met in that class. In sessions I have given, such rules have included:

1. It is O.K. to ask questions. The only stupid question is the question that is not asked.
2. What we discuss is confidential; that is, share the information but don’t bring classmates’ names into the information sharing.
3. No “put downs” or “killer statements”.
4. It is O.K. to laugh and have fun.
5. It is your right to pass.
6. A question box is available for those who prefer to ask questions in this manner.

I have entered classrooms as a guest speaker and had teachers instruct the students to sit quiet and pay attention and not to say a word. They are always relieved when the ground rules are set and they have an opportunity to have their needs met. Teachers have commented on the rapport with the students in these classes.

A very wise public health doctor and sex educator, Mary Calderone (1982) wrote:” In our wish to protect our children from that unsavory aspect of adult life we “forget to remember” the intimate and personal pleasures of sexuality as part of the goodness of life” (p. 2).

She reminds us that very young babies have been noted by competent observers to experience what could only be interpreted as orgasm and they learn after a few months how deliberately to produce this kind of self-pleasuring. “How can a baby be bad or sinful for doing what he or she was created to do — learn how to walk-talk-think and explore and civilize his or her inborn sexuality” (p. 4).

These words of Dr. Calderone (1982) tell us that

Throughout childhood boys and girls learn to know and experience their own bodies, each with its own repertoire. This is the only way they can grow to understand, in late years, that sex can be a component in a mutually, respectful, loving relationship. The ability to share sexual intimacy with another person and to make “intelligent” use of our own reproductive potential requires that you behave responsibly toward your partner as well as yourself (p. 4).
As adults it is important we recognize these activities as normal and teach not only the normalcy but also give the tools needed to get these needs satisfied safely, as in using the appropriate protection for preventing pregnancy or the transmission of disease.

Glasser (1990) suggests “a measure of our strength, often called strength of character, is how much we can learn to tolerate pain or delay pleasure while doing what is good for us in the long run” (p. 46). Knowledge, as well as how to use the knowledge, provides the power to do what is best for us “in the long run”.

John Dewey (Gordon, 1989) suggested in the late 1800s that schools should focus less on what to do and more on how to decide what to do. It is with this statement and those of Glasser that I am convinced we need to be spending much more time teaching the how to’s.

For the last three years I have presented a program called “Sex and Total Behavior” to students, parents and professionals. I use it in two ways. First, I use it to teach parents about our sexuality as coming from within as one of our very basic needs for survival and reproduction. Once parents agree that this is so, it becomes easier for them to understand the importance of quality sex education. The second way I use it is with students who tell me what they really want to know is how to use the information they are getting. For example, I once had a student tell me to tell the educators all she really wanted to know is what to do when a guy puts his hand in her blouse.

It is not necessary to have all the facts about birth control and sexually transmitted diseases to impact the behavior of teenagers. What is more important is that we learn to listen and have a clear picture of what they want, that we understand they have some very important issues to deal with. We need to teach them how their wants relate to their needs and whether their present behavior is really getting them what they want. We need to be available to help find alternative behaviors. For example, teenagers are very often looking for love, and, based on the knowledge they have, one way to prove your love is to have sexual intercourse. Others may have a strong need for power and see this as an area where mom and dad and teachers can’t control them, while others see sex as freedom and fun - the media promotes these images. Then, again others are interested in having the old brain need for sex release satisfied.

“Sex and Total Behavior” is used successfully to teach control theory to them. It empowers them to see they do in fact have choices, and how knowledge gives them the power to make effective decisions to have their needs met.

The professional has the opportunity to understand our sexuality as well as control theory. I have had professionals trained in reality therapy appreciate the opportunity to examine their own sexuality. At a recent conference, a sex educator remarked; “I have been doing my job for ten years. I now understand what I must do. Knowledge is not enough, I have to teach how to use the knowledge”.

I have prepared the following in handout form. Included is a poster that depicts the difference between those who know how to use the knowledge they have and those who do not. The handout was originally prepared for a poster presentation at the 12th Annual Conference on Sexuality at the University of Guelph, June 1990. I now use it with parents, teens and professionals.

TEENS, SEX AND TOTAL BEHAVIOR

Dr. William Glasser (1984) hypothesizes that we are genetically driven from within to satisfy five basic needs of survival and reproduction, love and belonging, power, fun and freedom. Behavior is an attempt to get something we want and our wants are based on one or more of these needs being met.

We know what we want by the pictures we have in our head, based on the knowledge we now have. In effect, says Glasser (1984) we possess two worlds, an “all we want world” (quality world) and an “all we know world”. Consider what happens when the following traditional messages are perceived by our teens.

FEMALE PERCEPTION

All we know world
In order to have intercourse we must be in love.
If not I will be seen as a “bad girl”.
Intercourse is O.K. for guys.
Can’t plan to protect myself, only “bad girls” do that.

All we want world
Someone to love in order to have intercourse. (need for sex release and love and belonging)

MALE PERCEPTION

All we know world
Girl has the power to say “no”
If she says no I’ll feel rejected-powerless.
Can’t share my feelings - too risky to become involved emotionally;
Anyway all men want sex.

All we want world
Have intercourse without emotional ties. (need for sex release plus power)

All any picture has to do is fulfill the need the person decides is important at that time. (Glasser, 1984) The left hand square of the diagram indicates a typical scenario with this knowledge.
In order to change a behavior there has to be a picture that is equally need fulfilling. Our sex education programs fail if the needs of the teens are not being met. Students need to be taught about relationships and meeting their needs in that relationship. For instance we need to prepare them to ask. How is my need for love being met in this relationship? Do I have a sense of belonging-friendship-caring-involvement? Is my need for power being met? Do I have a sense of importance-recognition-skill-competence? What about fun? Do I have pleasure-enjoyment-learning and laughter? Finally, do I have freedom? Am I free to be myself-have choices - independence-liberty and autonomy.

We must also teach about the basic needs of survival and reproduction (sex drive). If we can do this as well as provide the necessary knowledge about contraception and protection against disease, the “all we know world” and the “all we want world” will look like the following:

**MALE AND FEMALE PERCEPTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All we know</th>
<th>All we want</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex is natural-pleasurable</td>
<td>A good relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if free from unwanted pregnancy,</td>
<td>free from unwanted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexually transmitted diseases</td>
<td>pregnancy and S.T.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and if not against our own values.</td>
<td>(love and belonging,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>power, fun, freedom and sex release, our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reproduction need).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many ways to satisfy the sex urge.

I have the power to say “no”.
I have the power to discuss my concerns with him/her.

If we are to have behavior change, our sex education programs must teach about total behavior. As indicated in the center of the poster diagram our behavior has four components - the physiology, feeling, thinking and doing. We cannot help how we feel (sexual arousal) but we do have control over what we choose to do about these feelings and physiology. Knowledge is power and, once we have that knowledge, we must accept responsibility for our “total behavior”. The way we think about something and what we choose to do about it will affect our physiology and how we feel. Teens already know how they feel and what is happening physically; they need help in the thinking and doing areas of behavior and to be shown how these four components intertwine. Once we have knowledge, we have the power to change our behavior and can no longer claim ignorance. Once we do this, the scenario on the right hand of the poster diagram indicates a much different more responsible behavior. Let the teen make an evaluation on which behavior he or she will choose!

My total behavior is made up of:
1. My physiology-erection in the male-vaginal secretions in the female.
2. My feelings-how I feel about the message received-sexual arousal.

3. My thinking-what I know I can do about the message-given based on the knowledge I now have.

**References**

REALITY THERAPY: AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR THE REHABILITATION COUNSELOR IN THE MAINE WORKERS’ COMPENSATION SYSTEM

Shirley R. Barlow

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The Maine Workers’ Compensation system is a complex and controversial system created by the state legislature with the intention of providing order and organization to a process meant to protect the injured worker from unscrupulous labor practices, at the same time protecting the employer against unfair and unnecessary litigation (MRSA §§1-195, 1989). It is historically rooted in the national rehabilitation movement which began with the Civil Employees Act of 1908 and has evolved to its present status (Rubin & Roessler, 1987).

Rehabilitation counselors, whether fledglings or time-worn veterans, are in desperate need of some constant therapeutic principles upon which they can rely. These principles must allow the counselors to operate flexibly within this ever-changing and multi-faceted system, yet provide some constant and uniform guidelines (Cassell & Mulkey, 1985).

Presently, there are no clear guidelines for approved rehabilitation providers in Maine as far as counseling practices are concerned, yet the phases of the Maine Workers’ Compensation system create a framework which would easily accommodate the principles of reality therapy. Reality therapy is a theory introduced by William Glasser in 1965. In essence, it encourages people to accept responsibility for their own behavior, to focus on their situation realistically and accurately as well as more effectively and productively meeting their inner needs (Glasser, 1965).

The purpose of this paper is to provide the reader with a brief overview of the Maine Workers’ Compensation system and to show how Glasser’s theory can be applied to the rehabilitation process in ways which benefit the injured worker and the counselor at the same time, contributing to the overall effectiveness of the Workers’ Compensation system.

The author’s personal experience as an intern at a small, private rehabilitation company is also included as part of the basis for this paper. That experience has included a mentor relationship with the president and founder of the company who has worked directly in the field for the past eight years. It has included a caseload of over forty clients in all phases of the rehabilitation process including referral, evaluation of suitability, plan development and implementation, appeal conferences (which include the worker, Worker’s Compensation administrator, attorneys and claims adjusters), labor market surveys, job site inspections, placement and closure.

The internship has extended over a nine month period and has included over one thousand hours of direct field work.

BACKGROUND

The Maine Workers’ Compensation system is explained by statutes set forth and revised by the Maine state legislature. These rules are summarized and used by rehabilitation counselors in a publication entitled Maine Workers’ Compensation Commission Rules and Regulations (1989). Rehabilitation counselors have access to review and interpretation of these rules and regulations through personal and written communication with the Workers’ Compensation administrators located in the state’s major cities.

In the literature, the concept of applying reality therapy to the rehabilitation system has been addressed on at least one occasion (Osokie & Turpin, 1985) yet there is very little reference made to the use of reality therapy directly in Worker’s Compensation systems in the standard texts for rehabilitation courses (Rubin et al, 1987).

Reality therapy has been offered as a theory in the therapeutic community since 1965 (Glasser, 1965). Since the time of its initial introduction, it has been expanded by both Glasser and his associates from the specific field of acute mental health (Glasser, 1960) and corrections setting (Glasser, 1965) to a more general use. It has also been applied extensively in the educational field (Glasser, 1980), and to the business world as well (Karrass & Glasser, 1980). It is presently accepted as part of the broader base of community services (Wubbolding, 1988).

WORKER’S COMPENSATIONS SYSTEM

The Maine Law

Maine has a mandatory Workers’ Compensation system, yet within that system there are elements of choice for the injured worker. The system is set up in a series of steps which is best defined by the forms which create the format of procedures used by the rehabilitation counselor, injured worker and claims adjuster (MRSA §§ 1-195, 1989).

Upon this framework of forms are mandated certain time and monetary restrictions. The evaluation of suitability and the rehabilitation plan are conducted by the rehabilitation counselor with the cooperation of the injured worker. The plan is to be acceptable to both the injured worker and the insurance company with the intention of returning the injured worker to suitable employment.

As of November 1989, the Maine State legislature granted the Workers’ Compensation Commission the power to implement a plan regardless of the insurance company’s decision. However, in practice, every attempt is made to bring all parties to an agreement without the involvement of the Commission. Should the Commission exercise its power, the money for the plan comes from a special account established by the state. If the plan is successful, the insurance company is responsible for reimbursement to the fund at 180% of the cost of the original plan (MRSA §§1-195, 1989).
This system involves a large number of individuals, each representing a particular area of interest and unique set of expectations. Although the basic framework is provided by the state, no two cases are the same and these combined factors contribute to an enormously complex system attempting to serve the injured worker.

The Rehabilitation Counselor’s Role

Literature has indicated that intervention of a trained professional counselor with regard to vocational placement has proven to be more effective than when no counseling was used (Rubin et al., 1987). Consequently, it has been mandated by the state legislature that rehabilitation services be made available to the injured worker (MSRA §§1-195, 1989). Disputes constantly arise questioning the realm in which the rehabilitation counselor practices (Cassell et al., 1985). Rehabilitation work is much like blind people describing their perceptions of an elephant. Those people involved in the rehabilitation process describe clients accurately from their own perspective, yet none of the descriptions are complete. The counselor, to be effective, must have a total view of the whole person as well as a thorough understanding of the confines of the system in which he/she is working.

The counselor faces a complex set of counseling challenges. Injured workers are frequently experiencing grief and loss as a result of their injury and inability to return to work, as well as being exposed for the first time to a stigmatizing condition (Goffman, 1963). The injured worker also represents a wide range of social, intellectual and physical circumstances. To be truly effective, the counselor not only assists in vocational placement but acts as educator, advocate and the coordinator of services. An effective counselor helps the person make judgments regarding his/her own behaviors as well as teaching the person how to get inner needs met in the outer world (Glasser, 1976).

Reality Therapy

Reality therapy is a method of helping people which includes principles basic to all human behavior. It teaches people to take control of their lives by making more realistic plans and effectively meeting their inner needs, then matching those needs to their outer world (Wubbolding, 1988). Introduced in 1965 by William Glasser, reality therapy was first applied to acute mental health care facilities (Glasser, 1960) and later in the correctional setting (Glasser, 1965). It has since been applied to circumstances in which more traditional forms of psychotherapy appeared ineffective and is a theory which has withstood the test of time (Wubbolding, 1988). Glasser has adapted and refined his theory over the past twenty years so that it continues to offer a variety of usable techniques to the counselor; at the same time, it is presented in common sense language that can be used by a wide variety of people in the helping professions (Wubbolding, 1988).

When examining reality therapy it is important that the straight forward language not mislead one into believing that it is a simple process, easily applied to every situation. It is rather a philosophy, a different way of looking at the world (Glasser, 1981). The theory includes several important principles. It states that people are responsible for their own behavior, that people can change and lead more effective lives and that people behave for a purpose — that is, to match their inner feelings to their outer world (Glasser, 1976).

Glasser believes that human beings are motivated to fulfill needs and wants. Human needs are common to all people, while wants are unique to the individual and are based upon the individuals’ perception of their world (Glasser, 1976). He believes the difference between what people want and what people perceive they are getting from their environment produces specific behaviors, and that these behaviors are based upon choice. He believes that people see their world through their perceptions and that their level of functioning is directly related to their level of perception (Glasser, 1965). He also believes that people are responsible for their own behavior and that their behavior manifests in either a success or failure identity (Glasser, 1972). This behavior/identity can be changed depending upon the perspective the person chooses. A change in perspective can mean a change in behavior and a change in behavior can mean a change in how the person relates and reacts to the real world or reality (Glasser, 1972). Glasser further believes that people get into trouble not because their standards are too high but because their performance is too low (Bassin, Bratter, & Rachin, 1976).

Reality Therapy Applied to Workers’ Compensation

It is helpful to divide reality therapy into phases when applying it to the Workers’ Compensation system. When this is done, one sees how the framework of the Workers’ compensation system, which is defined by the use of specific forms, lends itself to some of the techniques practiced in reality therapy as seen in Figure 1. For example, in the early stages of contact with the injured worker the counselor meets to perform the evaluation of suitability. During this time it is important to the effectiveness of future work to set up a non-punitive and trusting relationship. It is important for the counselor to suspend value judgments and establish warmth and openness. It is in this early stage that the counselor must acknowledge the given circumstances of the injured worker, at the same time beginning the shift from failure identity to success identity (Glasser, 1972).

As the process develops, the counselor will begin to listen for themes, metaphors and cycles (Wubbolding, 1988) and begin the process of helping the injured worker to understand the nature of feelings. Feelings, according to Glasser, are not the source of people’s motivations. People do not necessarily act to feel better but, instead, they behave in order to get what they want (Glasser, 1981).

As the rehabilitation counselor moves with the injured worker from the evaluation of suitability to the rehabilitation plan and plan implementation...
### Elements of Reality Therapy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework of the Maine Workers' Compensation System</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- R-1 Report of Injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>- R-2 Evaluation of Suitability</td>
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<tr>
<td>- R-3 Rehabilitation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- R-3 Plan Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- R-4 Closure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Establish a warm, supportive relationship

- Focus on the client's present daily activities
- Assess the productivity of the client's present behavior
- Guide the client in forming a plan
- Get the client's commitment to the plan
- Accept no excuses
- Teach renegotiation as opposed to administering punishment
- Never give up

The final phase, plan making is taught, personal responsibility is emphasized and consequences of behavior experienced (Wubbolding, 1988). Fear, doubts and withdrawal may surface as the counselor and injured worker near the end of the process. Previously unnoticed secondary gains in the form of a non-supportive spouse or intensifying pain may occur. It is extremely important that the counselor remain focused on the overall goals of rehabilitation at this time (Corwin, 1987).

Throughout this process, the strategies of reality therapy are invaluable to the rehabilitation counselor. Reality therapy emphasizes that it is not the symptoms which are important but rather the dysfunctions in any form which stems from the core source of not getting inner human needs met (Osokie et al, 1985). Meaningful work in which a person produces or creates leads to a sense of self-worth which is one of those needs. Reality therapy is intended to focus on health, not a disease, and is based on the premise that all behavior has purpose (Glasser, 1981).

The rehabilitation counselor must understand the difference between forcing change and allowing change to happen. The most important quality for the counselor to have in the final stages of the rehabilitation process is perseverance. Although the most obvious goal for all concerned is that of placement (Vandergoot and Worrall, 1979) in the long run, it will be the genuine communication, effective plan development and perseverance that will have the most important effect on the injured worker. Reality therapy gives the counselor specific techniques to use not only in relationship with the client but as effective ways of coping with the complexity of the Workers' Compensation system as well.

**CONCLUSION**

At first glance, the role of the rehabilitation counselor appears overwhelming. The physical and emotional circumstances surrounding the injured worker are varied. To place these circumstances into the context of the Workers' Compensation system as set forth by state law adds to the complexity. Upon reviewing the tasks of the rehabilitation counselor under these circumstances, it seems clear why there are relatively few counselors practicing full time in the field and why the profession suffers a high rate of burnout and transiency.

Reality therapy and control theory could be very helpful to the rehabilitation counselor. They could be applied in at least three different ways. First, they could be used by the counselor as a way of coming to terms with issues which are both personal and professional. Second, the principles and techniques could be used in networking with the other professionals in the field, for it is this case management aspect of rehabilitation which lays important groundwork crucial to the success of plan-making. Third, and most importantly, the counselor could use reality therapy and control theory directly in working with the injured worker. The techniques are invaluable in the formative stages of the relationship as well as in teaching plan-making and applying those plans to the real world.
It would be helpful to those involved in the rehabilitation field if a course in reality therapy/control theory were taught by a certified reality therapist as part of a master’s level rehabilitation program. It would also be helpful if ongoing workshops were made available by the Worker’s Compensation system for their approved rehabilitation providers with credits available for recertification, and if Worker’s Compensation staff, including commissioners, administrators, clerical personnel as well as the approved providers were provided with a yearly workshop which demonstrates the techniques used in reality therapy.

The rehabilitation requirements of the Maine Workers’ Compensation system and reality therapy form a dovetailing relationship. When the techniques of reality therapy have been effectively practiced, the counselor can feel a sense of accomplishment separate from the specific outcome of any particular case. The counselor will have helped the injured worker negotiate a difficult and complicated system as well as having taught important life-long coping skills.

References


RENegotiation:
What To Do When You Don’t Follow Your Plan

Albert J. Katz

The author is a senior faculty member of the IRT and a school psychologist in the New York City Board of Education.

A client called complaining and angering that his plan had failed and, therefore, he was a failure. I wondered, “Would he give up?” “Would he choose still other ineffective behaviors?” The problem of clients not following their original plans is a common one that is often dealt with by simply having clients make new plans.

When training counselors who use reality therapy and control theory, I’ve noticed that techniques vary dramatically. Many counselors begin making plans with clients much sooner in the counseling process than others. Some clients are successful and others have frequent failure. Sometimes, after a period of choosing effective behaviors, clients return to choosing some of the original behaviors that brought them in to counseling. The popular words for this are Lapse or Slip. For the purposes of this article, I am differentiating Lapse or Slip from Relapse which is frequently seen as a more permanent and total return to the original behavior.

The Risky Plan

Over the years, my emphasis in counseling has been two-fold. The first phase focuses on getting personally involved and gaining trust. The second phase asks clients to evaluate their decisions and potential plans. These evaluation questions can be heard during all stages of the counseling process. When I think that a client is sincerely motivated, I begin a discussion of the options for making plans. When I ask for assurance and insurance that he wants to change his behavior, I gauge his motivation by the conviction of his answers. By placing so much importance on the counseling environment and those procedures leading up to developing a plan, clients show a better than average success rate. Here is where the counselor’s skill makes a difference; BE SELECTIVE IN ALLOWING CLIENTS TO CHOOSE BEHAVIOR CHANGES WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF RISK.

The important point here is that we are not overzealous in guiding clients to make just any plan, but rather in helping them choose a plan with the greatest potential for success. The best plan is a safe plan that avoids the chance for slipping back. Recently, Doreen was referred to me by her teacher who said that she seemed sad and depressed and was beginning to avoid her classwork. In a very short time Doreen told me that she thought her father didn’t love her.

It’s really simple, she said, “I just want him to hug me and tell me that he loves me.” After gaining assurance that she was lovable, I asked her if she and her father ever discussed this. What were the chances of her father doing what she wanted if she asked him?

During the next five days we set up a series of relatively safe plans that
included greeting her father at the door, watching TV together, asking him about his day at work and giving him a hug. My plan was to help Doreen avoid setting herself up for failure by reducing the risks. Her plan worked on the fifth day when her father woke her, kissed her and spontaneously said he loved her.

The Renegotiated Plan

Counselors often neglect an important question that should be asked after a client has decided that what he is doing isn’t working and before making a new or revised plan. **ASK A CLIENT IF HE WANTS TO CONSIDER DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT.** Very often clients find it easy to say that what they’re doing isn’t working but don’t want to recognize that to change they must **DO** something different. Think of the smokers you know who say they know smoking is harmful and that they should stop but they haven’t decided that they want to do something different.

When people change behavior their motivation is initially high but, after awhile, they may begin to question the effort that is required. “**Hoping behaviors**” such as sitting around the dessert table and hoping they won’t eat anything are often chosen in place of more effective but, perhaps, more difficult behaviors such as sitting elsewhere or leaving. During moments when they are not in effective control of their lives, clients often choose to return to those behaviors they wanted to give up or change. However, these momentary lapses need not be seen as permanent; the client has not necessarily failed. Instead, this can be seen as a poor choice; next time he can choose a behavior that works better at getting him what he wants. It does not have to be seen as an all-or-nothing choice. Two steps forward and one back is O.K., too! This is contrary to the addiction philosophy which states that having one slip sends you back to “day one”. Some people then choose to give up entirely rather than seeing it as a step away from the direction they want to go. Many times it takes several attempts before new behaviors take hold. Personally, I tried many times before I stopped smoking completely. Some people can change their behavior on the first try; most need many chances.

Choosing Temptation

What I think is important is that, when counseling, we prepare clients for the possibility of a slip and to discuss with them how they can cope during these difficult times. How clients choose to behave when they don’t follow their plan is critical. If they choose to blame themselves or “to guilt”, they need to be aware of these choices and to evaluate their effectiveness. Clients need help in becoming aware of the feeling and physiological signals that precede a possible slip. Good counseling will prepare clients for the moments and the situations when they are most likely to choose to be tempted. When these situations are identified, then plans can be discussed that will help the clients choose effective behaviors to avoid a lapse. During counseling sessions, **CLIENTS SHOULD REHEARSE HOW THEY WILL CHOOSE TO BEHAVE WHEN FACED WITH TEMPTATION.** Dieters often are faced with parties where they need to practice how to refuse certain foods, how it will feel to refuse, what to say to the server and how to ask for what they want. It is important to phrase the questions carefully. For example, a client should rehearse what he will say to the host when refusing dessert. Insist that the plan be realistic. He should never make an impossible plan such as the refusal of all sweets. What alternative dessert will he request? It is deliberate that questions are stated in the form of **WHAT** they will do and not **IF** they will do it. The former indicates positive direction and the ability to succeed. The latter leaves open the possibility of failure. The same can be said of the idea of a client saying he will “try”. There is an unstated notion that he can avoid doing what he planned. It also indicates a weak commitment.

This preparation not only helps prevent clients from diverting their plans and goals but also allows them to gain additional strength and confidence when they see that they have been able to overcome obstacles. I think that the concept of acting “as if” that self-help programs use is applicable here, too. **WHEN YOU BEHAVE THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE THEN YOU WILL BE THAT WAY.** These new behaviors then become a natural part of you.

Common Sense Plan-Making Summary

Counselors can help clients increase their chances for success by keeping in mind some basic, common sense rules.

1. Ask the client what he wants to accomplish. Have him consider alternatives; does he want to do something different to achieve his goal? Have the client convince you (and himself) that his plan will succeed. Reject any plan that seems risky.

2. Request that the client sign a written commitment to his plan. Credit companies ask us to sign for a charge of ten dollars, yet counselors are reluctant to ask clients to sign written commitments to plans that may save their lives.

3. Have the client prepare a written list of behaviors to which he is committed and carry the list with him.

4. Play Devil’s Advocate. Rehearse all situations to which the client may be vulnerable so that he can plan effective behaviors.

5. Understand that a poor choice need not be magnified into total failure. Sometimes more than one attempt may be necessary before achieving success. Try again! If a person whose plan is to give up smoking has a cigarette, he can throw the remaining cigarettes away rather than saying he has failed and, therefore, might as well continue to smoke.

6. The client can leave a situation in which he feels out of control. If a person who is choosing not to eat certain foods feels that he is losing control, he can leave the party.

7. Suggest to a client that he ask for help at the moment he needs it.

**Bibliography**


INTEGRATING THE AFRICAN CENTERED PERSPECTIVE WITH REALITY THERAPY/CONTROL THEORY

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A cursory review of the literature (Acosta, Yamamoto & Evans, 1982; Atkinson, Morton and Wing, 1979; Boyd, 1977; Cobb, 1989; Devore and Schlesinger, 1987; Ehrenberg & Ehrenberg, 1986; Fanon, 1967; Gary, 1978; Granger, 1985; Ho, 1987; Robinson, 1989, White, 1984 and Wilson, 1989) reveals several recurrent barriers within conventional therapeutic approaches. Foremost among them is the assumption/presumption that everyone can be treated the same. The conventional theoretical practice perspectives postulate ethnicity can be ignored as a significant factor. It presumes that the practitioner, if (s)he is “adroit and competent” can overcome any cultural or ethnic differences brought to therapy. The key to success, from this point of view, is technical. There is no significant difference from the treatment perspective due to culture and ethnicity. Practitioners need to be aware that not “all” of any ethnic or cultural group is the same.

A major internal barrier attempts to use methods which deny the need to account for diversity in the problem solving process. This barrier is based on those interventions which hold that therapeutic technique, appropriately used, will work with anyone. This is especially true in the areas of race and culture. This attitude presupposes that color and cultural blindness is therapeutically viable. According to The Roundtable (1989, p. 2), “Cultural blindness defines those systems that express a philosophy of being unbiased, but function with the belief that color or culture makes no difference. This type of system holds that everyone is the same so approaches traditionally used by the dominant culture are applicable to all.”

This is a traditional Euro-centric view and may work if one lived in a homogenous environment. Culture defines the way of life which is considered natural by those who practice it. It determines the way we perceive reality. It gives meaning to the things we do. Our perceptions determine behavior. Thus, culture determines, to a great extent, our behavior. In the world community, there are many different cultures.

A second presumption concerns the predisposition toward grouping nonwhites with low income whites for treatment purposes. This practice makes the assumption that viewing them in a similar fashion is valid. This attitude presupposes a connection in treatment of nonwhite issues with low income persons. It enhances the attitudinal barrier to effective service delivery.

Another prevailing barrier found in conventional therapy is the practice of the deficit hypothesis. Nonwhite, ethnically different family structures are viewed as dysfunctional or pathological and the differences are attributable to genetics or social disorganization. To be different from the mainstream American family is to be “sick.” Within conventional therapy, the white middle class is the model. The client is not “normal” unless (s)he can exhibit those traits/variables ascribed to this group. Treatment issues focus upon the client increasing “coping skills”; adaption is central to this focus. The model is the middle class, and variance is pathological. Concern with correcting differences as the professional’s mission in the therapeutic process is also a barrier. The mission is to have the client adjust to the status quo. That which is different is aberrant. The focus of therapy is to work to correct perceived differences. Training is the final barrier.

Training programs which continue to produce individual practitioners who reinforce these barriers are a part of the problem. Many training programs produce counselors using methods taught since the approaches were founded. They continue this practice in isolation from the reality that the world has changed and the methods whereby persons meet their basic needs have also changed. The programs which perpetuate these barriers continue the cycle by providing “clients” who are to be saved from themselves. The victim is responsible for the conditions as they exist. It is the responsibility of those who would position themselves as keepers of the flame to become more adroit at recognizing the “blame the victim” cycle.

Alternatives to the Conventional

Confronted by barriers, progressive methods were developed to overcome them. There have been, during this process, several alternatives to deal with these impediments. Among the alternatives is the therapeutic approach which shifts the locus of the problem from the individual to the environment. Ethnic and culturally different people are not themselves disadvantaged but exist within a disadvantaged environment. The efforts shift to the environment for intervention from a systems perspective.

There is also the approach which deals with a revised interpretation of behaviors. Behaviors are analyzed from a strengths-needs perspective. Therapy focuses upon the strengths that the client brings to therapy. Empowerment is key in the therapeutic relationship. Personal revelations are viable within treatment and it is alright to share with your client that you are not omnipotent. The evaluation of differences in communication styles is viewed as just that - a difference and not a weakness.

The tools for dealing with problems have been creatively modified. The temporal process, from this perspective, deals with the present and the future. The role of the past is to discover successful behaviors and strengths to use in the present. Therapists are teaching their clients, and the clients gain self help skills. Finally, it has become acceptable to be involved with clients and treat them no differently than one would treat other people. It is clear that nonwhite clients’ perception of the world may be different, and
their behaviors reflect that everyone does not have to be the same. Furthermore, when there is a difference, it does not have to be labelled aberrant behavior.

These alternative perspectives are synthesized through reality therapy and control theory. It is not presented as a panacea, but as a viable theoretical and practical frame of reference for those who wish to consider a different way to work with their clients. Intervention is focused through and based on reality therapy/control theory. It provides a viable strategy to work with diverse populations. The approach allows the inclusion of the perceptions of individuals and groups within its parameters.

Role of Therapist and the Process of Transformation

The therapist goal is to understand and use behaviors brought to the process to move from failure to success. Success is measured in terms of the clients’ realistic world view. The role of the therapist continues to be one of educator, trainer, facilitator and catalyst. In these various roles, the therapist becomes the link between where the individual is and where the individual wants to go.

The therapist works to transform within the parameters of the therapeutic process. Before one can work to influence others (s)he must transform self. Transforming is the art of changing and transmuting states, forms and conditions from one to another (Three Initiates, 1988). (s)he works to provide the resources necessary for the person to move from wanting to need satisfaction. According to the Three Initiates (1988, p. 125), “In addition to the transforming of one’s own mental state by the art of transformation, mental influence may be extended to embrace the phenomena of influence of one mind over that of another.”

In addition to the concept of transformation, a second concept that is especially pertinent is that of polarity. That is all behavior is placed on a continuum. According to the principle of polarity (Three Initiates, 1988, p. 125), “Everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites; like and unlike are the same; opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled.”

This principle provides a strong rationale for intervention. It presupposes the possibility for change. If one but understands the presenting problem, the solution is also near. All problems are located on the same continuum as solutions. Every problem has a solution and this solution is inherent to the problem. The difficulty many times is the question, which may not be appropriate to the particular problem.

African Centered Approach

The African centered approach joins traditional cultural values which are over 2000 years old (Budge, 1960; Karenga, 1984, and Massey, 1970) with reality therapy. The purpose of African centered reality based therapy is to liberate the individual from the restrictive limits of the constraining environment. According to Fanon (1967, p. 218), “Thus human reality in-
teachability of its clients. This principle recognizes the value of information/knowledge as a key process in choosing behavior (which, after all, is based upon perception).

Free will means that humans are free to act as they will and may choose good or evil. People have options when they take action and must learn to accept responsibility for the choices they make. This free will is grounded in moral conscience, and persons will make responsible choices when they have information and values which lead them in that direction. Just as knowledge is essential to teachability, values are essential to free will. Joined, they form significant part of the perceptual system and thus significantly affect subsequent behaviors. Behavior is organized around the control of perceptions.

The essentiality of moral social practice relates that good is that which lasts and uplifts individuals and groups. It charges people with making the world a better place in which to live. Moral practice is essential to the well being of all humanity. People share responsibility not only for themselves but for others. We must all work for the good of humanity. The move toward self actualization is essentially seen in our relations to others and how we perceive ourselves in this relationship. This concept reaffirms that we are all one humanity and that the only good is that which is done for those who need it. It is the unifying principle of the principles. We have a responsibility to act responsibly in the real world.

Conclusion

It is these principles integrated with reality therapy and control theory which provide a solid foundation upon which to intervene in the world community. This is also basic to the African centered perspective. We are all free to choose our direction and that is as it should be. For those who would avail themselves of the possibility of inclusion, these principles can provide a solid foundation upon which to build. They are essential in the process of bridge building. They aid in climbing the mountains of resistance to change and span the wide rivers of misery and the low valleys of despair in order to lay the foundation for constructive change. The five principles are not in opposition but are complementary to the philosophical underpinnings of reality therapy.

In concert with these five principles are the basic concepts of reality therapy and control theory. It is a perspective which integrates an African centered reality with control theory and reality therapy. The counseling environment and the procedures that lead to change are essential to this process. According to Mickel (1990, p. 32), “In the final analysis, the responsibility of the therapeutic process is to prepare the system to accept the reality of many possibilities.” Integrating the African centered perspective with reality therapy/control theory is but one of the many possibilities to facilitate change in the real world. It becomes a model leading to transformation within the parameters of the therapeutic process.

References


REALITY THERAPY AND “METHOD” ACTING

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Background

Theater historians usually credit the first attempts at Realism in play directing to the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen (1826-1914), followed a short time later by the British director Henry Irving (1838-1905) at the Lyceum Theatre in London, and the French director Andre Antoine (1858-1943) at the Theatre Libre in Paris. But it was the work of Constantin Stanislavski, the renowned Russian director and the actors of his Moscow Art Theatre, who most affected the theater world and still affects it today.

In 1897, Stanislavski and colleague Vladimir Nemirovich Danchenko, emerged from a two-day brainstorming session with a plan. This plan eventually resulted in a radical new technique for training and directing actors. Stanislavski increasingly had been dissatisfied with the overblown, unrealistic acting style popular on the stage of his time. He believed this acting style was out of synchrony with the emerging new playwriting and production style; i.e., the more focused and scientific style of Realism.

Since the aesthetic evolution of Realism was grounded in a clear, objective and scientific view of reality, it will come as no surprise that Stanislavski’s theoretical foundation has many echoes in control theory and reality therapy. Reality therapy processes easily can be applied to Stanislavski-based play directing.

Underlying the Realist engagement with the world was the search for truth. In seeking the truth, Stanislavski sought a more objective/scientific process that would lead actors to the reality of their character (i.e., the actors’ role) and thus to the truthful thoughts, feelings and behaviors inherent in the dramatic circumstances. He believed that if actors could find an appropriate external “stimulus,” they could find the appropriate internal “response.” Originally, Stanislavski promoted a process of emotional recall in which actors thought of a situation in their own real life that had aroused in them an emotion identical with that aroused in their character. Later, Stanislavski amended that notion to one in which the actors connect their belief mechanisms to their total behavior, particularly their action in the scene, and the given circumstances of the dramatic situation. Through Stanislavski’s lengthy actor training process, the actors learn how to believe fully in the scene and to “open up and free up” (i.e., increase sensual awareness and reactivity) to the feelings stimulated by the dramatic moment. The actor then should be able to generate spontaneously the actual emotions required of the character.

In a comparison of RT and the Stanislavski method there is a dual application for a stage director: in the actor-to-company processes and in the character-to-play processes.

Actor-to-Company Processes

In my function as a stage-director, when I first meet a new cast I apply group dynamics theory through a paradigm I call the GUILD elements of an acting ensemble: Goal-setting, Unity, Intimacy, Leadership and Development. Although all these GUILD elements are tightly integrated, it is in the Goal-setting process that the RT methods are most clearly seen. At the first cast meeting, after several ice-breaker games, one of the first questions I ask the cast is “What do you expect to get out of your involvement with this company and this play (i.e., what do you want)?” The responses range from “I want to give the best performance I can” to “I want to make new friends.” I usually jot down each of these goals and, once everyone has had an opportunity to share his or her expectations with the company, I comment on them and encourage the others to comment as well. I ask what they have done in the past to achieve these particular goals and if there are any other goals they would like to achieve during the rehearsal/performance period (essentially “is your initial goal what you really want to achieve”)? The next question is “What do you think you can do to achieve these goals?” They are asked to write down their plan so it becomes a commitment and they provide me with a copy of it so I can work their plans into the rehearsal schedule.

Actor-to-Play Processes

A similar process is followed doing character work with each of the actors. Stanislavski’s major and most practical innovation was that the actors were required to find what he called the “super-objective” of the character. In RT terms, the super-objective is the overall want of the character that motivates its thoughts, feelings and behaviors from moment to moment, scene to scene. Each actor has to determine the major want for his or her character for the whole play (indeed, sometimes for the whole life of the character). Each actor must determine how his or her character usually goes about meeting this want, or whether there is some other underlying conscious or sub-conscious want that really is what the character is seeking to satisfy.

Finally, the actors are asked how their character goes about getting what he or she wants. Since these wants and plans continually change throughout any play, the RT paradigm is a handy and productive structure for developing a complex character and keeping track of his or her objectives and motivations throughout the web of plot circumstances.

Most stage directors today frequently use RT processes without knowing it. It is a director’s responsibility to help the actors clarify the pictures in their character’s Quality World and sometimes even the pictures in their own Quality World. One of the terms most frequently used by directors is “What do you want in this scene?” The “you” in that question can refer either to the character or the actor. For example, the actor may have a personal goal in his or her mind for this particular rehearsal: “I’m not sure what my character wants in this scene and so I thought I would experiment with a variety of motivations and see how they play off the other characters.” Or the actor may have a character goal such as “My character
desperately wants to hide her true feelings from the other characters in the scene even though those feelings are threatening to burst to the surface."

This unintended use of RT usually ends when the director and the actors have determined the appropriate objectives and wants of each character. Stage directors may go on to supply the actors with the necessary motivation or wait until each actor has run through several motivational options. Together they decide which motivations, wants, objectives, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors seem most appropriate.

In my own practice I use the full RT process throughout the rehearsal period since it is apparent that RT illuminates the Stanislavski technique for many actors. Many points that Stanislavski makes in his writings have strong parallels in RT. For example, he says, "Until his goal is clear the direction of [the actor's] activities will remain unformed" (1936, p. 238), thereby strongly justifying the need to determine what the character wants. A clear and concise expression of this want also is necessary according to Stanislavski. For the lead character Argan in a production of Moliere's The Imaginary Invalid, Stanislavski first thought this character's want was "I wish to be sick," but on more careful reflection refocused the want more clearly to "I wish to be thought sick." He said that with this new want, the whole comic side came to the fore and the ground was prepared to show up in the way in which the charlatans of medical world exploited the stupid Argan, which was what Moliere meant to do. (1936, p. 258)

For Goldoni's La Locandiera Stanislavski first used "I wish to be a misogynist," as the main character's want, but after asking himself the familiar RT question "is this what I (the character) really want," Stanislavski decided that there was a more accurate objective, i.e., "I wish to do my courting on the sly," (p. 258).

Another process Stanislavski promoted was the in-depth understanding by the actor of the "given circumstances" of the scene or dramatic moment. These range from the simple, i.e., time of day, to the complex emotional state of the characters vis-a-vis the other characters. He said that these given circumstances "taken together give the present tense of the play" (1961, p. 16). I have found that a simple way to help the actor deal effectively with many of the given circumstances of the scene is to ask, "What are you presently doing in this scene to get what you want?" This standard RT question not only focuses the actors on the given circumstances and the present moment of the scene, but also gives them insights into their characters' specific methods for realizing those wants on a scene-by-scene basis. In addition, the actors can evaluate whether their characters have been relatively successful or unsuccessful in achieving their wants.

For me, the heart of RT is the plan. Stanislavski's processes also include a plan for the actors. He calls the actors plan "Scoring the Role" (1961, p. 56). When actors score their role according to Stanislavski's technique, they look at the given circumstances of each dramatic moment in the play and decide what the character wants and how he intends to go about achieving it. Stanislavski had his actors write down these elements regardless of whether or not their characters realized their objective in the play. He reasoned that, given the conflict inherent in every play, most of the time the character will not realize his or her goal until near the end, or somehow the character will be thwarted in the attempt. As a result, the character's score will be a map or a plan of how he or she proceeds through the play with all the variety of changes of intentions, objectives, motivations, behaviors, and emotional responses. At the same time, it is the plan that enables the actor to find the truth of the scene.

The last element of standard RT practice is the client follow-up to see if the client put the plan into operation and/or if it was successful. There is a parallel in Stanislavski's process even here. In his last work, Creating the Role, he has a self-explanatory chapter entitled "Checking Work Done and Summing Up." He questions the actors extensively regarding the scoring of their characters and all the given circumstances of the play: all the motivations, side-tracked objectives, substitute objectives, everything that leads to the reality of the character.

Finally, RT processes help the development of the actor. It is not uncommon for me to ask an actor who seems obstructed in some way, "What do you think is the right thing for the character to do at this point?" If, by focusing on the dramatic moment, the actor can answer that question satisfactorily, then the RT paradigm follows. If the actor is unsure, we work to clarify the picture of the character that the actor has in his or her Quality World for that moment in the play.

Conclusion

The parallels between RT and the Stanislavski method are striking. Both are based in reality and both are committed to finding the truth. My own experience has shown that using RT techniques with actors has reduced the need for me to be an authoritarian director and has allowed me to be more facilitative.

The major premise underlying most actor training/directing in today's theater is that the actors find their character from within. The actors' character must grow organically out of the truths of the human condition as each actor perceives them. Then, because the actors have made themselves participants in those truths, they are capable of finding the truth of the character.

As a reality therapist, I believe that is what I also do with my clients, people who seek me out for assistance with their personal concerns. I help facilitate their growth out of their perception of reality as they see it. I use a great deal of role-play with my clients and through that process, as the actors in a play, we become participants in their truths, for they alone are capable of effectively addressing their own concerns.

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PROFESSIONAL ISSUES: CONSULTATION, PART III

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In several earlier issues of the Journal of Reality Therapy, I discussed the growth of the profession of consulting in the United States, various types of consultants, as well as several professional and ethical principles relevant to this emerging profession.

By 1989, there were five times the number of consultants in the United States alone as there were in 1980. There are now over 250,000 people who claim to be consultants (Jonas, 1989). There are technical consultants, clinical consultants, and process consultants. Each type has specific skills and responsibilities. Consultants who conduct on-site training and in-service programs for schools and agencies are referred to as “process consultants” with the motto “together (with our clients) we will work things out” (Wubbolding, 1990). More specifically, the motto of the process consultant who teaches reality therapy could be, “I will present ideas and skills and help you to become more effective in your use of them”.

Paramount among the many ethical principles related to consulting are the needs to put the interests of the consultee first, to represent one’s skills and limitations accurately, to be cognizant of possible conflicts, and to avoid dual relationships (Wubbolding, 1990).

Previously I identified several pitfalls that neophyte and even experienced consultants can fall into; misidentifying the client system, being unaware of trainees’ responsibilities, failing to account for cultural differences and using the consultancy to create a full time job for oneself. I further identified seventeen important questions that reality therapy training consultants can use as guidelines (Wubbolding, 1991). It is the purpose of this article to discuss several of these in more detail.

The three cases below are not intended to be exhaustive regarding ethical aspects of consulting. Rather, they are intended to present three generic issues that are faced by trainers, 1) initial contact, 2) research stage, and 3) cross cultural consulting.

CASE #1: ABC COMPANY

Fran, a reality therapy trainer, is called by a “coordinator” at the ABC Corporation. The “coordinator” wishes to meet with Fran to explain the needs, stating that she feels the principles taught by Fran would be useful to her division of the company. She wants to have two other persons talk with Fran over lunch. When the four of them meet, the company representatives state that they have been commissioned to restructure their division. Since

the traditional concept of managing is changing, they state that the division is now emphasizing “project management” and they add that the new international thrust of the company requires new skills. They want help from Fran because they feel that Fran can offer training in how “to take initiative, be sensitive to diversity, and become better leaders”.

Fran does not completely understand the vocabulary of the team but feels that it desperately needs help. The team also has confidence in its’ prospective consultant and that reality therapy applied to management can benefit virtually everyone. Fran agrees to write a proposal which the team will present to the division director for a decision. The proposal is written and three months later Fran has heard nothing about the status of the proposal which had taken four hours to prepare.

Discussion:

It is an easy temptation for a consultant to be willing to meet any representative of a company or an organization without evaluating whether such a meeting would be effective. The question the consultant failed to adequately determine is whether the participants representing the company were the decision makers. In this case they were to present to their director the proposal of what for him/her would be an anonymous potential trainer — perhaps one of many. Finding flaws in the proposal would be easy and the team would be unprepared to answer questions regarding a potentially valuable program.

The effective consultant needs to decide if the persons assessing the needs of the organization are truly the decision makers or, as in this case, whether the director has delegated the screening process to subordinates.

Understanding the difference in the contact persons’ responsibilities is not to imply that the consultant should always insist on meeting with a higher level decision maker. Rather it is suggested that each potential client system and contact with that client system be evaluated so that maximum benefit for all can be obtained.

Also, Fran would do well to understand more thoroughly the language and structure described by the representatives of the ABC Company. Before the proposal is written the consultant should have a working knowledge of how the ABC Company perceives “project management”. Additionally, the consultant is advised to determine the representatives’ expectations regarding the skills required by employees who deal with foreign workers and company representatives.

The effective consultant needs to be certain that as quickly as possible he/she establishes a relationship with the decision maker. In the case above, the consultant was overly eager to meet with any representatives from this organization. Fran also did not gain a thorough enough knowledge of the corporate culture as reflected in their use of terminology, but rather was absorbed in what reality therapy could offer the company. In this case, overeagerness and lack of thoroughness resulted in time and energy wasted, discouragement, and possible loss of future opportunities.
CASE 2: EFG COUNTY ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT

In the second example, the consultant has already been awarded a contract for training and thus the case is intended to illustrate some of the issues to be dealt with after mutual commitments for training have been settled.

Kelley has signed a contract to conduct reality therapy training for the EFG County Adult Probation Department. In order to train more effectively, Kelley who has never worked in probation nor with offenders, attempts to learn as much as possible about the department. This new knowledge includes the types of offenses of the probationers, rules of probation such as the fact that the probationer cannot leave the state for more than 48 hours without getting permission of the officer, and that “good judgment must be used in selecting social relationships”. Kelley takes special note of the fact that some rules are clear and precise and some are vague and quite subjective. In the course of the research by Kelly, it becomes clear that in many cases the officer can “violate” probationers and send them back to the judge but that often there are few consequences which are effective because of the overcrowding of the jails and prisons. Kelley also learns that the probation officers often feel overworked, have caseloads that are excessively high and that the administration does not provide them with enough support or recognition. Kelley attempts to learn the nature of the resources available to the probation officers; Childrens’ Services Bureau, Job Club, GED preparation, recovery programs, etc.

Thus, effective training by Kelly will undoubtedly be enhanced by an acquaintance with the systemic constraints and limitations experienced by the officers. They have caseloads of more than two hundred. Some, on the other hand, do “intensive supervision” and have caseloads of only fifty. They have cubicles rather than closed offices and thus confidentiality is limited. The officers complain that they have up to forty phone calls a day from their probationers and thus answer their phones during sessions with the probationers. Skillful questioning by Kelly brings to light that six months ago each probation officer was furnished with an answering machine and thus they are not required to answer each call. Kelly discovers that in the last 3 years there has been a 60% turn over in the department.

Regarding this specific training, Kelly learns that the director has initiated the program, that the officers signed up for anyone of the three segments of training and that the requirement of training is seen by some as redesigning their curriculum so as to meet the changing needs of their emerging nation.

Discussion:

In this case Kelly has an idea of what to expect from the participants in each of the three segments of the training program. With even a minimal amount of knowledge of corrections and probation, the training is more likely to be seen as relevant with the participants being more receptive than if the consultant had only knowledge of reality therapy and no knowledge or empathy for the job of the officer.

In this case the consultant explored how the request for training had originated. It started not on the “grass-roots” level with the participants themselves. It was initiated from the top down with attendance mandatory, and as a result the trainer will need to be prepared to deal with resistance. It will be useful for Kelly to get such issues out into the open at the start, not to take personally negative comments about the training, and to accept the feelings of the participants as their best efforts at the moment to fulfill their need for power. Almost invariably an accepting, non-confrontive, gentle, yet strong attitude will diffuse at least some resistance and help participants choose to benefit from training.

Kelly also explored the responsibilities and perceptions of the participants as well as could be expected. Of course it would be better to meet with some of the participants beforehand, but this is not always possible.

Finally, this case represents a slightly different stage of consultation than the first case and points up the importance of asking key questions about the participants, their work and their clients.

CASE 3: HIJ MULTICULTURAL

Kenton is asked to set up a training program in HIJ, a small country populated with persons few of whom are from the anglo-saxon culture of Kenton. The ministry of education asks that Kenton consult with them about reorganizing their schools so as to incorporate reality therapy, as well as redesigning their curriculum so as to meet the changing needs of their emerging nation.

Discussion:

It is my belief that even a thorough knowledge of reality therapy will not suffice for Kenton. This consultant need not be a member of the “other” culture nor even be an expert in it. Nevertheless, to function ethically, Kenton should not rush naively to give an affirmative answer to this request. Rather it is useful to be aware of current thinking on the qualities necessary for effective cross cultural work. Sue (1983) described characteristics of the “culturally skilled” psychologist. These apply equally to “culturally skilled” consultants who work in a multi cultural setting, i.e., who work with persons from cultures other than their own.

1. Beliefs/attitudes; the culturally skilled consultant is one who has become aware of his/her own cultural heritage and biases, and who respects differences and feels comfortable with them.

2. Knowledge; a consultant adequately equipped with skills to work in a cross cultural setting has a good understanding of the group with which he/she is dealing; how that culture is different from his/her own.

3. Skills; if Kenton is to work in the land of HIJ it is imperative to know subtle differences in non-verbal communication. Most importantly, Kenton should know or at least minimally be willing to learn how reality therapy is applied differently in this “other”
culture. In North America, the expectation has been that reality therapy is used and taught quite directly. In other cultures, where communication is less direct, the consultant needs to adjust both the teaching and the practice of reality therapy. Such a consultant needs to develop a list of relevant questions which will enable him/her to bring to the surface the above issues. Moreover, there is no substitute for immersion in the culture, dialogue with members of that culture, and systematic study of other peoples’ life styles, history, and socio-eco-political values and practices.

In summary, if a consultant is to function effectively and ethically, it is necessary to have more knowledge and skills than those required to practice counseling or therapy. Even skills in teaching are no longer regarded as sufficient by professional organizations. It is crucial for consultants to determine if they have sufficient knowledge and appreciation of the client system. This knowledge and skill can be gained through introspection, study, and personal consultation with other professional persons.

References

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The Board of Directors has approved the establishment of an International Resource Library to be housed at Northeastern University, the home of The Journal for Reality Therapy. This library will contain the following:

1) Annotated bibliography of all published articles.

2) Abstracts of doctoral dissertations regarding reality therapy and control theory.

3) Identification of books, media, and other resources available elsewhere with names, addresses, and sources of such material.

A copy of materials is available upon request at a production/mailing cost of $6.00. In addition, individuals are encouraged to send information, materials, etc. to the Library for listing. The mailing address for the Library will be:

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