The Journal of Reality Therapy is dedicated to the publication of manuscripts concerning research, theory development, or special descriptions of the successful application of control theory and reality therapy principles in field settings. This journal is the official publication of the Institute for Control Theory, Reality Therapy and Quality Management.

Subscriptions: $10.00 for one year or $18.00 for two years. (U.S. currency) Single copies, $5.00 per issue. Send payment order to the editor. Back issues Vol. 1-8, $3.00 per issue; Vol. 9-14, $4.00 per copy.

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The Journal of Reality Therapy is published semi-annually in Fall and Spring. ISSN: 0743-0493.

Mission: Our mission and our vision is first to teach the world control theory and then to teach the use of this theory in counseling, where it is called reality therapy, in education as it is practiced in Quality Schools, and in managing all people so that they do quality work where it is known as lead-management.

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1996 International Convention
Albuquerque, New Mexico
July 10-13, 1996

1997 International Convention
Portland, Oregon
July 9-12, 1997

Vol. XV No. 2 Spring 1996

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Editor's Comment

Larry Litwack

This issue marks the end of fifteen years of publication. I am proud of the way the Journal has grown in size and quality over the years; we have come a long way from the typical 32 pages of the early issues (and incidentally, copies of all back issues are available either in original form or in photocopies).

This issue reflects what I hope will be an increase in the international contributions, as exemplified by the articles by Emed (Canada), Threadgall (England), and Rehak (Croatia). There are also several themes seen in this issue. The first is reflected in the articles by Barbieri, Emed, and Renna — each tying eastern philosophy with CT/RT. The second presents a continued focus on diversity as seen in the articles by Sanchez/Garriga, Threadgall, Baca, and Matthews. The third is built on a research base as exemplified by Russo et al., Parish, and Barry. The remaining articles continue to reflect the creativity in the conceptualization and application of CT/RT principles by practitioners.

Once again, I would like to encourage readers to consider writing for the Journal. This is our publication — as we present our ideas to each other and the world, we will continue to stimulate the development and growth of the principles and process of CT/RT/QM.

CONFRONTING STRESS: INTEGRATING CONTROL THEORY AND MINDFULNESS TO CULTIVATE OUR INNER RESOURCES THROUGH MIND/BODY HEALING METHODS

Patric Barbieri

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ABSTRACT

Becoming a more integral part of our healing process and getting to know ourselves on a deeper level can lead us to understand the reasons why we choose our ineffective organized behaviors to deal with stressful situations. Mindfulness, an eastern meditation technique, can be used to increase our utilization of Control theory. Learning to spend more time observing our thoughts and behaviors in a non-judgmental way, and confronting the fears that we have repressed in our body and mind may cause us pain in the short run. On the other hand, carrying these fears inside us can cause more long term health effects. After we have learned to slowly bring in our fears and observe the behaviors we have used to repress them, we can learn how to stop the conflict within us and transform and heal our mind and body.

Knowing others is intelligence;
Knowing yourself is true wisdom.
Mastering others is strength;
Mastering yourself is true power.
-Lao Tze, (Tao Te Ching, pg. 33)

STRESS EDUCATION

How persons define stress is only what they perceive “Stresses” them out. Not only do different issues affect others in various ways, how we deal with stress is unique to each individual. We first must be concerned with educating ourselves about the feelings and behaviors associated with stress, in lieu of what actually stresses us out. We all have a certain amount of stress in our lives. The practice of stress reduction techniques is to learn how to observe and be aware of the behaviors and thoughts that arise under stressful situations. Our goal is not to get rid of all the stress in our life. We want to experience each moment as it unfolds, and understand the stress so we can have more control over choosing our behaviors when we are “Stressed out.”.

Have you ever heard that certain individuals have greater coping capacities to deal with stress than others? In certain instances, people say that they thrive on stress and work harder when they are under pressure. If those persons thrive on stress, and there is a negative connotation in our society associated with the word stress, is this really “Stress” that they are actually feeling? Or is it a positive internal energy that promotes motivation and initiative? Why is it that some people break down when stress has occupied their mind and body, and others are actually more productive? For the sake
of argument, I am going to assume that the feelings, thoughts, actions, and physiological effects of stress are unfavorable, and most people would like to have a certain amount of control over the stress in their everyday lives.

More people would benefit from stress reduction techniques by increasing their awareness of themselves. It is not to say that we do not know who we are, but it is a closer examination of our internal thoughts and behaviors. If we seek to gain greater control over our lives, it is not necessary to look outside of ourselves to find the answers. All the information we need to know about ourselves is there inside us. We may have not looked close enough to understand the roots of our internal thoughts and behaviors that manifest when we are stressed out. By actually decreasing the amount of thoughts that filter into our mind each and every second of the day, we are increasing our ability to focus on the present moment, the essence of life we tend to miss.

Getting to know yourself on a deeper level is sometimes painful. It is necessary though to get to the root of why we choose to use our ineffective organized behaviors in a stressful situation. Stress Education is a prerequisite to learning “Stress Reduction”. We are educating ourselves by increasing our knowledge about ourselves. Are we individuals who repress stress? Do we tend to over dramatize our stress externally? Do we shut down and avoid a situation because it is too painful to think about, or do we increase our physical exercise to alleviate the symptoms of stress related effects hoping to drive them away?

Eastern philosophies have had a great impact on the way in which we perceive ourselves as part of the healing process. From Taoism to Buddhism to Control Theory, the theme is that we need to understand how we choose our behaviors, and how we can effectively meet our needs. Our thinking and perceptions can be transformed in a “stressful” situation by developing control over the mind. Integrating Mindfulness into our understanding of Control Theory can facilitate a clear and objective mind to understand, create, and re-organize our behaviors. Mindfulness becomes the bridge that crosses the gap from mere existence to living each moment to it’s fullest by creating an understanding of how we become attached to the perceptions of our thoughts.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR YOURSELF FIRST?**

“Do not seek yourself outside of yourself”

Ralph Waldo Emerson - Self Reliance

“Progress is up to the individual, it depends on his or her understanding and resolute application of the will, so self-reliance is our only recourse.”

(Smith, 1991, p. 122.)

In stressful times, it is habitual to consult with our support system to comfort, offer advice, or just listen to an issue that is causing us pain. Our support system may include family members, friends, co-workers, or medical professionals. On the other hand, if we are able to turn our focus inward upon ourselves for understanding, we may find we are our own best support resource. Is it so urgent that we need to look to others to comfort our pain immediately? Or can we ask ourselves, “What can I do for myself first.” We have the ability to comfort our own afflictions by spending time observing our feelings and thoughts, and getting back in touch with ourselves.

Solitude is one fear we may have to contend with while spending time with ourselves and gaining control over these thoughts. When you invite all your feelings in, you are there alone with all your internal formations to seek understanding and to begin to untie the knots within yourself.

By self-examination, you empower yourself to be in control of the therapy. You are beginning to manage your feelings by using the freedom you have to choose when you want to consult with other support resources other than yourself. Outside consultation is acted upon without the urgency and fear of helplessness. You have tapped into the true consciousness of your own mind to alleviate the pain by bringing it into your awareness, and transforming each and every feeling by understanding how it developed and attached itself within your mind and body.

Stress may externalize itself in many forms to each individual. Whether the stress is manifesting from work related issues, family, past experiences, or future concerns, they all have a way of creating knots inside our mind and body. We may have a picture in our heads of being freed from these afflictions though we have yet to clearly self-evaluate whether what we have been doing is working. We are trapped within a cycle of choosing ineffective behaviors that keep us returning to unresolved issues because we have not confronted or let go of the pain.

What would happen if you decided to confront, or bring into your awareness, your afflictions that pain you. Would you create or reorganize more emotional pain in your body and mind? This is quite possible in the short run, but the long term effects of carrying unresolved issues around have been proven to induce much more serious illness. Bringing these issues into your awareness may cause you more pain in the short run because you have spent so much time and energy repressing them. Then you confront this issue, and all the pain that you have worked so hard at repressing filters into your body and mind. Practicing mindfulness will help you unfold the underlying thoughts and behaviors that have been helping you squelch these issues, and find a way to live with them and extinguish the fear within your mind. By continual examination and mindfulness, you have brought this fear closer and closer to you and observed all the actions, feelings, and physiological effects that you have been using to push this fear away. Now that you have unlocked the fear of facing this issue, you begin to re-organize your behaviors because you have increased your ability to evaluate whether what you have been doing has actually been provoking more pain and anxiety in the long run.

**CONTROL THEORY AND NON-ATTACHMENT**

At times we ruminate over our problems and we become attached to them by obsessively thinking about them over and over. When a person becomes rapt in thought about one issue, the dilemma has taken control over one’s mind. Mindfulness has discontinued and attachment to this issue makes it more difficult for a person to change his or her behaviors to unlock
the conflict. We do not want to become self absorbed on the issue by think-
ing about it so much that we become increasingly more frustrated. Under-
stand that the point of meditation is to observe without judgment. If we
ourselves over-consumed by certain issues, we must find a way to
develop a clear mind. This presence of mind will pave the way to increase
our ability to change our ineffective organized behaviors that keep us from
liberating our perceptions of this issue.

Eugen Herrigel, who wrote, *Zen in the Art of Archery*, explains how,
in his life lessons with the Master, he learned non-attachment through the
art of archery. He spent six years waiting for the “Right shot” to hit the
target. And so came the day when it finally happened, and the master
replied, “What are you thinking of?”. “You know already that you should
not grieve over bad shots; Learn now not to rejoice over the good ones. You
must free yourself from the buffettings of pleasure and pain, and learn to
rise above them in easy equanimity” (Herrigel, 1953. p. 69). The Master’s
point here is that we should not be any more attached to the good feelings
that we have than the bad ones we experience. This will lead us to develop
a clear and non-judgmental mind.

Non-attachment should not be confused with detachment. When we
try to be detached from something in our lives, we are staying aloof from it,
and do not want to get involved. We repress it and do not want to deal with
it because we are afraid of it. Non-attachment means that we are able to let
things come and go without trying to control our feelings. We accept them
by paying attention to them as they arise, but we do not become attached.
We know when to let go to be fully present to the next experience in our life.

In Control Theory, there are three types of sensations that are associ-
ated with our thoughts and feelings, they are: Yellow, a positive feeling,
Green, a neutral feeling, and Red, a negative feeling. When we are
practicing Mindfulness and we experience a Yellow, Green, or Red feeling
enter our mind and body, we are completely non-judgmental about whether
it is a good, bad or neutral thought. When you feel, you just observe “I am
now feeling a positive feeling,” or “I am now feeling a neutral feeling” or
“I am now feeling a negative feeling.” This is the simplicity of Mindfulness.
On the other hand, once we become attached to the feeling we start to lose
control over our actions, and the feeling may become more intense. In
Control Theory terms, we are being driven by our feeling wheel because of
our choice of behaviors that we believe will help us gain control of our-
seives. The Red (negative) feelings are filtering into our control system, and
we become attached to them by continuing to use our organized behaviors.
We now are unable to let go and be non-judgmental towards the feelings,
which consequently constrain our ability to create and re-organize new
more effective behaviors. By implementing mindfulness techniques we
become non-attached by identifying and observing the actual feelings that
are associated with our behavioral system in the present moment, and bring
them into our awareness.

For example, during my summer vacation I had been planning a trip to
Concord, MA. to visit Henry David Thoreau’s home that he lived in for two
years in the woods at Walden Pond. When I got there the parking lot was
full, and the attendant said that the lot would re-open at 2:00 p.m. I was
upset, but not completely let down. I said to myself, “O.K., I will get an ice
cream and return at 2:00 p.m., it is only a couple of hours.” I then returned
at 2:00 and the line to the parking lot was now a mile long. I became angry
and felt a sense of urgency to get into the parking lot. I was grasping the
steering wheel so tightly as if the line was going to move any faster, and I
would soon be in Walden woods. The line was not moving and my anger
was increasing steadily. I became so attached to having to see Thoreau’s
house on this day that I pushed all my feelings aside and in my mind began
a one man quest for the parking lot at Walden pond. I was so consumed by
my feelings I could not begin to think to move to my thinking wheel, and re-
organize my thoughts. It did not occur to me that I had three more weeks
off for the summer, and I could come back at another time. I was angry,
frustrated and seething by the heat, the parking lot attendant who said the
parking lot would be re-opened, and all the people who decided they were
going to Walden pond on this day.

After a short while, I took a few seconds to ask myself what I was
doing. I finally was aware that I had not been practicing mindfulness, and
began to deliberate on the situation. I was not pushing the feelings away
anymore, but I brought them into my consciousness and accepted that they
had arisen in my mind and body. I observed in my body anxiety, frustra-
tion, and heat. I said to myself, “Right now I am feeling anger in myself, I
also feel frustration, and I am hot.” I then again repeated these feelings and
physiological events that were occurring. Each time that I reiterated my be-
haviors the strength of the anxiety, frustration, and the urgency to get into
the parking lot started to diminish.

My point here is what would have happened if I did not restore the
situation by being mindful of my thoughts and behaviors? How long would
I have been attached to these feelings in my mind and body, and why was it
so important for me to see Thoreau’s house that day? If I had friends or
children in the car I may have been yelling, and demonstrating my
frustration, and they would have been affected by my inability to gain
control over this situation.

In our Quality world, we all have different pictures and wants for
meeting our needs for Belonging, Power, Fun, and Freedom. This may have
not been important to others that day, but to me it was my way of having
Fun, and if I did not see Thoreau’s house I was not having Fun.

In my opinion, the ability to identify the frustration signal is a principal
component in mindfulness. What we do next is the key to our development
as persons who exhibit control over their choice of behaviors. Mindfulness
heightens our awareness of what we are doing in the present moment, and
then we are more effective at looking at, and evaluating our behaviors. It is
certainly difficult to train the mind to deal with day to day stress, but if we
are not careful we create internal formations, and start to repress our nega-
tive feelings. Understanding Control Theory and Mindfulness can help us
deal with stress by confronting and re-organizing our behaviors. The
practice of mindfulness assists us in understanding the relationship between
our mind and body.

**INTERNAL FORMATIONS**

“Our conscious reasoning mind knows that negative feelings such as anger,
fear, and regret are not wholly acceptable to ourselves or society, so it finds ways to repress them, to push them into remote areas of our consciousness in order to forget them. Because we want to avoid suffering, we create defense mechanisms that deny the existence of these negative feelings, and give us the impression we have peace within ourselves. But our internal formations are always looking for ways to manifest as destructive images, feelings, thoughts, words, or behavior.

(Thich Nat Hanh, 1991 p. 65)

Internal formations are those unpleasant thoughts in our mind which have clung to our unconsciousness and caused us anxiety. They have tied knots in our mind and body and they have been repressed because we either were afraid to confront them, or we did not have any other method of resolving the conflict within ourselves. These formations eventually manifest themselves in our behaviors and thoughts sometime within our lives. We may not know the reasons we feel the way we do because understanding has not been investigated. The longer we choose to let these knots dwell, the more they will tighten themselves over time and be difficult to undo. By looking into our innermost fears we examine them one by one. We may have been carrying many repressed thoughts in ourselves for a long time and never have attempted to unveil our mask that has covered our true face.

I do not propose that it is time to suddenly let all of your fears out into the open. You may start by peeking into these fears that are tucked within your consciousness, and just observe them and see what they do by being completely non-judgmental about each feeling or thought, whether good or bad. You may realize this isn’t so bad and want to look more, or deeper with the same intentions.

Recognizing and accepting our afflictions seizes their destructive nature, and is the key to loosening the knots within ourselves. The fears now unveiled are not so heavy as they were at one time because we are no longer spending energy pushing them away. We must realize that the fears have not changed in themselves, but we have looked and observed them and now have more control over them than we did before. The difference now is of understanding, and we are confident we can face these issues and choose behaviors that will help us to move beyond the attachment.

The pain or thoughts may still exist with the same intensity, but we now can learn to live with it and stop fighting what we fear. What we are not afraid of anymore is all the feelings associated with the issue if it enters our mind. We have confronted these feelings and are in more control over what we do if they arise again.

MIND STATES

“Expressing anger is not the best way to deal with it. In expressing anger we might be practicing or rehearsing it, and making it stronger in the depth of our consciousness.”

(Thich Nat Hanh, 1991 p. 59)

Expressing anger is the first reaction that most people tend to use to deal with stress. When we express our anger we get the false impression that we are venting our anger and this is good for us. Even when we use physical exercise, we may have the perception that the stress will go away after we have worked our bodies to exhaust and dampen the feelings inside us. If we are using methods that are pushing the stress away, we are only going to be relieved of the stress in the short term. Eventually, once we have time to think and rest, the stress will manifest itself once again. What has occupied our mind as a stressful issue will attach itself until we have understood all the factors that are causing ourselves to feel “Stressed out”.

I believe that there are two ways we can express our anger. Internally, or internally and externally at the same time. Which one is the most effective way to deal with our conflicts? Neither of them! Have you known persons who are always blissful and outgoing only to find that they are really unhappy, and can not understand how they can always wear a face that displays complete balance? This is an example of expressing anger internally. The person exhibits little or no expression of unhappiness. This may imply that the person is in denial, or he/she is having this behavior to deal with the affliction. The conflicts are therefore creating internal struggles, and the consequences of the stress related effects may develop disorders or disease within the body and mind.

On the other hand, persons who always seem to be depressed or anger impulsively, and whose unhappiness manifests itself, are expressing their behavior internally and externally at the same time. We must understand that the stress related issues always are rooted internally within our mind and body. They begin there, and we will always be affected internally when they have attached themselves within our consciousness. Whether we choose to express our feelings externally is only another ineffective behavior we choose to deal with the issues.

If you think that you can deal with stress by creating an external impression of bliss, or hide your conflicts internally, you may fool others, but you can not fool your own mind and body. It is a step in the right direction that persons can have a positive outlook to dealing with their stresses and anxieties. If the objective is to hide these issues by repressing them, and to avoid confronting them, the control you once thought you had will deteriorate, and eventually will lead you to create other ineffective behaviors.

Only by bringing these issues into our awareness and confronting them will we be on the right path to deal with the internal factors leading to our expressions. If you are observing and confronting these issues each day, you will be able to evaluate how you choose to deal with the conflicts. Does it ever help to wear a face that expresses anger or unhappiness? Or keep things inside by thinking you are hiding them from yourself and they will go away?

First, let’s look at what it means to keep “Things”, inside? Does this mean that: we do not tell others our problems, and do not express ourselves externally? Or does this imply that we will feel better if we tell our friends or support resources our problems, and in our perception we have, “Expressed ourselves”, and have untied an internal formation within our mind and body? In my opinion, keeping things inside means to not have observed these “things” within ourselves, and we have not committed to changing our behaviors. When we have told others about our issues, we have helped them understand why we may have been behaving in a certain manner.
Have we confronted the issues though in our mind to understand our thoughts and change our behaviors?

Keeping “things” inside means you have not confronted your own issues, and are not willing to accept them within your own mind. Remember, you do not have to let your feelings out of the bag by telling others, this is a personal choice. You only have to be honest with yourself by facing the issues by Mindfully being aware. You can tell someone about your problems and this may help you, but if you never face the real issues you are continuing to keep them repressed and are expressing them internally.

MEDITATION AND ALTERNATIVE HEALING METHODS

“There is something about the discipline associated with these Mind/Body techniques that empowers individuals and at the same time, deepens and broadens their perspective on the value of having a body, and taking care of it and nourishing it in a certain way”

(Kabat-Zinn, 1993, p. 135)

The practice of alternative Mind/Body healing methods is to offer individuals opportunities to improve their quality of life. Proponents of alternative healing methods say that the mind and body have a direct influence on one another. In fact, in Chinese medicine it is said that there is no distinction between the mind and body, they are one and the same. Stress reduction techniques are a rather eclectic menu that one can choose from. There are many techniques used around the world that have been practiced for many centuries.

Thich Nat Hanh, a Buddhist monk and the foremost leader on the practice of mindfulness, uses the example of doing the dishes to demonstrate mindfulness meditation practices. There are two ways a person can do the dishes. First, we can look at this time as something we disdain, and struggle our way through it by complaining or thinking about something else we could be doing, or second, we can do it Mindfully. If we do the dishes Mindfully we are coming in contact with the present moment and we do not judge doing the dishes as good or bad, we just do the dishes because they need to be done. If we label the time as a red (negative) feeling, and become attached to the negative perceptions we have with doing the dishes, then we are going to have negative feelings throughout the time spent cleaning the dishes. If we are able to let go, and be non-judgmental about the negative feelings towards doing the dishes, practicing mindfulness may change our perceptions about this activity. We let go of all previous perceptions, and in the cleaning process we practice observing our breath, and staying in touch with the present moment which is very relaxing. This is an example of using “Mindful Meditation” as a practice in our everyday lives. We can do many things in the spirit of mindfulness. We can practice while mowing the lawn, washing the car, spending time with family, standing in line at the bank, or just walking, as long as we are focused on the present moment during the activity.

If persons have not reached the point where they can sit down and practice meditation by just observing their breath, I would advise a practice that implements the physiological aspect of meditation, and learning how to control all the thoughts that inundate us. In meditation, when we add the physiological component to the process with Yoga, Tai Chi, or walking, we are giving the mind something else to do, rather than just chatter, or reorganize into other ailments such as headaches, stomachaches, or boredom. This is done by practicing exercises that are called meditative movement. Tai Chi Chuan (QiGong), Walking meditation, and Yoga are examples of exercises that fall into this category. We replace being mindful of our breath in the present moment, to becoming mindful of the soft flowing movements of Tai Chi Chuan, or each step we take when we walk, or the postures and stretching of Yoga exercises. Eventually, this can lead us to practice seated meditation once we have begun to understand our mind and body, and have begun to train the mind to quiet down.

Usually practitioners will find themselves becoming “Bored” with the activity. This usually happens when a person is focusing on the results of meditation practice. Boredom is just a perception arising in the mind that keeps it chattering. It is O.K. to be “Bored,” it is only a thought that has entered your mind, observe it, and let it go just like all other thoughts that are keeping you from being in touch with the present moment. Once you recognize that you are bored, you are no longer practicing mindfulness, just observe the thought and focus back on being mindful of the present moment. You may have to do this on a continual basis, but by steady practice each day you will find yourself focusing on your breathing for longer intervals without distraction.

I find that many people that I talk to say that, “The meditation practice is not working for me, I can’t do it”. Once you have set a goal or objective in your meditation practice you are going to be disappointed. Let go of getting anywhere in your practice. Do not set your eye on the results of the practice, just sit to sit, or walk to walk, just be here to be here in the present moment and observe what happens nonjudgmentally.

CULTIVATING AWARENESS

“Meditation is best described as a way of being. It’s like weaving a parachute when you are about to jump out of the plane. You want to have been weaving the parachute morning, noon, and night, day in, and day out, so that when you need it, it will actually hold you.”

(Kabat-Zinn, 1993, p. 142)

The curative process in the use of meditation, Tai Chi Chuan (QiGong), or Yoga, should not be the aim of the practice. Focusing on one’s breath and relaxing is the first step to learn how to control the mind. The effects of tuning into our mind and body is simply be in contact with the present moment. One should not be consumed by thinking that one is “treating”, or “curing” the stress or illness. In fact, we learn to let go of getting anywhere, and observe our thoughts. The physiological relaxation, and increased control of the mind that accompanies these techniques, will be a healing in itself.

There is no quick fix associated with dealing with stress. Cultivation of inner resources increases the ability to deal with stressful situations when
they arise. How do we cultivate our strength? To put it simply, we practice observing our feelings every day. The mind constantly chatters, and we can quiet it down if we direct our energies on developing control over our mind and body. If we are practicing walking meditation and the thought of having to finish a project at work comes into mind, we simply observe it, and direct our focus back on each step that we are taking. We may have hundreds of thoughts come into our mind when we are practicing, and we have to bring ourselves back to the breath a hundred times. With persistence, we can quiet this chatter and increase our control over our thoughts.

We seek refuge in ourselves as the healer of our pains. We inoculate ourselves against stress by inviting the anxieties, fears, and frustrations into our mind and body. For example, when we are vaccinated from the flu, we are actually being injected with a small sample of the virus. We therefore build up a tolerance from the virus by facilitating this resistance. We might say to ourselves when we are feeling anxiety, "I am now feeling anxiety, anxiety has arisen in my body before, and I will observe it's nature." As we elucidate the fear of confronting our stresses by past introspection into our thoughts and perceptions, we have embarked upon cultivating awareness of body and mind.

WHAT IS NOT WRONG TODAY

"In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here."

— Henry David Thoreau, Walden

Let’s look at another perspective of our thoughts and feelings. When stress is not present in our bodies, do we think, “Right now I am not feeling any stress, or right now I am not feeling a toothache?” Do we enjoy not having any stress or not having a toothache? It may be true that we are not feeling any stress, but are we free of the thought of stress? Do we allow ourselves to be more aware of what is not wrong, rather than going on to thinking about our next problem? Are we really afraid of enjoying ourselves without having to solve a problem right now, or not having anything to do by keeping our mind occupied with thoughts?

The fear of not having anything to do may have a direct influence on how we overlook the experience of enjoying life in the present moment. We are attached to having to keep the mind occupied to avoid boredom. Is there dissatisfaction in being bored? Only if we perceive it to be that way. Boredom can be complete equanimity if we allow ourselves to dwell in the present moment. We do not need to fill the mind with incessant stimulation. This perception may be much of what is causing us stress. When you are bored have you ever thought how stress free you are right now? Try and observe the feelings of how you are in control of what you are doing right now, without the pressure of hastiness that occurs in our every day lives.

CONCLUSION

By integrating mindfulness into our everyday lives, our use of Control Theory may be more effective because we have spent more time observing our internal thoughts and behaviors as they arise. Experiencing mindfulness can develop a greater awareness of why we choose our organized behaviors. We become persons who are managing our own healing process, not persons who are being managed by others.

In life it seems as if we are always waiting for something to happen. We are constantly setting goals, and the journey on the path to reaching these goals is overlooked. When I do this . . . then I can do that, but what about right now? If we are always deciding about the future, or reflecting on the past how can we enjoy each moment of our life as it is happening right now? Freedom from our stress or anxieties is going to be a part of our daily life. If we spend all our time expecting to be freed from all our stresses one day, a large portion of life will pass us by before we know it. Ask yourself, how much time do I spend thinking about how it would be like if . . . and how much time do I spend enjoying life in the present moment each day.

References


THE ZEN CONNECTION

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ABSTRACT

This article describes correspondences and similarities between the major concepts of Reality Therapy/Control Theory and Zen Buddhism. These parallels appear notably in the areas of Total Behavior, Responsibility and Choice, Modeling, Self Evaluation, the Quality World, and the emphasis on the present.

I have been intrigued by the fact that Robert Pirsig's book, Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance is cited by Glasser as one of the sources for his concept of "Quality". I often wonder if there are other parallels between this modern theory and the ancient discipline of Zen.

When I had occasion to study Zen Buddhism in depth this year, this question was constantly on my mind. And sure enough, I noted a number of interesting similarities. When we consider that the ultimate goal of both Reality Therapy and Buddhism is to make people happy, and, in the words of Shakyamuni Buddha, "free from anguish", this is not surprising. In fact, I found that the study of one throws light on the other.

Both Control Theory and Buddhism are holistic in outlook. This was brought home to me during interviews with Robert Aitken Roshi in my koan study. I was asked to show my understanding, and not just explain it. Showing involved some kind of action that would demonstrate how I saw things.

This suggested two parallels in Control Theory: one is of course the behavioral car where action and thinking occur simultaneously. Usually we have the action, and the thought is not clearly articulated, and the challenge for the client is to be aware of his or her thinking patterns.

This was the opposite situation where I had an intellectual idea, and had to articulate it by somehow showing it directly. I found this exercise quite challenging, and a source of important insights.

The other parallel is Glasser's insistence of modeling. He urges us to model what we want to teach instead of providing a discursive explanation of it. Modeling may involve all four components of behavior, is effective, and leaves little room for misunderstanding.

Suzanne Langer, in her classic book Philosophy in a New Key, explains the differences between the presentation and the discursive modes of thought. Her presentational mode is consistent with modeling understood in its widest sense - a concept with depth, encompassing the art of the traditional storyteller as well as role playing as we know it in the study of Reality Therapy.

The inter-relatedness of things as exemplified by the behavioral car is applied systematically to all areas of life in Buddhism, notably in the notion of Karma. Karma can be described as the interrelatedness of cause and effect. Rename the wheels of the behavioral car: Label the front wheels "Behavior", and the rear wheels "Consequences", and you have the notion of Karma in a nutshell.

According to this law, our behavior creates desirable or undesirable results according to the mechanics of cause and effect. We ourselves create the conditions in which we live. This is indeed an appropriate cultural framework for understanding choice and responsibility!

Here is the first "Great Vow" of Buddhism: The many beings are numberless; I vow to save them. Save them from what? Robert Aitken in his Taking the Path of Zen gives us a clue to the meaning of this vow: To save the many beings simply means to include them. Include them in what? In our Quality World of course!

Noah included all animals, and symbolically, all beings in his ark, and thereby saved them. The ark was his quality world; it was rich and varied, and did not exclude. He reached "the other shore" of salvation together with them.

Including all beings in your salvation is the Boddhisattva ideal in Buddhism. Noah was a good Buddhist in this sense.

This saving, or including, is not a one time historical event, but is to be practiced continuously. Thus we, who have now taken over from Noah, have to fill up the ark of our quality world with all beings all the time: daily, and perhaps more often. Today, tropical forests and vanishing species, tomorrow your own son or daughter who may be wearing the 'wrong' clothes, or may have the 'wrong' sexual orientation, and the next day wolves who are eating the deer must be included. Perhaps you should reconsider that form letter soliciting funds from the Save the Wolves foundation that lies in the wastebasket?

The Story of Noah's Ark is of course a myth, and as such, only points the way. However, there is evidence that people with a rich and varied quality world are happier. Obviously such a myth, and the culture that fostered it aimed at more than making only particular individuals happy.

The blue area in the outer fringes of the Control Theory chart, the world beyond the senses, is called the "Real World" by Glasser. It is interesting to note that beliefs, which are part of our Quality World are often about this "Real World". For example, God, Heaven, and the Angels are put out there in the blue area by the believers of certain religions, although such beliefs about them are located in the believers' Quality Worlds.

Unlike other religions, Buddhism makes no claims about this world, except to say that it and the world we perceive are one and the same. Shakyamuni Buddha himself remained silent every time metaphysical questions about this world were put to him.

In fact, realizing that these beliefs are conceptual, in other words, a product of our thinking, and that they have no other existence is one of the goals of Buddhist meditation. No value judgment is offered either by
Buddhists or Glasser that this blue world is more real than the perceived world. The only difference is that it is not perceived. In the *Stations of the Mind*, Dr. Glasser calls it “the external world”.

The next level in the chart is the Green World, or the world as we perceive it through the senses. Zen invites us to experience this world in terms of sights, sounds, tastes, smells and tactile and bodily feelings rather than as objects and as things. The trouble with a world full of things is that we then tend to impute two fictitious qualities to them:

1. That they are permanent, stable and unchanging, and
2. That they have an independent existence apart from other things.

One of the Zen koans that I studied depends on experiencing the Green World of the Control Theory chart in terms of sensory phenomena. This is possibly the way babies and very young children perceive things: at a certain age, when mother turns the corner, she “disappears”. Then, at another age, we figure out that “mother” is a very useful shorthand description of these countless visual and tactile phenomena. Then, we start demanding that she be unchanging and permanent.

The Buddhist analysis of why we feel unhappy is right here in a nutshell: That we do not adapt well to change, because we expect everything including ourselves to be permanent and independently existing.

In Control Theory terms, the pictures we have in our quality worlds do not always keep up with the changes people and things undergo in the real world. More than that, it is the very nature of things and people in the real world to be constantly changing and impermanent, whereas the nature of pictures and concepts is to stay the same. Oscar Wilde played with this theme in his 1891 fantasy, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

The Buddhist recipe for happiness and well-being is called the Noble Eightfold path. This path is in fact the front wheels of Glasser’s total behavior car.

In order to feel better, a Buddhist practices right action (Shakyamuni Buddha adds right speech, right livelihood, and right lifestyle) and right thinking (this includes right views, or outlook, right concentration and meditation). The world right, in this context means something like “in accord with the interdependent and constantly changing nature of things”.

The other components of behavior are not mentioned, but we know that steering the front wheels in the “right” direction, better feelings and physiologic changes will follow.

The emphasis on right meditation is reminiscent of Glasser’s concept of Positive Addiction. Meditation is one of the positive addictions that Glasser examines in his book by the same title.

I was delighted to learn that the Chinese ideogram for the word mindfulness consists of two symbols: *Now* and *Mind*. Mindfulness, in other words is *now mind*. According to Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddhist meditation is the practice of mindfulness. He compares people whose mind is somewhere else to ghosts.

Glasser (1980) puts the same emphasis on dealing with the here and now: “...step two of Reality Therapy is to focus on the clients’ daily activity and ask people what they are doing now.” (Glasser's italics)

Self evaluation is the cornerstone of Buddhist precepts or vows. When, at the end of a retreat in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition which I attended, the topic of precepts came up, all the concerns I had heard about self-evaluation in the context of Reality Therapy were brought up by the participants, and were discussed at length. The first precept about not killing, or respect for life, for example, is couched, like the others, in the first person where I resolve to be mindful in this regard. Some people observe this by becoming vegetarians. The Dalai Lama, however, and Tibetans in general are not vegetarians; they eat meat regularly. A few others withhold that portion of their income tax that goes to the “defense” department. However, many samurais and martial arts experts of old, as well as a good number of Japanese soldiers and generals who served in World War two were Buddhists.

With every question, participants were looking for external guidelines. They found none. Our group leaders were past masters at turning these questions back at the questioners.

Another precept about not ingesting toxic substances (including alcohol) was most ardently discussed. It appeared that one could take this precept, and still drink if or when one chose to. One could even skip that precept if one wanted, and just take the others. At another Zen training session that I attended, alcoholic beverages were served at a celebration by the Zendo staff.

There is also a tradition of making one’s own vows (couched in poetic form if desired). These could be anything from the wish to start a vegetable garden to a desire to limit TV watching time.

This was difficult stuff for those of us who were raised on prohibitions and commandments!

It eventually became clear that the vow in Buddhism appears similar to the Reality Therapy question of “What do you want?” Once a vow is articulated, other details, such as what or how many steps one wishes to take to implement it, or issues of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with results are left to each of us to evaluate for ourselves.

In conclusion, it is apparent to me that many major concepts of Reality Therapy are compatible with Zen. Articulating these has been an enriching experience.

**References**


BEYOND ROLE PLAY: WHY REALITY THERAPY IS SO DIFFICULT IN THE REAL WORLD

The Relationship Between the Human Will, The Control System and Lasting Change

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ABSTRACT

A major component of the Reality Therapy certification program is the utilization of role plays as an experiential teaching modality. Most would agree that using role play is the best way to demonstrate and teach the techniques of Reality Therapy. However, when participants begin making the transition from the training back to real world environments, many do not experience the same rapid success and therapeutic closure so often seen in practice role play sessions. This article hypothesizes that the major difference between training and actual application is the role of the human will in the process of change. A look at the will or human spirit in relationship to the control system, the difficult challenge of change, and the necessity of cultivating and maintaining the will to change is explored. Finally, the relationship of the human will in the process of counseling and the inherent ethical implications of maintaining role play guidelines and boundaries during training are discussed.

"The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will." — Vince Lombardi

REAL WORLD FRUSTRATION SIGNAL

During the past few years, I have had the pleasure of working with many people in various stages of Reality Therapy training. Although many come from diverse professional and educational experiences, all, at one time or another, have described a similar frustration: A “perceptual gap” between the results of their skills during role play sessions and equally successful outcomes when applying what they have learned in the real world.

We would all agree that our practice of Reality Therapy improves daily. Yet, we continue to struggle with the challenge of “bridging the gap” between success in training sessions and the “real doing” of Reality Therapy.

What follows is a compilation of my current thinking, as well as ideas that are evolving as I continue to work closely with people in RT and explore the creative thinking of others whose notions parallel much of what Control Theory teaches us. My intent is to help bridge the gap between role play and real world application by attempting to better understand the relationship between self evaluation and planning. What is truly involved when we ask the people we are working with: “Are you willing to do something different? (Buck, 1987)

My belief system concerning the human will and Control Theory comes from personal experience, having used both to recover from a debilitating illness lasting eight years. Perhaps someday I will be ready to tell my story in detail, but for now suffice it to say that everything I talk about, I have lived. Everything I believe to be invaluable and useful, was to me, and all that I recommend to do to cultivate the will, I have done.

“To awaken the will is to awaken the feeling that one is responsible to life for something, however grim the circumstances might be.” — Victor Frankl

Within our Reality Therapy practicum groups as we look more closely at our collective skills, we have been able to self evaluate that there is indeed a commonality where we feel the most “stuck” transferring what we know into our various work environments. Confronted with any given situation, we are quite comfortable with our ability to “think” events in Control Theory terms, e.g., “talk the talk.” We work diligently at establishing environments that are perceived as need satisfying for our students and clients. Similarly, we know how to help them clarify and evaluate their wants, look at their current behavior and self evaluate behavioral effectiveness. Helping them formulate plans that move them in a more positive direction demonstrates our ability to “walk the walk.” Seems simple enough to us! So what’s the common negative perception?

Many times good plans are not carried out by students and clients. Having heard the “bad” news, we do what any good Reality Therapist would do: hypothesize the reasons why the plan might have failed. Their current level of commitment to change wasn’t high? They didn’t really want it that badly? They wanted the benefit of it (the new picture) but didn’t want to do what needed to be done? What they wanted wasn’t possible or logical? Arguably, any one of these reasons for not following through on a plan is possible. However, my belief is that most characteristically sound plans fail not because individuals don’t really want to change (I believe that they usually do) but because they don’t have the will to change. Therein lies the difference between the results of a “good” role play and real therapy: Reluctance to change after self evaluation is very rarely encountered in a role play.

The Human Will does not play any role in a role play!! Which is precisely why most “role plays” can have successful outcomes with high commitments to change. More importantly, it is why role plays should be defined in the stricter sense. Any use of “real life” personal material on the part of the participants is not only unethical (Wubbolding, 1995), but unproductive therapeutically since the “will to change” cannot “come to life” in a forum. This is why I believe that real counseling cannot take place during role play training or, for that matter, any other mode of training. Real counseling and real change are too intense, take time and require intense concentration for internal motivation in much different environments both with and without the counselor. Counselors cannot have an honest sense of empathy for your predicament unless they really know you and have spent much time understanding your situation. Without doing so,
they cannot be successful in helping you activate and profit from your will. Conversely, when you move on to implement a plan, ultimately you move on alone in the real world. It is this realization that clients can’t “take you with them” when attempting a plan that adds to the complexity of the process of change. Additionally, solitude is necessary to facilitate the use of their will to guide them during the critical planning process. In the real world, implementation of a plan is done in solitude and thus requires “familiarity with the inherent loneliness of challenge.” Reframing solitude from loneliness to solace. Hopefully, the reader will understand that the human will needs both time and solitude to be effective as the main catalyst for lasting change. There is neither time nor solitude in a training session and thus they play no role in any outcome.

Fortunately, will plays a very large role in our lives and the lives of those people we are trying to help move toward quality. Consequently, to be more effective using Reality Therapy in the real world, I believe it may be valuable to better understand how the will relates to Control Theory.

Asking people if they really want something or really want to change may not be enough. Asking them if they are willing to do what needs to be done, no matter what it takes, no matter how much pain they may endure might also not be enough. However, teaching them how to cultivate their will and strengthen their resolve will give them “perceptual intensity.” A skill that keeps the focus on the new picture “giving pleasure in the moment” not the pain of the struggle, thus moving them toward lasting change. Like the marathon runner who thinks not only of his “picture of the finish line,” but also his “total behavior” in the present moment, the human will sustains him, substituting “pure pleasure” for physical pain. In this way, he uses his solitude as an opportunity to visualize his “pictures” and thus energize his entire system. He does this paradoxically by “staying within himself” willfully even under enormous physiological conditions.

This ability to “go back to the will” repeatedly in difficult times is a strength that I believe we are all capable of. Understanding where this strength lies in the Control System and how to cultivate it may be very crucial in helping others change. To do this, we must first explore the relationship between the Comparing Place and the human will.

THE COMPARING PLACE: WHERE THE WILL IS?

“I can’t die! I have too many books to write”.

— Paleontologist, Stephen Jay Gould, 1982

Reality Therapy teaches us that self evaluation is the “keystone in the arch” of the procedures that lead to change. (Wubbolding, 1988) Unless we self evaluate that our present behavior is not working and we are willing to “try something else,” what we want we will never have. Consequently, any plans we formulate without this true self evaluation are doomed to fail. As we all know, the journey to a difficult self evaluation is long and hard. Events leading up to the moment of true self evaluation are marked with many “pure pain signals.” Often we approach then avoid a commitment to what needs to be done and instead choose a familiar less effective behavior. The result: Our Comparing Place scales continue to be out of balance and the negative cycle continues.

However, for most of us, there comes a time when faced with a difficult decision, we finally gain the strength and courage to say: “Enough is enough, “I’m going to do it”!! It will be one of my greatest challenges, but I will do it no matter what!!” At the moment of this true self evaluation we then get an intense “pure pleasure signal.” Our system changes in many cases from long term “pure pain” to “uplifting pure pleasure.” I believe that this “Pure Pleasure of Self Evaluation” is the human will that manifests itself (can be felt as) an intense perception of whatever Quality World picture we are controlling for. Using Dr. Glasser’s analogy of the car, the human will is like the car battery. It charges our system in the Comparing Place (in some cases jump starts!) with a pure pleasure signal that helps us choose total behaviors that are not only more effective, but also more creative, marked by conviction and self trust. Just as the Quality World is the “heart” of the control system for it is where all behavior begins, the Comparing Place can be viewed as the “soul” of the system housing the will or the human spirit to achieve (Power).

“Most people are like tea bags: they don’t know their own strength until they get into hot water” — tea bag

The following case is intended to illustrate this relationship between the will and the Comparing Place:

John is in his mid twenties, an unemployed teacher, who for the past ten years was addicted to cocaine. He lost his job, is separated from his wife and child and currently is living “on the street”. John goes sporadically to an outpatient drug treatment clinic for counseling. He talks openly about wanting to “get off drugs and get his life together,” but continues to choose drugs over the long hard road back to his family and a teaching job. In Control Theory terms, John’s pictures of family and a job are still possible but he continues to use drugs to eliminate the “pure pain” he continues to “get” when he thinks about what he currently has and how difficult it will be to “take back his life.” The drugs, of course, compound his problem as his old brain continues to send a message to his new brain which essentially says: “Give me drugs”!! Once John uses his organized behaviors to “get his high,” unfortunately, he gets a “pure pleasure signal” as his old brain sends a message to his new brain saying: “Everything is all right”!! However, as the drug wears off, this message is short lived and the cycle continues until John finds himself in an emergency room have overdosed accompanied by a new experience: near death. In recovery, his wife tells him she is taking his child and moving out of state. She still loves him, but cannot continue to be close to him like this. At this point, John “hits bottom” with an intense pure pain signal as he watched his wife leave the room.

That evening alone in his hospital room, his life seemingly, hopeless, John “digs down” into the soul of his system and says: Enough”!! At that very moment, John gets a huge pure
pleasure signal. At that very moment, he knows that he will never do drugs again, he will commit himself to intensive treatment, endure any physical and emotional pain and indeed, “take back his life.” At that moment, John becomes fully acquainted with his will. For the first time in many years, he sees clearly the person he wants to be and the long hard road ahead.

In the above illustration, the question remains: Having rekindled his will to change, how does John sustain his resolve as he begins his long difficult journey back to the life he truly wants. Remembering that his most difficult challenge will be the continuing “message” from his old brain for the “pure pleasure of the drug,” John must find a way to actually substitute the “pure pleasure of the drug” with the “pure pleasure of self evaluation”. In short, he must find a way to “call up his will” to the same level of intensity as he experienced during that moment of solitude in the hospital. Fundamentally, if he is to succeed, he must find “the inner hold” as Frankl calls it and use his will to decide what shall become of life.

There are many tools available to him as he meets this challenge. Although I will touch upon some, most are beyond the scope and depth of this article. If the idea of the will is perceived as valuable information for the reader, I would encourage further readings as described, most notably those on Eastern philosophy and “Mindfulness”. After John’s “good dose of perspective” comes the challenge of day to day energy management of his will. An authentic relationship with a competent Reality Therapist is certainly part of the puzzle. Solitude and time to cultivate the will are the other pieces. Slow and steady wins the race. Paradoxically, not focusing on the outcome will ensure not only success, but peace in the process.

THE COMPARING PLACE: A GENETIC INSTRUCTION?

“I shall hear in Heaven.” — Beethoven

Throughout history there are examples of the heroic nature of men and women who overcame enormous challenges, obstacles and tragedies by preserving a vestige of spiritual freedom and independence of mind. One only needs to read the daily newspaper for stories of “common” people in terrible conditions of psychological and physical stress who nevertheless have the inner strength to, as Frankl says, “choose their own attitude, choose their own way”. The potential for us all to “use our inner strength (our will) to rise above our outward fate with the chance of achieving something through our suffering is always there.” (Frankl, 1959). So why do some people overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges including life threatening illness, while others “fall apart” when confronted with minimal stressful situations which are commonplace? The answer may lie in the “type” of Comparing Place they have. Much like Glasser’s (1995) explanation of our genetically instructed Needs ranging from hypo to hyper, perhaps we are also genetically programmed with “strong to weak” Comparing Places. This may account for people who have been viewed as strong willed, high spirited, intense, focused, determined, driven, even stubborn!! It may also account for those who are perceived as weak, lazy, excusers, procrastinators, hysterics, laid back, etc. I believe that some people are indeed born with stronger Comparing Places or “strong willed” and may therefore be more easily able to “bring their will to life.” Perhaps they have a corresponding hyper Power need. However, I also believe that many people have wills that are in an “inactive or unused state” and can thus be “restored, retrieved, or revitalized.” Therefore, whether you are “born with a strong will” or you have to do some “work” evoking the will from a “state of latency”, without a strong will, lasting change, personal growth and what Barnes Boffey terms “Reinventing Yourself” is not possible.

DOROTHY IN THE LAND OF OZ: GOING HOME TO THE WILL.

“— but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved when he has put his heart into this work and done his best.

— Nothing can bring you Happiness but Yourself”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Essay on Self-Reliance

Like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, the ability to “go home” or go back to the will (the pure pleasure of self evaluation) repeatedly in difficult times is a strength that we all possess. Many of the people we work with don’t have a clue as to the real reason that their plans to change often fail. They have very little knowledge about the human will and the vital role it plays in our psychological growth.

To help people avoid falling back into old patterns of behavior, it is often helpful to teach them about their will. By expanding their knowledge filter regarding the capacity of the will, they are able to see that the energy activities of persistence, concentration and internal motivation are all parts of the manifestation of the human will. They will come to understand that strengthening the will allows the decision process to flow and increases their ability to endure the hard work of change. Patiently staying with what you feel to be important requires courage, which is another activity of the will that is important for them to understand. Courage to stand up for what you believe in, to stand alone if necessary and to fight for your dreams. Courage to look at yourself in the mirror and ask: “What can I do about this problem to make it better even if I’m afraid to do it”? “What can I learn from this struggle”?

Courage to stare down the problem no matter how difficult and reclaim your life. Knowing how the will relates to self evaluation and ultimately commitment is the necessary beginning to taking command of your life. Conversely, knowing that it is easy to fall back into old less effective behaviors once the will is abandoned can be a constant helpful reminder along the way. Perspective is the key. It can unlock the way to boosting your will and adding Quality to your life.

Once you have taught your students or clients the importance of having a strong will and its capacity for supporting lasting change, there are a number of interesting and helpful activities and experiential exercises that can specifically aid in strengthening their will (and yours!!) These activities
can be modified to work with anyone regardless of age, education or intellectual capacity. Briefly described, they are merely offered as a starting point for those who may value the benefits of cultivating the human will while using Reality Therapy:

AFFIRMATIONS

Rather than just pursuing philosophical and psychological discussions about the will, we can discover its nature through direct experience. The will is very much an instrument of our thinking component. When brought into the present moment, it aids us in carrying out our intentions.

Control Theory teaches us that we receive information from the outside world and filter it through our sensory system into our perceived world as something positive, negative or neutral. Some of these perceptions that are highly positive and "need satisfying" enter our Quality World where they are stored as "pictures" that drive our behavior. When information from the outside world serves as a "reminder" to the will of how important these pictures are, this information is called an affirmation. An affirmation or maxim can be a single word such as confidence, tenacity or self reliance. It can be a phrase or notable quotation much like the ones I have used in this article. It can also be a picture or photograph. Anything that is positive and inspiring which relates to one of your Quality World pictures. They can be your own or well known. Some of the best I have used have come from the back of tea bags!! An affirmation can be a meditative focus that leads you willfully to an activity or change in your behavior. In order for it to be helpful the affirmation you choose must be clear and meaningful to you at the time. Use your affirmation several times during the day as you go through your normal routine by saying it, reading it, or looking at it. Soon it will bring vivid images of what you want or the person you want to be in a current difficult situation. For example, I like the phrase: "No Fear." Very often when I am going into an extremely difficult meeting at work, I will write "No Fear" on the top corner of my notebook. It helps me focus on the thinking component of my total behavior and say what I feel needs to be said. When I go on long training runs, I wear my "No Fear" hat!! Like most people, I keep pictures of my family on my desk, I do this for love and belonging, I also do this for affirmation. When things get difficult, I’m never really alone. Focusing on the pictures charges my energy and strengthens my resolve replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. Using affirmations is a creative process generating positive feelings from within. They serve as a point of focus or signpost along the path of change.

LITERATURE AND FILMS

Inspirational books and films can help you to create the inner conditions that are a prerequisite for committing the time, energy and effort necessary for the development of the will. Emerson’s essay on Self-reliance is relevant and timeless. Autobiographies and biographies can be very helpful when chosen with the person’s age, interest and pictures in mind. Some that have been helpful in focusing the will to accomplish tasks are:

Norman Cousins Anatomy of an Illness

Roberto Assagiolo The Act of Will
Nien Cheng’s Life and Death in Shanghai
Dennis Overby Omni
Jack Canfield Chicken Soup for the Soup and A Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul
Jon Kabat - Zinn Wherever You Go There You Are and Full Catastrophe Living
Victor Frankl Man’s Search for Meaning
Bill Moyer Healing and the Mind
Thomas More Care of the Soul

All of us have special books and movies that have the capacity to elicit intense positive feelings thus bolstering the will. Children all have favorite Fairy tales that are truly “soul stories”. As we read descriptions of inner experiences, real or fictional, the will helps us to relate these experiences to our own existence as we seek to know ourselves and control for our pictures.

NEED SATISFYING ACTIVITIES AND ENVIRONMENTS

Much has been written concerning the benefits of exercise, fun activities and “getting away from it all” for emotional and physical well being. It is also true that these activities while facilitating a state of “wellness”, also encourage an increased state of “willfulness.” The importance of “doing” a need satisfying activity each day cannot be understated when cultivating the will. By experiencing something in nature or culture that is good, truthful and has beauty, we accomplish two things. First, we forget to think about the problem we currently have, or even the success we are trying to achieve. Second, by experiencing the activity “in the moment” we increase the capacity of the will. The result very often is paradoxical: success will follow you precisely because you had forgotten to think of both the success and the problem. Frankl calls this “tragic optimism.” For some of us, these activities might be physical outdoor sports, for others, music or art. Some people prefer doing things in solitude, while others prefer being with someone. The important thing is that the setting and the activity match your picture and that it occurs if not daily then frequently.

CREATING A WORK AND DOING A DEED

When you put your heart into creating something, with enthusiasm, almost anything is possible as the “hands on” creative experience creates a passionate feeling that is a powerful fuel for the will. Whether it be writing, painting, taking pictures, gardening, or a building project, the entire behavioral system responds with increased excitement. The metabolic rate increases. Breathing and pulse may quicken ever so slightly. The body temperature can rise. All of which has the result of stimulating the immune system. Anything worth doing is worth doing with a sense of joy and purpose. You will find your will and powers of concentration improve as you take part in this daily activity and sustain themselves as you enter the challenges of your life.

This is particularly helpful immediately following a “stressing” event. Use the tension energy coming from the event and direct it toward some
activity that is both enjoyable and constructive. You should then find yourself calming down (the release of energy), while at the same time feeling a sense of accomplishment in a piece of carpentry, or a piece of writing, or a new arrangement of pictures in the family album. Remember, it can be anything as long as it is something you enjoy. You'll probably notice, as you divert your attention and quiet down, that you are able to go back to the source of the tension and “see it” in a different way and perhaps come up with a creative solution. Because now, you are different.

Similarly, extend a daily helping hand to someone who needs it. This can be giving extra help to a student or child, visiting an elderly person who is alone and in need of company, or simply helping a family member with a chore. The act of “reaching out and doing a deed” need not be of heroic proportions, but done daily, happily with interest, and enthusiasm. The pure pleasure signal you will get from this activity will further increase the frequency and intensity of the pure pleasure of self-evaluation, the human will.

During these activities, attempt to be “mindful” of both your total knowledge and valuing filters. The goal is to cultivate a feeling of openness when engaged in a new experience. Strive for an open-minded consideration of the experience before you. A lack of openness to observe new phenomena from a low level of perception (neutral) leads to a mental rut and a paralysis of the will. When someone tells you something that you consider to be impossible, reserve judgment and allow yourself to say: “Anything is possible and he might be right.” Take in all of the new information before reaching your conclusion. Going into these activities with this in mind will help.

MEDITATION AND SOLITUDE

Calling upon your Will successfully requires a time of daily solitude. For more than five thousand years the Chinese have spoken about the circulation of what might be called the “doing-willing” energy of the body or “Qi” (chi). They have described pathways or meridians to indicate where this energy may be felt and influenced. According to Chinese practice, anyone can train himself to feel the warmth or tingling of this energy at the acupuncture points, which lie on the meridians. Theoretically, negative emotions put a “crimp” in the circulation of this energy, creating areas where the energy backs up and causes pressure or tension. Eventually, the tension can build up to a point where it causes pain, first psychologically, and ultimately, if not corrected, physically.

Control Theory teaches much the same with its concept of reorganization. The more energy we have circulating in our bodies, the faster it can back up and enter our physical consciousness. Most of us therefore find ways to bleed off some of the tension so as not to feed the pressure around the crimps. This can be accomplished through any method that deadens our energy. Some people choose various chemicals such as nicotine, alcohol, and other recreational and prescription drugs. Believe it or not, foods such as deep-fried and refined white sugar and exercise past the point of exhaustion will also produce the sought after deadening effect. Paradoxically, by killing off some of our life force, we reduce tension around the crimps in our energy flow. These techniques quickly become negative addictions, because they deaden our inner awareness that something is dreadfully wrong. They zap our will to improve in the process!!

According to Chinese philosophy, the way to deal with addictive behavior, and thus avoid dying by inches with a weak will, is to go after the cause of the crimp. This allows the energy or Qi to flow, reducing the pressure from back up and creating an inner sense of balance. This balance is essential for “releasing the power of the will.” Without the flow of energy, the will cannot strive to “know itself.”

Many Eastern philosophies and religions, most notably Zen Buddhism, emphasize the importance of meditation or “mindfulness” in solitude as a means of awakening the will. There are many reasons why it is valuable to integrate meditative practices into one’s life and many different applications including but not limited to visualization, the relaxation response, Tai chi and yoga. With mindfulness, there is “no right way” and people must choose the application that feels right for them. It helps to take a class when getting started. The principles of mindfulness parallel much of what Control Theory teaches us and the use of meditative practice as an adjunct to Reality Therapy is currently being utilized with interesting results. (Barbieri, 1996, 1994)

REFRAME THE MEANING OF YOUR SUFFERING

“Emotion, which is suffering, ceases to be suffering as soon as we form a clear and precise picture of it.” — Spinoza

Someone once said that in Life it’s not if you will suffer, but when, for how long and whether you will suffer bravely. Victor Frankl’s book, Man’s Search for Meaning traces the real tragedy of suffering to the failure of the sufferer to find meaning and a sense of responsibility in his existence. He calls this sense of frustration or battle “the will to meaning.” Frankl believes that in order for us to establish the will to live, we must make a larger sense out of our apparently senseless suffering. It is here that we encounter the central theme of his existential philosophy born out of the still unthinkable horror of the Nazi death camps: “to live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering.” (Frankl, 1959)

We learn a valuable lesson from the work of Frankl. Every situation in life has both a limit and a gift. When we are having difficulties, as we will, the limit is fairly obvious to us. If we can reframe how we view the difficult situation, the gift is the opportunity of attaining values and insight that the situation affords. If we can reframe the negative into a challenge and attempt to find the meaning (the gift) of our plight, we will allow our inner strength or will power to raise us above our “outward fate.” We will then achieve something through our suffering.

All of the above activities are deliberate actions. The positive feelings that will come are manifestations of your will, signposts for personal growth. Each activity leads to and supports the next. If continued beyond the present “crisis of the will”, they will eventually engage and strengthen.
your intuitive powers (sixth sense) which will add another layer of richness to a now growing strong sense of will. All of these suggestions can be incorporated into the planning process and will over time increase the probability of success. Again, I stress both the importance of daily plans and the use of solitude in many of the activities to strengthen resolve.

SUMMARY

As we lead our lives, we will be confronted with inevitable adversity. The difficulties we encounter will range from minor conflicts to crises that disrupt the core of our lives. Whatever the magnitude of the situation, when it occurs, change will be necessary and we will be forced to make important decisions. As we attempt to gain control we may at times choose less effective behaviors that lead us down a path of disappointment and misery. Eventually, most of us will come to self evaluate that what we are doing is not helping and we need to change. From this point on our willingness to change will be constantly challenged and repeatedly tested.

Control Theory teaches us that all behavior is our best attempt to meet our Quality World pictures. We know that all behaviors begin in the Quality World. This is why it is often referred to as the heart of the control system. Subsequently, I believe that all sustained behavioral change that is effective and responsible continues to be “charged” in the Comparing Place by the human will.

Reality Therapy training cannot incorporate the human will factor within the role play format because of time, environment and ethics. The will cannot be “called to action” in simulated environments and role plays must remain as such. However, it is possible to use Reality Therapy “in the real world” and work with a person’s resolve to change. To do this, we must recognize the importance of will power and the role it plays in helping us maintain perspective and enthusiasm for life regardless of what surprises it brings us.

Maintaining a positive attitude and a high level of commitment to change in the face of distress is not an easy task. Apathy and cynicism bite down hard on the energy of the will. The inclination to look for fault outside oneself is nearly unstoppable. Although we have attained an impressive amount of power over our surroundings, our self-knowledge and inner control continue to be a challenge. Instinct and impulse, rather than courage and wisdom are the means by which many people lead their lives when faced with crisis. Crisis creates favorable circumstances for experiencing the will. Sometimes when we are confronted with overwhelming circumstances, at the moment of self evaluation, something in us awakens which is felt as a surge of unsuspected strength. Its expression can range from the spectacular as in surviving in the wilderness to the not so spectacular as climbing out of an abusive relationship. Ultimately, we are only able to generate such courage to change through the activity of the will which sparks intense concentration and internal motivation to “remember the pure pleasure of self evaluation.”

The journey toward lasting change is like a marathon whose finish line lies hidden beyond the chaos in our lives. A role play is like a “jog around the block” when compared to this long, hard and often lonely run. Together with a strong will you can run the road to change guided by mile markers of intense self evaluation images. The trek to the finish line, beyond despair, is worth the effort. When you reach it you will have learned more about yourself and grown more than you ever dreamed was possible. There will be many hills along the way, and there may be times when you wonder, “Why bother?” Just remember this: The greatest opportunity of your life is the challenge now before you. When you have ascended each hill you can glance back and know what was. Self trust, will and the pure pleasure of your self evaluation to change will be your water stations along the way. At times you will have the company of others who run, but most often, you will be alone in your quest. Learn to appreciate the solace. Many people you know will not understand why you would even attempt to run. The gift in their not understanding is a better understanding of yourself. The memory of what you have already seen and learned will sustain you in spite of their doubts.

No doubt, you will tire along the way. If you can call upon your will and just “be in the moment”, then you will have put aside any fear of what may lie ahead. Doing so, you will come to better know yourself, your spirit and what you are truly capable of.

When you reach the finish, you can pause and reflect upon your accomplishment and re-create yourself. When you look back, there will be no regret and remorse over lost time and opportunities. When you look back, you will see the results of your dauntlessness.

The power to do so is yours.

“The will to live is not a theoretical abstraction, but a physiologic reality with therapeutic characteristics.”

— Norman Cousins

Bibliography


CONTROL THEORY, REALITY THERAPY AND CULTURAL FATALISM: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATION

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ABSTRACT

Conceptualizations within Control Theory and Reality Therapy have continued to make important strides in the reformulation of theory and practice as it relates to multicultural populations. In an effort to continue these positive steps, this article presents the specific cultural variable of Fatalism (Fatalismo), particularly as it relates to Latinos/as. The understanding of this belief structure, its role in therapy and its integration with principles of CT and RT are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to give voice to and empower those groups that have been traditionally and historically marginalized, excluded, and oppressed by this society remains a critical challenge to both practitioners and theorists alike. Theories (and the clinical practices that derive from them) are extremely powerful “constructed pictures” of what the world may or may not look like. They obviously influence our ability to assist and empower clients to create possibilities that enhance the development of a quality world (Glasser, 1984). As scientific constructions, they inform not only how we conduct practice, but also embody particular world views as well. Science is but another way of defining and structuring the environment around us.

To the extent that these constructions omit, devalue, or pathologize other ways of “being in the world”, they become powerful weapons of oppression and domination. To the degree to which scientific theories challenge narrowly focused views and acknowledge, affirm, support, and truly integrate histories, customs, practices, and belief systems of diverse groups, they begin the process of liberation and the creation of hope for those trapped in endless circles of darkness and despair.

A number of our brothers and sisters, working within the theoretical framework of Control Theory and Reality Therapy (CT/RT), continue to challenge this particular world view and its ability to genuinely empower those who represent difference, both in this country and abroad. These practitioners and theorists have begun to critically question CT/RT in its ability to give voice to and empower diverse groups, including but not limited to people with disabilities (Sansone, 1993); gay and lesbian students (LaFontaine, 1994, 1995); African Americans (Mickel, 1991, 1994, 1995); and Latinos/as (Sanchez & Garriga, 1995). More detailed examination of specific groups and cultural factors is needed in order to continue this critical process of “reformulation” and critical engagement between theory, practice and diverse populations.

Sanchez & Garriga (1995) examined the relationship between RT/CT and the process of Latino activism, suggesting some reformulations in conceptualizations involving RT/CT and Latinos/as. Helping Latinos/as was conceptualized as a process of affirming and enhancing a Latino ethnic consciousness (Padilla, 1985) through empowerment leading to social activism, thus striving to create possibilities and in the language of CT, leading to an enhancement of the quality world. Working with Latino/a clients is also a process of engaging and integrating some very crucial cultural variables, which have a significant impact in the kinds of “pictures” Latinos/as have of their quality world and the ability to engage in direct and responsible action leading to the satisfaction of basic needs (Glasser, 1984).

A cultural variable that presents challenges to those working with Latino/a clients within the framework of CT/RT is that of Fatalism (Fatalismo). This is a specific element of the world view of many Latinos/as with significant implications both for the empowerment process, and the development of a general sense of being an active and responsible agent, able to have a direct impact in one’s life and functioning, key elements to CT/RT (Glasser, 1984).

The purpose of this article is to review the cultural variable of fatalism as it relates to Latino/a clients and its implications in the therapy/empowerment process within CT/RT. Some of the areas of consistencies and contradictions will be examined along with the integration of this variable into the therapy process with Latino/a clients.

FATALISM (FATALISMO): A BRIEF REVIEW

Comas-Diaz (1989) describes cultural fatalism as a belief system that for some Latinos/as does have an impact on their “coping styles”, and thus has implications for the therapy process. She depicts cultural fatalism as “... the belief that some things are meant to happen regardless of the individual’s intervention (Que sera, sera - what will be, will be)” (p. 41). She goes on to relate fatalism to “locus of control” theory, where “fatalism reflects an external locus of control in which people perceive the events that happen to them to be the result of luck, fate, or powers beyond their control rather than dependent on their own behavior” (pp. 41-42).
This belief system, presented within this simple, global and dichotomous manner, is also believed to be influenced by some other very complex variables including social class, religious affiliation, and the practicing of other “folk beliefs” such as Espiritismo and Santeria. The major point made, however, is that control is assigned, according to this conceptualization of fatalism, to an external source, which clearly has implications for treatment with Latino/a clients that seeks to empower through active engagement and struggle with complex sociopolitical issues (Sanchez & Garriga, 1995). This conceptualization also does not take into account that religious affiliations and “folk beliefs” can also be viewed as “active” ways to “control” powers that are felt to be beyond one’s control. The vital component of integrating religion and “the political” will be discussed as one avenue of “empowerment” that affirms and integrates critical cultural belief systems.

A conceptualization that goes a bit further in terms of complexity and integration into the therapy process is that of Paniagua (1994). He defines fatalism as a cultural variable which entails the belief “... that a divine providence governs the world and that an individual cannot control or prevent adversity ...” (p. 42). He goes on, however, to divide fatalism into two broad categories, the first being when the Latino/a client exhibits “... a sense of vulnerability and lack of control in the presence of adverse events, as well as the feeling that such events are ‘waiting’ to affect the life of the individual” (p. 42). From a therapy perspective and in particular, from an CT/RT model, this world view would present a challenge to the concepts of empowerment, responsibility, active engagement and social activism. Paniagua (1994) reviews a second way that the cultural belief of fatalism may be exhibited in Latino/a clients, where “Fatalism may also be interpreted ... as an adaptive response to uncontrollable life situations ... (where it) is often associated with ... involvement in religious activities, which provide both personal and social resources for the individual” (pp. 42-43). This stance is thus viewed as a more positive and controlled reaction, where the Latino/a clients more actively control and are empowered through religion and faith. Within CT/RT, theorists have begun to challenge the more pragmatic stance taken by traditional CT/RT conceptualizations, with the “need” for inclusiveness of issues like prayer (Davidson, 1995a); spirituality (Emed, 1995); and faith (Davidson, 1995b; Dennis, 1989).

A more sophisticated and complex analysis of fatalism is presented by Andrade (1995) in his essay on Fatalism in The Mexican Music. He begins with a broad based definition, which is then broken down into four categories, which embody several levels of complexity:

“Fatalism” is the concept that events in life are fixed in advance for all time in such a manner that human beings are powerless to change them. It is a deterministic and predestinarian type of social thought. God, or some other force like society, economics, education, the government, in its infinite wisdom has seen fit to decide who we are, what we will do, when we will do it, and there is nothing we can do to change it (p. 3).

This is obviously a very broad based and complex definition, one that clearly challenges CT/RT and its basic stance of being able to control and actively influence life events. It of course also has profound implications for social/political activism as well.

Andrade (1995), however, goes on to conceptualize fatalism (in his analysis of Mexican music) as embodying four distinct types. There are: Innocuous Fatalism, Predestinarian Fatalism, Tongue Tight Fatalism, and the Hopeless Fatalism (pp. 5-18). In Innocuous Fatalism “the individual ... believes God, or other force, controls him/her and that any action being considered or in process is by Divine will” (p. 5). In a sense there is “dual control”, one can take action, but that action is ultimately within the province of a “higher power”. The integration of religion in a positive and empowering manner becomes critical within this framework, at points typified in “God helps those who help themselves.” Clearly action and direct responsibility in confronting social problems are not precluded in this cultural belief.

“Predestinarian Fatalism” is described as “... a kind of second stage to the innocuous condition” (p. 8). In this form of fatalism, Andrade suggests that “... all events in life have been predetermined, from the beginning of time, by some force which humanity cannot avoid. This force appears to be inflexible and pernicious” (p. 8). Andrade describes this fatalism as having “serious consequences” where “... the human being has no real power as all acts have been predetermined and the individual is totally controlled by forces outside himself/herself” (p. 9). The predetermined nature of events, within the context of powerful controlling forces outside of one’s control, clearly presents challenges to a conceptualization of positive action and empowerment. Andrade gives an example dealing with health care, where the person might embody an attitude, reflected in behavior, where practicing positive health activities is seen as irrelevant and not connected to the ultimately “predetermined” time that one has on earth, as well as the inevitability of illness or disease. Just as critical, with regards to our empowerment concepts, if one’s political and social condition are also “predetermined” and beyond control, then the concept of direct social activism to change this “predetermined” condition becomes problematic.

In Andrade’s “Tongue Tight” fatalism, he describes a level of fatalism with a more significant behavioral component. “The individual becomes ‘tongue tight’ and comes to a certain impasse in which he/she cannot move or speak out.” He goes on to note how “... the individual remains passive, inactive, incapable of challenging, or doing something about his/her circumstances” (p. 12). The “circumstances” are all negative life events, with persons generally unable to satisfy basic needs (survival, belonging, freedom, fun and power) and the active enhancement of their quality world. Certainly, a conceptualization involving confrontation and challenge of sociopolitical issues and barriers to the evolving of a quality world based on social justice issues (Sanchez & Garriga, 1995) would be unthinkable.

The “Hopeless Fatalism” is the fourth and final type of fatalism described by Andrade. He depicts this form as “... perhaps the worse ... the one that gives and grants no hope, no redemption, no possibility of escaping the macabre, ghastly world of this individual” (p. 15). The world depicted “... in alcohol, drugs, prostitution ...” are part of this experi-
ence according to Andrade. By implication, violence and self-destruction (both direct and indirect) are part of the pictures of the world, where there is a sense of not having control, life being predetermined, run by forces more powerful than oneself, and set within a nihilistic "picture" within the person with this world view. This is a massive internalization of a hostile, negative, and uncaring world view, one where faith in positive action is virtually absent. This extreme powerlessness presents the ultimate challenge to practitioners attempting to instill an active stance to the confrontation of both individual and more broadly, collective social problems experienced in various communities.

TOWARDS AN ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

Given this very complex cultural variable, how do we proceed in therapy with Latino/a clients? How is this element of culture understood, affirmed, integrated and "repatterned" (Kavanagh & Kennedy, 1992) in an effort to empower Latino/a clients to be able to actively control and change their environment. Awareness of this cultural variable as part of a world view is the first step. The ability to conceptualize this complex element, and assess the level at which the client embodies fatalism, provides assistance in developing a treatment plan that does not ignore this critical element, yet a treatment plan that seeks to challenge and restructure its effect on the Latino/a clients’ "pictures" within themselves and ability to satisfy basic needs.

Figure 1 presents our model of fatalism and its implications for the therapy process within an CT/RT framework. The relationship between the four types of fatalism presented by Andrade (1995) is also displayed. The last three elements in our conceptualization - Negative Spiritual Forces, Nihilistic World View, Ultimate Despair and Hopelessness - are clearly the most challenging from the empowerment perspective. The therapeutic focus here clearly needs to be within an "individual empowerment model." While understanding, affirming and giving voice to this despair and powerless world view, the therapist models active, responsible engagement with the world through direct involvement in accessing basic services to meet basic needs.

The therapist becomes the "control agent" in enhancing the quality world for the client. This, however, needs to be seen as only a temporary stage and end for strategies and a process of "following rules" and maintaining the "status quo" of mainstream society, rather than leading to social activism and change based on social justice issues, in particular, opposition and resistance to oppressive social and economic practices in this society (Sanchez & Garriga, 1995).

The upper end of our chart (Figure 1) embodies the more positive spectrum of fatalism where therapeutic intervention would focus more on collective Latino/a issues of empowerment and an understanding of the complex sociopolitical and economic forces that continually oppress and limit the life chances of people of color in this country. Here, the conceptualization of religious involvement, the spiritual, the sacred, prayer, and faith, become very important elements and challenge to CT/RT and the empowerment process in general.

THE EMPOWERMENT PROCESS, RELIGION AND THE POLITICAL

As noted previously, theorists and practitioners within CT/RT have begun to challenge, not only the relevance of CT/RT to multicultural/diverse populations, but also non-traditional therapy constructs like the spiritual, prayer, faith and religion (Davidson, 1995a, 1995b; Dennis, 1989; Emed, 1995). The integration of these constructs in the need structure, pictures within clients, and the empowerment towards a quality world, are all conceptualized as active choices of strategies that add a cultural and world view dimension, that of the belief in God or another higher power and the critical roles that faith, the spiritual, and prayer play in actively enhancing and giving possibility to the fulfillment of basic needs and living in a quality world.

For Latino/a clients, the integration of the sacred and religion in general, is a complex issue, one that has in traditional, structured, and hierarchical mainstream religion been used to further the process of maintaining oppression, colonialism, and the loss of cultural identity through assimilation (Stevens-Arroyo, 1995). Abalos & Pulido (1994) discuss how
In this way we will be able to discern between those sacred faces that are destructive and those that are creative. There are four qualitatively different sacred sources that inspire us. Some sacred forces tie us in uncritical loyalty to a status quo which daily becomes more violent. Other sacred sources inspire Latinas and Latinos to pursue their own self-interest and power because this is the American dream and the fulfillment of civil religion. The most vindictive sacred forces lead us to revenge, rage and anger against ourselves and others as we lose who we are in the nihilism of drugs, gangs, violence, and despair. And, finally, we have as our guides the sacred sources of transformation. Each of us as a Latina woman, as a Latino man, has a unique, personal face and story of transformation which needs to be lived. (p. 9)

The stress on collective, political and community involvement is a critical element to our conceptualization of enhancement of empowerment and a quality world based on social justice issues. The ability to use religious beliefs, systems, and structures in a way that will affirm Latino cultural beliefs and practices, but also integrate the political, is vital to the empowerment process. The elements of the positive end of Fatalism: belief in higher powers and the guiding of people’s destinies, must also incorporate the political question as well. Without religion and its various world view constrasts being connected to the political, an empowerment model that embodies social activism and social change cannot take place, Abalos & Pulido (1994) summarized this challenge to empowerment and collective control as follows:

Each of us is political in daily shaping a more human and compassionate environment, each of us together with our neighbor can create new turning points in the history of our communities. Only this kind of personal, political and historical participation can reveal the deepest and most loving sacred within each of us. (p. 9)

CONCLUSION

The ability to understand, affirm, respect and genuinely integrate specific Latino cultural variables is an important element to the empowerment process (Sanchez, 1996). Therapists and practitioners have begun to critically question CT/RT and its relevance to diverse, multicultural populations. Its ability to authentically empower those who have been marginalized in this society is the ultimate test of any theory and practices derived from them, that seeks to create possibilities and hope for oppressed people in the world. Understanding, affirming, respecting, and genuinely integrating specific cultural variables and religious beliefs is a necessary element to the empowerment process and the creation of relevance between theory and actual practice with diverse groups.

This paper has focused on the specific Latino/a cultural variable of Fatalism (Fatalismo) and its implications to the empowerment process within a CT/RT framework. The complex dimensions and levels of this variable were reviewed and the challenges presented to therapists in integrating and at points “restructuring” this powerful belief and worldview structure. The gradations between a positive and a negative fatalism were presented. The role of religion, the spiritual, prayer, and the sacred was also presented, as constructs that can be authentically integrated to empower Latino/a clients within a “dual control” framework, that is, sharing action and responsibility with a “higher power” yet still striving for the enhancement of a quality world and better satisfaction of basic needs. The critical dimension of moving the client from individual concerns to a more collective, “political” stance was stressed. Any conceptualization that seeks to authentically empower Latino/a clients must strive to enhance Latino Ethnic Consciousness (Padilla, 1985). The ability to understand yet critically challenge specific cultural variables and the broader sociopolitical and economic variables that impact on the quality world of Latinos/as and their ability to satisfy needs, remains a challenge to all those engaged in the creation of social activism leading to social change. The creation of possibilities of hope and a vision of the future remains the ultimate challenge to all our brothers and sisters in the helping professions.

References

Counselling Homosexual Men

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Abstract

The article discusses issues involved in counseling homosexual men from a control theory/reality therapy perspective.

Homosexual men may come for counseling with problems identical with those of heterosexuals, and in many of these situations their sexuality will be irrelevant to the problem. For others, their sexuality is at the very root of their problems, or their problems are colored or deepened by their sexuality. Some come with a problem they feel they can more easily talk about, but underlying that is the issue of sexuality, with the doubts and fears that it can bring.

Many homosexuals are happy, well-balanced people, who, in spite of a homophobic environment, deem the world a good place in which to live. Others find it an unfriendly place, feeling persecuted and unwanted, weighed down with shame and guilt. Added to this can be the fear of HIV/AIDS.

There has been very little literature to help either the homosexual or those counseling him. When we (Colchester Area Gay Community) with the local health authority produced a booklet guide for homosexuals only a few years ago, it was the first of its kind in the U.K. For the homosexual the position is improving, but for the counselor I can find no specifically helpful information, either in books or articles.

Being a homosexual myself, a counselor for twenty-five years and one of the first to be certified in Reality Therapy in the U.K., I can perhaps do something to fill that gap. I believe Control Theory and Reality Therapy have much to contribute to the successful counseling of homosexuals.

Among the welter of homophobic misinformation, the counselor needs to be aware of the facts about homosexuality. It is sometimes necessary to communicate these to the client as ignorance is sometimes part of the problem.

No one can be blamed for being homosexual. It seems sexual orientation is set either at conception or very early in life. Recently there has been some evidence discovered of a gene which predisposes a person to homosexual orientation. It is not caused by an over-protective mother or an absent or weak father, as there are so many cases where this does not apply.

For some, sexuality is not constant. Some experience strong homosexual urges during adolescence, but become heterosexual in their twenties. Some say they were aware of being homosexual during childhood, but some seem to arrive at this awareness much later, even marrying before they are aware. I have had several cases from each of these groups, as well as others...
who have never had any doubts about their sexual orientation.

There are purported cures. A cure is to be considered only if you regard homosexuality as a disease. I do not see it as fitting into the usual definition of a disease. I have yet to encounter a man who has been 'cured' of his homosexuality: i.e. become a heterosexual because of some therapy. There are those who feel through so-called aversion therapy or counselling their homosexuality is evil, sinful and nasty so they no longer take part in homosexual practices. Some, often for religious reasons, repress their 'unnatural' feelings. Some, as already mentioned, seem to change naturally. None of these can be regarded as cures.

Most of what I have already said would apply to women as well as men, but there are differences, such as the legal position, HIV/AIDS and children. I shall therefore confine myself to talking about male homosexuals as that is where my experience lies.

It is very important the environment be welcoming and relaxing, not only for the first meeting but also for subsequent ones; the counselor shows empathy and is not judgmental. Acceptance is indeed crucial as the counselor may be the first person to whom the client has mentioned his sexuality. There is often a fear of rejection and this needs to be allayed. If talking to the counselor is easier than expected, the client will find it easier to face the world and perhaps talk to others who would be supportive.

Everyone is an individual and varies in his problems and attitudes. There is not space in such an article as this to discuss all the possibilities and variety of clients, so there has to be some generalization. I am not showing how each case can be solved, but how Control Theory and Reality Therapy can be used effectively with homosexual men.

For the client for whom his sexuality is a problem or underlies other problems, his scales are out of balance because of the difference between his perceived world and his quality world.

The pictures in his quality album are of being accepted, of a loving, caring partner, deeply enjoyable sex, and having a place in society. These pictures are often culled from the heterosexual environment. Some even see marriage as desirable or are pushed in that direction by relatives or friends. Divorce is not necessarily the solution to this problem. This may give rise to conflicting desires such as a heterosexual marriage and sex with a male friend or friends. I know one person who has managed to fulfill both these desires happily for all concerned! Many look for a parallel to marriage in a monogamous homosexual relationship.

Their perception of the world is that their desires are condemned, and they are very vulnerable. One of my clients said he was in a big protective bubble which he would come out of only when he felt he was in a safe environment. There may be little chance for the experience of a deep loving relationship and so the substitute is casual sex which often lacks satisfaction.

Scales are put back into balance by either changing the perception of the world, or changing the pictures in the quality world, or perhaps both. Neither of these is done easily. One needs to reassess the perception of the world and look again at the pictures in the quality world with the view to replacing some of them, as difficult as this is to do. This needs a trust in the counselor that he will persevere and not give up on his client as the therapy may be long and difficult.

This balance may sometimes be more easily achieved by change in behavior. The client could often be more creative in his behavior which is not achieving the results he so much desires. He may need to be encouraged to think out new strategies to achieve his desires and so balance his scales. For example, if a man is looking for a meaningful relationship with another man without success, he may need to find places to go where he can meet such men, or change his attitude or his body language.

It is important to look at the needs of the client and how they can be satisfied within his environment and sexual orientation. A homosexual has as much need to belong and be loved as anyone else. This includes being accepted by society, not being lonely and eventually finding a loving caring partner. He needs the freedom to choose his lifestyle. He needs a remission of fear and degradation so that he can have real fun, and enjoy life to the full. Some may need to feel it is permissible to have fun. I have come across men who were afraid to have fun because a punishment in the guise of unpleasant events is sure to happen.

Power and freedom often go together. A homosexual may feel unduly restricted, not having the power or freedom to live the life he desires. Marriage often provides a natural opportunity for leaving the parental home, and gaining power in a home of one's own. Sometimes, however, a gay young man may stay with his parents and nurse them through old age. After their death he finds himself very lonely, not having been able to make close friendships during his parents' life-time.

Some homosexuals find satisfaction and fulfillment in channelling their sexual energy into creative or caring activities. This can be important to a man who wants either to postpone sexual activity until he finds a permanent sexual relationship, or prefers to remain celibate. Some religious groups, while accepting homosexuals, disapprove of homosexual activity, particularly as the Bible proscribes such activity.

Many answers of homosexuals to the question 'What do you want?' are reasonable and obtainable. These include having a partner, being loved, being 'out' without discrimination, living a full life; but others are difficult or impossible of fulfillment, such as sex with another man when the client is under the age of consent, marriage, children, a cure. One client faced me with the ultimatum: "It's either a cure or I commit suicide". Sometimes a religious background, as in this case, adds to the difficulties. In such cases survival, that primitive need, can lose its power and suicide becomes desirable and sometimes regrettablly a fact.

When it comes to what they are doing, it may be they are depressing, undervaluing themselves, getting angry, overeating, stealing, concealing their sexuality or being flamboyant about it, trying to find satisfaction in casual sex.

All this needs careful evaluation. There is a need to look at the restrictions imposed by society and by oneself. This evaluation is a continuous
process, needing repetition as counseling sessions proceed, so as to show progress is being made, as the client can become despondent, feeling he is achieving little or nothing.

I find mind maps helpful to me as well as the client. It can help to make evaluations clear and can also be used for making plans. Figure 2 shows the first stage of such a mind map. In a real situation specific names would replace most of the words in the diagram. It should start from the center of a large sheet of paper so items can be added as thinking proceeds. Such a method not only makes problems clear but can indicate the way forward. There are various ways of using these in counselling. One might make a mind map together as the session proceeds or use it towards the end to summarize and reflect back what has been said. The client could make his own mind map either during a session or between sessions. For more information on mind mapping, consult Tony Buzan’s ‘The Mind Map Book’.

Many find the matter of ‘coming out’ daunting, and there is understandably a fear of the consequences. This needs to be put into perspective. He needs to realize there is no requirement to come out in spite of the pressure brought to bear by some gay groups. Heterosexuals do not have to proclaim their sexuality, and neither should homosexuals.

In some occupations, to come out would mean the termination of one’s career. To proclaim one’s sexuality on a form particularly for an insurance company could be very costly. In other situations there are advantages to coming out such as cutting out stress in relationships with people in daily contact. In personal relationships, it is rare to get adverse reactions, particularly with people who like you. Often a friendship is enhanced. Nevertheless, the probabilities need to be weighed as a rejection can come from an unexpected quarter, and that could be devastating.

References
ALCOHOL MISUSE: 
A TRADITIONAL NAVAJO VIEW

John Baca

The author works at Raindancer Youth Services in Farmington, New Mexico.

ABSTRACT

The importance of linking folklore with counseling in working with culturally different clients is stressed.

Folklore finds its ultimate roots in the reality of any culture, in its value system and ethics, in the codes by which people live. They endure, linking present with past, magnifying a heritage until it becomes relevant to today’s culture.

Recently, I had to advise the grandmother and brother of a high school student who had been arrested of the circumstances and charges connected with his arrest for public intoxication. As I explained the charge and disposition to both of them, the elderly white-haired woman in traditional Navajo dress sat up stiffly in her chair. Then she began to speak, pointing to her grandson, repeatedly. When she finished speaking, her head bowed. While her gaze was fixed on the floor, I asked the brother to translate what the old woman had said. He looked at her, at his brother, then at me as he began.

"Corn is the symbol of life, in our life, there is good and bad, female and male, holy and evil. Corn is good. Our people regard corn as good. A perfect ear of corn is treasured. Our people even gather corn pollen as a blessing offering."

A long pause followed these words. No sound was heard except the measured breathing of four separate people. Then the brother continued for his grandmother. "Corn is also bad. Many misuse corn. It is brewed into beer and distilled into alcohol. Merely using alcohol for pleasure is to abuse corn."

The grandmother then asked her grandson the ultimate question: "Where are your cultural values?" His head bowed, his gaze was fixed on the floor.

Alcohol is so much a part of our culture that it is sometimes difficult for a non drinker to gain social acceptance. This is not hard for successful adults. On the other hand, teenagers have a pressing need for acceptance as they make the transition into adulthood. To not drink is to risk being unacceptable by their peer group. (Glasser, 1985). Another consideration is the lack of counseling services and activities for young Native American students to participate in on the reservation. Employment opportunities are also grim.

Glasser points out that we all have different pictures in our heads as to the perfect child (Glasser, 1985). However, he proposes the utilization of control theory in regard to their upbringing.

Keep the pictures of what we want our children to become up to them. By pushing our pictures and dictating their ambitions, they become what “we” as parents want and not what the children choose or value. (Glasser, 1985)

As adults, we have made pictures of our own from our parents, relatives, employers, colleagues, and friends. Once these values become our own, we naturally attempt to persuade others to share our picture.

While visiting with elementary age Navajo children, a common story has emerged. That, if they do not follow the grandmothers’ instructions (i.e., going to bed), the “aglanii” monster will come and take them away. “Aglanii” interprets into what we would refer to as a “skid-row” alcoholic. The picture for the child is then developed at an early age.

However, one must critically examine the efficacy of these examples and the high incidence of alcoholism within the Navajo culture. It appears as though folklore may be helpful in educating young people. As professionals, we must consider incorporating these legends with our current curricula to break through cultural barriers.

References


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UNCOVERING BASIC NEEDS THROUGH THE LESSONS OF ANIMALS

Lucia N. Matthews

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ABSTRACT

An essential premise in Control Theory and the practice of Reality Therapy is the importance of assessing basic needs. In this article, Medicine Cards are offered as an alternative way to assess basic needs. Medicine Cards are derived from Native American legends about lessons that can be learned from observing animal life. Their relevance to Control Theory and their applicability to the process of Reality Therapy is presented. The advantages of using Medicine Cards as a therapeutic adjunct are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Control Theory is predicated on the assumption that everything we think, do and feel is generated by pictures inside our head and that these basic needs are what drives total behavior. Essentially, the practice of Reality Therapy is contingent upon the client's ability to identify his/her basic needs. Without an accurate understanding of these powerful forces, a counselor's capacity to use CT/RT as an effective intervention is severely curtailed. As a recently certified Reality Therapist, I am continuously on the prowl for new and novel ways to help clients identify what it is they really want. When I was introduced to Medicine Cards, I was struck by how they might enable clients to tap into the pictures inside their heads. The purpose of this article is to introduce the concept of Medicine Cards and highlight how their use may become an effective adjunct to the CT/RT process.

Medicine Cards are a series of cards, each depicting a different animal. Every card is associated with a Native American legend that describes the medicinal powers of the animal. The originators of the Medicine Cards (Sams & Carson, 1988) are Native Americans who have lived on various reservations throughout the United States and Mexico. Sams is a medicine teacher who has been trained in Seneca, Mayan, Aztec, and Choctaw medicine. The authors note that the stories used with the Medicine Cards are a compilation of legends gathered from numerous Native American tribes. These legends teach how animals have certain attributes that, if heeded, can help improve the quality of life. This "power" of the animal is medicinal in that it promotes a healing of body, mind and spirit. In essence, Sams & Carson maintain that the animals represented on the cards can help us to understand ourselves as well as the world around us.

MEDICINE CARDS AND CONTROL THEORY

I was attracted to Medicine Cards for numerous reasons. Primarily, I saw a synergy between Control Theory's concept that ties behavior to the pictures in peoples' heads and the pictures portrayed on the cards. Medicine Cards provide a corporeal, visual image that enables clients to more fully comprehend how their perceptions of the world can be represented by a picture. Also, the vocabulary used to illustrate the beliefs associated with Medicine Cards corresponds to the vocabulary that explains the concepts of Control Theory and the process of Reality Therapy. Like CT/RT, Animal Medicine helps us to understand our needs and fosters personal power. Its' lessons urge us to take responsibility for our lives and to use the legends as a vehicle to satisfy specific needs.

The relevance of Medicine Cards to Control Theory became apparent when I compared Glasser's (1984) description of basic needs to Sams & Carson's (1988) reason for developing the cards. Glasser argues that there is no respite from basic needs. They are a force within us that is continuously vying for gratification. He maintains that "if you understand that the pathway to practicing control theory is through the pictures in our heads and the behaviors we choose, you have made a good start" (Glasser, 1984, p. 236).

Sams & Carson comment that, "We as teachers have devised a method of divination to assist each soul to find its personal pathway through the medicine of animals" (1988, p. 11). I consider Medicine Cards to be a pathway to basic needs. The cards are a medium through which a client's basic needs become more tangibly manifested to both the client and to the counselor. Essentially, Medicine Cards help clarify the distinction between the All-We-Want World and the pictures emanating from the All-We-Know World.

USING MEDICINE CARDS IN REALITY THERAPY

The process I employ when using the cards has evolved over time and is primarily derived from trial and error. Basically, I ask clients to study the cards and to select four cards that particularly capture their attention. I lay the four cards in front of the client in the order that they were selected. We begin a discussion focused on why each animal was chosen and what is especially appealing about the animal. I might ask how the client acts in ways that are like the animal or what is the most desirable characteristic of the animal. The nature of my queries is exploratory and my goal is to uncover any perceptions the client may have of himself or others. Once a general discussion has been exhausted, I read aloud the legend associated with the selected animals. I ask the client to reflect on the story and to offer additional comments. We then discuss how the powers of the animals correlate to the client's perceptions.

The potency of the Medicine Cards lies in their simplicity. The pictures are not detailed nor are the stories particularly long and complex. Each legend is based on one major idea or concept. This lack of detail enables a client to project his or her own unique message onto the animals. Sams & Carson also suggest that, by understanding the basic nature of the selected animal, you may come to understand your own needs. For example, the rabbit card connotes fearfulness. It is indicative of a time of worry about the future or of trying to exercise your control over things beyond our control (Sams & Carson, 1988, p. 158). Additionally, the legends typically offer practical advice. The rabbit story encourages you to write your fears
down and be willing to feel them. Essentially, this parallels the Reality Therapy process in that it is similar to asking the question, "What would happen if . . . ."

The legends also describe the feelings and behaviors that may ensue if one attempts to suppress the powers of the animals. This is helpful when a client selects a card but cannot explain why. For example, if the card depicting a porcupine was chosen, I might relate what it means when a porcupine rolls over and exposes its belly.

The ill-dignified Porcupine is belly-up, with its quills stuck in the ground. This is a rather defenseless position. You may be forcing yourself to be vulnerable so that you can regain your hope. Perhaps you needed to roll over to get your tummy patted. This position could therefore indicate that you are ready to accept a little love from others. (Sams & Carson, 1988, p. 87).

It is not important that the client agrees with the narration. The efficacy of the cards is in the dialogue they provoke.

Another benefit of the Medicine Cards is their flexibility. There is no specific way that they must be used in order to be effective. I have employed them with children, adults, and in numerous settings. Their application is limited only by the level of comfort one might feel in utilizing them in a creative manner. For example, I have asked clients to pick two cards, one depicting the way they see themselves and one depicting the way they perceive others to see them. This enables a discussion focused on any existing dichotomies. The cards can be used to help establish goals in therapy by asking clients to select a card that depicts the current way they must be used in order to be effective. I have employed the cards in the dialogue they provoke.

Periodically, I will have him/her return to the cards to see how the choice of animals has changed. This enables a discussion regarding how changes in the All-We-Want World can alter perceptions of both ourselves and others. I have also used the cards in group settings. I have examined family dynamics by asking family members to select cards that represent each member of their family; and have employed the cards as an involvement exercise in substance abuse groups.

ADVANTAGES AS A THERAPEUTIC ADJUNCT

Medicine Cards offer many advantages to the practice of Reality Therapy. Perhaps their most basic asset is that they act as a catalyst that cultivates meaningful dialogue. This is important because dialogue is the medium through which a therapeutic intervention is accomplished. Dialogue promotes involvement, enables accurate assessment, encourages self-evaluation, and helps to establish goals for therapy. Medicine Cards are especially effective with a resistant client because they stimulate dialogue in a way that is more indirect and less intimidating than asking, "What do you want?" Medicine Cards also promote involvement in that most clients find them a novelty. Typically, the mere explanation of the cards becomes a joining exercise that can help appease a wary client. Often such a client will volunteer a spontaneous comment that belies relief (e.g., "I was worried you would ask me to look at the ink blots.").

One of the crucial elements in effective counseling is a trusting environment. Medicine Cards can be a potent ally in the establishment of that trust especially with clients who may feel threatened or scared by the therapeutic relationship. The cards enable clients to project their thoughts and feelings onto the animals. Their ability to self-disclose is enhanced because the situation is less intimate. As counselors respond in ways that do not make clients regret their revelations, the level of vulnerability decreases and a more trusting environment is established. The stage is set for more, increasingly intimate self-disclosure. For example, the cards were particularly effective with a client who continuously intellectualized the legends until I observed that each of the animals he had selected were associated with power. This led to a discussion about the importance of power in the animal kingdom and, more specifically, what power signified for him. Gradually, he was able to reveal his unfulfilled need for power and a goal for therapy was established.

In addition to promoting a more accurate assessment of the Quality World, Medicine Cards also help clients to self-evaluate. Discrepancies between the All-We-Want World and the All-We-Know World are frequently exposed. Often the pictures themselves highlight a startling contrast that provokes a candid reaction in a client. For instance, one client's perception of herself was that of a wolf but her wish was to be a swan. The disparity between these images presented a vivid portrayal of her conflict between what she wanted and how she behaved. It was eventually determined that her need was to be more nurturing but that she was behaving in ways that actually caused people to shy away from her. Over the course of therapy, I was able to stimulate self-evaluation simply by asking if she was acting more like a wolf or a swan.

An added benefit of the Medicine Cards is that I have found them to be multi-cultural. The interpretation of the cards is constrained only by the unique life experiences and cultural influences the client brings to the encounter. Having said this, a cautionary note is in order. The legends espoused through the Medicine Cards originate from Native American culture and hold special, mystical meaning for some. Their commercialization, and my subsequent use of these cards in an alternative manner, does not preclude a sensitivity to their original meaning. Rather, as Sams & Carson (1988) note, Animal Medicine has the potential to open a new doorway of understanding for those who seek the "Oneness" of all life. They envision Medicine Cards to be a "fun bridge" that will aid in this understanding (p. 11). I view my use of these cards as an extension of their perspective. The stories associated with these cards hold the potential to be a powerful, animated adjunct to the therapeutic process.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this article was to introduce the potential advantages of Medicine Cards and to offer fodder for their consideration as an alternative way to tap into a client's Quality World. Admittedly, the compatibility of Medicine Cards with Control Theory and their benefits in Reality Therapy is my subjective perception and not based on any sound empirical evidence. However, in the infamous words of Dr. William Glasser, "I encourage you..."
to be skeptical” (Glasser, 1984, p. XIV). I invite you to try Medicine Cards in your own practice of Reality Therapy and evaluate if they work for your clients. I welcome any comments or criticisms so that I may fully consider their further applicability to Control Theory and the Reality Therapy process.

REFERENCES
N.B. Medicine Cards are available through local booksellers or direct through:
Bear & Company
P.O. Box 2860
Santa Fe, NM 87504-2860
(800) 932-3277

The JRT Compendium

This volume is a selection of articles from the first twelve years of the Journal of Reality Therapy. Designed for practitioners, students, and faculty teaching in the helping professions and education, it presents an evolutionary overview of the development of the concepts and practice of control theory and reality therapy. Written by a diverse group of international contributors, the articles provide for the reader both the depth and breadth of the theory and application of CT/RT principles.

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DEMING’S MANAGEMENT OBLIGATIONS AND CONTROL THEORY

Antun-Tony Rehak

The author is a Basic Practicum supervisor and the training manager of a plant in Omisali, Croatia.

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the connection between the fourteen obligations of management by W. Edwards Deming and Control Theory as applied in a petrochemical industry in Croatia.

In November 1988, I started to learn RT and CT. As an employee relations manager in a medium sized petrochemical factory, I wanted to find a way which would help me to assist plant managers in their management of people and to help people keep their motivation. I had 25 years of experience, and I wanted to learn something which would be helpful. As a Basic Practicum Supervisor, I needed to read and study the list of books by Institute members. As a result, my approach to my life and work is quite different.

First, I started to implement RT and CT in my private life. For this purpose, my learning of CT was not only learning, but investigation and constant improvement of what I know, and also constant teaching and learning from others. Today, I’m full time on a project named “DINA Organization for Quality”. DINA is the name of my firm, which produces basic petrochemical goods, and has 600 employees. The main characteristic of this type of industry is expensive equipment which is potentially dangerous for people and the environment, and a small number of employees. The main energy which makes possible the work of the plant is a knowledge of people. The core instruction for this project was suggested by Glasser, and can be found in his Bulletin #18, 1-1-92.

I offered to the company board a training program for managers, but without success. The problems of others were their main focus, but not the improvement of management. When the board started to focus on a quality approach, I again suggested managerial training. The answer was “Yes, we have nothing to lose!” This quality project was named ISO-9000. (ISO refers to the International Organization for Standardization which is a world-wide federation of national standards bodies from some 90 countries established in 1947. With a Central Secretariat in Geneva, its mission is to promote the development of standardization and related activities in the world with a view toward facilitating the international exchange of goods and services, and to developing cooperation in the spheres of intellectual, scientific, technological, and economic activity. ISO 9000 refers to a series of standards.)

My training program was based on one done by Blanchard (1983). This is important because it shows how people meet their needs in the workplace.
was a pioneer in managing workers in a way that they can have quality work without describing it in those words. CT training was the next subject, with the goal of using CT in managing people. Quality school concepts were the main approach of teaching. During the past three years, I have also found it useful to combine Deming’s learning and Glasser’s CT, because Deming was a pioneer in managing workers in a way that they can have quality work which is a precondition of a quality product at a competitive cost.

**DEMING’S PRINCIPLES**

In December 1991, Deming offered many important observations to US Navy leaders. It was then that he formulated his famous 14 obligations of management. These applied to all managers if they want to achieve quality. To talk of modern management and quality today without following Deming’s work would be missing the point. Glasser helped me, through his writing, to understand and find practical applications of the 14 points.

A list of Deming’s points are:

1. Create and publish to all employees a statement of the aims and purposes of the organization. Management must demonstrate constantly its commitment to this statement.
2. Learn the new philosophy. This applies not only to top management, but to everyone.
3. Understand the purpose of inspection for the improvement of process and cost reduction. Advance the quality output of the system.
4. End the practice of awarding business on the basis of price alone.
5. Constantly seek to improve the system of production and service.
6. Institute specific skills training.
7. Teach and promote leadership.
8. Drive out fear. Create trust and a climate for innovation.
9. Optimize the efforts of individuals and groups to meet the aims of the organization.
10. Eliminate exhortations for the work force.
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for production and management by objective (MBO). Learn the capabilities of the processes and people and institute methods for improvement.
12. Remove barriers that rob people of the pride of workmanship.
14. Take action to accomplish the transformation. Deming knew perfectly well what he believed and did, but did not explain it. CT helped to both understand the need to use the above points and how to implement them in our plant.

**DINA**

In my firm, it was unnecessary to implement all the points immediately. I constructed a training program for managers which included selected points. The start focussed on differentiating the tasks and duties, and identifying the purposes of the organization. The managers knew well what employees had to do and how to create a yearly plan, but they were less aware of the methods used to define the aims of the company. Workers have to work, but it was uncommon for managers to explain why something must be done.

The same holds true between managers, because they are at the same time managers and workers. Do they have similar pictures of the purpose of their organization? Is the purpose written and visible within the work environment? There are too many managers who do not know how to briefly explain their goals and their methods for leading people. They know what to do but not what its purpose is. What we find on walls are posted messages, which tend to be not only useless, but counterproductive (e.g. safety rules, etc.)

According to Deming, managers work on the system, and workers work in the system. A manager’s concern is to define the purpose of the company, as well as to ensure it. It is important to know what the system is. An example of an optimal system is an orchestra. The players are not there to play solos, they are there to support each other as an interconnected whole. They need not individually be the best players in the country.

**Degree of interdependence**

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<tr>
<th>Bowling team</th>
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**LOW**

**HIGH**

This picture shows the importance of CT knowledge and team work in my plant. Since our managers are familiar enough with the concepts of successful management, they do what they know best — their former jobs, since they were acknowledged as experts there. Rare are those who, by starting to manage, also start to learn a completely new profession with different behavioral patterns. Many start their job quite scared and willing to learning something new. When they see that others manage without any particular training, they became “know-it-alls”. Our classical managerial training programs are designed so that managers do not learn how to work with people; the programs are too full of other subjects.

Deming says that “Man’s job is to govern the future, not simply be a victim of the wind blowing this way and that way”. Too many people are working only for money. Working only for money produces no joy in one’s work. Workers do not know the meaning of their work, and they do not produce good work. Human beings are entitled to joy in their work. This means that they must understand the whole system: “Why are we doing this?” Without this, they are helpless. Workers must understand how their work fits into the whole system. Systems have an aim, which must include the future. What will we be doing a year from now, a few years from now, ten years from now? It may be quite different from what we are doing now. Managers in my firm know how to set a goal, but they fail to do so in practice. Instead, they set a yearly plan of production, raw material, financial constraints, etc. This is not enough. People want to know why they are
doing something, what the firm's future is, etc.

In another small firm, I implemented a program in the beginning of this year to set the purpose initially, and then to set the goals and tasks. Workers in two groups described the purpose of the firm. The result was a picture of two of the best systems we know; one used a planetary system as a symbol, and the other was a diamond. This is what they transferred from their quality world to paper. There is an idealistic system in our quality world. Thus it is no surprise that people are dissatisfied with their work. An ideal system exists in their quality world, while they find reality very different. We have few if any managers who are leaders who are working in the system; our managers are predominantly people who are working in the system.

**Quality** is a new philosophy; it is unbelievable how few managers understand it. An old philosophy is to gain profit; profit is a daily routine, and the quality of products and services is a goal. To reach quality is to gain a profit. Glasser states that "Quality does not happen; it has to be carefully nurtured into existence by a lead-manager who understands that getting the uninitiated started is a long slow process." It takes time, training for all levels in its application, and commitment from all concerned. This is the hardest part. My organization started to work on quality in 1992 with the goal of receiving certification from the ISO.

**Transformation** is a new philosophy, especially in my country. Everything is in transformation: government, industry and education. Management is in a stable state; therefore, transformation is required to move from the present to prepare for the future. Transformation will release the power of human resources contained in intrinsic motivation.

A new philosophy comes not from practice, but from theory. According to Deming, it is important to be familiar with knowledge arising from theories of variation, knowledge, psychology, and systems. Teaching managers about a new philosophy is difficult, especially since top managers think that they know what they need to know. To avoid this, I'm teaching low level managers, engineers, and other professionals. There is some effect, but I must be available to them in their place, because of the negative impact of top managers. The time necessary to implement a new philosophy is three times longer without the support of top management.

Control Theory explains that all we do is behave. Inspection is behaving, but not in a responsible way. If workers work within the system and managers are responsible for the system, they must work together on improving the quality of system output. Managers then inspect the result of the system, rather than the output of an individual worker. The field of action is a broad one: from input quality (information, material, supplies, storage, handling, etc), through system design and functioning (area of ISO standards; relationships between design and production, sales and production, marketing and design, etc), training of employees (managerial skills, etc), statistical quality control (monitoring methods, feedback), and the entire production process. Only the manager is responsible for promoting the harmonious functioning of all the system's parts. A business is not merely reflected in an organizational chart - all departments striving to meet goals (sales, profit, production). It is a network of people, materials, methods, equipment - all working in support of each other for the common aim. It is customary to think that managers manage people - if the result is poor, this is because people are at fault. So managers seek ways to act upon individuals, which is in most cases counterproductive.

In practice, we are talking about quality assurance (QA), but we have instead quality inspection (QI). The whole system of quality in Europe is based on quality inspections for quality control (QC). If you want to stay where you are today, then inspect people. If you want to improve your productivity, then it is important to move from inspection to control and to use assurance. My project has involved teaching people CT and self-evaluation as a method of quality improvement. After two years of once a week CT sessions in one plant for Purchasing, Accounting, and Personnel departments, there are some improvements.

The practice of awarding business on the basis of price alone is different from measuring results by quality. In order to achieve that, everyone in the company must be capable of thinking statistically. Statistics is the simplest language of communication. In Japan, Deming taught statistics eight hours a day. We use statistics, but we are managers. Statistics serve primarily as a way of monitoring each employee's performance. The sum of individual statistical results yields the result of the system under a manager's responsibility. The worker is a quality creator who has to measure his own quality.

Managers must be guided by theory, not price figures. Applying systems theory, everybody wins if the aim of the system is for everybody to win. Without theory, there is no knowledge and nothing to learn. We need to think about where we are regarding strategy, purpose, finance, research, education, and what we are doing. We work on simple things, those that have figures. The heavy damage occurs when we have no figures. These losses represent damages that we must manage.

To reduce telephone costs, I experimented with ten telephones. Each month, each telephone user has a cost figure from the previous month, and is placed on a curve which includes everyone. Nobody says there is more or less. Each user can see whether or not the phone use is too much or whether not there is a trend. At the end of one year, I will look at the plan's effect on phone costs.

Constantly working on improving the system of production and service is possible if we can identify the system, according to Deming. Although the manager is responsible for the improvement of a system, it cannot be done without workers. If statistics are introduced as a method of tapping internal motivation, there is a chance to have workers be partners in the improvement of the system. Responsibility for data monitoring and gathering must rest at the lowest possible levels. Proposals for improvement start from there and, if they are simultaneously accepted at the lowest level, managers need to establish procedures to implement them. Managers are needed here, since proposals frequently concern other units as well. Since workers are working in the system, they are professionals in their work and know better than anyone else what can be improved. The manager acts upon the system and judges whether the change in question should be implemented, after which he ensures its implementation.
Managers ensure proposal implementation. Once something that someone has proposed is applied, the employee will make other proposals. A common mistake made by managers is that they employ only their employees’ hands, not their brains. Employees must be partners with managers in system improvement.

Today, according to Deming’s approach, we practically have no system. When we started to try to reach an international quality award, I was involved in explanations to people about the goal of the company. Two years ago, I was lucky to have a third of the people who said that the quality goal of the firm was also their goal. The rest had their own goals which differed from managerial goals. We also had the problem of a socialistic self-management system as the state system. Our entire society is in transformation. Everything similar to the private system is neglected. The self-management system was one in which the workers’ decisions were important and managers were under their control. Today, we see a transformation in which managers say what to do and workers have to follow orders. Boss-management is more preferred than lead-management, and there are not enough people who are responsible for the system within the organization.

Training is important in petrochemical plants because it involves communication between workers and managers. Training should consist of acquiring knowledge and skills, including understanding the technology of one’s work. There are other areas that we did not feel obliged to introduce into company training programs; what quality is, what customers want for the long term, statistics, team work, problem solving, etc. Modern and efficient training methods are there (e.g. Glasser’s Quality School and Quality School Teacher) to be learned and applied. Many of the poor teaching methods used in schools that cause so many problems and produce poor results are applied in companies, with mistakes made in process, resulting in problems both for those who teach and those who are being taught. A teacher may not be particularly interested in how a student will apply knowledge, but in the workplace, the ability to apply knowledge is critical if we wish to have quality. To implement quality school concepts is a long term process. We have to begin with the definition of training.

According to Glasser

“Education is a process through which we discover that learning adds quality to our lives. Teaching is a process of imparting specific skills and knowledge through a variety of techniques, like explaining and modeling, to people who want to learn these skills and knowledge because they believe that, sooner or later, these skills and knowledge will add quality to their lives”.

We need to differentiate between what we know and what we use. We used to say that knowledge is power, but incorrect knowledge leads to an opposite effect. We have permanent training for all support people and professionals in my firm. What we lack is enough effort in helping people increase their desire for learning and helping people make their own evaluation of what they need to know. We have an S-R psychology-based approach, that people must learn about work processes if they want to be promoted. This is a typical boss-management approach. In teaching CT, my problem is that there is never a time when I can say I have finished teaching CT. The same problem can be explained in that I do not know the results of my teaching CT. Up to now, I believe that I’m doing well; Is that enough?

Researchers have stated that the source of almost all problems in an organization comes from boss-management (see Glasser’s The Control Theory Manager). What we need is to change the way we treat people. A top manager may be managed in a boss-management way, and he thinks that is the best way to treat people. If I compare managers in my firm with others, there is a difference. The main obstacle to implementing CT in managerial roles is its difficulty and the need for time. When I ask managers if we are on the right path, they agree. My problem is to deeply integrate CT into my own behavior. Then managers may see that it is possible to implement a concept which is so human, yet so different from our everyday lives.

Creating a climate for trust and innovation is stressed by Deming. If employees believe that they will put themselves out of work by increasing productivity, they will understandably fight it. We use methods that intimidate people and fill them with fear in the mistaken belief that we will make them work harder. Whoever believes that has either missed his calling or simply does not know better. A manager must work on establishing a trusting environment in the work place. This area is closely connected to Deming’s suggestion that managers learn the new psychology because:

- Psychology helps to understand people, interactions among people, people and their work circumstances, interaction between a leader and his people, teachers and pupils, and any management system.
- People differ from one another. A leader has to be aware of these differences and use them to optimize his employees’ skills and inclinations.
- People are intrinsically motivated. People are born with the need to relate to one another, to love and belong, as well as to be acknowledged for their work. There is an inner need for self-respect. Our working and living conditions neglect this. Some extrinsic motivations make people humiliate themselves in order to achieve their self worth (higher salary, promotion). No individuals will study or do something with pleasure (quality) if they know they will be judged, ranked, or recommended for promotion. Today satisfaction with one’s work is of secondary importance.
- Deming says that knowledge of a new psychology should be applied in management, in work with people. Glasser has further developed the conceptual ideas of this new psychology of Deming in his work relating to the concept of quality.

Croatia is a country in struggle, and fear and coercion is on the front line. Our people are very close to the line. Television has so big an impact on spreading fear or coercion that it is very difficult to avoid their spread. I decided not to wait for the end of the war. Today, I can teach people that coercion is not responsible behavior, that fear is our choice, and that there
is no quality in a coercive environment. We cannot avoid coercion on the front line, but we can behave in more responsible ways in the workplace, at school or at home.

We have barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship. Pride in what one does, in being employed at a company, is not created by high salaries. The best example of this is to observe a new employee joining the company. At first, everyone is really proud to be hired by the company. The employee comes to work, and from the first day the bosses do not have time for him so he is left to other employees. After a while, managers will note that a newcomer knows very well where to go for a good cup of coffee and how to avoid tasks. New employees soon feel that many things are done unnecessarily, working conditions are poor, people do not get along, etc. Since a new employee is prepared to receive as much information as possible, he receives the information provided by those in the company who have time. Those who have the time have shared all their frustrations with the newcomer. This is how we end up with a new employee who has lost the pride he had upon joining the company.

Because at times it is very difficult to work with one’s own workers, or to waste time with people, there are a lot of services or contractors who support our staff needs. They are easy to deal with. If we are dissatisfied, they send others. Nobody cares about the fact that subcontractors take little care of equipment maintenance or job quality, or that only their workers are employed. At our companies, it is difficult to achieve anything long range. On one hand, you have people who worked hard to install and maintain the equipment. After the second or third change of personnel, nobody remembers the initial ideas, what makes what we have the best.

Being proud of what one does is not learned systematically by those who work with people and who produce through people, yet people need it at their work every day. In our midst, there are people who are proud of and love what they do, but they are so few they dare not even mention it. It is not the result of education. If someone works hard and does what the teacher asks, we know what others think of him - that he is an eager beaver. If someone tries his best at work, he is seen as fawning upon the boss. The minority who work hard do not move the majority to do the same.

Thus, we have a system in which 15-20% work hard, and the rest are along for the ride. If we wish to improve and reach quality, we cannot do it with so few people. We must learn ways to win over the majority of employees. Achievement is a great motivator. How do we know what is good at work? If you ask workers, they may say that nobody complains. It means that motivation may be at zero. What effort will a sport enthusiast make if he does not know the result? If we make mistakes or have poor results, the boss is there. If we are doing well, we are ignored.

Everyone working with people needs to know Control Theory which explains how human beings function. We are proud when we know what we did and what value it has for our organization. We need to know the purpose or goal of what we do. Predominantly, only managers know the result of people’s efforts, but this is not enough. The result must be known by the individual who is making the effort to achieve something. The result will lead to new efforts and joy in one’s work.

Implementing CT in the work place will help to attain this goal. In the departments where I have sessions of CT training, problems are solved with joy. Joy is the result of the everyday way we treat each other. My main problem comes from creating new ways of teaching CT. Glasser’s teaching charts with the basic needs are on the walls. Everyone who visits the department can ask and receive an explanation about it. In teaching, we use everyday life in the firm as examples.

Encouraging education and self-improvement for everyone is not easy to implement. Our idea of self-improvement is not what Deming suggested. To us, self-improvement is achieving higher degrees in education or to reach a higher position at work. Self-development means the recognition of even the slightest improvement and smallest practical act. Everyone has to be taught that improvement is an almost daily matter. A teacher once told me that each task performed means that we are richer for an experience. The manager’s role in this respect is critical. If people are taught to independently evaluate their own work, success is complete - the quality of work is reached. There are some people who do this on their own, but there are too few for quality products or service. The secret of a profession is not knowledge, but what gives a professional joy in work.

Deming, in his discussion of destructive forces, criticized grades in schools as an obstacle to quality. It is destructive because it destroys someone’s intrinsic motivation. At work, it is thought that the boss is the one to determine who is successful and who is not - that is a destructive force, affecting worth and efficiency. Grades at school and performance appraisal or a merit system at work are introduced by boss-managers who thought that would encourage students or workers to work better.

I was involved in establishing performance appraisal in my organization. I believed that yearly or quarterly performance appraisal was a method for improving industrial morale. Today, I believe that is typical S-R psychology, and I am slowly working on changing performance appraisal to self-evaluation. Why slowly? Because a precondition is to change boss-management to lead-management. It is obvious that we must start learning techniques of working with people that will make it possible for a majority to do high quality work.

Although self-evaluation is useful, it is not easy to teach people how to evaluate themselves. I am using questionnaires in which every employee can find self-evaluation questions. The questions follow CT/RT principles. This is also how I try to implement self-evaluation concepts in every aspect of my work with employees.

CHANGE

To accomplish the transformation, we need to identify what we need to change and who is responsible for managing change. The first problem is because changing typically is something that is measurable or visible, like changing a work place, physical environment, promotion, reorganization, etc. My problem is how to implement change in an industry filled with technical people who only acknowledge what is measurable or visible.

Today much more is known about change as a process. Deming claims that managing changes is a manager’s work that cannot be delegated.
Changes lead to progress, although they do cause a lot of headaches. Due to the inherent difficulties, we rarely dare make any changes, which means stagnation which leads to deterioration. It is possible to manage changes once you have learned something about them.

Another obligation describes how new working methods and philosophies should be taught. One new concept is to stop the practice or buying the cheapest. If the cheapest raw materials, tools or services are input into the process, little quality can be expected at the output. If we wish to change current company practice, the manager must personally see to it that a new approach to buying quality is implemented. It may be necessary to start teaching employees what quality is, until the introduced change becomes standard procedure. Every change implies change in people, so managers need to try it first. By learning change principles and applying it to themselves, they become better prepared to managing change in others. If managers are unable to master this, there will be little change or progress. Many first-line managers were involved in the introduction of ISO-9000. Now many wonder how a few have succeeded whereas they themselves did not move an inch.

When researchers asked Japanese employees whether it would be good for them if their company were to raise its productivity, 87.2% replied “Yes”. When employees in Germany were asked the same question, 72.5% said “No”, and in my company, 82% said “No”. To the question whether increased company profits were personally beneficial to the workers, Japanese were 93.6% positive, Germans were 73.5% negative, and in my company, 68% negative.

To accomplish such a transformation is possible if we view our firm as a system. Because my firm does not fit Deming’s definition of a system, I am helping the staff to build a system. This year, we started with establishing purposes and goals. After this, we can talk about beginning to transform the system, because we will have clearly designated responsibilities and we can see the desired direction. Deming said “The goal is clear. The productivity of our systems must be increased. The key to change is the understanding of our managers and the people to whom they report about what it means to be a good manager”.

References

QUALITY LITERATURE & QUALITY WORLD:
The Great Gilly Hopkins Mirrors Control Theory Psychology
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ABSTRACT
Compelling evidence is found in quality literature that mirrors control theory psychology. Basic needs are genetic; we are born with them. The reader of quality literature recognizes these familiar, indeed, universal attempts to control the world in order to achieve satisfaction of basic needs. To illustrate this proposition, the authors analyze Paterson’s Newbery Award Winning book, The Great Gilly Hopkins. This unique analysis examines why the book has such a gripping impact on the reader. What makes this “quality” literature (like quality movies, plays, paintings, or other art) is the goodness of fit with a common life goal; getting needs met. As Gilly Hopkins struggles, and ultimately gains, stability and security, love, power, fun, and freedom, the reader is brought into her quality world.

She could stand anything, she thought — a gross guardian, a freaky kid, an ugly, dirty house — as long as she was in charge.

Gilly Hopkins
Paterson, (1978), p.6

As the year 2000 approaches, utilizing the power of good literature with our nation’s youth is one of the most worthy trends in education. Increasingly, teachers use real books by real authors as part of reading programs to create meaning-making environments; and, as a result of such interest, there is a new generation of quality literature written. Contemporary uses of quality literature are successful in promoting language development and literacy competencies, appreciating and understanding literary elements, exploring historical events (Barnes, 1991; National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools, 1989), and expanding content knowledge (Norton, 1992). One of the most inviting features, however, and that which is highlighted in this article is the use of realistic fiction to explore human possibilities and enhance personal and social development.

Realistic fiction is identified by Savage (1994) as consisting of stories that attempt to portray people and events as they are in real life. Other attributes in realistic fiction are well-written texts that tell a good story, have strong characterizations, and offer worthwhile themes that youth can be expected to understand. Savage also suggests realistic fiction mirrors experiences and often deals with problems and conflicts that a person faces on a daily basis (p. 38).

Cox and Many (1992) found that higher levels of personal understanding could be reached when readers actually live through the experience of
Rosenblatt (1967) proposes that when readers are aware that their experiences and anxieties are not unique and that others have encountered similar conflicts, they may be able to handle their own conflicts better. For some, literature may be the only avenue by which they can realize that their own lives reflect, at least to some extent, the experiences of others in their society (p. 146).

There is much untapped power in a reader’s response to realistic fiction especially when basic psychological principles are present. The National Council of Teachers of English, (1983) suggest that students should realize that their experiences and anxieties are not unique and that others have encountered the story. Rosenblatt (1967) proposes that when readers are aware that their own conflicts, they may be able to handle their own conflicts better. For some, literature may be the only avenue by which they can realize that their own lives reflect, at least to some extent, the experiences of others in their society (p. 146).

There is much untapped power in a reader’s response to realistic fiction especially when basic psychological principles are present. The National Council of Teachers of English, (1983) suggest that students should realize the importance of literature as a mirror of human experience. The purpose of this article is to feature one example of realistic fiction that meets the NCTE criterion. The Great Gilly Hopkins, a Newberry Honor Book, by Paterson (1978), mirrors the human experience and illustrates several principles of Control Theory Psychology.

Control Theory (Glasser, 1984, 1986, and Wubbolding, 1988, 1991) explains our behavior as our best attempt at the time to satisfy five genetic needs: survival, love/belonging, freedom, fun, and power. Instinctively, the reader responds and connects to these powerful forces. Through The Great Gilly Hopkins, one can indeed explore human principles. Gilly’s story acts as a microcosm of the inner workings of human needs, thus illustrating Control Theory through narrative.

In order to illuminate the parallels between the Great Gilly Hopkins and Control Theory, this article will provide a brief synopsis of the story and specifically describe how the five basic needs and basic principles described in Control Theory are experienced in Gilly’s story. The resolution and conclusion further delineate the connections between character and insights to human behavior.

**STORY SYNOPSIS**

Having no home to call her own, emotionally/physically cut off from her mother, abandoned into foster care, Gilly, age eleven, is controlling out-of-control. From the Great Galadriel to Gruesome Gilly, there is apparently one recurring, overriding motivation — to be with her mother, Courtney Rutherford Hopkins. Instead of her mother, Gilly finds herself placed in a foster home, called Thompson Park, with an odd assortment of characters: Maime Trotter, the heavy-set matron of Thompson Park; William Earnest (W. E.), a seven year old foster “brother;” and Mr. Randolph, a blind black man.

Gilly desperately attempts to control her destiny. She writes to her mother in a plea to be rescued. Eventually she engineers her own escape by taking money from Maime, manipulating W. E. to help her steal from Mr. Randolph, and buying a bus ticket. Caught in her efforts to leave, yet still loved, Gilly is finally brought into a loving web.

Gilly’s rescue, however, is already in motion even though it is no longer wanted. A grandmother, previously unknown to Gilly, comes to “claim” her and has the legal rights to do so. Too late, Gilly realizes that what she really needed was within the walls of Thompson Park that she had longed to escape.

In an eventual face-to-face encounter with her mother, Gilly realizes that Courtney was not going to stay and was not going to take her away. Gilly’s life would not be as she dreamed or planned; but true to her individual spirit, Gilly had learned much and adjusts. Her life with her grandmother will be okay — not perfect — not exactly what she wanted, but with the gift of love shared from her last foster family, Gilly finds her own sense of home and belonging.

**DEFINING NEEDS**

Human beings are motivated to fulfill needs and wants. Human needs are common to all people. Wants are unique to each individual (Wubbolding, 1988, p. 3).

The universal nature of Gilly’s quest for a quality world is engaging. It is as if her unique story unfolds, however, that a greater transaction occurs. Gilly actually enters the reader’s world so that the reader wants the problems resolved. The reader wants Gilly to succeed.

**SURVIVAL**

**Survival:** The need to maintain life and good health. This need includes the sub-needs for comfort, food, air, etc. (Wubbolding, 1991, p. 8).

Gilly’s meeting survival needs are the basic charge of the social worker and the foster care system. There is little to suggest that the system is not handling the sustaining life needs for Gilly, such as food and housing; yet, imagine having your world uprooted and changed, being trundled from one place to another, and not knowing from one time to another when a major change in that support system might occur next. A social worker, instead of a loved one, is Gilly’s lifeline. Gilly has the essential support to maintain life and to sustain health, but her total well-being is also wrapped up with the following four psychological needs: freedom, power, fun, and love.

**FREEDOM**

**Freedom:** The need to make choices, to live without undue restraints (Wubbolding, 1991, p. 8).

On one hand, it appears that Gilly has little to say where she lives or whether she can call that place safe, much less a home. On the other hand, when love and trusting did not work, Gilly tried (perhaps) less painful options — like annoying, uncooperative, manipulative behaviors — that very much effect her moves to a series of foster homes. The social worker, Miss Ellis, pleaded for Gilly’s cooperation.

I’m not trying to blame you, Gilly. It’s just that I need, we all need, your cooperation if any kind of arrangement is to work out ... I can’t imagine you enjoy all this moving around ... Will you do me a favor, Gilly? Try to get off on the right foot? (Paterson, p.2).
Instead of considering cooperation, however, Gilly is imagining herself sailing around the living room — with an uplifted foot square in the mouth of the next foster mother. In Miss Ellis’ car, Gilly smacks her gum and carelessly spreads it “under the handle of the left-hand door as a sticky surprise for the next person who might try to open it” (Paterson, p.3). Gilly is not without freedom. She exercises her freedom often as evidenced in her behaviors. What greater freedom than to be able to “mold” her environment in her struggle for control?

POWER OR ACHIEVEMENT

Power: The need for achievement and accomplishment. Everyone has a need to feel a sense of being in charge of his/her own life (Wubbolding, 1991, p. 7).

Whereas Gilly has little to say about her foster home, she is very much in control of her behavior. It could be said that she is controllingly out-of-control. She describes herself.

... I am not nice. I am brilliant. I am famous across this entire country. Nobody wants to tangle with the great Galadriel Hopkins. I am too clever and too hard to manage. Gruesome Gilly, they call me ... Here I come, Maime baby, ready or not (Paterson, p. 3).

When placed at Thompson Park, Gilly exercised her power often. In her first debut with her new “family,” she loudly proceeded to bang out “Heart and Soul” with her left hand and “Chop-sticks” with her right. Gilly knew she could stand anything ... . . . a gross guardian, a freaky kid, an ugly, dirty house — as long as she was in charge” (Paterson, p. 6). And, she was well on the way.

Gilly used her intelligence for power purposes. She chose when to show her giftedness and when not to do so. In a previous school, Gilly’s teacher thought her a genius. Gilly overheard the principal telling her teacher that Gilly had made the highest score in the entire school’s history! Soon after, Gilly completely quit, turning in only blank sheets of paper. An “army” of school psychologists tried to figure her out.

In her new school, however, Gilly could not “control” her teacher, Miss Harris, a tall, cool and distant woman. In some ways, Gilly felt that “it was rather comfortable to go to school with no one yelling or cajoling — to know that your work was judged on its merits and was not affected by the teacher’s personal opinion of the person doing the work” (Paterson, p. 54). In other ways, Gilly felt the loss of power with such fairness. She wanted to control — to be treated differently.

Miss Harris’s indifference grated on Gilly. She was not used to being treated like everyone else. Ever since the first grade, she had forced her teachers to make a special case of her. She had been in charge of her own education. She had learned what and when it pleased her. Teachers had courted her and cursed her, but no one before had simply melted her into the mass (Paterson, p. 55).

If we can’t get what we want with what we know, we will create new behaviors that may be more effective. But old or new, all our behavior is our constant attempt to reduce the difference between what we want (the pictures in our heads) and what we have (the way we see situations in the world) (Glasser, 1984, p. 32).

Since old behaviors would not get her the attention she wanted, Gilly chose another set of “power tools.” She wrote Miss Harris an anonymous note meant to get her angry. Ironically, Gilly found that Miss Harris identified with her.

You may find this hard to believe, Gilly, but you and I are very much alike . . . I don’t mean in intelligence, although that is true, too. Both of us are smart, and we know it. But the thing that brings us closer than intelligence is anger. You and I are two of the angriest people I know . . . But I didn’t ask you to stay after school to tell you how intelligent you are or how much I envy you, but to thank you for your card (Paterson, p. 58-59).

For Gilly, the loss of power accelerated the urgency to leave Thompson Park. She knew that “. . . between the craziness in the brown house and the craziness at school, she would become like W. E., soft and no good, and if there was anything her short life had taught her, it was that a person must be tough. Otherwise, you were had” (Paterson, p. 60). Galadriel Hopkins was not ready to be had.

FUN

Fun: The need to enjoy life, to laugh, to see humor (Wubbolding, 1991, p. 8).

Fun and power, for Gilly, are often blended. She enjoys manipulating her environment to get attention — negative or positive. At her first school recess, for example, Gilly swipes a basketball from a nearby game.

Now all the boys were after her. She began to run across the playground laughing and clutching the ball to her chest. She could hear the boys screaming behind her, but she was too fast for them. She ran in and out of hopscotch games and right through a jump rope, all the way back to the basketball post where she shot again, missing wildly in her glee . . . The boys did not watch for the rebound. They leaped upon her. She was on her back, scratching and kicking for all she was worth. They were yelping like hurt puppies (Paterson, p. 23).

Later, Gilly, calculated the damage. On her way to the principal’s office, she noted that the boys looked a lot worse than she felt. She thought, “Six to one — pretty good odds even for the great Gilly Hopkins” (Paterson, p. 24).

“I hope you’ll give yourself — and us — a chance, Gilly” the principal suggests. But, Gilly ignores the remark and her thinking shows how she mixes “fun” and “power” all in one.

Only a half day and already the principal was yo-yoing. Give her a week, boy. A week and she’d have the whole cussed place in an
LOVE and BELONGING

Belonging: the need for involvement with people; the need to love and be loved, to affiliate and bond with other people (Wubbolding, 1991, p. 6).

In the beginning of this story, Gilly was a loner and illustrated this on one occasion by yelling, “I don’t need any help ... from anybody!” (Paterson, p. 30). Abandoned by her mother, left behind by a foster family she loved, and a “loser” twice more with other placements, Gilly had been in three foster homes in three years. How did she handle the loss of love, sharing, and belonging? Gilly wore her mask of power, the bravado of an (Paterson, p. 4).

Thoughts described Maime as “a huge hippopotamus of a woman” but, at the time, Gilly’s quality world did not include Maime Trotter. Her 11 ‘After’ smile” (Paterson, pp. 4-5).

With this foster home, Gilly had a new option for love and belonging; but, at the time, Gilly’s quality world did not include Maime Trotter. Her thoughts described Maime as “a huge hippopotamus of a woman” who smiled “like the ‘After’ in a magazine diet ad — a ‘Before’ body with an ‘After’ smile” (Paterson, pp. 4-5).

Because we must fulfill the needs from moment to moment, each person develops an inner “picture album” of specific wants. This “picture album” contains precise images of how we wish to fulfill those needs” (Wubbolding, 1988, p. 3).

Gilly illustrates the content of her quality world as she describes the pictures in her mind. She wants her mother to love her, to take her home. With Gilly, however, the picture frame is not just a metaphor. Gilly literally carries with her a pasteboard frame and picture of her mother with the inscription, “For my beautiful Galadriel, I will always love you” (Paterson, p. 9). Like the image from Glasser’s Control Theory diagram (1986), there is a universal desire for a mother who loves us. Likewise, Gilly pictures her mother with almost divine qualities . . . with laughing eyes . . . glossy black hair dangling in gentle waves without a hair astray . . . beautiful smiling Courtney of the perfect teeth and lovely hair . . . wanting Gilly . . . protecting . . . loving. This one picture of her mother is the quality world that Gilly dreams of owning.

As she dropped off to sleep, Gilly promised herself for the millionth time that she would find out where Courtney Rutherford Hopkins was, write to her, and tell her to come and take her beautiful Galadriel home (Paterson, p. 15).

Glasser (1984) suggests that we are a “control system.” A control system acts upon the world and itself as part of the world to attempt to get the picture that it wants” (p. 39).

True to the workings of Control Theory, the drive to match to her pictures of the quality world takes many behavioral forms. Gilly has a plan, and upon receiving a short note from her mother, Gilly becomes action-oriented. Gilly’s life takes on many forms of action. Her thoughts are easy to follow.

If I wrote you — if I asked, would you come and get me? You’re the only one in the world I need. I’d be good for you. You’d see.

I’d change into a whole new person. I’d turn from gruesome Gilly into gorgeous, gracious, good, glorious Galadriel. And grateful. Oh, Courtney — oh, Mother, I’d be so grateful (Paterson, p. 30).

Glasser (1984) states that “... we commonly have pictures in our albums that cannot be satisfied in the real world” (Paterson, p. 23). Gilly, however, certainly gives it a try. She writes to her mother alluding to her perceived (and exaggerated) situation: living with a foster mother, a religious fanatic, a dirty house, weird friends, and a mentally retarded boy. When a response does not come quickly, Gilly plots to involve her foster brother and a lonely school friend to take money from Mr. Randolph, the blind neighbor. She also steals from Maime Trotter and runs away.

Gilly is discovered at a bus stop, taken to a police station, and picked up by Trotter. She had not achieved her desired end — to be with her mother. Instead, through interactions with other characters, her sense of belonging takes shape.

William Earnest (W. E.) W. E. was the seven year old with a small face, topped with muddy brown hair and masked with thick-metal rimmed glasses, who loved Gilly. She earned his trust, helped him practice reading, showed him how to make and fly paper airplanes, and taught him how to defend himself. His adoration is obvious as he looked up into her face “... squinty little eyes full of pure pleasure” (Paterson, p. 52). It is W. E. who begged her at the police station. “Gilly! Gilly! ... Come home, Gilly. Please come home! Please, please!” (Paterson, p. 92).

Just as she helped W. E., he gave back to Gilly, “little near-sighted eyes, full of tears behind thick lenses” (Paterson, p. 121). When Gilly struggled with having to leave Thompson Park, it was W. E. who came to her rescue.

He sat down next to her, so close that she could feel the warmth of him from her arm through her thigh. It gave her the strength to look up again defiantly (Paterson, p. 121).

Mr. Randolph. Mr. Randolph, the blind and frequent dinner visitor, appreciated Gilly. At first, Gilly referred to him as a “weird little colored man with white eyes” (Paterson, p. 11), but when she came to know him through sharing and helping him, her perceptions changed. Gilly read to Mr. Randolph from his poetry book; and even though he could not see “... Mr. Randolph seemed to know each word, prompting her gently if she started to stumble on an unfamiliar one, and joining her, powerfully and musically, on his own favorite lines” (Paterson, p. 38). Mr. Randolph is sincerely grateful for Gilly’s gift. “Thank you, thank you,” he said softly.

Involvement with this unusual “family” took many forms. During
Thanksgiving, Mr. Randolph, then W. E. and finally Maime Trotter became feverish, and sick with the flu. Gilly took care of them. No longer thinking only of her own needs, Gilly was needed. She shared herself; and, in her giving, strengthened a loving bond.

**Maime Trotter.** Gilly rejected love. She had seen a look on Trotter’s face that she “... had, in some deep part of her, longed to see all her life, but not from someone like Trotter. That was not part of the plan” (Paterson, p. 52). Eventually, however, Trotter became a part of Gilly’s quality world. Gilly discovered Trotter’s unrelenting acceptance and belonging. Despite the choices that Gilly made, Trotter remained steadfast. Gilly overheard a fight with Miss Ellis, the social worker, with Trotter yelling, “Never, never, never! ... You ain’t taking Gilly” (Paterson, p. 127). Trotter’s unrelenting acceptance and belonging strengthened a loving bond.

Gilly’s picture of a quality world changed, and thoughts depict this evolution.

She awoke in the night, trying to remember the dream that had awakened her. It was a sad one, or why did her heart feel like a lump of poorly mashed potatoes? It was something about Courtney. Courtney coming to get her, and then, having seen her, turning away sorrowing: “Never, never, never.” But the voice was Trotter’s (Paterson, p. 127).

**Nonnie.** The unknown grandmother, is first described by Gilly as “a small, plump woman whose gray hair peaked out from under a close-fitting black felt hat” (Paterson, p. 107). When taken by her grandmother to a house in Virginia, Gilly learned that Nonnie hadn’t talked to her own daughter, Courtney, in 13 years.

And now what? It was not at all the way she’d imagined the ending. In Gilly’s story, Courtney herself came sweeping in like a goddess queen, reclaiming the long-lost princess. There was no place in this dream for dumpy old-fashioned ladies with Southern speech, or barefoot fat women in striped pajamas, or blind old men who recited poetry by heart and snored with their mouths open — or crazy, heart-ripping little guys who went “pow” and still wet their stupid beds (Paterson, p. 114).

When her grandmother appears, Gilly must reconcile what she really wanted; and, as Wubbolding (1988) suggests, “When clients determine their ‘really wants,’ they are uncovering the needs they wish to fulfill” (p. 33).

I just wanted — what had she wanted? A home — but Trotter had tried to give her that. Permanence — Trotter had wanted to give her that as well. No, what she wanted was something Trotter had no power over. To stop being a “foster child,” the quotation marks dragging the phrase down, almost drowning it. To be real without any quotation marks. To belong and to possess. To be herself, to be the swim, to be the ugly duckling no longer — Cap O’Rushes, her disguise thrown off — Cinderella with both slippers on her feet — Snow White beyond the dwarfs — Galadriel Hopkins, come into her own (Paterson, p. 124).

**At this point, Gilly understood more now about love and belonging. She also saw her grandmother with sympathetic eyes. “I hope you don’t mind my celebrating a little,” Nonnie apologizes. “I usually eat in the kitchen since I’ve been alone” (Paterson, p. 133).**

The word “alone” twanged in Gilly’s head. She knew what it meant to be alone. But only since Thompson Park did she understand a little what it meant to have people and then lose them. She looked at the person who was smiling shyly at her, who had lost husband, son, daughter. That was alone (Paterson, p. 133).

**Courtney Rutherford Hopkins.** Gilly got her chance to see her mother, but the meeting created a different picture in her mind.

But this person wasn’t Courtney. It couldn’t be Courtney! Courtney was tall and willowy and gorgeous. The woman who stood before them was no taller than Nonnie and just as plump ... Her hair was long, but it was dull and stringy ... A flower child gone to seed (Paterson, p. 145).

Gilly realized that Courtney hadn’t come because she wanted to. She’d come because Nonnie had paid her to. She wasn’t going to stay, and she wasn’t going to take Gilly back with her. “I will always love you.” It was a lie. Gilly had thrown away her whole life for a stinking lie (Paterson, p. 146).

**When we change important pictures, we change our lives** (Glasser 1984, p. 22).

Having once built an attachment with the unlikely trio of the fat woman, the blind man, and the mentally retarded boy, the magic was done. After the loving involvement with Trotter and others, the sense of involvement transferred to her grandmother; and, remarkably, it held through the trauma of “losing” her mother. The picture album had changed.

**RESOLUTION**

In a phone call to Trotter from the airport, after seeing her mother, Gilly finally acknowledged her feelings. The following brief excerpts from the powerful dialogue of the text creates a sense of resolution.

“Trotter, it’s all wrong. Nothing turned out the way it’s supposed to.”

“How you mean supposed to? Life ain’t supposed to be nothing, ’cept maybe tough.”

“Trotter, stop preaching at me. I want to come home.”

“You’re home baby. Your grandma is home.”

“Trotter,” ... “I love you.”

“I know, baby. I love you, too.”


This is not a classic happy ending, but the reader knows that Gilly will be okay in the end. Gilly says to her grandmother, “I’m ready to go home now” (Paterson, p. 148). With grandmother, Gilly was no longer a “foster
child." An unobtainable inner picture had become a more attainable, realistic one. Gilly's quality world now matched her real world.

**Quality Literature and Quality World**

Quality literature "touches" the reader, it is powerful. In analysis, it is through the character, and the character's struggle, frustrations, and resolutions, that a reader can experience new insights. The literary element of character is a concept generally accepted by reading and English professionals as the core of fictional literature. Kormanski (1988) suggests that it is often difficult to discuss the other literary elements, such as theme and plot, without reference to the problems and the conflicts of the character.

Through characters such as Gilly Hopkins, readers learn to understand themselves better and feel empathy and sympathy. By studying literary characters with problems similar to their own, readers gain understanding of the controlling forces in their own lives. In addition to learning about themselves, readers should better understand others and, with this increased awareness, be able to empathize. Quality literature thus helps to develop a framework in which to build improve interpersonal relationships.

One reason why good literature is so effective is that it connects the reader with others who are making their own best attempt at controlling their lives. The reader recognizes the struggle to get basic human needs met, and the drive for success in achieving one's wants, as defined in the quality world. Control Theory explains why people behave as they do. Universal truths, as described in Control Theory, resonate with the reader of quality literature.

**References**


**SELF EVALUATION FOR QUALITY: METHOD AND MODEL**

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**ABSTRACT**

The focus of this paper is to provide a framework, model, and method for self evaluation. It explicates a method for self evaluation which has as its goal quality practice. The author posits the use of the quasi-experimental time series (single subject) research design as an effective model for self evaluating. The paper outlines the process to adapt a relatively user friendly, scientifically acceptable method for evaluating one's own practice. It includes a model based on this scientific method specifically designed for practitioners of reality therapy, control theory, and quality management.

Self evaluation is a method which, when chosen, can lead to quality model building for those who practice reality therapy, control theory and quality management (RTCTQM). The model developed herein provides a framework to evaluate the single subject research design, utilizing the scientific method. The method explicated through this model is a useful process which can be used in assessing formalized clinical knowledge, skills and values.

Reality therapy, control theory and quality management has developed a body of knowledge, values and skills which has placed it in the theoretical domain along with other practice approaches. In the years since the publication of *Reality Therapy*, there has come into existence an extensive body of theoretical literature (Litwack, 1994 and Franklin, 1994). Although not as much attention has been paid to the area of empirically based clinical research, there have been exceptions (Litwack, 1994). An area that requires additional attention is the development of this body of systematic, empirically based clinical research. This is research based on the scientific method. These data are readily available from the RTCTQM practitioners. They utilize the scientific method to problem solve in their daily practice. This is the foundation of empirical practice data. Self evaluation methods provide empirical data which lead to continuous improvement of practice. This is exemplified in the definitions of self evaluation: According to Good (1994), "Self evaluation is a matter of asking yourself questions and answering them honestly. This includes focusing on your perceptions at the values level (p. 170)." According to Schatz (1995), "Self-evaluation involves looking at what we want and what we are doing to get what we want. It is comparing where we've been to where we want to be (p. 27)."

The relationship helps to define the goal and subsequent objectives.

Collaborative self evaluation is essential for both client and therapist. It provides feedback which can lead to change in behavior. If we seek to reach quality in the therapeutic interaction, there must be a constant self
evaluation for quality. Quality is exemplified through continuous improvement and conformance to requirements. There are six conditions of quality utilized by practitioners of RTCTQM (Glasser, 1993).

According to Glasser (1984), "The real key is to make a joint evaluation of the situation and try cooperatively to connect it so that it works better, for both parties. If you do this both with your family and in your work, you will find that your life becomes much better (p. 167)." Evaluation must be useful work. It provides a foundation for the client and change agent to continue their involvement based on the feedback.

Practitioners must utilize the feedback from evaluation to move to responsible change-agent behavior. Responsible behavior is essential to quality work for both the client and the therapist. We must always evaluate change in terms of total behaviors. According to Glasser (1964), "Our job is to face this question, confront them with their total behavior, and get them to judge the quality of what they are doing. We have found that unless they judge their own behavior, they will not change (p. 69)." This leads to the stage where we must engage in a subjective judgment, the intervention stage.

Traditionally, the intervention stage is where the therapist practices the art of reality therapy. It is the implementing phase of therapy. It is where change in our total behaviors (from a therapeutic perspective) occurs. Evaluation of total behavior occurs during intervention. It is both the client as well as the therapist who must constantly evaluate. According to McMahon (1990), "Evaluation is a time to study and measure the results of the actions taken during intervention (p. 244)." It is where we perceive whether we have done a good job or need to improve our skills. We can choose to use the data to self-assess and to provide the requisite information to our client. According to Glasser (1964), "If we do not evaluate our own behavior, or having evaluated it, we do not act to improve our own conduct where it is below our standards, we will not fulfill our need to be worthwhile and we will suffer as acutely as when we fail to love or be loved (p. 12)."

The objective of total behavior is always to meet our basic needs. Our total behavior is comprised of thinking, feeling, physiology and action (Glasser, 1984). In an effort to meet these needs, we behave. This behavior is our best attempt to meet standards we have set for ourselves. Standards are reflected through the measurable indicant we have placed in the quality world. They are the pictures that we behave to match. A matched picture balances the scales and we feel good. As we assess total behavior, the most efficient area to use for measuring change is acting behaviors. Acting behaviors are comprised of internal as well as external manipulations of our environment. The behaviors are usually comprised of that which is sensed. These behaviors provide the baseline from which to measure our attempt to meet our basic needs.

Baseline is defined by Monette, Sullivan and DeJong (1990), as "A series of measurements of a client's condition prior to treatment that is used as a basis for comparison with the client's condition after treatment is implemented (p. 491)." In the evaluation process, we choose which of the behaviors we will use to comprise the baseline. The baseline is always comprised of total behaviors. The baseline becomes the standard by which we interpret change in our behavior. According to Glasser (1964), "Therefore, in order to do therapy successfully, the therapist must acknowledge that standards of behavior exist, standards accepted by both individuals and society as the best means of meeting basic human needs. Patients must be confronted by the disparity between the values they recognize as the acceptable norm and the lives they lead (p. 72)." We, in essence, compare our current behavior with our baseline behaviors. There are other variables (beyond the observable) that must be considered.

When we look at this behavior, we must always consider ethnicity and gender issues. If the therapist is to accurately interpret perceptions (she) must accept that no two individuals have identical perceptions. What comprises the quality worlds may be similar, but usually are different. This difference may be impacted by issues of gender and ethnicity. According to McMahon (1990), "In addition to a sensitivity to culture, sexual orientation, and gender, during the evaluation stage a worker keeps in mind that goal accomplishment is related to several additional diversity variables, such as age and stages, endowment and personality, value system, social class, and geographic location (269)."

Self evaluation includes knowledge and value judgment as essential components of decision making. According to Glasser (1964), "The patient rather than the therapist must decide whether or not his behavior is irresponsible and whether he should change it (p. 35)." The question that must be asked (leading to value judgment) is whether there is a perception of whether it is working. If it is working, it is alright to exit. If it is not working, a decision is necessary to proceed. The concept of choice requires this to be a conscious decision.

If the decision is made to proceed, we must plan for the need fulfilling behavior identified in the baseline (all behavior is purposeful). This is the intervention in relation to each behavior. The evolution of whether or not it is working takes us to the planning stage if the answer is no. Here we must look at the plan. If the plan is not working, we may need to return to our assessment of total behavior. If it is working (moving in the right direction), we can exit with the position that we are performing quality therapy, or we may see that it is meeting our needs, choose a new need and begin the process anew.

SELF-EVALUATION MODEL

The model (figure one) is designed to reflect the process the therapist uses within his or her practice. In order for reality therapists who use control theory to scientifically validate practice, they must utilize a model that evaluates the therapist-client relationship. They must further use a model that provides the feedback necessary to do quality self-evaluation. According to Monette, Sullivan and DeJong (1990), "Single-subject designs are quasi-experimental research designs that involve assessing change in a dependent variable on a single research subject. The dependent variable is measured during a baseline phase and during one or more intervention phases when the independent variable is manipulated. Experimental effects are inferred by comparisons of the subject's responses across baseline and
identify the basic need(s) that are being addressed. Within this first step, we also determine with the client the goal and what objectives are to be achieved through the therapy. This is the planning process.

The second step is to select the specific design used in the evaluation process. The methodology one chooses should be flexible and adaptable. It should suit the objectives as well as the limitations of the particular subject being evaluated. Here we select the specific single subject design. This model offers a time series, quasi-experimental design.

The design is quasi-experimental which involves assessing change in the dependent variable on the research subject. According to Campbell and Stanley (1963), “The essence of the time series design is the presence of a periodic measurement process on some group or individual and the introduction of an experimental change into this time series of measurements, the results of which are indicated by a discontinuity in the measurements recorded in the time series (p. 37).” This time series design is generally known as a single subject design. According to Grinnell (1988), “The indispensable feature of single-subject research designs is the repetitive objective measurements of the dependent variable, or the client’s target problem. The dependent variable we select to treat, and hence measure, is usually a behavior, feeling, affect, or cognition that we hope will change in the desired direction as a result of our independent variable, or treatment intervention (p. 365).”

The third step in evaluation is to choose the total behavior and measure its occurrence. Quality evaluation calls for measuring the client’s total behavior so that any changes can be measured. At this point, the practitioner develops the baseline - a series of measurements of the client’s condition prior to treatment. The baseline(s) are used as the foundation from which to compare the client’s conditions after RTCTQM intervention. There are two issues: (1) what to measure and (2) how to measure it. The problem and subsequent behaviors will lead to the appropriate total behavior to measure. It is generally recommended that several measures be used to establish the baseline. In the process, we can measure both need fulfilling behaviors as well as the non-responsible behaviors.

The single subject self evaluation begins with the identification of the baseline. The baseline is comprised of total behavior. This information is collected on sets of total behaviors (independent variables). The next step is intervention (RT/CT/QM), and the third step is measuring change. We can utilize multiple measures (records, observation, self reports or paper and pencil). These measures give feedback which can reflect change or no change (no change is also useful feedback) (Monette, Sullivan and DeJong, 1990). We can use one or a combination of these methods. Of the four, self reports are most akin to RT/CT/QM self evaluation. According to Monette, et al., (1990), “The last measurement alternative is to use self-reports of clients who monitor their own behavior or feelings. Although clients’ perceptions of their condition are important, there are many problems associated with over reliance on self-reports (p. 313).”

The major research problem for self reports is reactivity. Reactivity is concerned with the impact of the act of being studied upon those who are
studied. People who are studied know it is occurring and therefore act different during the study than they would if they were not aware or not being studied. But from a treatment perspective, sensitizing the client to some aspect of his or her behavior may be considered a positive.

The next step is the self evaluation. The therapist as well as the client must look at the data and make a value judgment (is it working). If the answer is yes, then we have a need fulfilling situation and this information begins the feedback loop for continuous change or quality. If the answer is no, we return to our multiple measures to again process the impact of the treatment on the independent variable.

The next step is implementation of the evaluation methodology. Within the process of evaluation, we make the observation and then determine if it is working. According to Glasser (1993), "As self-evaluation is a requisite for moving to quality, all students would be taught to evaluate their own work and, based on that evaluation, to improve it and to repeat this process until they began to do some of what they and their teacher would call quality work (p. 102)."

The final phase is the documentation of the process. As reality therapists, we must take seriously our professional responsibility to report clinical results and document them for those who follow us. It matters that we self evaluate to continually improve the outcomes of therapy. It also matters that we document and report our findings to increased acceptability in the professional therapeutic community. According to Glasser (1964), "One might learn everything about the piece, yet little of the whole picture. Only after all the pieces are put together can the full picture be appreciated. Certainly there are dramatic moments in Reality Therapy and certainly what is said in each session is important, but primary importance must be given to the whole process, during which the patient gradually changes his behavior from irresponsible to responsible (p. 41)." This wholistic approach to treatment and theory building in the final analysis is the intent of the self evaluation single subject design.

CONCLUSION

Job satisfaction is tied up with knowing that you have done the best that you can and that this best is a quality job. As the practice of reality therapy, control theory and quality management moves toward professionalization, research for self evaluation gains in significance. We also do quality work because it produces a quality outcome. According to Rubin and Babbie (1993), "But the main reason to utilize research is not to meet our own needs to be professional or for job satisfaction. The main reason is compassion for our clients. It is because we care about helping our clients that we seek scientific evidence about the effects of the services we are providing them or of other services that might help them more (p. xxv)." An additional reason is to overcome the traditional barriers which the therapeutic community erects when a method appears that alters the client/therapist relationship. As practitioners of RTCTQM, there is a commitment to contractual improvement while providing a quality product. It is an old mountain, but it must be climbed once again to reinvigorate the relationship. It is a welcome task, therefore let us arrange to "just do it."

Bibliography

GLASSER’S QUALITY SCHOOLWORK AND
DEWEY’S QUALITATIVE THOUGHT
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ABSTRACT

This article explores the relationship of teacher and student in the classroom. First, to determine under what conditions schoolwork can be acknowledged to have quality, and second, to identify the norm against which quality schoolwork can be judged. Glasser requires that quality schoolwork be useful, joyful, not destructive, and the best possible work, and that it be created and evaluated by the student in a warm and supportive classroom atmosphere nurtured by the teacher. Dewey deems schoolwork to have quality in as much as the expressed symbols (subject matters) students learn broaden and deepen their experience. The teacher can be judged to have engaged in quality teaching in as much as the students’ experience (as expressed in subject matters) is enlarged and enriched.

The question, what is quality, confronts teachers in quality schools each day. Actually, what confronts teachers is their student’s answers. If they don’t like an assignment, that assignment is obviously not quality. If asked to give their schoolwork a quality mark, they say it’s worth somewhere in the high eighties, low nineties. Glasser (1993) has described the conditions under which a student can produce quality schoolwork and the norms with which it can be judged: 1) a warm, supportive classroom, and 2) the norms that the work be useful, the best possible, evaluated by the student, joyful, and not destructive (pp. 22-25). Glasser explained to teachers: “in the beginning, your students don’t even know what quality is, much less that it is what they want. But you know it” (p. 26). The novice teacher of fundamental math can devise a supportive classroom, but has much less that it is what they want. But other teachers still struggle with the concept of quality as it applies to work in the classroom. In an era of alternative assessment and restructured curricula, they genuinely question how and with what certainty quality can be assigned to schoolwork. The teacher of fundamental math still questions: what is quality schoolwork? Glasser says to that teacher: “you know it.” What exactly does the teacher know intuitively and how can it be communicated to students?

John Dewey, the educational philosopher, speaks about that intuitive knowledge: “it is closely connected with the single qualitiveness underlying all the details of explicit reasoning” (1931, p. 100). He further explains by describing how a person standing in front of a work of art understands it. That appreciation begins “with the ‘Oh’ of wonder and terminate(s) with the ‘Good’ of a rounded-out and organized situation” (1931, p. 102).

What do student and teacher wonder at? For that we have to look more closely at the classroom. A warm and supportive classroom that becomes the seedbed for quality schoolwork, according to Glasser (1993, p. 22), contains a teacher and a student bound in a relationship of trust. For Dewey, the supportive classroom is created when classroom experiences grow out of home experiences; “school life should grow gradually out of the home life; . . . it should take up and continue the activities with which the child is already familiar with in the home” (1897, p. 446). Dewey was not a dewy-eyed romantic. He wrote this before the passage of laws forbidding child labor, before many Americans had indoor plumbing, before the delivery room replaced the kitchen as the setting for a child’s first cries. Dewey knew people struggled to support themselves and their families: “while our educational leaders are talking of culture, the development of personality, etc., as the end and aim of education, the great majority of those who pass under the tuition of the school regard it only as a narrowly practical tool with which to get bread and butter enough to eke out a restricted life” (1897, p. 466), and that such homes provided the environment, the social relationships, in which the child grew. In the context of today’s single-parent homes in which mall rats or street kids live, Dewey would certainly include mall or street culture in the student’s experience.

Expanding the analogy between home and school, Dewey compared a baby’s babblings and a mother’s teaching of language with a student’s inchoate measuring and a teacher’s presenting numbers and ways of manipulating them. The common ground in both cases was society: the baby learns “the consolidated wealth of ideas and emotions which are now summed up in language” (1902, p. 443), and the student the tools for erecting theories and cathedrals. This analogy is central to Dewey’s understanding of the educational enterprise and critical to a definition of Glasser’s quality schoolwork. This, however, is not only an analogy; it is the identification of education’s beginning with the student’s experience. For Dewey, education “is primarily concerned with growth, with a moving and changing process, with transforming existing capabilities and experiences,” stating “that which does not exist (growth’s goal, on-going and ever-changing) cannot be measured. And it is no paradox to say that the teacher is deeply concerned with what does not exist” (1931, p. 119). Quality schoolwork results when a student’s mind grows to express his experience, when that which exists in potential becomes actual.

Schoolwork begins with the student. “It is to be borne in mind that the
fundamental intent (of education) is not to amuse nor to convey information with a minimum of vexation nor yet to acquire skill, — though these results may accrue as by-products, — but to enlarge and enrich the scope of experience, and to keep alert and effective the interest of intellectual progress” (1966, pp. 233-4). To heed the call for life-long learning, the student must “enlarge and enrich” his experience: he must broaden and deepen what he has experienced at home, in the mall or street.

Where exactly does quality lie? It lies in what does not yet exist. It is the relationship between the student’s experience and his expression of it through symbols (subject matters), whether linguistic, artistic or scientific. The student is the ultimate judge of the congruence of experience and symbol: the more congruent, the better the quality. The symbols are not additive, but explanatory, descriptive, giving understanding, and are, in the traditional sense, educational. The more congruent, the better the quality. In a math class, logic as a symbol is more prized than emotion; in a class on poetry, the reverse is true. Rap is rated more highly than Rock on the street; the reverse is true in the mall. The student must judge whether his experience is adequately expressed by the symbols. Whether Rap or Rock is the student’s experience, either can be expressed by scientific or artistic symbols, by words or by numerical equivalents of sound waves. The traditional belief that symbols, educational subjects, have a value in themselves is, of course, true. But quality accrues as those symbols explain and expand the student’s experience. The teacher “is concerned not with the subject-matter as such, but with the subject-matter as a related factor in a total growing experience” (1902, pp. 479).

The teacher, on the other hand, is concerned with that congruence which did not exist until teacher and student met in the classroom. The teacher must judge whether the symbols adequately express the student’s experience. To make that judgment, the teacher must explore the student’s experience, helping the student to enlarge and enrich his experience by reflecting in a five-fold way: perplexity or confusion about an incomplete experience, conjectural anticipation, careful survey, tentative hypothesis, and testing the hypothesis (1966, p. 150). “The systematized and defined experience of the adult mind, in other words, is of value to us in interpreting the child’s life as it immediately shows itself, and in passing on to guidance or direction” (1902, p. 473). What Dewey writes about here is not reinventing the wheel, but recalling the process that led to the wheel's invention. First the problem: how to move a heavy object; second, thinking about a solution: putting something under the object; third, surveying the possibilities: lever, inclined plane, a circular object; fourth, hypothesis: four circular things under the object; finally, the test: those four things work, eureka. I have found it. If the student can shout eureka, that he has found a broadening and deepening expression of his experience, then what has happened in the classroom has been quality schoolwork.

Quality schoolwork is an expression of that process of making the student’s experience more meaningful. Dismayed that “growth is regarded as having an end, instead of being an end,” Dewey stated that “this ironical situation will endure till it is recognized that living has its own intrinsic quality and that the business of education is with that quality” (1966, pp. 50, 51). This is the central insight of Dewey’s educational philosophy and the precise point where it intersects with Glasser’s theory of quality. “The idea of education advanced in these chapters is formally summed up in the idea of continuous reconstruction of experience, an idea which is marked off from education as preparation for a remote future, as unfolding, as external formation, as a recapitulation of the past!” (1966, p. 80).

Thus, the requirements for quality schoolwork, according to Dewey, are twofold. First, the student must reflect enough about his experience to extract meaning from it through symbols (schoolwork). Second, the teacher must guide the student to those symbols that can satisfactorily expand the student’s experience.

Recall Glasser’s requirements that must be present in the warm and supportive classroom: quality schoolwork has to be useful, best, evaluated, joyful, and not destructive. Considering usefulness, Dewey said “it is impossible to foretell definitely just what civilization will be twenty years from now. Hence it is impossible to prepare the child for any precise set of conditions. To prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities” (1902, p. 445).

For Dewey, quality resides in the relationship between the student and his experience and, more specifically, in the broadening and deepening of that experience which is mediated by the relationship between teacher and student and which manifests itself in schoolwork the student produces.

Dewey’s insights on qualitative thought give additional meaning to Glasser’s theory of quality schoolwork.

Bibliography


OPEN MEETINGS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: FACILITATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL INTEREST

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ABSTRACT

A qualitative inquiry was conducted into the effects of open classroom meetings in two elementary schools and four grade levels (second through fifth). A content analysis suggests that open meetings can facilitate social responsibility and interest among students. Ideas for conducting open meetings related to social interest are presented. Developmental considerations are discussed as students are perceived as moving from self-interest to a greater sense of mutuality both within and across grade levels.

Elementary teachers and counselors are confronted on a daily basis with the challenge of building a sense of caring and community among students and within the school itself. Teachers and counselors recognize that a logical and natural place for children to learn the basics of caring and respecting others is among their peers and in the context of the school environment. However, for such caring and respect to go beyond the expectations and exhortations of teachers and parents, a conscious, systematic environment. However, for such caring and respect to go beyond the expectations and exhortations of teachers and parents, a conscious, systematic

open meetings can center on seemingly non-controversial topics such as games and sports. However, even such “neutral” topics can shift the conversation heavy with fairness on the playground. In this way, individual needs and group expectations can be brought up for discussion and balanced in a way that suggests respect for both the individual and the group. In social problem-solving groups, children or the teacher can both suggest and write the plans for a particular theme or topic. In attempting to keep up with the basic principles of Reality Therapy, class meetings are geared toward solving the problem at hand and seeking viable solutions free of blame or guilt.

The teacher/counselor role in the social problem-solving group is to lead and direct the discussion. The primary objective is to move towards a resolution, and by example and feedback, model a nonjudgmental attitude that always values free discussion and a positive solution. Efforts are made to eliminate the typical blaming and in-group bickering that so easily can come to dominate a large group conversation. This is especially true in social problem-solving groups where emotionally charged issues, such as igniting anger and conflict, can frequently be the topic for discussion.

It should also be considered that not every classroom meeting regarding a social concern or school issue will resolve that problem. For example, a small group of children consistent on bullying or harassing others on the playground or bus may continue to do so, thereby necessitating more formal disciplinary efforts. But even in such instances as the above example, children are still learning to seek a “public”, structured, and respectful forum to air their grievances and concerns.

Issues related to the values of respect and caring inside and outside the classroom are not constrained to the social problem-solving group. Frequently, open meetings can center on seemingly non-controversial topics such as games and sports. However, even, such “neutral” topics can shift to concerns that students experience in school and home and see around them in their communities.

One example of this was observed in an open-ended meeting where the light and fun topic of “Houses” was being discussed. While considering the merits of largely comfortable, suburban houses, one student commented on the fact that homeless children may not have shoes of any kind. This comment “lifts” the conversation to a different level more consistent with Glasser’s notion of the social problem-solving group. The skilled teacher/counselor, acting as the discussion facilitator, can decide the direction for the group or perhaps future groups based on these spontaneous comments.

Additionally, the educational-diagnostic meeting is a likely context for issues of social concern to arise. Here the teacher/counselor integrates the classroom meeting more explicitly into the regular curriculum by including academic units in history, reading, literature and science as a source for
topics. Diverse topics like "bridges" and Native American practices can be used as well. Using the classroom meeting in this way allows the teacher to personalize curricular content that may otherwise be quite abstract and therefore disconnected from the everyday life of children.

Glasser's distinctions between the three kinds of classroom meetings is a useful one, especially for planning a topic and outlining its presentation to the class. However, as practically every teacher and counselor knows, new and unexpected events can readily become part of an open class discussion and may capture the interest and imagination of the students and further reflect concerns in the social contexts of home, school, community, and society.

PAST RESEARCH ON OPEN MEETINGS

To date, only a few studies have attempted to examine the effects of open class meetings on elementary students. In their earlier study, Omizo and Cubberly (1983) included 56 learning disabled children that were randomly placed in treatment and non-treatment groups. Teachers, trained in Reality Therapy classroom meetings, conducted semi-weekly groups over a period of 11 weeks. A locus of control scale and an instrument of self-concept development were administered (Dimensions of Self-Concept) to all participants. While no significant findings were discovered with respect to locus of control, a measure of self-control (Dimensions of Self-Control -DOSC) did yield some significant subscale results. The subscales of the DOSC that were significant were "Academic Interest and Satisfaction", "Level of Aspiration" and the "Anxiety" subscale. Further interpretation of these scales suggested that students in the Glasser classroom meeting group appeared more interested and satisfied with schooling than the control group participants. The learning disabled students in the experimental (open meeting) groups also displayed an overall increase in their level of aspiration suggesting an "I Can" attitude toward academic efforts. Finally, the learning disabled experimental students indicated less concern and pre-occupation over school and a more factual, reality-based approach to school. The authors suggest that these findings are in keeping with Glasser's general principles of open meetings that he first described in "Schools Without Failure" (Glasser, 1969).

Sordahl and Sanche (1985) also sought to determine the effects of classroom meetings on the self-concept of school-aged children. The difference in this Canadian study was that regular classroom teachers and students participated. Ninety-one students were administered the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (P-H), the Pupil Behavior Rating Scale (PBRS) and two separate scales (self-concept and behavior) designed specifically for this study. These researchers found that global self-concept, as measured by the Piers-Harris, did not vary significantly between the groups but the situation specific self-concept and behavioral measures did. That is, students in the open classroom meeting groups reported significantly improved self-concepts compared to their control counterparts. Scores of positive classroom behaviors were significantly greater among the experimental groups, i.e., classroom meetings) than the control groups. The authors further interpreted this latter finding to suggest that classroom meetings might function as "... an effective means of preventive counseling to entire classes of children by enhancing their problem-solving skills, their decision-making skills, their acceptance of responsibility, and their interpersonal skills." (Sordahl and Sanche, 1985, p. 358).

QUESTIONS CONCERNING OPEN CLASSROOM MEETINGS

The above reviewed research studies indicate that the open classroom meeting is potentially helpful for the elementary school child. As originally suggested by Glasser (1969), classroom meetings can improve decision-making skills, student responsibility, and generalized interest in the academic processes of school. The intent of our study was to extend the theory, research and practice of the open classroom meeting to the everyday life of the elementary classroom. Among a very large number of initial interests and concerns, we were able to select a few concerns for our focus:

1. How do open classroom meetings affect the social interest and concern of students?
2. What do students themselves think about the open classroom meeting?
3. What developmental considerations from second to fifth grade are in evidence? And finally,
4. What are some of the most effective ways to conduct the open classroom meetings?

In order to best address these and other questions, it was decided to use an action research strategy. In action research, new knowledge is produced in the actual settings in which it is intended for practical use. In addition, the co-researchers or participants help to construct and control both the content and direction of the inquiry. The action research model is a qualitative approach to gaining knowledge and one which attempts to merge theory and practice (Carson, 1990).

METHOD

This project on open classroom meetings took place over a seven month period during the 1993-1994 school year. Four teachers, trained and already using open meetings, participated as co-researchers. Four regular classrooms at two local elementary schools were used. Grade levels 2, 3, 4, and 5 were included in the project as a means to explore developmental differences among the students. University faculty members, along with graduate education students, were paired and regularly visited (weekly or biweekly) participating classrooms during the time that open meetings were being conducted. These meetings were videotaped (with the permission of students and parents) and, later, videotapes were transcribed for qualitative content analysis. A total of 28 videotapes were made (not all open meetings were taped) during the seven month project time period. The meetings were held on a weekly or biweekly basis throughout the school year and each meeting ranged from approximately 20 to 35 minutes in length.

The project schedule included meetings with co-researchers from September to November of 1993. Videotaping, transcription of those tapes and planning meetings with co-researchers took place from November, 1993...
through May of 1994. Each grade level represented participated in a concluding open classroom meeting titled “Open Meeting on Open Meetings”. This last effort was an attempt to better understand student reactions to the classroom meetings. Additional meetings with teachers and university personnel took place in the summer and early fall of 1994. These meetings were to review tapes and give comments and feedback to each other. In the Fall of 1994, the university team of four faculty members and one graduate student met several times in order to conduct a content analysis of the tapes.

OPEN CLASSROOM MEETINGS

The procedure for the implementation of the open classroom meetings followed the general guidelines described by Glasser in “Schools Without Failure” (1969). Among other issues, meetings were used as a means to facilitate classroom discussion where one possible outcome might be the enhanced sense of social interest and responsibility on the part of the students. The topics were diverse and wide-ranging, including seemingly innocuous topics like “noise”, “birthdays” and “special occasions” as well as more emotionally charged concerns such as “teasing”, “put-downs” and “anger”. While the basic components of the classroom meeting are fairly structured, teachers have many opportunities to tailor, redesign and reinvent procedures as they actually take place.

SOCIAL INTEREST AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Social interest was defined according to the general considerations provided by Alfred Adler (see Richardson & Guignon, 1988). Our definition suggested that social interest, when applied to elementary-aged children, constitutes the beginning of empathy, i.e., the ability to enter into the perspectives and feelings of others. This presents a developmental movement from self-centeredness (egocentricity) to other-centeredness (allocentricity). In addition, the construct of social interest is consistent with “community feeling”. Therefore, this sense of belonging seems to carry with it the responsibility to listen and be sensitive to others. Behaviorally, social interest can be best expressed as an ongoing and increasing interest and concern about peers, the groups, and the classroom and school environment.

While cognitive maturation certainly plays a major role in the development of empathy and caring for others, we were interested in seeing if open classroom meetings would promote the beginnings of any of the above components.

ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING THE DATA

Having first agreed to a basic and general definition of social interest, we set about the task of group meetings to review the transcripts of the videotapes. Faculty and graduate student co-researchers met several times for this purpose. We checked and listed by discussion and eventual consensus every student remark that related to our action research inquiry as to social interest. In order to best address these action research questions regarding social interest and open meetings, we performed a content analysis of selected videos as well as the final open meeting (“Open Meeting on Open Meetings”). Initially, we listed every student expression that fit with the definition we had established for social interest. These were by each grade level.

FINDING BASIC THEMES

The next step in our process was to identify and summarize themes pertaining to social interest as they were expressed across the four grade levels. A list of fifteen meaning units was created that included (1) sharing ideas, thoughts and topics, (2) solving problems, (3) learning from and about others, (4) having the class help face problems, (5) everybody listens, (6) getting concerned and helping others, (7) keeping friends by using “put-ups” only, (8) learning what we have in common, (9) sharing feelings, (10) knowing what others like to do, (11) decreasing name calling, (12) stopping “blunting out”, (13) trusting people, (14) solving problems for others and making them feel better and (15) having the whole classroom involved with each other.

Further refinement of these meaning units revealed three interrelated basic themes. These were labeled “Solving”, “Sharing” and “Caring”. This step seems best related to question three: What are some of the developmental considerations in play as we reviewed transcripts from grades two through five?

Earlier we stated that children move from ego-driven motives, seeking self-satisfaction, to progressively taking in more of the perspective of others as they gain sensitivity and concern for them.

This seems to have occurred to some extent as younger children appeared more focused on simply solving the problem so as to reduce its noxious elements and go about one’s business. While this may still be quite egocentric, in a developmental schema, it can be seen as the necessary building block to social interest and expressing care and concern about the group. First, we need to acknowledge problems and seek solutions, if only or largely for our own satisfaction.

First, young children need to develop attention skills, that is, they need to learn to listen to each other. Next, children need to store information that can be used at a later time. Finally, children need to be able to draw upon reliable sequences or steps that can lead to problem resolution (Pettit, 1992). The context for the development of these skills for self-responsibility and problem-solving is one that is simultaneously familiar and exciting. This allows for both safety and a moderate degree of disequilibrium. This disequilibrium or tension facilitates movement to a greater sense of mutuality among students as they cognitively mature.

Our observations of the open classroom meetings suggest that these elements were strongly in evidence. Seated in a circle (either on chairs or the floor), and dispensing with the formalities of rows and desks, created a somewhat novel and stimulating situation. Following a sequence of planned steps and activities allowed for a familiar and therefore safe context for the discussion of sometimes emotionally laden issues. As teachers used their skills in allowing new twists and turns in the discussion, excitement and stimulation were typically evident in the meetings.

In a more developmental context, the movement from grade to grade,
characterized by "Solving", "Sharing" and "Caring", corresponds, in a very general fashion, to the developmental model proposed by Yeates and Selman (1989). Here children move from unilateral approach (defining problems in terms of self), to reciprocal (understanding others' needs and interests) to collaborative (finding mutual ideals) (Yeates & Selman, 1989).

ENHANCING SOCIAL INTEREST

Based on this action research project, we would like to propose several considerations for conducting open meetings with children:

1. First, acknowledge the developmental nature of social interest and use open classroom meetings. This means focusing on basic memory and attention skills as a necessary step to developing social interest and community feeling.

2. Always attempt to provide a predictable sequence of steps to the meeting so that children can predict movement from the familiar (opening question and "go around") to the final, and hopefully stimulating, challenge question. This balances the need for safety and tension (or disequilibrium) necessary for growth and change.

3. Encourage schools and teachers to adapt open classroom meetings in successive grades. This would seem necessary for increasing maturity to take place as the child grows older and moves towards Yeates and Selman's (1989) ideal of producing mutually determined goals. Our co-researchers report that students who have experienced open meetings the year before seem more prepared to engage at the next level.

4. Be prepared for and expect the unexpected. As important as the physical setup and sequences are, meetings may take unexpected twists and turns. Our teacher co-researchers were especially adept at recognizing these "Diversions" and incorporating this into the meeting itself or allowing the "twist" to suggest a topic for a future meeting.

5. Social interest is the outcome of increasing collaboration within a democratic classroom and school climate, and can take place over many years and experiences. Allow for student participation. Let students not only suggest topics but help design and write some open class meetings.

6. Do not be afraid to discuss controversial topics. Teach students to disagree in an "agreeable" fashion and to work toward conflict resolution and respecting differences of opinion.

CONCLUSION

Mary Rose O'Reilly, in her recent book entitled "The Peaceable Classroom", writes; "When people sit around in a group and share experiences, the universe of possibilities begins to change" (p. 41). When elementary students have the opportunity to listen to one another, new options for social interest arise and dialogue and mutual understanding can emerge. The open classroom, first described by Glasser (1969), is a valuable tool that can begin a steady developmental process toward social interest and the building of classroom and school communities.

References

WHO ARE “AT-RISK” AND WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP THEM?

Thomas S. Parish

The author is a professor of Foundations and Adult Education and Assistant to the Dean of Education at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

ABSTRACT

While labeling jars may be productive, labeling students is highly nonproductive — even harmful — to our nation’s students who are considered to be “at-risk.” Instead, “at-risk” students, like all other students, simply need to have their “core” needs met. How to achieve this end will be elaborated upon, but the essence of what will be shared centers around the ideas that you can’t be an effective teacher until you are an effective person, and that effective persons make the best teachers.

Several years ago, a superintendent from a particular school system requested that I assess the school district’s students psychologically in order to determine who was “at-risk” with regard to possible school failure. So I ventured into this situation prepared to measure students’ self-concepts, ascertain familial stability, etc. I managed to pinpoint the “at-risk” students using the various measures available, but quickly noted that all of this effort may not have been totally necessary. More specifically, I discovered that the “at-risk” students I had identified were nearly all the students that got up in the middle of their classes around midmorning in order to go see some one regarding some problem they had, e.g., their learning disabilities, underachievement behaviors, personal-social-adjustment problems, reading problems, etc. The question that immediately popped into my mind was, “Why was this so?”

To answer this question, Glasser (1984, 1990, 1993) suggests that these students’ core needs (i.e., survival, love & belonging, power, fun, and freedom) are not being met, and that their “at-risk” status would not likely change until this situation was corrected, i.e., their needs are being effectively met. Thus, less attention probably needs to be focused upon labeling students (e.g., LD, MR), and more attention should be placed upon really identifying what hurts, what’s broken, and/or what’s blocking adequate need-fulfillment for them, and then seek to implement appropriate actions/strategies that can remediate these important needs and/or wants.

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS

Besides good instincts and accurate observations that can detect when students are “in trouble,” the use of various inventories can be essential in identifying needs, wants, and/or problem areas. For instance, the Personal History Inventory for Children (PHIC; see Parish & Anderson, 1995) was devised to ascertain the functionality of children’s and adolescents’ support systems. The PHIC attempts to assess various support systems commonly found in children’s and adolescents’ lives (e.g., Are the parents hostile or uncaring? Are peers supportive? Is adequate supervision provided? etc). In all, the PHIC asks 14 such questions, and the range of possible scores on this inventory is from 0 (i.e., no support systems failed) to 14 (i.e., all fourteen support systems have failed). According to Parish and Harrison (1989), the average score on this inventory is only one (1), but “at-risk” students tend to score much higher than this (see Necessary & Parish, 1994; Rankin & Parish, 1995).

That children and adolescents sorely need functioning support systems has been stressed by Hetherington, Stanley-Hagen, and Anderson (1989), as well as Parish (1987). In fact, a number of studies have shown that responsive peers and school personnel have performed essential roles as extrafamilial support systems helping students to cope with crises encountered in their lives (see Hetherington & Clingempeel, 1988; Hetherington, Cox & Cox, 1982; Rutter, 1987). Additional studies have also demonstrated that familial harmony, rather than parental conflict and/or hostility, fosters greater self-esteem (Amato, 1986; Bishop & Ingersoll, 1989; Raschke & Raschke, 1979), as well as cognitive and social competence (Long, Forehand, Fauber, & Brody, 1987) in children and adolescents who contend with stressful situations on a regular basis.

This is not to suggest, however, that problems such as familial instability, geographic mobility, or financial hardship (plus other nonfunctioning support systems) don’t negatively affect the psychological adjustment of youth (Parish, 1990). They certainly do, particularly when occurring concurrently, for such events create acute stress, i.e., lots of stress all at once (see Parish & Wigle, 1985). For instance, Parish (1990) reported that youth from divorced nonremarried and divorced remarried families experienced more dysfunctional support systems than youth from intact families (where both biological parents resided). That this is so may account for the findings by Parish and Philp (1982) who had teachers work diligently to enhance the self-concepts of children from all three of the above familial configurations, but were only successful in achieving this end (i.e., enhancing students’ self-concepts) with youth from intact families. “What went wrong?” you ask. Well, I am confident that the teachers were doing their best in each instance, but over the period of a month it simply wasn’t enough. Perhaps continued effort over a longer period of time by these teachers might have been more helpful, but it’s more likely that the students’ families should have been taught how each member could better function as a support system for one another. As reported by Parish and Parish (1991), students who had experienced parental divorce were significantly more likely to have encountered the following:

(1) Parental hostility and/or lack of care,
(2) Inadequate supervision when not in school,
(3) Lack of concern by teachers, and
(4) More financial hardship.

In turn, lower self-concepts and poorer social skills were also found to be associated with these kinds of life experiences (i.e., failed support systems).
Another study, that approaches these problems from a different perspective, was reported by Brown (1980). In this study, 18,000 elementary and secondary students were examined to determine if the fulfillment of students' needs varied as a function of familial configuration, i.e., one-parent vs. two-parent families. He found that students from one parent families, more so than those from two parent families, were:

1. Poorer academic achievers,
2. Greater discipline problems,
3. Truant more often,
4. Dropped-out more often,
5. Suspended more often,
6. Expelled more often. Of the 18,000 students who were examined, only single-parent students were ever expelled from school.

Findings such as these should take us back to Glasser's (1984; 1990; 1993) original assertion that many schools, and most of the teachers in them, are simply not meeting students' needs, particularly those students for whom other (non-school-related) support systems (e.g., parents, sibs, peers) have already failed.

Of course, the nation's school systems may not be responsible for the high rate of divorce that prevails today. It's also true that the economy always seems to be in a downturn for some people, and that families are becoming more and more transient. Schools certainly can't be held responsible for any or all of these conditions, either. Furthermore, as we approach the beginning of the next century, more and more of our nation's youth are likely to be from the lower economic strata, be members of minority groups, and/or hold fewer interests or desires in common with their teachers. For instance, teachers used to be quite concerned about students bringing GUM to school, but the greater concern for teachers today (and perhaps more so in the future) is students bringing GUNS to school.

Of course, teachers and other ancillary personnel can continue to fail in attending to their students' needs, and in the meantime try to externalize the problem by blaming the system, the family, and/or TV. Though these assertions could be quite valid, the real concern should not be in finding fault, but in developing solutions. Instead of accusing others, pointing fingers, criticizing and complaining (which are all inefficient behaviors), teachers, counselors, and other school-related personnel who interact with students on a daily basis need to realize their pivotal position (as individuals who can make a difference) by following Theodore Roosevelt's counsel to

"Do What we can, with what you have, with where you are."


Hopefully, we already have gained some insight regarding where the students are thanks to such scales as the PHIC, or the Symptoms/Signs of Stress Scale (SSSS; see Table 1) that was developed by Healy and Parish (1986). The SSSS, by the way, not only helps us to identify potential sources of any problems, but in addition, allows the teacher, counselor, or parent to possibly associate these problems with one or more specific symptoms or signs being manifested by the student(s) in question.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms/Signs of Stress Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In completing the Inventory, place a check beside the symptoms/signs which you suspect are indicators of problems for your child and place a check beside probable causes. Your response will be kept confidential and identified only by the number assigned at the top. Thank you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of your child</th>
<th>Sex of your child: M / F</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placed in Special Education? Y / N</td>
<td>Relationship of person filling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes--what is the category?</td>
<td>out inventory? Mother / Father</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Symptoms/Signs of Stress?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific symptoms such as ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomachaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Backaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appetite changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vague physical complaints</td>
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<tr>
<th>Scholastic Symptoms of Stress?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Specific symptoms such as ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drop in grades</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss in concentration and memory</td>
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<tr>
<th>An Unusual Activity Level?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific symptoms such as ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decrease in mental/physical energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawal from usual activities</td>
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<td>Increased purposeless, nongoal directed</td>
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<tr>
<th>Social Symptoms of Stress?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Specific symptoms such as ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overinvolvement</td>
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<tr>
<th>Specific symptoms such as ...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fears</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oversensitiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightmares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicide thoughts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temper tantrums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lying</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bedwetting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nailbitten</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aggressiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence of drug abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrational arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running away</td>
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<tr>
<th>Shift In Feelings?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Specific symptoms such as ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mood changes (moodiness, irritability, sadness, boredom, depression)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elation without reason</td>
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</table>
1. Divorce steps that occur between teachers’ expectations and students’ subsequent compliance behaviors [i.e., teacher expectancy effects].

That expectations/anticipations play a key role in how we subsequently act is nicely depicted in the following illustration:

Have you ever been overjoyed, or at least very pleased, by getting a “B” in a class?

Now, have you ever been really upset, or at least very disappointed, by getting a “B” in a class?

So what’s the difference? After all, a “B” is a “B”, isn’t it? Well, not really. You see, it all depends on our expectations, or the pictures in our minds (Glasser, 1981).

So it is with our students. Maybe they’re not performing up to our standards or expectations, but that doesn’t mean that they are really doing poorly. In other words, maybe they’re not underachievers, but we’re just overexpecters. If this is so, then the course of least resistance to achieve satisfaction of our own needs, and possibly the students’ needs, too, is to be willing to change our pictures in our picture books, or the expectations we have in our minds.

That our attitudes are critical in determining our level of success is nicely portrayed by this quote of Henry Ford’s: “If you think you can, or you think you can’t, you’re absolutely right!”

Now imagine two 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 hot,
The intensity to inspire.
(Trujillo, 1987)

In contrast, think about another teacher who truly believes that s/he is powerless and inadequate, and that s/he was really not “cut out” to be a teacher. Now, while it may be so that both are teachers, they both are probably conveying more than the content of their curriculum. As Parish (1991) asserts...

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 (p. 17).

What’s most interesting, however, is that while teachers may derogate themselves or others, that doesn’t necessarily mean that students will always follow suit. As a case in point, Parish and Copeland (1978) asked teachers to describe how their middle-school students — with or without various exceptionalities or handicaps — would evaluate themselves, while their students were simply asked to evaluate themselves. Curiously, the teachers created a kind of “pecking order,” with normal students rated highest,
followed by physically handicapped, learning disabled, and emotionally disturbed students. Notably, however, the real self-perceptions of these four groups of students were all very positive, and did not vary from one another. Thus, the students with exceptionalities had not come to share their teachers’ perceptions of themselves, but was this a possible point of ongoing contention between them, did such teacher perceptions impact upon the students’ schoolwork, and/or would such students eventually come to comply with the negative perceptions of their teachers? After all, Rosenthal (1973) reported that when students didn’t submit to teachers’ expectations, the teachers would become angry and upset with their students for failing to act as expected. The best solution, of course, is for teachers to remove any negative pictures or unachievable expectations they might possess regarding their students that would more likely bring them and/or their students into contact with more personal pain and/or anger.

**OUR PLAYBOOKS**

Another alternative to changing our pictures or expectations is to examine what we’ve been doing per se, in order to determine if our actions have been working, i.e., getting us what we want. If we discover that the actions or plays in our existing playbooks have not been working to get us what we want, but have been creating new needs instead, then we — as teachers — will need to consider our options. For instance, we can try other, more efficient plays or behaviors from our own playbooks, or borrow more efficient plays from others’ playbooks.

Education, for example, is usually a good source for new plays. For instance, we could learn about our students’ “social styles” as originally described by Carl Jung back in the 1920’s (see Hull, 1977), or more recently depicted by Merrill and Reid (1981). We could also learn about how to more effectively interact with someone deemed to be a “feeler,” or a “senser,” or a “thinker,” or an “intuit.” We could also learn about the “80% Rule,” which proposes that we interact effectively with people who are like ourselves about 80% of the time, but interact ineffectively with others who are unlike us about 80% of the time (Andersen, 1988). Besides the 80% Rule, however, teachers will want to learn more about the “Golden Rule” and The “Platinum Rule.” The former rule, of course, says that “You should do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” The latter rule, in contrast, says that “You should do unto others as they want done unto them.” The difference between these two rules is really just a matter of “focus.” Specifically, the “Golden Rule” uses your own wants and needs as the greatest point of concern, while the latter rule stresses the wants and needs of others as the principal point of interest (Andersen, 1988). In keeping with the “Platinum Rule” is the “100% Rule,” which suggests that if we are willing to keep others’ wants and needs in mind, that we will be more effective in communicating with them . . . up to 100% of the time. Said somewhat differently, “Your students don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care” (Author: Unknown).

Along these same lines, there are other approaches that can be used to enhance our communication with students. The elements of Reality Therapy (Glasser, 1965) include many key points regarding ways to more effectively interact with others, e.g., make friends, ask questions (rather than make statements), and offer plans are among my personal favorites, which I discovered back in the 1970’s. Of course, the possibilities for enhancing our communication skills are virtually endless; that’s why life truly seems to be “a search for positive alternatives.”

We just have to make sure that we don’t simply concentrate on what we want. Rather, if we’ll consider our students’ needs, their need levels, and whether or not they are being met, we will find that by looking for answers to these questions, we will more likely motivate and inspire our students. The Needs Assessment Rating Form (see Table 2) is offered in order to assist teachers in understanding the needs, need levels, and degree of fulfillment, for both students and teachers. Furthermore, according to the 100% Rule, if teachers endeavor to fulfill their students’ needs to the best of their ability, they will, in turn, more likely have their own needs more likely met too. The reason that this is so is because both the teachers and their students have gained entry into each others’ “Quality Worlds” (Glasser, 1990, 1993).

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love/ Belonging</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Fun</th>
<th>Freedom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need Level</td>
<td>Needs Are Met</td>
<td>Need Level</td>
<td>Needs Are Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the Student</td>
<td>According to the Teacher</td>
<td>of the Teacher</td>
<td>According to the Student</td>
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- **Rate from 1 to 10,** or from a very low need rating to a very high need rating.

- **Rate from 1 to 10,** or from a very low need-fulfillment rating to a very high need-fulfillment rating.
Of course, maybe what we need to think or do isn't available from anyone or anything else. When this happens, we will have to rely on our own creativity. While we are in such unknown territory, it would be prudent to examine the multiple effects of our various actions on various individuals. Truly, untested ideas, when not thoroughly thought out, have a tendency to come back and bite us. So patience is crucial, and contemplation of the "Platinum Rule" should be MUSTS, especially when we have no personal anchor of experience from which to make a wise choice.

All of these strategies, whether they are homemade or borrowed from others, should demonstrate ways by which we "can make a difference" in one student's life, and maybe in many students' lives. The key, though, is that we personally strive to think and/or act efficiently (i.e., do things that satisfy our needs, and hopefully the needs of others, without creating any new needs), and encourage our students, even the so-called "at-risk" ones, to do likewise.

Evidence demonstrating how well these notions work have been reported by Boyd and Parish (1985), Newberry and Parish (1987), and Parish and Parish (1989). In each of these studies, it was demonstrated that teachers are able to effectively aid "at-risk"-type students by approaching them in a kindly fashion, spending "quality time" with them, and/or persistently showing them that they care for them. Exactly what means them in a kindly fashion, spending "quality time" with them, and/or others, should demonstrate ways by which we "can make a difference" in one student's life, and maybe in many students' lives. The key, though, is to anchor of experience from which to make a wise choice.

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References

FIFTEEN REALITY THERAPY/CONTROL THEORY DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS
Written Between 1990 and 1995

James R. Barry

The author is a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts.

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This compilation of doctoral dissertations follows Dr. Marion Franklin's exhaustive list of reality therapy/control theory dissertations written between 1970 and 1990. Dr. Franklin's list is available in Journal of Reality Therapy, Spring 1993 (Vol XII, n. 2).
SURVIVAL, BELONGING, POWER, FUN AND FREEDOM ON THE HIGH SEAS

Minor L. Morgan

The author, who is reality therapy certified and a basic week instructor, was a practicing attorney at law in Dallas, Texas for many years and is now also a psychologist in private practice.

ABSTRACT

This whimsical, tongue-in-cheek bit of pure fiction is offered as a device for teaching the five basic needs proposed in Dr. Glasser’s control theory explanation of human behavior. As you read this story about one passenger’s experience on a cruise on a luxury liner, can you relate these fictitious events to the basic needs?

May I tell you a story in which you are the leading character? You are on a cruise ship, the grandest ocean liner ever built, on its maiden voyage. You are having dinner at the captain’s table. The elegant gold-trimmed china plates, the fresh flowers, soft, velvety red and yellow blossoms in cut crystal vases, are all glowing, sparkling in the soft light of the candles. You are now enjoying the main course of a fine gourmet dinner.

Will you take a moment now and picture what is being served at that dinner? For me it would be sole almondine a la Luigi, but let’s work with your picture. At this moment you are having a heart-warming visit with the captain of the cruise ship. It turns out you and he have mutual acquaintances around the world. The captain relates how these friends speak so very highly of you, and he also mentioned that he himself has read some of your published articles. He talks about these articles in a detailed way that convinces you that he really has read them. He expresses strong agreement with some theories that you have advanced in your articles about the significance of geological samples taken from the ocean floor. In the conversation the captain tells how proud he is of the ship, and explains all the latest technological features that make this the safest ship ever built, actually unsinkable. You think to yourself how wonderful it is to be safe as your own living room here in the middle of the ocean. The captain offers to show you any part of the ship that you like. Or if you prefer, you may wander about on your own and tell any crew member you see that you are here by special permission of the captain. He pulls a note pad out of his pocket, scribbles a little note and hands it to you. “Show them this” he says. The captain is a picture of rhythmic smoothness on the dance floor. He whirls around and faces you, his face contorted with rage. “Who do you think you are?” he demands. “Get out of this room at once!”

“But Captain!” you shout, feeling some anger of your own. “There is an iceberg right in front of us. You have got to change course immediately!” “So now you are going to tell me how to run my ship!” says the captain. “First Officer!” As the captain calls out, a uniformed officer appears as if out of nowhere. The captain speaks to him: “Take this person to his stateroom, station a guard at the door, and see that he doesn’t leave his stateroom until I give the order. I will look into this situation tomorrow, or maybe later.” Then he turns to you and says, contemptuously, “You are about to learn something about the authority of the captain of a ship at sea.” Then, nodding to the first officer, “That’s all.” You are then hustled to your stateroom. At first you try to resist, but crewmen turn up miraculously, and you are pushed bodily into your stateroom. All the while you are shouting “Listen to me! Listen to me!” , trying to tell someone about the iceberg. But they all laugh at you. You try the door but find it locked. No one answers your frantic calls. This was such a fun evening, but now that all seems so long ago. You search about the room for some possible means of escape. Then you hear a roaring, crunching noise, and feel a sudden jolt, so violent you are thrown to the deck. The ship shudders.

What a nightmare!

It’s all fiction, folks. Pure fiction. I know nothing about what really happened on the Titanic, or any ship that ever hit an iceberg. I just made it up.

Can you spot points in this story where each of the five basic needs was being fulfilled in a very pleasing manner? And can you spot points where each of the needs was being severely frustrated? Talk it over with your group. Does this help make the basic needs more concrete, more real?
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