

**UNDERSTANDING**  
**and**  
**CONNECTING**  
*WITH AGGRESSIVE*  
*STUDENTS*  
**#ED404d / #ED504d**

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**  
A THREE CREDIT CLASS

**INSTRUCTOR:**

DR. MICHAEL SEDLER

Email: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

(509) 443-1605

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE

Please use the checklist/syllabus in the manual.

**PLEASE SEND ASSIGNMENTS ELECTRONICALLY (AS AN ATTACHMENT). It is best to send in no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time and I will send you back comments. Send them in numerical order (#1, #2, #3...). You may send work in Microsoft Word, in a Google Doc (but give permission for review), zip folder, a converted Pages file, etc.**

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class! If working in a group, put all names on each paper, except the integration paper which must be individually authored. See \*\* at bottom of page.

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography with phone numbers of publishing companies. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Master's Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in-services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months. If you would like individual feedback on assignments, please indicate this when turning in your work.

Sincerely,

Michael Sedler  
(509) 443-1605  
E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)  
Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)  
P.O. BOX 30310 - Spokane, WA. - 99223

\*\* For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hoi.edu](http://www.hoi.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

Please share about my classes with others; it is my main form of advertising

## **MICHAEL SEDLER**

(509) 443-1605 (w); (509) 939-6302 (c)

email: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net) or [michael@michaelsedler.com](mailto:michael@michaelsedler.com)

website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

### **Education**

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

### **Work Experience**

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration, State of WA., behavior consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K -12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

### **Other Experiences**

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up Miss America 2012

### **Author**

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective.

Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions.

**(Over 300,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly.*** (October, 2016. Revell Books, \$5.99) (updated/edited version of “Stop The Runaway Conversation.”) Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective.

Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell Books is a division of Baker Publishing Group.

Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)  
MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hoi.edu](http://www.hoi.edu)). \*\*Clock hours available for partial course completion.

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students** (SS401p/SS501p)

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach** (SS401q/SS501q)

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning** (SS401v/SS501v)

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students** (ED404d/ED504d)

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES:** (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough** (ED437q/ED537q)

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators** (ED409r/ED509r)

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. Gang Attitudes And Actions** (SS406k/SS506k)

This class will help each person to identify gangs and intervention strategies for your community/school.

**4. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions** (SS409f/SS509f)

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**5. Mental Health Issues and Students** (HE402n/HE502n)

A class to help understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**6. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools** (ED434y/ED534y)

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**7. Organizational Teaching Skills** (ED429w/ED529w)

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**8. School Violence** (SS406m/SS506m)

Each person will learn indicators and interventions for potential violent situations.

**9. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students** (HE401m/HE501m)

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**10. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline** (ED419g/ED519g)

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**11. Youth Suicide** (SS404u/SS504u)

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**  
**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

**THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)**

**MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR**

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

**1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

**2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

**3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching. Specific activities, strategies, and learning approaches for schools.

**4. The Impact of Trauma and Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Strategies to support children who have experienced traumatic situations in life.

**5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

**6- CREDIT COST: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours (6 quarter = 4 semester)**

**REGISTRATION: Call The Heritage Institute--1 (800) 445-1305; 1 (360) 341-3020**

*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS: Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.**

**Email address: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)**

**Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)**

\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credit once clock hours have been earned for a class.

**COURSE TITLE:** UNDERSTANDING AND CONNECTING WITH AGGRESSIVE STUDENTS  
(ED404d/ED504d)

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 3 QUARTER CREDITS  
[Semester Cr Equivalent: 2.00]

**CLOCK HRS:** 30  
**PDU'S:** 30  
**CEU'S:** 3.0 (30)

**INSTRUCTOR:** MICHAEL SEDLER, D.Min., M.S.W.  
Box 30310  
Spokane, WA 992223  
(509) 443-1605  
EMAIL: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

#### ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

The assignment checklist will help you plan your schedule of work for this course. Check off items completed so that you can better monitor your progress. While you have six-months to complete your work, many will find a shorter time period convenient. **Please email no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time for comments. Do NOT send further work until you receive comments from the instructor. Grades will be submitted once all assignments and the integration paper have been sent to instructor.** If involved in a group, all work should be sent through the Group Leader.

***For Washington Clock Hours, Oregon Professional Development Units, or Continuing Education Credits, please complete the first 6 assignments.***

#### **Assignment #1:**

Read a book from the bibliography or one of your choice. If taking this course in a group, each person should read a book. Only one person needs to write a 2 page summary. Write a 2-3 page summary of the text. **(send to instructor)**

#### **Assignment #2:**

Read all materials enclosed in the packet and complete all the pages that say, "Send To Instructor."

#### **Assignment #3:**

Complete "Who is the difficult person?" form found on page 8. **(send to instructor)**

#### **Assignment #4:**

Choose one student (or child) as a "focus" for the class.

- To maintain privacy, please do not refer to students in your paper by their actual name, but rather use an alias or designation such as "Student A."

#### **Assignment #5:**

Read the file of student(s) chosen, interview other teachers who have had the student, and gain any other information possible. If done during the summer or non school time, be sure to choose a student (or individual) you know fairly well.

#### **Assignment #6:**

Write 2-3 page behavioral management plan for the student. Sample programs are enclosed on pages 48-52. You do not need to follow the sample outlines, they are only suggestions. **(send a copy to instructor)**

***This completes the assignments required for Washington Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or CEUs.***

***Continue to the next section for additional assignments required for University Quarter Credit***

#### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED for 400 or 500 LEVEL UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

In this section you will have an opportunity to apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, (they will often be glad to sponsor community-based learning), with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session, students from past years, or use one of your own children or a relative.

**\_\_ Assignment #7: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Meet with a fellow educator on a weekly basis (for a three week period) and discuss problematic behaviors in the classroom. Specifically focus on aggression and disruptive actions.

**\_\_ Assignment #8: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Write a 2-3 page final paper on your student. Include modifications made to program, insights, suggestions, what worked, what didn't, etc. Be sure to include the history and analysis of student. **(send to instructor)**

**Assignment #9: You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

**Assignment #A: (SEND commentary to Instructor)**

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 2 page commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.

***(The following is encouraged but not required):***

- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by also contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library located at <http://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library>

**OR**

**Assignment #B: (SEND lesson and summary to Instructor)**

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a 2 page summary concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.

***(The following is encouraged but not required):***

- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog <http://www.hol.edu/blog> prior to writing your article.
- Please email a copy to [Rebecca Blankinship \(rebecca@hol.edu\)](mailto:rebecca@hol.edu) THI blog curator and media specialist.
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Subject line to read: (Course Name, Blog)

Send to instructor: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)

**500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

**\_\_ Assignment #10: (500 Level only)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one (1)** of the following assignment options:

**Option A)** Consult with a fellow educator on one of their students. Write a 2-3 page summary of suggestions. **(send to instructor)**

**OR**

**Option B)** Another assignment of your own design with the instructor's prior approval.

**400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

**Integration Paper (send to instructor)**

**Assignment #11: (Required for 400 and 500 Level Credit)**

Write a 2-3 page Integration Paper answering these specific questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Mike Sedler, M.S.W.**, brings over 30 year of educational experience as an administrator, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social

Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration Paper portion (and other designated assignments) which must be individually authored and submitted. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor. **If you do not receive a confirmation email back after sending your paperwork via email, please re-send or contact the instructor to confirm it has been received. It seems that occasionally things get lost in cyber- space. Thank you.**

**Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. 😊**



# WHO'S THE DIFFICULT PERSON NOW? (send to instructor)

LIST 3 DIFFICULT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

WRITE WHAT MAKES EACH PERSON DIFFICULT (BE SPECIFIC)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

YOU USUALLY RESPOND TO THEIR DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR IN  
THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

WHAT YOU WANT TO HAPPEN DIFFERENTLY:

FOR YOURSELF

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

FROM OTHER

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*LEARNING*

*MORE*

*ABOUT*

*ANGER*

**RECENT STATISTICS SHOW THAT:**

**1 in 4** kids is bullied. The American Justice Department says that this month 1 out of every 4 kids will be abused by another youth.

**1 in 2** kids are bullied outside of school. Such as events in the community, in the city, or at home. However, if it happens outside of school, it can and most surely will happen as a repeat offense in school.

Surveys show that **77%** of students are bullied mentally, verbally, & physically.

In a recent study, **77%** of the students said they had been bullied. And **14%** of those who were bullied said they experienced severe (bad) reactions to the abuse.

**1 out of 5** kids admits to being a bully, or doing some "Bullying."

**8%** of students miss 1 day of class per month for fear of bullies.

**43%** fear harassment in the bathroom at school.

**100,000** students carry a gun to school.

**28%** of youths who carry weapons have witnessed violence at home.

**282,000** students are physically attacked in secondary schools each month.

More recent statistics show that:

A poll of teens ages 12-17 found that they think violence **increased at their schools.**

More youth violence occurs on school grounds as opposed to on the way to school. This trend is changing as noted in the CAABI statistics. However, this may depend on where you live.

80% of the time, an argument with a bully will end up in a physical fight.

1/3 of students surveyed said they heard another student threaten to kill someone.

1 out of 5 teens knows someone who brings a gun to school.

2 out of 3 say they know how to make a bomb or know where to get the info to do it.

Almost half of all students say they know another student who's capable of murder.

ACCORDING TO THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS - School Crime and Safety:

46% of males and 26% females have been in physical fights. Those in the lower grades reported twice as many fights as those in the higher grades.

However, there is a lower rate of serious violent crimes in the elementary level than in the middle or high schools.

Teenagers say revenge is the strongest motivation for school shootings

- 87% said the shootings were motivations to "get back at those who have hurt them."
- 86% said "general bullying" causes teenagers to turn to lethal violence in the schools.

Students recognize that being a victim of abuse at home or witnessing others being abused at home may cause violence in school.

- 61 % said students shoot others because they have been or are currently victims of physical abuse at home.
- 54% said witnessing physical abuse at home can lead to violence in school.

Students say their schools are not safe.

Homicide is the **second leading cause** of death among young people ages 10 to 24 overall. In this age group, it is the leading cause of death for African-Americans, the second leading cause of death for Hispanics, and the third leading cause of death for American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Asian Pacific Islanders.

**There were 5, 740 children and teens killed by guns in 2008 and 2009** (Children's Defense Fund-CDF, 2012)

The following information is found in the CDF, 2012 report on children and guns:  
Males are twice as likely to be threatened as females.

34,387 children and teens were injured by guns.

Every day, guns kill 15 to 20 children (between ages 14 to 19).

About one in six high school students reported they carried weapons (such as a gun, knife, club) in the past 30 days.

Nationally, 29.8% of students had their property (car, books, clothing) stolen or deliberately damaged on school property one or more times in the twelve months prior to this survey.

## **Risk Factors for Teen Violence:**

- Individual Factors in Teen Violence:
- Attention deficits/hyperactivity
- Antisocial beliefs and attitudes
- History of early aggressive behavior
- Involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Early involvement in general offenses
- Low IQ
- Poor behavioral control
- Social cognitive or information-processing deficits

## **Family Factors in Youth Violence:**

- Authoritarian childrearing attitudes
- Exposure to violence and family conflict
- Harsh, lax, or inconsistent disciplinary practices
- Lack of involvement in the child's life
- Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers
- Low parental education and income
- Parental substance abuse and criminality
- Poor family functioning
- Poor monitoring and supervision of children
- Protective Factors for Teen Violence Prevention
- Individual Protective Factors:
- Intolerant attitude toward deviance
- High IQ
- Positive social orientation
- Peer/School Protective Factors:
- Commitment to school
- Involvement in social activities

According to Statistics more than 1 in 3 high school students, both male and female, have been involved in a physical fight. 1 in 9 of those students have been injured badly enough to need medical treatment.

The U.S. Justice report also stated that 1 in 3 teens, both male and female, have experienced some sort of violent behavior from a dating partner.

Although all of the statistics focus on differing topics they all point to one frightening conclusion, teen anger and violence is now, and has been for several years, a problem in our society.

## Teen Anger and Violence Warning Signs

The National Youth Violence Prevention Center has compiled the following list of warning signs that your teen may be having anger management issues:

- Frequent loss of temper over small issues
- Frequent physical fighting with friends, acquaintances and family members
- Damaging property while in a fit of anger
- Use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Written plans for violent acts
- Carrying a weapon (s)
- Been the victim of school bullies
- Gang affiliations
- Failure to acknowledge the feelings of others
- Fascination with weapons
- Cruelty to animals.

### What to do

Most teen management professionals agree that dealing with a teen with an anger problem should start at home. They believe that most teen anger comes from underlying emotional problems such as fear or rejection or failure. Suggestions on what to do when your teen has an anger management issue include:

- o Give them support and understanding. Try to get to the real issue not just what is on the surface.
- o Let them know that everyone has negative emotions and that it's ok to get angry, but it's not ok to lash out because of their anger.
- o Watch for triggers and find a way to deflect the anger into something more appropriate.
- o Help them to recognize the feelings that cause the anger and how to deal with them before they get out of control.

If all else fails, check into professional help for your child.

Check into family counseling as well; remember teen anger isn't just your child's problem.

## WARNING SIGNS FOR PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

<u>Atmosphere</u>	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Staff</u>
too quiet	body language	challenge, confrontation
restlessness	clenched fists	lack of consistency
too noisy	hitting walls	“get what you expect”
too obedient	no eye contact	target kids – love or hate much
troublemakers aren’t around	restlessness	
rival groups talking	verbal cues	staff need to win personal issues
lookouts posted	phone calls-family	
whispering	failure in school	staff conflict
avoiding staff	not getting privileges	staff fear
engaging staff	prior history- suicide threats	staff flexibility and expectations
too hot/too cold	recent events	
groupings/pairings	dress and make-up	fatigue, frustration
	abrupt change	
	food intake	
	sleep dysfunction	
	setting up arguments	
	neediness	
	medical complaints	

## **RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS ABOUT AT-RISK CHILDREN**

(Children's Defense Fund, Federal Interagency on Child Family Statistics, National Centers for Disease Control)

1. **ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN.** Research shows with absolute certainty that all children can learn (even the poor, language challenged, learning disabled, under achieving). We must examine our attitudes and expectations surrounding the concept of student learning.
2. **SCHOOLS MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** Early 1960's and 1970's studies concluded that poverty yielded strong negative impact on learning. New studies challenge those findings. Developing an environment and milieu of success will make a tremendous impact upon the students.
3. **TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** The single most influential factor in student learning is teacher quality. An ineffective teacher may impact student learning to such a large degree that it inhibits growth for up to one year. We are the most important factor in a child's learning. *"We can be an instrument of inspiration or a tool of torture"* (Gaim Ginott)
4. **IMMEDIATE GAINS ARE POSSIBLE.** Research has found that by utilizing a combination of effective instructional strategies, positive interventions, and relationship connections, student learning can be immediately impacted. It may be helpful to examine a before and after "picture" of the child.
5. **LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS CAN BECOME HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS.** Successful model have been used to significantly raise the performance levels of low performing schools. Don't let the current state of the classroom/school prevent you from attempting to make changes.
6. **BEST PRACTICES WORK FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS.** By using a combination of well researched and documented interventions, achievement improves in students. There are proven strategies that work. Are you willing to attempt some of these ideas and make a change in your approach?



## ANGER/AGGRESSION QUESTIONS

(SEND TO INSTRUCTOR...short answers to each question)

1. DO I ENJOY GETTING ANGRY?
2. WHEN I AM ANGRY, DO I WANT TO BE IN FULL CONTROL OF MY BEHAVIOR, OR DO I WANT TO ACT SPONTANEOUSLY?
3. IF I WANT TO BE IN FULL CONTROL, AM I WILLING TO SPEND THE ENERGY REQUIRED TO STAY AHEAD OF THE ACTION?
4. WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT EXPLOSIVE AND IMPULSIVE ACTS WHEN I GET ANGRY?
5. WHEN I GET ANGRY WITH PEOPLE, HOW DO I WANT TO END UP WITH THEM?
6. WHERE DO I STAND ON SULKING AND POUTING?
7. AM I WILLING TO REMAIN UNAWARE OF MY ANGER SOMETIMES?
8. WHAT IS MY POSITION WITH REGARD TO SHORT-TERM GAINS AND LONG-TERM LOSSES?
9. OVERALL, WHAT DO I MOST WANT THE OUTCOME OF MY ANGER EXPRESSION TO BE?

## GENERAL THEMES IN AN EXPLOSIVE CHILD'S LIFE

Poor Preparation Skills- the child is often surprised by life. He/she does not think ahead and pre-plan strategies.

Poor Response Skills- this person has poor impulse control and often over-reacts to situations.

Poor Support Systems-whether it is a lack of family support, few friends, isolation in the community, or simply a lack of people who care, this individual feels alone and has little positive input.

Poor Social Skills-he/she does not understand the strategies of prosocial skills and how to interact with people. They may come across as insensitive, callous, mean, rude, or simply uncaring.

Poor Self-Image- this individual has a general lack of confidence and positive self-worth. This impacts how he/she relates to others in life.

Poor Coping Skills- when things don't go well, this person does not know how to react. They often become angry, moody, or resentful for the situation. This leads to blaming others and projecting their anger upon others.

Poor Understanding of Expectations- while it may seem that this person just doesn't care, in reality, they may not understand. A lack of clarity in life rules, expectations, or general social values is lacking in their life.

Poor Me Attitude- this person feels like a victim and often senses that people don't like them (real or imagined).

Poor Futuring Perspective- a general lack of hope and brightness for the future impacts this person. They can't imagine life better than it is.

Poor Prognosis- the tendency toward pessimism and negative thinking permeates their life.

# ANGER DANGER

*Ephesians 4:26 "Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger."*

## • UNDERSTANDING ANGER-

Anger is a secondary emotion. It is generated from other emotions. The most common ones are hurt and fear. "I am so angry because he *hurt* my feelings." If someone trips you, you get angry because of embarrassment. Anger is used as a defense mechanism. Be willing to look beneath the anger to find the triggering emotion.

## • RECOGNIZING ANGER-

Examine the external and internal signals in a person.

1. How do you know when you are getting upset? (tenseness, heart pounding, sweating, impatient)-all internal signs.
2. How do others know when you are upset? (loud voice, sharpness in voice, withdraw, face gets red)-all external signs.

## • THE CYCLE OF ANGER-

Understand the anger cycle. A person gets frustrated, hurt, rejected, etc. Anger comes to the surface. The person expresses the anger or pushes down the anger. The behavior of the person changes to express the inner turmoil. It eventually blows and the person is upset and angry. An apology or discussion may follow. Without intervention and an attempt to understand the cause of the anger, this pattern will be repeated.

## • WORKING THROUGH ANGER-

1. Discuss your perspective with others. It helps to hear what others believe.
2. Examine your own behavior. What part do "I" play in the problem?
3. What can I control? What can't I control?
4. Write out options, choices, and solutions to the problem(s).

## • AVOIDING THE PITFALLS OF ANGER-

1. Identify the anger zones (places and people).
2. Develop accountability. Talk with others about your anger.
3. Ask yourself "Is it worth it?" "Is my getting angry worth the issue?"

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

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## **TEACHER BEHAVIORS THAT ERODE CLASSROOM CLIMATE**

### ***SELF-EVALUATION TIME!***

Sarcasm- students' feelings can be hurt by sarcastic, put-downs thinly disguised as humor.

Negative tone of voice- Students can read between the lines and sense a sarcastic, negative, or condescending tone of voice.

Negative body language- a teacher's clenched fists, set jaw, quizzical look, or rigid body posture can speak more loudly than any words.

Inconsistency- Nothing escapes the students' attention. They are the first to realize that the teacher is not enforcing the rules and consequences consistently.

Favoritism- "Brown nosing" is an art, and any student in any class can point out the teacher's pet who gets special treatment.

Put-downs- Sometimes teachers are not aware that they are embarrassing a student with subtle put-downs or insults.

Outbursts- Teachers are sometimes provoked by students and they "lose it." These teacher outbursts set a bad example for the students and could escalate into more serious problems.

Public Reprimands- No one wants to be corrected, humiliated, or lose face in front of his or her peers.

Unfairness- Taking away promised privileges, scheduling a surprise test, nit-picking while grading homework or tests, or assigning punitive homework could be construed as unfair.

Apathy- Students do not want to be ignored. Teachers who forget student's names or appear indifferent will lose students' respect.

Inflexibility- Teachers who never adjust homework assignments or test dates to meet the needs of their students appear rigid and uncaring.

Lack of humor- Teachers who cannot laugh at themselves usually don't encourage students to take risks and make mistakes. Humorless classes lack energy.

## CONTROLLING ANXIETY

Anxiety is the body's warning that something may be suspicious, unusual, or different. We often take this to mean a problem, panic, or we may be losing control. While we often tell one another to remain calm, this is not a natural reaction to anxiety or a crisis. The following are common areas of anxiety and ways to improve your normal "crisis approach", if you are finding yourself ineffective during these times.

1. **LACK OF CONFIDENCE** This will usually be found in two situations.

a) When one is in a new or unfamiliar situation and you are unsure as to how to respond or proceed.

b) When one is in a situation similar to before and it did not go well previously (here we go again).

\*\*\*\* Capitalize on your strengths. If you communicate well, have a good sense of humor, are a good listener, etc., use your strength. Unfortunately, we end up using our weaknesses more in a crisis situation. If I have an anger problem, it explodes. If I have difficulty communicating, I begin to ramble or stutter. Ask for suggestions from supervisors, colleagues, and friends. Take classes and go to training sessions. Get input.

2. **PERSONAL SORE SPOTS** In other words, "what pushes your buttons."

What kind of person really bugs you? The whiner, the boss, the "I don't care" kid, the giggler? We must know our own areas of growth and how we get hooked.

\*\*\*\* Begin to examine these areas and increase awareness. Make commitments to not get hooked by the situation. Remember, you are not the target. Be able to separate your own ego, your own self, from the situation.

3. **INDIVIDUAL STRESSES** We all have stress in our lives. Did you get a ticket on the way to work (lucky guess), have an argument with the kids or spouse, was someone in your parking spot (again)? These are issues which confront all of us.

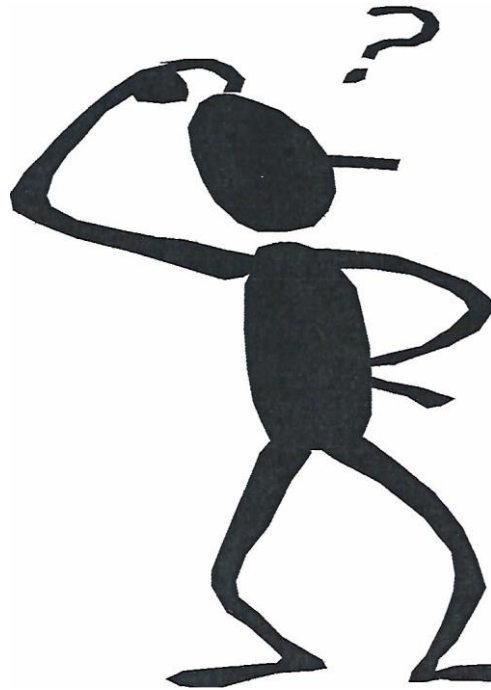
\*\*\*\* Take time for yourself. Go biking, walking, read a book, listen to music, have an espresso (but not a double), be with friends. We must learn to enjoy life, it is a precious gift.

***(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)***

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4. **OUR OWN FEAR AND ANXIETY RESPONSES** How do we react to a situation? Can we keep our cool? What happens to me when I get angry? Typically, an individual does a nice job in a situation until they begin to "stress out." It is at this point we say and do things we wish we wouldn't have done in the situation.  
\*\*\*\* We need to have a variety of strategies to stay focused. Talk to the people involved, self-talk your way through situations, take deep breaths, keep your body loose, ask for feedback from people. Be willing to learn and to find effective ways to respond to difficult situations.

5. **ORGANIZATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONFUSION** If one is unsure as to the direction to be taken, confusion enters in to the situation. During confusion, people are not as effective.  
\*\*\*\* Ask for rules to be clarified. Establish clear policies, If there are no clear policies, develop some and present them to those in management. Don't take a powerless stance in your job. You are necessary for the success of the job.

**THE GOAL IS NOT TO ELIMINATE ANXIETY, BUT TO CONTROL AND DIRECT IT.**



## ***DISTORTED THINKING***

"Crazy thinking" is a common problem with people who have significant behavioral issues. Their thinking process is skewed and distorted. Do any of these look familiar? **SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

**FILTERING-** one negative event over shadows everything else. Once a problem occurs, they can't seem to focus on any other issues.

**OVER-GENERALIZATION-** one experience generalizes to all situations (prejudice, bias foundation). If you respond a certain way one time, it now becomes what they expect each time.

**MIND READING-** assumption of facts. They know what you think and believe ... regardless of how you attempt to convince them otherwise.

**PERSONALIZATION-** victim mentality. They feel picked upon and singled out.

**CONTROL FALLACIES-** 1) being controlled; 2) responsible for others (controlling them). Similar to the victim aspects, this person feels they have no control over life or responsible for all of life.

**FALLACY OF FAIRNESS-** "it's not fair" issue. Life does not seem fair as situations appear to be tilted against them.

**BLAMING-** blame others, no responsibility. It is never their fault.

**"YOU OWE ME" SYNDROME-** deserve things, entitlement. This person feels specific benefits and breaks are deserved.

*Think of individuals you know that fall into one (or more) of these categories. What are your interventions for these people?*

Send a 1-2 page summary to the instructor with at least one situation and interventions (you may use initials or a 'fake' name).

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## ANGER

### (IT WON'T WORK HERE)



Anger is a form of communication. The way one comes to express behavior is a learned behavior and can be modified and changed. Anger gets something done. It gets attention, their way, fear reaction. The magnitude of the anger is often dependent upon the magnitude of the stress in the situation.

Many kids start out "high" already. That is, emotionally, they are already wound up, stressed, agitated. Anger covers up the primary feelings in a person. Fear, loss of hope, and hurt are the initial areas which can bring about anger. It is easier to show anger than the person's primary feelings, which are much more intense or hidden. They often times reveal ones heart, intentions, and character. Aggression toward others can mean a fear of others, of relationships, of intimacy.

There are specific behaviors which go along with each individual's anger. While they are often unique to the person, there are some general ones which seem almost universal in nature. Remember, many kids come from a system (home, school, community) that is not meeting their needs. They begin to move into internal self-talk which may escalate the person.

It is okay to get angry; it is what we do with our anger which is the issue. Anger can motivate a person to change. However, as a society, we have come to be tentative toward anger because of the extremes we see modeled in life. Let us begin to see anger as an illumination, a cue that there is a need, a hurt, or changes are needed in a life.



• \*\*\* YOU DO NOT NEED TO SEND THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS. THEY ARE FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT AS YOU BEGIN TO EXAMINE YOUR OWN STUDENTS.

## **UNDERSTANDING AND CONNECTING WITH AGGRESSIVE STUDENTS**

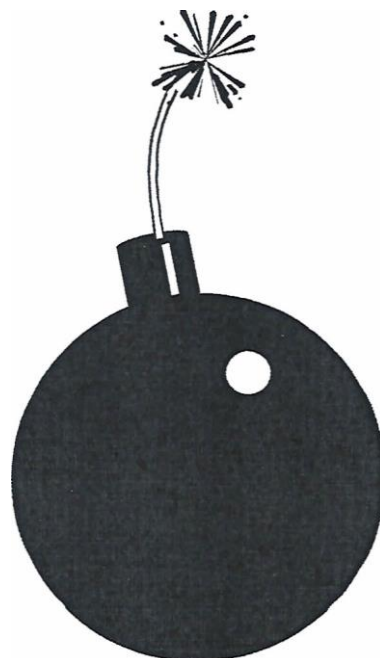
### **HISTORY**

Student A has two siblings, both girls. They are both in high school while he is in elementary. His father works a job where his schedule fluctuates between day, swing, and graveyard shifts. His mother is involved in neighborhood and community activities. Student A has a history of aggressive behaviors on the playground, before and after school. He feels "picked on" and "unliked" by peers. The parents have been contacted and are equally concerned. However, there seems to be little carry over into student A's life after the meetings.

In a discussion with previous teachers, this student has successfully isolated himself from his peers. He does not like to be with kids, has few social relations, and has not participated in any extra-curricular events in school. In recent years, academics have become an issue as the student is not turning in work. Upon being tested, the student was found to have average intelligence, which only substantiated the feelings of the school and parents.

At present, this student is in your class (or your school) and the principal (or parents, teachers, etc). have come and asked for your assistance. Student A has historically not been belligerent or rebellious. However, in recent weeks, he has refused to do several things for adults, including saying threatening remarks.

**(QUESTIONS ON NEXT PAGE)**



1. Why now? In light of the years of history, why is the student choosing now to act out in refusal. Why has his aggressive, typically focused on playground and to peers, now been focused on adults?
2. Has the student connected with his sisters? What types of dynamics are there between siblings?
3. Is he involved in any community groups? Boy Scouts, religious affiliation, sports teams? How does he relate to neighbors?
4. Are his problems with the same group of kids? Same types of problems?
5. How does he manifest his anger, through hitting, yelling, profanity, threats?
6. Are there any adults or significant others he has attached to over the years?
7. Is there anyone at school who feels attached to the student? Do any adults feel to connect or reach out to him? How about kids?
8. What are his likes? Begin to examine reinforcement issues.
9. What is his motivation for his anger? What is he hoping to accomplish? Is he? Is there another way to accomplish his needs without his anger being used?

*ANGER*

*INTERVENTION*

*APPROACHES*

## **DO YOU EXPRESS ANGER CONSTRUCTIVELY?**

In some cultures, societies, and families, anger and aggression are seen as negative aspects of human behavior. Regardless, we must learn to appropriately focus our anger and avoid destructive consequences of our rage.

1. I never or very rarely become angry.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
2. I avoid expressing anger, because most people would misinterpret it as hatred.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
3. To be honest, I would rather bury my resentment toward a friend than risk losing his or her acceptance.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
4. No one has ever won an argument by blowing up.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
5. It is better to work out my anger on my own than to disclose it to others.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
6. Anger is not a mature or noble way to react to a frustrating situation.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
7. It's probably not a good idea to discipline someone while you are angry with him or her.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
8. The expression of anger only begets more anger and adds to the problem.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
9. When angry, I usually hide it because I fear making a fool of myself.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree
10. When angry with someone close to you, you should try to communicate it in some way, even if it is painful.  
a. Agree                      b. Agree Somewhat                      c. Disagree

**SCORING:** Give yourself one point for each "a" response, two points for each "b" response, and three points for each "c" response.

**A score of 24-30 points:** You accept your angry feelings and recognize how they should be expressed to build better interpersonal relationships.

**A score of 17-23 points:** You have an average grasp of how and why one should express anger to "clear the air." But there is always room for improvement.

**A score of 10-16 points:** You don't handle your anger as well as you might in order to promote more solid relationships with others. Keep in mind that it is better to express your anger in the moment than to fantasize later about retaliation.

## **THREE TYPES OF HOSTILE/AGGRESSIVE PEOPLE**

### **A) The Steamroller or Sherman Tank-**

Fond of Aggression

Characteristics-

1. Charges at you
2. Out to prove something
3. They do not recognize hurt feelings

Diffusion tactics-

- Avoid confrontation. Clarify. Ask questions
- Use of eye contact, use first name, personal
- Keep your ideas personal. Use of "I" statements are helpful. "In my opinion" "This is what I see"

### **B) The Sneak Attack from the Sniper-**

Undercuts, Sarcastic, Subtle

Characteristics-

1. Rarely attacks directly
2. Appears condescending, superior, right

Diffusion tactics-

- Confront. Be tactful but you must help the person see that you are not an easy target. "You stated that you thought my presentation was interesting. Is that positive or negative?"
- Seek group confrontation. When in class, it is okay to bring in the group for discussion. Be careful to not put the person on the spot or to empower them. It is best to ignore them personally and ask the class a general question. (After the sniper comments, "This test was really fair!") "Class, let me ask all of you a question. If I asked questions we didn't go over, I need to know. Did you feel the test covered material in the book and in class?"
- The sniper may back off after you confront them. Be prepared for a snide or negative comment from them. Again, open up the communication lines with them and it will prevent the "sniper" approach. "Sandy, we can talk about this if you want." The response will usually be "no" with some low key comment, but that will minimize their future negative interactions with you.

### C) *The Grenade or Exploder-*

Tantrums, Escalates

Characteristics-

1. Frustrated, lack of perceived power
2. Ineffective in communication patterns. Use of anger and emotions are the major expression of communication.

Diffusion Tactics-

- If possible, let them vent. Naturally, this should be done in a private or small setting. However, with parents or adults, it may be possible to let them "get it out." For students, see if they wish to continue the discussion in a more private area.
- Use of tone, volume, cadence to gain attention. Remember, over 90% of communication is nonverbal. "It is not what you say, but how you say it." Watch your attitude, tone, inflection. And, be careful of your body language.
- Buy time, interrupt, stall. Don't feel you have to answer a question immediately. It is okay to say, "Let me think about that for a moment." Or to even say, "Good question, before I answer, would you like a drink of water, coffee (no whiskey allowed at this point). ☺"

When working with angry or aggressive people, we must keep our own sense of control. It is easy to become agitated and frustrated with the people. Use of silence and taking our time to answer can be an excellent technique to calm the other person down. It is okay to ask them to talk later or go to another setting. "Jim, I want to talk about this but in the middle of class doesn't work for me. We can either go back in the office or you can wait after class and we can talk. It is up to you."

Be in control, even if inside you are nervous and unsure. Carefully respond to the angry person, but let them know you have a plan (whether it is to talk later or now).

## **AVOIDING POWER STRUGGLES**

### **I. Basic underlying philosophy**

- A. *Behavior is purposive*
- B. *Need for belonging/significance*

### **II. Reasons to avoid power struggles**

- A. *Utilizing power-oriented tactics impresses the child with the value of power and increases the desire for it.*
  - 1. This leads to yet stronger orientation toward power.
  - 2. If parent/adult "wins" often enough through force the desire for power may find other, even less desirable manifestations or lead to the desire for revenge.
- B. *Reinforces mistaken goal*
  - 1. Mistaken goal: "I am significant only when I am in control or when I'm demonstrating that no one can control me".
  - 2. Losing a power struggle (or winning it, for that matter) proves the perceived validity of that belief
- C. *Shifts issue from true topic to "who will win"*
  - 1. Avoids resolution of whatever the issue was to begin with.
  - 2. Increases rather than decreases the conflict.

### **III. Identifying power struggles**

- A. *Adult's feeling: challenged; angry; provoked*
- B. *Adult's reaction: tendency to fight or give in*
- C. *Child's response to adult's correction: active or passive aggressive misbehavior becomes more intense, or "defiant compliance "*.

### **IV. Avoiding power struggles**

- A *Awareness of feelings*
  - 1. We do have control...it's not a catastrophe.
  - 2. Maintain awareness of what is actually going on. Don't take things personally.
- B. *When feeling challenged, defied, provoked, that's the signal that power struggle could ensue. This is your Choice Point*
- C. *What to do*
  - 1. Withdraw ... refuse to fight or give in (take a time out)
  - 2. Strategies
    - a. Reflective listening (Is this what you are saying ... ?)
    - b. Exploring alternatives (problem ownership)
    - c. I-messages (I hear, I think, I yi yi yi yi-help!)
    - d. Logical consequences (you're late so you must come early tomorrow)
    - e. Humor (no put downs or embarrassing statements.)
    - f. Honesty
- D. *When not involved in a power struggle*
  - 1. Enlist cooperation
  - 2. Encourage
  - 3. Build relationship
  - 4. Enjoy people
  - 5. Laugh

# ***TIPS FOR DEALING WITH AGRESSION***

## ***Send to Instructor***

The following suggestions may be helpful when confronted by an angry individual. This approach avoids being defensive and encourages the person to share their concerns. This also builds relationship between you and the person.

### **DO**

- 1. Listen
- 2. Write down what they say
- 3. When they slow down, ask them what else is bothering them
- 4. Exhaust their list of complaints
- 5. Ask them to clarify any specific complaints that are too general
- 6. Show them the list and ask if it is complete
- 7. Ask them for suggestions for solving any of the problems that they have listed
- 8. Write down their suggestions
- 9. Use the word “we” when discussing solutions
- 10. If they start out loud with their voice, you must match their intensity. Do not yell at them, but let them know you have heard them. As you continue, begin to get softer in your voice. This will bring them down in volume with you.  
example: you say “I know you are upset (louder than normal voice), but if we can sit down and talk, I’m sure we will work this out (going softer until you reach normal calm voice).

### **DON’T**

- 1. Argue
- 2. Defend or become defensive
- 3. Promise things you can’t produce
- 4. Take responsibility for areas which don’t belong to you. Let others own their problems (parents, educators, students)
- 5. Belittle or minimize the problem

**SEND TO INSTRUCTOR: WRITE A 2 PAGE SUMMARY ON WHAT YOU DO PERSONALLY TO AVOID POWER STRUGGLES AND REDUCE ANXIETY AND AGITATION IN YOUR LIFE.**





## **WHAT TO DO WHEN ...**

### **A student is out of their seat-**

- \*\*continue to teach
- \*\*follow them around
- \*\*say their name, repeat assigned task

Avoid: asking them "what should you be doing?"  
raising your voice and attacking them

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### **A student is pushing in line-**

- \*\*remind them of rules
- \*\*stand in front (or behind) the student
- \*\*dramatically ask them, "Are you all right?"

Avoid: sending them to end of line without other intervention  
giving consequence without another intervention

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### **A student is arguing with you-**

- \*\*take a stand, "I don't want to argue about this. Your answer is..."
- \*\*ask them to come in later (after school, recess, lunch) so you can finish the debate later.
- \*\*if it is chronic, use a pre-set comment, "before we go any further, is this going to be an argument?"

Avoid: getting into a power struggle  
discussing longer than you desire

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### **A student is about to lose their temper-**

- \*\*ask them if they need some time to themselves
- \*\*find a place of agreement, "Look, I'm getting frustrated, how about you? Let's go get a drink, then look at the situation again."
- \*\*address the class or other students, "It may be helpful to start reading (or whatever) so Jeff can have some time."

Avoid: being sarcastic or being harsh in your tone of voice  
being intimidated and backing off your role as the authority

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### **A student is in another person's space-**

- \*\*remind them of the rules
- \*\*state the "aggressors" name (repeat if necessary, then re-direct

Avoid: giving consequences without an intervention  
Just separating without addressing the issue

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# School-Based Cyberbullying Interventions

Cyberbullying is a growing trend with school-aged children. Current estimates are that as many as 20 to 35% of children and adolescents report experiencing cyberbullying as a bully, a victim, or both.

There is no standard definition of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying has been defined as "an individual or a group willfully using information and communication involving electronic technologies to facilitate deliberate and repeated harassment or threat to another individual or group by sending or posting cruel text and/or graphics using technological means".

## How is Cyberbullying Different from Traditional Bullying?

Despite the subtle differences, definitions share the following components which make cyberbullying distinct from traditional bullying:

- **Access:** It is virtually impossible for victims to get away from cyberbullies. Because most students have access to computers and cell phones at home, cyberbullies have access to and can reach their victims almost all the time. Victims do not have a safe haven as they do in cases of traditional bullying.
- **Reach:** Unlike traditional bullying, due to technology, the cyberbullying audience has few to no barriers and the audience easily grows almost exponentially.
- **Anonymity:** Cyberbullying is not a face-to-face interaction and cyberbullies hide behind technology. Anonymity which is inherent in electronic communication fosters lack of inhibition. As a result, normal behavior restraints can disappear, allowing adolescents to act harsher than they would in real life.

Initial research has demonstrated that being a victim of cyberbullying may negatively impact students' physical, social, emotional, and cognitive functioning. Experts also claim that it is important for schools to ensure that they take reasonable precautions to protect their students from online aggression and respond to reported cases of cyberbullying in order to maintain a safe school climate. Experts also claim that school personnel need to understand what cyberbullying is, how it affects students, and what they can do to create a safe school environment. The goal of this article is to provide initial steps in addressing cyberbullying in schools.

## Using the Three-Tiered Model

A three-tiered model focused on prevention and intervention incorporates a "whole school" approach to bullying prevention that educates school staff, students, and parents and facilitates changes in beliefs, behaviors, and social norms that foster support and trust. A primary emphasis of many school-based bullying prevention programs is to intervene at Tier 1 to broadly educate students, staff, and parents and change the normative climate so bullying is seen as unacceptable. Additional supports and services may be needed to respond to potential and actual instances of cyberbullying at Tiers 2 and 3. At Tier 2, school interventions target groups of students at risk of being involved in cyberbullying. And lastly, at Tier 3 school interventions provide intensive,

and individualized support. Use the Three-Tiered Model to anticipate, plan & prepare, and educate the larger school community on cyberbullying prevention. The following is an example of initial steps in addressing cyberbullying in schools:

## **Develop a Plan**

1) *Create a Team.* Form a team to focus on cyberbullying or expand the current bullying team to include cyberbullying.

- Review or create a bullying prevention and intervention program that includes traditional and cyberbullying behaviors.
- Work to change norms about bullying and school context to target and prevent school bullying.

2) *Assess.* Gather data on the current level of cyberbullying at your school to determine the extent of the problem.

- Consider a whole-school surveyor surveying targeted groups including teachers/counselors, students and parents. Schools may wish to create their own measure or use an available measure.
- Gather resources. Willard has sample student and staff surveys for download on the internet. Disciplinary referrals or reported incidents of cyberbullying may provide useful data.

## **Beginning Prevention/Intervention Efforts**

1) *Awareness of Cyberbullying.* Many parents and students may not realize the dangers associated with electronic media so education should be broad and include school staff, students, parents, and other relevant community members.

- Provide resources to help students and parents identify cyberbullying and report it to the appropriate school staff.
- Students should be informed of ways to stop cyberbullying if it is happening to them. The free CyberSmart curriculum ([cybersmart.org](http://cybersmart.org)) provides downloadable lessons and activities to educate school staff, students, and parents and emphasizes core character values (caring, honesty, respect for self, responsibility & fairness) as the underlying message of cyberbullying education.
- Educate parents about the risk of cyberbullying and provide methods they can use at home to prevent or intervene with cyberbullying behaviors. This information can be delivered to parents via workshops, online training, brochures and pamphlets, Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings or via a newsletter that is sent home with children.

2) *Create Policies and Procedures.* Preventative interventions that target school bullying by changing norms about bullying and school context may decrease electronic bullying so schools need clear policies. Clearly establish the fact that technology will not be used for bullying or harassing others. The following points should be addressed/considered:

- Include a section about cyberbullying in the student handbook.
- Require students and parents to sign off annually on clear rules, expectations and consequences regarding online and cell phone use and behavior.
- Include specific disciplinary processes and procedures for those who use technology improperly.
- Establish a process for students to report cyberbullying. The majority of cyberbullying incidents go unreported so consider allowing student input/involvement in the reporting process.

3) *Formulate a Plan to Respond to Victims.* School psychologists and other support staff are critical in working with victims of cyberbullying. This type of work may include the following:

- Interviewing the victim to determine their current level of distress and providing counseling or other services deemed necessary.
- Meeting with the victim's parents and provide any relevant referrals to community mental health services or law enforcement.
- Offering groups for students who are experiencing cyberbullying to problem-solve, work on conflict resolution skills, and teach appropriate response strategies.

4) *Plan/or dealing with reported cases.* Even with good prevention efforts in place, a plan for handling reported cases of cyberbullying is necessary.

# **TYPES OF DIFFICULT STUDENTS**

## **1. OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE**

"I don't care." "I don't trust you." "Leave me alone."

Physical behavior- defiant, hostile, intimidation.

Internal perspective- mistrusts. Anger is close to the surface. Fear, hurt loneliness.

Adult interactions and thoughts- as children pull back and put up walls, the adult becomes uncomfortable, confused, resentment builds.

Needs- to have a safe place. Ability to trust. Not be judged.

Intervention Strategies- be authentic and real. Stand up for yourself, be honest, but compassionate. Give space. Keep door open to child. Emphasize communication. Ask the child "what you can do to help." Touch base regularly with student. Enter into their world. Rating scales (on a scale of "1 to 5" how do you feel, how upset are you ... ). Use of cue cards such as "I need break" "Please leave me alone."

## **2. ATTENTION GETTER**

"Nobody loves me." "It's not my fault." "Notice me."

Physical behavior- talks frequently, active, clown around, gets others involved.

Internal perspective- high anxiety and insecurity. Feels like an outsider.

Adult interactions and thoughts- gets tired of student. Adult can become impatient, aloof. Ambivalent about feelings for this child.

Needs- to feel safe, worthy, accepted.

Intervention Strategies- need to get under the surface and to the root of emotions. Use of role play may help. Speak about feelings, needs. Use of intrinsic values and feelings (what do you think and feel) is better than extrinsic approaches (this is what I think). Difficult to bond to this person as they only show surface feelings. Help the student "get real."

### 3. PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE

"You can't make me." "I can't." "I don't want to." "This is stupid."

Physical behavior- passive--appears compliant, but has excuses.  
Aggressive--controlling, shut down.

Internal Perspective- tense, locked up. Denies feelings, acts on environment.

Adult interactions and thoughts- we attempt being kind, helpful, friendly ... and then get conned. We have deep mistrust of this person.

Needs- gain control to feel competent and comfortable.

Intervention Strategies- boundaries and limits are needed. Help this person to take off the "mask" by affirming who they are. Discuss anger, root causes such as hurt, fear, and frustration. This person will benefit from a self-management behavior program. Rating scales are also helpful.

### 4. CLINGON

"I can't do it myself." "Help me." "Don't leave me."

Physical behavior- clingy, physically close to adult, tattler. Shows little independence.

Internal perspective- fear, impatience, anxiety.

Adult interactions and thoughts- adult can become emotionally attached. This child pulls on our "helping heart." We all want to be needed.

Needs- deal with fear. Must see self as capable and responsible.

Intervention Strategies- teach independent skills. Be supportive, but allow for failure. Use of "hit and run." Boundaries for student and adult. Allow the student to fail, but offer supports and learning environment. Self reflective talks, writing, drawings may be helpful.

## EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS TO REDUCE AGGRESSION

- 1. Create a school bullying prevention committee to oversee efforts to reduce aggression.** This group can arrange staff training, oversee the effectiveness of the program, suggest changes, and monitor the consistency of interventions.
- 2. Train all staff.** Staff behavior is the key element in effective behavior interventions. Staff members serve as models for respectful behavior. Consistent staff response to aggression tells young people which behaviors are unacceptable. Consistent staff reporting is necessary to make discipline effective. Staff school-wide should encourage students to report aggression rather than focusing on reducing 'tattling'. And when staff avoid blaming the targets of bullying they send a clear message to bullies that they are fully responsible for their own actions.
- 3. Maintain positive feeling tone and strong staff-student connections.** When young people know they belong and are welcomed, they are more likely to try out new behaviors and to learn from consequences. When they see all adults modeling respectful behavior, they are more likely to show respect to peers. Use a variety of mentoring strategies to build staff connections for all students. Because we help young people when we maintain optimism and the belief that young people can change, staff and administrators should avoid the use of anger as a discipline strategy. Bullying by staff and administrators should also be addressed in any intervention.  
The best practices in bullying prevention are helping youth change aggressive behavior.
- 4. Address gender issues.** Evaluate the issues that occur between females and between males. There are many excellent resources on this topic. (see bibliography).
- 5. Use frequent descriptive praise for positive behavior.** Praise is important when an aggressive young person breaks his or her pattern and acts responsibly and kindly- or even when aggression is less frequent or less intense over a period of time. Descriptive feedback ("I notice that you have been playing without fighting.") is more effective than trait-based praise ("You're so kind") or I-messages (I see you are being very positive in your attitude.") Praise that names the result of the improved behavior helps young people see the positive effects of their changed behavior.
- 6. Develop staff-wide consensus about specific rules.** Unacceptable behaviors are often grouped by level, based on potential harm. For example, three categories might be: teasing and exclusion, hitting, and severe harassment and physical aggression. Except for clearly accidental behavior, focus rules on actions or words rather than intention. Maintain one behavior standard whether the target 'minds' or not, or whether or not the aggressor and target are friends. Avoid the search for "who started it" and focus on choices each student made- and on alternative choices that were available.
- 7. Maintain a school-wide reporting expectation for verbal and physical aggression.** All staff report peer-to-peer aggressive behavior to one central person (often the principal or assistant principal) to emphasize the importance of this behavior and to allow for consistent administration of consequences. This does not mean that other behaviors such as class disruption or failure to complete work are handled this way these behaviors are often best handled by the teacher unless they become chronic.
- 8. Use a school-wide behavior rubric - that is, a set of predictable escalating consequences- for aggression.** The school outlines specific, predictable, and escalating consequences for each category of peer-to-peer aggression. Students with behavior IEPs may have different consequences, but will have the same expectations.

More severe behaviors will sometimes lead to more severe consequences, but make every effort to keep consequences predictable and consistent when possible. Within this rubric, remember that policy and law will mandate other consequences for legally defined harassment, criminal threatening, assault, and other crimes.

**9. Administer consequences for aggression centrally.** To ensure consistency and to make it clear that safety is a high priority, it works best when the principal or assistant principal is the one to receive reports of peer-to-peer aggression, carry out a brief interview of aggressive youth (focused on helping the student take responsibility for the behavior and look up his or her consequence on the rubric), and investigate when necessary. The administrator sends a letter home outlining behavior, consequence, and consequence next time. Copies go to teacher and file.

**10. Support reflection and development of empathy after consequences are known.** During consequence time (inside recess, quiet lunch away from peers, detention, or in school suspension), the person supervising this time can help young people to complete a reflection form in which they write about what they did, how that behavior affected the target, what goal they were trying to reach through those actions, and how else they can reach those goals in the future. This reflection is often done by several young people in parallel, on clipboards or at desks, with the person on duty moving between them the way a writing teacher will edit with one student after another. Ask open-ended questions that promote reflection ("What did you do" "What was wrong with that?" "What goal were you trying to reach?" Next time you have that goal how will you reach it without hurting anyone?") Avoid questions like "Why did you do it?" or "How would you feel if someone did that to you?" as they may provide the youth with an opportunity to blame the target, give excuses, or trivialize the behavior.

**11. Involve parents.** Let parents know about both positive and negative behaviors relating to the aggressive behavior. Tell them when young people tell the truth about their own actions, when they show concern for the effects of their actions, and when they are respectful during the discipline process. Help parents find roles in the school's intervention (for example, praise or reward at home for positive behavior) and give them credit when things change. Invite them to suggest better interventions ("What would you like us to do next time?") rather than reacting defensively when they criticize our interventions. When there are consistent issues between parents and the school, meet with parents regularly (not just when there is a crisis) to strengthen working relationships.

**12. Support peer bystanders.** Encourage students to speak up in safe ways about bullying, to tell staff what they see and hear, and to befriend isolated peers. Thank and protect young people who report aggressive behavior toward themselves or toward others. Train and support a self-selected group of bystanders who want to be more effective at stopping bullying and exclusion in real-life situations.

**13. Show parents, students and staff that the program is working and what they are doing to make a difference.** Specific positive feedback to parents, staff and students about declining rates of aggression help them continue changes. Feedback about what they are doing to make a difference is also important.



# Guidelines for Confrontations

1) Is your goal to solve a problem or to win?

\* if you see it as winning, then you probably have a heavy ego investment and see winning as succeeding and will use anger and intimidation to try to gain CONTROL.

\* have you really won if you cause them to lose face ...?

\* what happens when a gang banger loses face ...?

2) Where does your authority come from?

- position, law and personal credibility or EGO ...?

3) Can you remain objective while trying to HELP this person?

- task centered, emotional control & bias management

4) Is this person's anger FOCUSED or NON-FOCUSED?

- if FOCUSED:

: acknowledge &/or interrupt the anger by proper proxemics (demeanor) and perspective (focus on the cause and lead away from the feelings to how to cooperatively solving the problem - real or perceived)

- if NON~FOCUSED:

: attempt to interrupt and find the underlying cause

**\*REMEMBER - REDUCE THE LEVEL OF ANGER FIRST**

a) Acknowledge Anger/Use Diffusing Technique(s)

b) Bridge to Content - focus on problem not feelings

c) Paraphrase & Summarize



## **CHECK THE ITEMS THAT APPLY TO YOU**

### **SUPPRESSING ANGER**

- I am very image conscious. I don't like to let others know my problems.
- Even when I feel very flustered I portray myself publicly as having it all together.
- I am rather reserved about sharing my problems or frustrations.
- If a family member or friend upsets me I can let days pass without even mentioning it.
- I have a tendency to be depressed and moody.
- Resentful thinking is common for me, although many people would never suspect it.
- I have suffered with physical ailments (headaches, stomach ailments, sleep problems).
- There are times when I wonder if my opinions or preferences are really valid.
- Sometimes I feel paralyzed when confronted by an unwanted situation.

### **OPEN AGGRESSION**

- I can be blunt and forceful when someone does something to frustrate me.
- As I speak my convictions my voice becomes increasingly louder.
- When someone confronts me about a problem, I am likely to offer a ready rebuttal.
- No one has to guess my opinion: I'm known for having unwavering viewpoints.
- When something goes wrong, I focus so much on fixing the problem I overlook other people's feelings.
- I have a history of getting caught in bickering matches with family members.
- During verbal disagreements with someone, I tend to repeat myself several times.
- It hard to keep my thoughts to myself when it is obvious that someone else is wrong.
- I have a reputation for being strong willed.
- I tend to give advice, even when others have not asked for it.

### **PASSIVE AGGRESSION**

- When I am frustrated, I become silent, knowing it bothers other people.
- I am prone to sulk and pout.
- When I don't want to do a project I will procrastinate. I can be lazy.
- When someone asks if I am frustrated, I will lie and say, "No, everything is fine."
- There are times when I am deliberately evasive so others won't bother me.
- I sometimes approach work projects half-heartedly.
- When someone talks to me about my problems I stare straight ahead, deliberately obstinate.
- I complain about people behind their backs, but resist the opportunity to be open with them face to face.
- Sometimes I become involved in behind-the-scenes misbehavior.
- I sometimes refuse to do someone a favor, knowing it will irritate him or her.

On the next page, anger approaches and interventions will be discussed. Evaluate strategies for your students and for yourself.

# **ANGER: FIVE APPROACHES – SEND TO INSTRUCTOR**

## 1. SUPPRESSING ANGER-Denial of anger

When might you choose to suppress your anger? \_\_\_\_\_

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Suppression often comes from fear caused by negative experiences with authority figures. Another reason is due to a strong sense of "image consciousness" and anger is viewed as bad.

**What To Do:** *Find one person to share with and be open. Write out thoughts, journal ideas.*

## 2. OPEN AGGRESSION - Self preservation

What areas of personal imperfections or mistakes do you have a difficult time accepting? \_\_\_\_\_

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A sense of insecurity often triggers this area. If we feel powerless, open aggression may occur.

**What To Do:** *Be accountable to someone. Be willing to self-evaluate.*

## 3. PASSIVE AGGRESSION - Openly accepting, but covert warfare

What are some ways you have seen people use passive-aggressive methods?

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Avoiding vulnerability is a part of this issue--the need for control, but wanting to still "look okay" to the world.

**What To Do:** *Be honest. Share feelings.*

## 4. ASSERTIVE ANGER- Sharing what you feel, but taking the other person's emotions into account.

Can you think of personal examples when you used assertive anger? \_\_\_\_\_

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## 5. DROPPING ANGER- Realizing what is important. What areas can you control?

What are some personal areas where you choose to "drop anger?"

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## **WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE !!!**

INSTEAD OF: Please be quiet so I can begin.

SAY: I'll be starting as soon as you show me you are ready.

INSTEAD OF: Keep your hands/feet to yourself.

SAY: You are welcome to be a part of the class when your hand/feet are kept to yourself.

INSTEAD OF: Don't be late for this class.

SAY: All of those who come to class on time get to go home on time.

INSTEAD OF: Open up your book to page 17.

SAY: I'll be teaching from page 17 today.

INSTEAD OF: You need to be respectful.

SAY: I will discuss this with you when your voice is calm and respect is shown.

INSTEAD OF: Quit breaking the rules of the game.

SAY: All people who follow the rules may play this game.

INSTEAD OF: Pay attention.

SAY: I'll start as soon as everyone is with me.

INSTEAD OF: Keep your desk neat.

SAY: Everyone who has a neat desk may join me at recess.

It is important to place the responsibility upon the child and not upon the teacher. Too often, we fall into the trap of "making decisions" for the student, thereby setting up the scenario for the student to blame us for the problem.

## **HOW TO RESPOND TO ANGRY PEOPLE**

1. It is important to understand and to know your own personal responses to fear. By doing so, we can help negate our own inappropriate responses. We must manage our own anger, fear and anxiety.

2. It is common for an attack of anger to be directed toward a person who is not really the target, they are just convenient. This is commonly seen in families as anger or frustration from a hectic day is directed toward kids or spouse. Remember, You Are Not The Target. (It just feels like it most of the time).

3. The person has a right to their own anger. We must help them to release it, but find appropriate ways to do so. The way we respond will either encourage further tirade or a decrease in the emotions and a more cognitive approach. However, do not discount their feelings, they are real.

4. Like a volcano, an eruption is an awful and scary sight. This is also true with anger. It is common for the initial "eruption" to be hurtful, emotion rendering, attacking, etc. Once the person has "spewed forth" (not spit forth, although that happens too), they are often times calmer. Allow this venting to occur, if possible. Once the initial anger has occurred, ask them to repeat themselves by asking for clarification of key points or encouraging them to elaborate. This will connect with them and show you are interested in their feelings. At the same time, it will allow them to re-state their concerns, often in a calmer and clearer manner.

5. If the anger is directed at you, and you are wrong, apologize (WHAT?), yes apologize. We must be willing to ask for forgiveness if we were in the wrong. This will build a bridge to the person and encourage them to begin to trust you. The sooner one does this, the sooner everyone can move on with their life, in a more productive direction.

6. When one is angry, they are operating in the affective and emotional realm. Due to this, words and situations are easily misinterpreted. Avoid being defensive, even if you are right. A defensive posture and approach will only further alienate and anger the person. Since over 90% of communication is nonverbal, begin to give positive nonverbal messages to the person. Give them eye contact, a nod of the head, a smile or suggestion that things can be worked out. Ask them clarifying and probing questions, but do not ask long ones. "Can you give me an example" or "Are you angry about..." are examples of such statements. The key is to connect with the person, but allow them the opportunity to share their concerns.

7. Be honest with the person. Share your heart. We must be open to areas of our own lives which need to be changed. When questioning something the person said, give a clear example. Don't discount their statements, offer solutions. Be involved in the solution, if you are involved in the problem. Communicate with the person in a direct, firm, but caring and compassionate manner. Watch your body language! Don't get too rigid, too stiff, are your fists or teeth clenched, are your words harsh, be kind yet purposeful in your speech and manner.

8. If necessary, obtain the direction of a third party. Again, work to resolution and restoration in the relationship. Be careful not to make this one issue bigger than the child, the adult or the relationship.

## **Communication is the Key to Crisis De-Escalation**

There are many ways to de-escalate a crisis with an individual. However, unless we use key communication skills, the chances of an explosion are significantly increased. The following ideas will assist you in working through a crisis situation.

### **Undivided Attention**

When people are paid attention to they feel validated; they feel important. The converse is also true: people feel less important and sometimes feel they need to up the ante if they feel like they need attention. Paying attention doesn't just mean saying, "I'm listening." It means looking at the person, making eye contact if it's culturally appropriate, and virtually listening with the entire body. By really listening, and conveying that through body language as well as words, an individual can take away the person's reason for escalating the situation.

### **Be Nonjudgmental**

If someone says, "I think everyone should die," a person's immediate reaction might be to think that the person is dangerous. That reaction, especially if verbalized, will probably upset the individual even more. Even if not said aloud, that attitude may be conveyed through the person's body language. We must tune into the nonverbal communication much more than words. So besides paying attention to what is said, ensure that body language and tone are nonjudgmental as well. This will go a lot further in calming the individual.

### **Focus on Feelings**

Going back to the previous example, if an individual says, "I think everyone should die," a feeling response might be, "You must be pretty upset," or even, "Tell me what that feels like." This isn't getting into a therapist's bailiwick; it is using a handy therapeutic tool. Most likely it will elicit a response that is positive, since the individual will know that the individual understands what's happening.

### **Allow Silence**

As people in the helping profession work with difficult situations, we must become quite comfortable using silence during discussions. The use of silence will assist the professional to relax, get their thoughts together, and to respond in a comfortable manner.

If the individual doesn't immediately answer a question, it doesn't mean he didn't hear you. It may mean he's thinking about his answer, or even that he wants to make sure he's saying the right thing.

Allow a moment of silence. If the person's face registers confusion, then repeat the question and let the silence happen again. Another good reason for silence is that no one likes it-and people tend to start talking when silence lengthens.

### **Clarify Messages**

When a person makes a statement, an individual may think he knows what the person means. The only way to be sure is to ask. Sometimes a question may be perceived as challenging and can make the person defensive. So restatement is used instead.

One of the most important actions in any crisis is for the professional to remain in control of herself. This concept of rational detachment will be the key to whether the individual helps de-escalate or escalate the situation. To rationally detach: develop a plan; use a team approach whenever possible; use positive self-talk; recognize personal limits; and debrief.

### **Develop a Plan**

Devise a plan before one is needed. Decisions made before a crisis occurs are more likely to be more rational than those made when on the receiving end of emotional outbursts. Think about those things that are upsetting and practice dealing with those issues ahead of time. This is called strategic visualization and is effective in helping individuals get through some stressful and even dangerous moments.

### **Use a Team Approach**

It's easier to maintain professionalism when assistance is nearby. Support and back up are both crucial pieces when trying to rationally detach.

### **Use Positive Self-Talk**

Positive self-talk has been the butt of many jokes. Picture Al Franken on Saturday Night Live saying, "I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and doggone it, people like me." Sure, that's funny, but positive self-talk really can work wonders. Just as saying, "I can't deal with this" might cause a teacher to behave in one fashion, saying to oneself, "I'm trained, I know what to do" will cause another response.

### **Recognize Personal Limits**

Being a professional doesn't mean that an educator must be able to excel at everything. That's an unrealistic expectation. Know what your limits are. Know that sometimes it's not easy to leave problems alone. Sometimes the most professional decision is to let someone else take over, if that's an option.

### **Debrief**

Be sure to debrief with coworkers, team members, or a supervisor after a major incident. Talking about it can relieve some of the stress and is also a good time to start planning for next time: what was done correctly, what could have been handled better, how could the response be improved the next time a similar situation occurs. This serves to assist in being able to rationally detach in the future. No matter what the situation, keeping the lines of communication open can help to de-escalate a potentially dangerous crisis.



## **DEVELOPING A MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

1. Choose the reinforcement with input from the individual. Often times, we assume what a person will enjoy. Not everyone loves the computer or likes to eat chocolate (although this may be hard to imagine). However, if a person dislikes candy, computers, games, etc., then using these rewards will be of little benefit. It is beneficial to ask the person what they would like to earn. "If you could do (or have) anything you wanted, within the school rules, what would it be?" This kind of stipulation "within school rules" helps prevent Disneyland and Corvette rewards.
  
2. When setting up your management program, be sure to clearly map out the guidelines. What does the person do to earn the reinforcement, how often, with whom? Avoid making the rewards unattainable. The person must have "immediate" success and enjoy the reward. If not, they may never know what they are missing. We must "hook" them. One rule of thumb could be, if the person is unsuccessful in the beginning, the program needs to be re-evaluated. While this isn't always true, it is a good rule to examine.
  
3. Are you asking the person to accomplish something they have never learned, do not know how to do, are unable to perform, or have such a strong habit of contrary behavior that the likelihood of success is minimal? Too often, it is expected for a person to be organized, listen, not to be aggressive, etc., yet they have never been taught the appropriate steps for success in these areas. Social skills training must be a critical component for this type of program. If the individual is constantly failing, how successful is your program?
  
4. Don't fall into the trap of threatening the person with a loss of the reward, constantly reminding them of what they are missing, or general coercion for their success. The program should speak for itself. Constant evaluation and modifications are necessary in all good management programs.
  
5. Keep in mind that the goal is to reduce the rewards and allow the student to succeed without external (or artificial) rewards. When the natural consequences and rewards are the guidelines within a students' life, he/she has learned from the program.

## WHY DO BEHAVIOR PROGRAMS FAIL?

1. *We do not understand why students misbehave.*

- a. *attention*
- b. *the task*
- c. *the instructions*
- d. *psychological factors*

2. *We need to be a behavioral artist not a behavioral technologist.*

Be creative, don't follow a formula. Use a "program" as a guideline to help you look deeper into the child and what they need in life. Yes, follow a behavior program, be consistent, but look beyond the program into the child's personality and characteristics.

3. *We follow a reactive rather than intervention model.* Because something doesn't work, we shouldn't change it. Evaluate the merits of the program, evaluate the intent of the program, and evaluate the interventions. Stay on course.

4. *We do not use our behavior consultants and trainers properly.*

Get help. We should not solve problems alone. Gain strategies from others to implement in our classrooms and schools.

5. *We treat the most difficult problems first.* Find success. Allow the child to be successful and to feel a positive reward. Start with the easy areas to obtain support from the student and other adults.

6. *We do not prepare the environment ahead of time for behavioral change.* We must communicate with others who are impacted by the behavior (parents, teachers, etc.).



## **BEHAVIOR PROGRAM SAMPLE**

### **Elementary student**

#### **TARGET BEHAVIORS**

**1. Listening and following directions-** respond to teacher instructions without distracting other students. If student is confused, he/she should raise hand and get help. The student will be given one warning and be encouraged to get on task before this will be considered a violation of this section.

**2. Positive friendships-** the student will avoid getting into physical fights or verbal arguing with students. If there is a problem, the student should obtain the involvement of an adult. The student will be given one warning and encourage to refrain from verbal fighting before this will be considered a violation. Any physical fighting will immediately be considered a violation.

(Avoid choosing more than one or two target behaviors. It will help keep the student focused and stop you from going crazy with too many areas.)

#### **PROGRAM**

**1. The student will receive one point in each area, on an hourly basis, if they follow the above guidelines.**

**2. If the student achieves a minimum of four points during the morning (out of a possible six), he/she will receive 5 minutes of reinforcement time.**

**3. If the student achieves a minimum of four points during the afternoon (out of a possible six), he/she will receive 5 minutes of reinforcement time.**

**4. If the student has a perfect day (12 out of 12 points), he/she will receive 15 minutes of reinforcement time.**

## **SAMPLE BEHAVIOR PROGRAM**

Middle School Student

### **TARGET BEHAVIORS**

1. On-time to class
2. Coming prepared to class

### **PROGRAM PROCEDURE**

1. a. Each time the student is on-time to class, he will receive a point. If he receives three points in a week, he will earn 15 minutes of free time.  
b. For every time past three days that he is on-time, he will earn an additional 5 minutes of free time.  
c. If the student is late to class, he will not receive a point and will be asked to show up 5 minutes early to school.
2. a. Each time that he comes to class with his notebook (pencil/paper) and book, he will be allowed to choose his own seat for the class period.  
b. If the student comes to class all week with his materials, he will be given a "no homework" certificate to be used for any regular homework assignment. It may not be used for quizzes, tests, or long term assignments.  
c. If he not only brings his supplies to class, but also completes the in-class assignment, he will be given a McDonald's \$1 certificate.

The student will be given the option to choose from the reinforcement list instead of earning the McDonald's coupon or his free time.

### **REINFORCEMENT LIST**

Listening to music  
Drawing  
Shooting baskets in the gym  
Helping out in Mrs. "G's" class  
Putting his head down and resting  
Reading a book or looking at magazines  
Playing a game on the computer  
Talking with friends

# BEHAVIOR PROGRAM

## *High School Student*

### TARGET BEHAVIORS

- I. Attendance
- II. Work Completion (periods 1 and 3)

### PROGRAM



- I. a. Josh will attend school at least 4 out of 5 days. If he attends 4 or more days, he will be able to spend one period in the resource room listening to music. If Josh maintains the attendance criterion for two weeks, he will be able to be an aide for the P.E. teacher (as requested by the student and approved by staff).
- b. If Josh is not tardy during the day, he will be able to spend the last ten minutes of school in the computer room.
- c. If Josh is absent 2 or more days in a week, he will lose his free time after he eats lunch. Restrictions will take place in the “in-house” room.
  
- II. a. After the initial instructions are given in each class period (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>), Josh will go to the teacher and repeat back the instructions.
- b. Josh will write down his homework assignments and get them initialed by the instructor. Each day his list goes home written and initialed, he will receive reinforcement from his parents (to be decided by the family).
- c. If he completes the necessary in-class and homework assignments, he will receive one point. When Josh has collected three points, he may turn them in for a homework free day.

## Getting Ready for Effective Communication

Here are some good starting steps:

1. **Plan on dealing with one problem at a time.** Seeking to solve an argument with win-win solutions is not an easy task. Don't make matters more difficult by taking on too much at one time. If more than one problem is pressing, take them up in sequence.
2. **Choose the right time and place.** Be careful where and when you try to communicate when you or the other person are angry. Avoid audiences; seek privacy. Also, seek times and places in which you are not likely to be interrupted (by people, television, telephone, and mealtime) and will be free to finish whatever you start.
3. **Review your plan.** Try to open your mind before you open your mouth. Consider your own views and feelings as well as the other person's. Especially, ask yourself what you can do to bring about a win-win solution to your argument. Rehearse what you and the other person may say. Imagine this conversation in several different forms and outcomes. Now you and the other person are face-to-face. Effective problem solvers follow such good communication rules as:
  - **Define yourself.** Explain your views, the reasons behind them and your proposed solutions as logically as you can. Carefully spell out anything you think might be misunderstood.
  - **Make sense to the other person.** Keep your listener constantly in mind as you talk. Encourage him or her to ask questions, to check out your meanings. Repeat yourself as often as necessary.
  - **Focus on behavior.** When you describe to the other person your view of what happened and what you would like to have happen, concentrate on actual actions you each have taken or might take. Try to avoid focusing on inner qualities that cannot be seen, such as personality, beliefs, intentions and motivations.
4. **Reciprocate.** Be certain, as you describe how the other person contributed to the problem and what you think he or she can do to help solve it, that you are equally clear about your part in both its cause and solution. Be specific; avoid vague generalizations.
5. **Be direct.** Say your piece in a straightforward, non-hostile, positive manner. Avoid camouflage, editing, half-truths or hiding what you honestly believe.
6. **Keep the pressure low.** To keep matters calm as your problem solving continues, try to listen openly to the other person. Offer reassurance as needed, don't paint the other person into a corner, and show that you understand his or her position and plans. If anger and aggression return, take a temporary break and reschedule your discussion for a later time.
7. **Be empathic.** Throughout your discussion, communicate to the other person your understanding of his or her feelings. Even if your understanding is not quite accurate, your effort will be appreciated.
8. **Avoid pitfalls.** Much can go wrong when two people argue, even when they are both seeking positive solutions. There is much to avoid: threats, commands, interruptions, sarcasm, put-downs,

counterattacks, insults, teasing, yelling, generalizations ("You never ... " "You always ... "), not responding (silence, sulking, ignoring), speaking for the other person, kitchen-sinking (dredging up old complaints and throwing them into the discussion) and building straw men (distorting what the other person said, and then, responding to it as if they, not you, actually said it). There is, indeed, much to avoid.

Such rules for good, problem-solving communication are easy to present, but hard to make use of in the heat of the battle. Nevertheless, if you wish the battle to have a nonviolent, conflict-resolving outcome for both people involved, these rules are worth following.

## **Pardon You Pardon Me**

Michele Sponagle

A co-worker nabs the promotion you were hoping for. A friend starts dating your ex. Your sister borrows your Louis Vuitton bag and has a little run-in with a glass of red wine. It's enough to get you good and angry, but if you're like many people, it gets thrown on top of a pile of hurts in a far corner of your mind.

Neatly tucking away all the resentment that can come with being treated unfairly, however, doesn't mean it won't continue to eat away at you. It festers and breeds to the point where that pile may eventually cast a black shadow over the way you feel in everyday life. And you may feel downright miserable. Learning to forgive, though, can change all that.

But let's be honest: when someone has done you wrong, forgiveness isn't always the first thing that springs to mind. You're pissed off and want to confront your anger. The good news is, that's OK. In fact, feeling that bum and acknowledging your emotional wounds is part of the forgiveness process. It's when we tune out and don't acknowledge those bad feelings that other problems arise: anger, resentment, depression, anxiety, even addictions.

The truth is, the act of forgiving reaps buckets of emotional and physical rewards. As psychologist Robert D. Enright, author of *Forgiveness Is a Choice* and professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, describes it, forgiveness is a "freeing thing." The payoff, he says, is emotional healing and a general positive, hopeful feeling. The bonus spinoff effect is that you stop spreading your anger to people around you. Your relationships with other people - innocent bystanders - become healthier.

Even though forgiveness is good medicine, and most people seem to know it, Enright, thinks people, at least initially, balk at the idea because of their misconceptions about the true meaning of forgiveness. "We think that when you forgive, you deny the unfairness, you deny the injustice [of what happened to you]," he says. "That's absolutely not the case."

The fact is, forgiveness doesn't condone, excuse or require acceptance or forgetting that a wrong has been committed. It's not a way of caving in to the perpetrator or showing weakness. Quite the opposite: you're in a position of strength when you offer your forgiveness to someone. Don't confuse it with reconciliation, though. What's fascinating - and powerful - about the process is that forgiveness is something you can do all by yourself, without the other person even having to be involved.

How you get to that positive place called forgiveness is an individual, custom-created trip. There is no rule book or time frame. Generally speaking, you'll want to follow four basic steps, according to Leslie Greenberg, professor of psychology and director of the Psychotherapy Research Clinic at York University in Toronto.



First, start by determining the specific sources of your hurt, Greenberg advises. And that includes everything: the wound and the salt that might have been rubbed in it. If your boyfriend cheated, that's a prime source of hurt, but if he did it while you were both going to couples' therapy so you could be happier together, that's the salt.

Second - and this is the step we're really good at avoiding - is facing the negative emotions we're feeling, from anger to disappointment. "It's important to acknowledge those feelings, and grieve," explains Greenberg. It can be a tough step because it's easy to confuse the acknowledgment of your feelings with thinking that the other person has succeeded in injuring you. Think of it this way, however: if you stay bitter, the person who wounded you wins because his or her control and negative influence will continue. And that's where you lose.

Steps 3 and 4 are intertwined. Greenberg helps clients imagine that the other person may regret what happened and that some part of them accepts responsibility. You may try to put yourself in their shoes to understand their actions. Giant caveat here: by doing this, you are absolutely not excusing an injustice. Not in any way. You're just learning to see that person through a compassionate lens. It's a big leap, and it takes as long as it takes. There's no time line to follow. The danger with rushing the process is that it becomes pseudo-forgiveness; that is, it's reduced to just an intellectual exercise, without the emotion required to really forgive.

For Melanie, a Winnipeg-based communications consultant, some festering emotions caused a deep family rift and put a damper on her wedding day. Melanie's sister, Nancy, decided not to fly into town for the event after Melanie pared down the size of the reception and organized a dinner with her close friends for the following day. Nancy proceeded to phone other family members to try to stir up trouble. The sisters didn't talk for three years.

Melanie's memories of her wedding have been scarred by the hurt, disappointment and anger caused by her sister's actions. But things between them started to improve when Melanie visited her family, and her sister was also there. They talked-steering clear of discussion of the fractious event-but the point is, they were able to reestablish their connection.

"Although our relationship was never the same," says Melanie, "I have forgiven her." And that was achieved by Melanie largely on her own: she acknowledged how much she was hurt by the incident, grieved the fact that her sister was absent from her wedding, then grew to empathize with Nancy, recognizing that, during that time, her sister was still longing for her own long-term relationship.

While Melanie's story culminated with reconciliation, it's important to remember forgiveness doesn't always guarantee or require that. Mandi, a Toronto author, lent her best friend, Jenny, \$1,000 to pay some bills. Jenny created a schedule to repay the loan, but after a few installments, she stopped sending money. Not surprisingly, it created a lot of tension. Eventually, the friendship ended. Seven years later, out of the blue, Jenny sent

a letter with an apology and a check for the remaining money. Though Mandi welcomed the gesture and sent a polite thank-you note, the friendship did not resume. Forgiveness can still mean you choose not to have someone in your life again. (Let's be honest: does anyone expect Brad and Jen to reunite?)

This is what happens when you truly forgive someone: you let go of your desire for revenge, says Greenberg. "It gives you a sense of peace, calm and freedom. " You feel compassion for the one who has hurt you, although you may not want them in your life anymore. Forgiveness really happens when you can wish someone well and refrain from finishing with, "May you rot in hell."

But if forgiveness is so important to our well-being, why are we so inept at it? We can stay steamed for a long time over small stuff-remember the guy who cut you off to get the last parking space this morning? Greenberg has his theories, including the fact we are taught as children to say "I'm sorry," but we aren't shown how to forgive. Or, as Enright says, "We're not getting out there and working on the small things before big things happen." Enright suggests giving our forgiveness muscles a workout-that way, we'll have the resources to deal with bigger injustices in life. That friend who took a vacation instead of attending your wedding? Acknowledge the hurt, pinpoint what it was that wounded you, then humanize the wrongdoer ("I know she's needed some time to herself lately").

Enright points to the Amish as an example of what mastering that life skill can mean. Forgiveness is part of their culture and belief system, and it's practiced for daily grievances. Recall last October, when we witnessed the ultimate act: Amish people in a Pennsylvania community forgave the gunman who killed five schoolchildren. Townspeople rallied around the widow of the gunman and even started a fund to help the family. Though an extreme example most of us will never have to face, it does demonstrate that, by practicing forgiveness as a way of life, we may be better equipped emotionally to cope with more serious infractions perpetrated against us.

But, as Enright points out, after 20 years of studying the subject, there are some people who wield an ironclad grip on their resentments. "They'll take deep bitterness and hatred to the grave," he says. "That is a huge waste of human resources. If they would at least examine the arguments for forgiveness, people might be surprised that it's not what they initially thought it was."

**WHEN YOU TRULY FORGIVE SOMEONE, YOU LET GO OF YOUR DESIRE FOR REVENGE**

#### **WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU**

Letting go of past emotional hurts and practicing forgiveness may boost your physical wellness, according to the newsletter Harvard Women's Health Watch. Stress is reduced-always a good thing for your body-and heart health improves because of lower blood pressure (not to mention, you'll likely feel better overall, physically).

## UNDERSTANDING AND CONNECTING WITH AGGRESSIVE STUDENTS

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Both books are available in CD format as audio books.