Winning Over Challenging Students:
A Trauma-Sensitive, Resilience-Based approach
[The Basics]

William G. Nicoll, Ph.D.
Resilience Counseling & Training Center
P.O. Box 1435
North Conway, New Hampshire 03860 USA
Email: resilienceetc@aol.com
www.resiliencecounselingcenter.com

[An RCTC professional development workshop for educators. Delivered in a 1, 2 or 3 day training format with additional training material, demonstrations and supervised skills practice in multi-day formats]
Workshop Agenda

Introductions & Overview of the Training

**Part One:**
Re-thinking our Paradigms regarding “discipline” & behavior

ACE’s & Trauma: What the research is telling us!!

Understanding the Behavior of Challenging Students

Live Demonstration: The Assessment & Intervention Planning Process

**Part Two:**
Fostering Resilience & Psychosocial Well-being in Schools
  - The 4 Cornerstones of Resilience & Psychosocial Well-being

Building Home-School Collaboration: Winning over parents as partners
  - The problem resolution Parent/School Consultation process

**Part Three:**
Infusing Social-Emotional Learning into your Curriculum

Tailoring the SEL Program to Your Student’s Needs and engaging staff
“Changing the life trajectories of youth from ‘at-risk’ to resilience begins with changing the beliefs and behaviors of the entourage of significant adults surrounding the lives of children and adolescents”

# Reframing our Understanding of Challenging Behavior: We see that which we already believe!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Assumptions</th>
<th>Intervention Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moral Frame</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewed as deliberate misbehavior of “bad kid”: “lazy, bully, selfish, stubborn, etc.” Assumes child needs to be taught right from wrong! Based in Linear Causality thinking of Stimulus → Response!</td>
<td>Sanctions, punishments, threats!! Used with rewards for compliance with adult’s authority. Or, authoritarian adults feels angry, challenged and seeks retribution or revenge for transgressions against their moral authority!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medical Frame</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views behavior as result of some form of neurological disorder or chemical imbalance in the brain. Linear Causality thinking that brain chemistry, genetics, impairment, etc. is “causing” the behavior.</td>
<td>Medications!!! Adults feel sorry for child, but not responsible for changing behavior themselves; i.e., if it’s a biomedical ‘cause’ then it surely requires a medical “cure”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relational Frame</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views behavior as adaptive to one’s perceived social ecosystem &amp; maintained by a circular causality pattern of with significant others.</td>
<td>Change the relationship! Provide a positive, supportive social ecosystem to nurture social well-being and mental health.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Circular Causality:  
The Biopsychosocial Perspective

1. Adverse Social Ecosystems:  
Trauma/Stress/Abuse:  
Chronic Family, School, &/or Community failure to adequately meet the 5 Maintenance Tasks of supportive social ecosystems [see page 44]

2. Cognitive Schema ‘Virus’:  
Unhealthy, mistaken assumptions regarding self, others & life which lead to the development of compensatory, adaptive social-emotional competencies & behaviors for survival in such adverse social ecosystems

3. Biological Adaptation to Stress:  
Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal system (HPA) over-responsiveness, Allostatic Overload & Inhibited Executive Functioning

4. Mal-Adaptive Patterns:  
AKA: Mental, Emotional & Learning Disorders  
Externalized or Internalized Emotional/Behavior Adjustment Problems in life:
Discipline Defined:

“Training intended to produce a specified character or pattern of behavior; training that develops self-control, character, or orderliness”

From root word: “Disciple”:
“a pupil or follower of a teacher, mentor or sensei who subscribe to, and actively assists in spreading the mentor’s teachings; ...to accept and follow a model or school of thought.”

Latin root: “Discipulos”:
.... a learner

What do our current methods of “Classroom Management & School Discipline” Actually Teach???
## Behavior Management Paradigms Guiding Educational Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authoritarian</th>
<th>Medical/Behavioral</th>
<th>Developmental/Resilience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Means of Behavior Mgmt.</strong></td>
<td>Control via Fear/Coercion/Threat/Punishment</td>
<td>Medications &amp; “Contingency based consequences” [Pos. Reinforcement And Pos/Neg. Punishment]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children are…</strong></td>
<td>held responsible for their behavior choices</td>
<td>to be medicated and properly trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rules are to…</strong></td>
<td>teach right from wrong and strictly enforced with zero tolerance</td>
<td>clearly delineated to manage behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior is to be…</strong></td>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td>Managed by medications and via behavioral contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Misbehavior Understood as…</strong></td>
<td>Deliberate wrong doing in defiance of authority figure</td>
<td>Neurological disorders and lack of appropriate training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consequences are…</strong></td>
<td>sanctions/punishments or rewards to enforce compliance with needs of adults</td>
<td>Techniques to shape and control behavior for compliance with expectations of adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solutions are responsibility of…</strong></td>
<td>the child and parents</td>
<td>Medical doctors adjusting meds &amp; adult reinforcement contingencies (aka: rewards &amp; punishments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chronically challenging kids are to be…</strong></td>
<td>Excluded or “fixed” via medications or “treatments”</td>
<td>Medicated and trained via behavioral intervention techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior mgmt. effectiveness is measured by…</strong></td>
<td>Degree of compliance</td>
<td>Behavior changes in terms of increase/decrease of target behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Behavior Management Paradigms Guiding Educational Practice**

- **Authoritarian:** Focus on control/compliance, using means of control via fear/coercion/threat/punishment, holding children responsible for their behavior choices, and teaching rules right from wrong with strict enforcement.
- **Medical/Behavioral:** Focus on training, using medications, neurology, and behavioral contracts to manage behavior, with consequences shaped by short-term logical strategies and long-term resilience building.
- **Developmental/Resilience:** Focus on social-emotional wellbeing, interpreting behavior to identify developmental issues, ensuring needs/rights are respected, and building resilience collaboratively.

---

**Means of Behavior Mgmt.**

- Control via Fear/Coercion/Threat/Punishment
- Held responsible for behavior choices
- Teach right from wrong with strict enforcement

**Children are…**

- Held responsible for their behavior
- To be medicated and properly trained

**Rules are to…**

- Clearly delineated to manage behavior
- Developed collaboratively and adapted when needed.

**Behavior is to be…**

- Controlled
- Managed by medications and behavioral contracts
- Interpreted to identify developmental issues/needs of the child

**Misbehavior Understood as…**

- Deliberate wrong doing in defiance of authority figure
- Neurological disorders and lack of appropriate training
- Techniques to shape and control behavior

**Consequences are…**

- Sanctions/punishments or rewards to enforce compliance
- Neurological disorders lack of appropriate training
- Techniques to shape and control behavior

**Solutions are responsibility of…**

- The child and parents
- Medical doctors adjusting meds & adult reinforcement contingencies
- Adults to understand function of behavior & identify unmet needs

**Chronically challenging kids are to be…**

- Excluded or “fixed” via medications or “treatments”
- Medicated and trained via behavioral intervention techniques
- Understood, included, Protected and “won over” by building resilience & social-emotional competencies

**Behavior mgmt. effectiveness is measured by…**

- Degree of compliance
- Behavior changes in terms of increase/decrease of target behavior
- Increased social-emotional well-being observed in pro-social behavioral/emotional actions.
If the goal is to CONTROL another human being, then threats and force are necessary. Fear, intimidation, and the inflicting of pain (physical or emotional) for non-compliant behavior are the tools of authoritarian control along with the use of rewards for compliance and submissive behavior.

However, if the goal is to develop a healthy, socially well-adjusted human being, then building trust and providing a supportive nurturing relationship through understanding, encouraging, guiding, leading, and the modeling of healthy social-emotional behavior becomes the path to success.
Research Evidence on Teacher Effects

Teachers viewed by student as empathic, warm, friendly, and having a genuine concern for the students as individuals are associated with student outcomes such as:

- Better academic performance,
- Higher learning motivation,
- More positive attitudes toward school
- Decreased incidences of behavior problems
- Fewer Referrals to Principals, Counselors & Special Education

[AKA: “Turnaround Teachers” that turn students from risk to resilience & success.]
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): A Brief Research Review

Major researchers on Adverse Childhood Experiences & Allostatic Overload

- Vincent Felitti
- Nadine Burke Harris
- Robert Anda
- Bruce McEwen
Childhood Experiences vs. Adult Alcoholism

ACE Score

% Alcoholic
0
1
2
3
4+

Health Risks
Mental Health

Childhood Experiences Underlie Chronic Depression

% with a lifetime history of depression

ACE Score

0 1 2 3 >=4

Women
Men
ACE Score and Rates of Antidepressant Prescriptions

approximately 50 years later

Prescription rate per 100 person-years

ACE Score

0 1 2 3 4 5 or more

Mental Health Costs
ACE Score and the Risk of *Perpetrating* Domestic Violence

![Chart showing the risk of perpetrating domestic violence by ACE Score for women and men.](chart)

- **Women**
- **Men**
Childhood Experiences Underlie Later Being Raped

Well-being

% Reporting Rape

ACE Score

0 1 2 3 4 +

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35
Mental Health

Childhood Experiences Underlie Suicide Attempts

% Attempting Suicide

ACE Score

0 1 2 3 4+

25
20
15
10
5
0
ACE Score and Teen Sexual Behaviors

Social function

Percent with health problem (%)

Intercourse by 15

Teen Pregnancy

Teen Paternity

ACE Score
0 1 2 3 4 or more
TRAUMA

Emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events (by frequency and/or toxicity). Trauma shatters your sense of security, competence, self-efficacy, or value. One seeks, therefore, to develop behavioral and emotional strategies for survival/coping in a world perceived as dangerous and/or non-supportive.

Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety, but any situation that leaves one feeling overwhelmed, worthless, unwanted, and isolated can be deemed as traumatic!

Trauma and abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or psychological in nature including active maltreatment and passive maltreatment (e.g., neglect, exclusion, or ignoring).
REMEMBER:

It is **not** the **objective facts** that determine whether an event is traumatic, but rather, one’s **subjective emotional experience** of the event(s).

The more frightened, helpless, powerless, unwanted, etc. you feel, the more likely you are to be traumatized!
The “Challenging Student”

“When teachers and administrators are confronted with students who find it hard to concentrate, manage their emotions, or deal calmly with provocation… they need to see them as children who, because of a lifetime of stress, haven’t yet developed a healthy set of self-regulation mechanisms”.


THEREFORE, instead of asking, “What disorder does this child have”? we must instead ask ourselves, “What has happened [or is happening] to this child? and, “What does he or she need so as to develop a sense of personal resilience, psychosocial well-being and to live a successful life”? 
Prior to your 18th birthday…

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often… Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt? If Yes, enter 1 __

2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often… Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured? If Yes, enter 1 __

3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever… Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you? If Yes, enter 1 __

4. Did you often or very often feel that … No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn’t look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other? If Yes, enter 1 __

5. Did you often or very often feel that, you didn’t have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it? If Yes, enter 1 __
6. Was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason? If Yes, enter 1 __

7. Was your mother or stepmother: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? Or, ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife? If Yes, enter 1 __

8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs? If Yes, enter 1 __

9. Was a household member depressed, mentally ill, or ever attempt suicide? If Yes, enter 1 __

10. Did a household member ever go to prison? If Yes, enter 1 __

Now add up your “Yes” answers: ____

This is your ACE Score!
TYPES of ACE’s INCLUDED in the QUESTIONNAIRE:

- ABUSE: Physical, Sexual & Emotional
- NEGLECT: Physical or Emotional
- DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE IN HOUSEHOLD
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EXPOSURE
- PARENTAL SEPARATION OR DIVORCE
- CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR & INCARCERATION

A FEW OF THE ACE’S ‘NOT’ INCLUDED to be CONSIDERED

- WATCHING A SIBLING BEING ABUSED
- LOSING A CAREGIVER (grandmother, mother, grandfather, etc.), HOMELESSNESS,
- SURVIVING/RECOVERING FROM ACCIDENT or DISASTER
- WITNESSING A FATHER BEING ABUSED (by mother or other), WITNESS A GRANDPARENT ABUSING YOUR PARENT
- WAR
- WITNESSING COMMUNITY VIOLENCE
- UNSTABLE HOME ENVIRONMENT
- FEELING PARENTAL DISAPPOINTED IN YOU FOR NOT LIVING UP TO THE GOALS OR STANDARDS THEY SET FOR YOU.
- FEEL DEFEATED BY A SIBLING AS FAVORED OR TOO GOOD, SUCCESSFUL, TALENTED FOR YOU TO EVER BE AN EQUAL.
- EVER PLACED IN FOSTER CARE OR FACILITY
**Trauma/Abuse/Maltreatment: Classification by Degree**

- **Quadrant #1**
  - I.E., low dosage and received infrequently
  - Normal in the human experience; relationship damage repaired via forgiveness, & positives > negatives by at least 5:1 ratio
  - “Overcoming difficulties leads to courage, self-respect & knowing thyself” (Alfred Adler) – Builds resilience!

- **Quadrant #2**
  - I.E., low dosage of toxin daily often
  - Often excused by others as just ‘bad’ treatment but not abusive/traumatic... IT IS Abuse/Trauma!!!
  - e.g. verbal abuse, name calling & criticism.

- **Quadrant #3**
  - I.E., high dosage received periodically
  - Often discounted by others as result of a ‘bad day’ or “too much to drink”, “stress”, etc. leaves victim feeling vulnerable & alone!

- **Quadrant #4**
  - I.E., high toxin dosage is normative!
  - Readily identified by most as abusive, traumatic

**Low Frequency**

**High Frequency**
The 3 Most Common Psychological Reactions to Trauma/ACEs:

While the body may heal the wounds from physical or sexual abuse, the psychological & emotional wounds remain throughout one’s lifetime.

Verbal and Emotional/Psychological “trauma/abuse/maltreatment” leave the same lifelong wounds but with no outwardly visible scars or bruises; thus often leaving victims unprotected and alone.

- **Self-Stigmatization:** “I am a terrible person, unlovable; nobody will ever like/value me”
  May vow to ‘never tell’ or seek to ‘hide true self’ by acting ‘as if” all okay; leaves one alone with the hurt, pain and negative self-identity.

- **Loss of Trust:** “I can’t trust anyone, must be vigilant; keep my guard:defenses up!”
  Thus, withdraws and isolates to “hide” from others or “lashes out” to distance as ‘best defense is good offense’

- **Self-Blame/Loathing:** “I’m to blame for this; I’m at fault and deserve this…!”
  May engage in self-harm behaviors, substance abuse to ‘blunt the emotional pain’, or accept abusive treatment from others in future relationships as “all I deserve!”
The degree to which one experiences emotional trauma and stress is the result of three interacting factors represented by this adaptation of Hill’s ABC = X model of stress. While everyone will encounter some degree of stress & trauma in life, we differ in regard to the number and degree of stress/trauma events experienced (‘A’ factor), the availability of supportive social ecosystems & our social-emotional competence (‘B’ factor), and how we perceive/attach meaning to these events along with our degree of confidence and social well-being for surviving and overcoming so as to move on successfully (‘C’ factor). It is the interaction among these ABC factors which determines our relative degree of personal resilience.
Understanding the Challenging Student: The Resilience & Social Wellbeing Paradigm (a ‘Copernican Shift’ in education)
Taking Education

“Back to Basics”!!

“Above all it is expected that the attention of the instructors to the disposition of the minds and morals of the youth under their charge will exceed every other care; well considering that though goodness without knowledge is weak and feeble, yet knowledge without goodness is dangerous, and that both united form the noblest character and lay the sweet foundation of usefulness to mankind.”

[1781, Dr. John Phillips’ Mission Statement upon his founding of Phillips Exeter Academy]
Behavior & Motivation:
Understanding the “Challenging Student”

“The problem is never that we know too little, but rather that we know so much that just ain’t so!”

Mark Twain
Just as the Bop Toy’s head will always remain congruent with the location of the weighted base by returning to status quo after forceful interventions, so too does ‘How’ we behave/feel always remain congruent with our idiosyncratic Rules of Social Interaction base. Changing the “how” of one’s behavior and feelings requires facilitating change in the Rules of Social Interaction to a more positive/affirming sense of self, others, & life.
Trying to change behavior by methods that focus on behaviors ONLY but do not focus on Level #3 will, at best, result in the "Bop Bag Effect" of short term change followed by a return to the status quo!

Student

Disruptive or Problematic Actions & Emotions
The presenting "symptoms"

Purpose or Function of child's Negative, Destructive Misbehaviors

Underlying "Rules of Social Interaction"
Student's ACE's-based logic system that maintains the behavior(s)

Teacher

Responsive Actions & Emotions
Failed, corrective "solutions"

Purpose or Function of the adult’s problem maintaining Responsive Behaviors

Underlying "Rules of Social Interaction"
Adult's personal logic system by which behavior evaluated & interpreted
The challenging student can perhaps best be understood if we view the behavior(s) as stemming from a “Cognitive Virus” within their cognitive “Rules of Social Interaction”. Based on their ACE’s or Trauma experiences, they interpret themselves, others, and life events through a “distorted, unhealthy lens”. Consequently, symptomatic behaviors will be found to be logical, adaptive responses to adverse life situations.

Interventions, therefore, must be directed primarily at healing this cognitive virus and leading the student toward resilience and psychosocial well-being.

**Entitlement:**
“I should always have what I want and to do the things that make me happy. Others are responsible for making sure I am happy and have what I want. Others should cater to my needs, wants and demands. If life does not go smoothly, someone is not doing their job of ensuring my life is happy and without consequences for my own actions; I therefore have the ‘right’ to do as I please without regard to the rights of others or rules/laws, etc..

**Disconnected:**
“Nobody cares about me nor values who I am. I am unwanted and not wanted or accepted as I am. I’m alone in this world”.

**Worthlessness:**
“I’m not worth the time of others; I’m not important to nor valued by others; I have nothing of worth or value to contribute.” I’m viewed as a ‘looser’.

**Powerlessness:**
“Others reject, criticize and seek to dominate and control me; to make me do things for them or jump to their demands, their ‘tune’. I must therefore either:

a) show them I cannot be controlled or dominated like a trained animal.” or,

b) accept that life is overwhelming and I am powerless to change it (i.e., learned helplessness)
Hopelessness: “Life is going nowhere for me; it’s useless to try to make things any better, it never gets better and never will.” My life will never change or improve; this is my lot in life. No matter how hard I try, nothing ever changes

Meaninglessness: “Nothing really matters; I am viewed as insignificant by others and have nothing of any value to contribute.”

Absoluteness: “Everything is black and white, first or last, good or bad; smart or stupid, talented or inept, there is no middle ground! I must be the first & best or I am nothing/nobody.”

Helplessness: “Others and/or life, is against me, I’m a victim of my circumstances or of forces beyond my control. There is nothing I can do to make things better, I’m incapable of doing anything to change this, someone must rescue or take care of me.”

Ineptness: “I’m not as smart or as capable as my peers or siblings. No matter what I do it’s never good enough. If I try, I’ll only fail again and humiliate myself.”
## The 5 Most Common Goals/Purposes of Challenging Student Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose/Goal</th>
<th>Rules of Interaction</th>
<th>Dx Clues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention/Service</td>
<td>“I only count when I’m noticed or getting special service”</td>
<td>Adult annoyed and responds Student responds to adult request but only temporarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>“I’ll show them they can’t control me!”</td>
<td>Adult angry/challenged &amp; tries to overpower and control student. Student continues the behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power/Superiority</td>
<td>“I must be better /dominate others”</td>
<td>Adult irritated &amp; disrespected. Seeks to “put student in his/her place”, defeat or put down. Student smug &amp; argues or criticizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenge/Counter-hurt</td>
<td>“I’m not valued, feel rejected”</td>
<td>Adult Hurt or embarrassed and seeks to hurt/punish as “consequence”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Avoidance of</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adult helpless, ‘sorry for’ &amp; seeks Testing/Dx.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure or Emotiona Pain</td>
<td>“I am, or my life is, hopeless, inept &amp; I give up”</td>
<td>Student continues so adults give up &amp; lower expectations/give up also.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The GOAL underlying most adolescent substance abuse/addiction!!*
The Resilience-Based, Developmental Paradigm: A “Developmental Cascade” in the Etiology of ‘Behavior Disorders’

**ACE’s in the Family:**
- Harsh, inconsistent or permissive Discipline
- Limited parental involvement, emotional neglect,
- Over indulgent, or controlling/over-involved
- Lack of, or excessive, home supervision,
- Abuse patterns: physical, sexual, verbal/psychological/emotional

**ACE’s in the School:**
- Negative & failure oriented feedback
- Harsh, punitive discipline; control focused interventions ignoring underlying issues
- Limited or no opportunity for adult supports in the school
- Rejecting/neglecting/bullying verbal & non-verbal responses from educators & peers
- Lack of social-emotional supports in the school; isolation &/or disengagement

“Too little connection, too much criticism, too little support & encouragement”
Fostering Resilience: A Social Vaccine & Antidote
RESILIENCE DEFINED:
The ability to set a positive, productive, fulfilling and goal-oriented direction in life while also being equipped to handle adversity, stress rejection, failures, and setbacks in stride.

It is the ability to “bounce back” and continue moving forward in that same positive, socially useful, productive, and contributive direction in life.

Thus it is:
A Preventive, Social Vaccine
Immunizing against the adverse effects of trauma, loss, stress and the myriad of social ills of life (depression, substance abuse, anxiety, loss, trauma, etc.)

&
An Antidote for Intervention
Countering the adverse effects of distress, loss, trauma, emotional pain, adversity and other psychosocial adjustment difficulties in their lives.
Developing Resilience in Youth: The 4 Cornerstones of Personal Resilience

1. **Availability of Positive, Supportive Social Ecosystems**
   All living organisms require, for healthy growth & development, the availability of supportive, nurturing ecosystems (plants, fish, wildlife)
   Primary Social Ecosystems for Humans = The Family, School & Community

2. **Developing Essential Social-Emotional Competencies**
   *Understanding/Respecting Self & Others Skills,  
   *Empathy Skills,  
   *Communication Skills,  
   *Cooperation Skills,  
   *Responsible Contribution Skills
   [requires adult modeling and the direct teaching of the competencies via SEL]

3. **Fostering an Optimistic, Courageous ‘Growth Mindset’**
   Focusing on effort, improvement, & progress via encouragement rather than assuming “Fixed” degree of Abilities & Talents [i.e., “Disabilities, Dysfunctions, or Disorders”]

4. **Opportunities to Experience the 5 Goals for Developing a Positive Self-Identity.**
   [Connection, Autonomy, Equality, Meaningful Contribution, & Competence/Mastery]
**Social-Emotional Competencies (SEL):**

- Social competencies such as responsiveness, communication, empathy, caring, compassion, altruism and forgiveness are found to be particularly important indicators of children’s overall positive adjustment and psychosocial wellness. (Englander-Golden, et.al., 2002; Luthar & Burak, 2000; Masten & Coatworth, 1998; Werner, 1992).

- In a longitudinal study, altruism was found to be the “transformative” adaptive defense to adverse life situations; the highest form of social competence, even in the absence of environmental supports. (Vaillant, 2002).

- Measures of problem-solving skills and training in problem-solving skills in childhood were found to be significantly correlated with successful adaptation and better psychological and social adjustment in adulthood (Heppner & Lee, 2002; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997).

- Self-understanding skills have been found to contribute significantly to resilience in children and adolescents living in adverse life situations (Beardslee, 1997; Rubin, 1996; Wolin & Wolin, 1993).

- Having a strong, positive ethnic identity is associated with high self-esteem and commitment to doing well in school, a sense of purpose in life, confidence in one’s self-efficacy and higher academic achievement (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; McLaughlin, et.al., 1994; Mehan, et.al., 1994).

- Individual responsibility (i.e. autonomy and internal locus of control) is a key determinant of resilience and associated with motivation and effort to do well at school (Howard, 1992; Luthar & Zigler, 1992; Werner & Smith, 1992; Watt, et. al., 1995).

- Compassion for others has been found to have both physiological (immune system) and psychological health benefits (Rein et.al., 1995).

- Humor enables one to gain protective distance from pain, stress and adversity and enables people to better handle trauma (McBroom, 2002; Higgins, 1994; Kumpfer, 1999; Vaillant, 2000)

- Long term studies on resilience and mind-body research have both found attitudes of hope and optimism to be associated with mental, physical, social, emotional and spiritual health (Benson, 1996; Carver & Scheier, 2002; Peterson & Streen, 2002; Seligman, 1998, 2002; Snyder, 2000; Snyder et.al., 2002; Werner & Smith, 2001).

- Certain characteristics of families, schools and communities are associated with the development of these personal strengths and social competencies and, in turn, the healthy social development and successful learning for youth (Benard, 2004)

**Protective Social Ecosystems:**

- Changing the life trajectories of youth from “at-risk” to resilience begins with changing the beliefs and behaviors of the significant entourage of adults surrounding the lives of children and adolescents; i.e., parents, educators, and community leaders.

- Providing opportunities for youth to develop a sense of connection and contribution via participation in engaging, challenging, and interesting activities promotes the whole range of personal resilience social competencies and personal strengths (Hattie, et.al, 1997; Larson, 2000; Werner & Smith, 1992).
The presence of “protective environmental factors” (supports and opportunities) predicts positive outcomes in 50 – 80% of at-risk youth populations (Werner & Smith, 2001).

Longitudinal studies of resilient youth in adulthood indicate that competence, confidence and caring can flourish, even under adverse circumstances, IF children and adolescents encounter persons who provide them with the secure basis for the development of trust, autonomy and initiative… at home, in the classroom OR in the neighborhood (Werner & Smith, 1992).

The positive impacts of protective environments transcend ethnic, gender, cultural, social class, and geographical boundaries (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Werner & Smith, 1992).

Supportive relationships appear to serve as “critical mediums” of development providing the opportunity for the healthy physical, intellectual, psychological and social growth of youth (National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, 2002).

Resilient “survivors” describe quiet availability, fundamental positive regard, and simple sustained kindness as the key ingredients in caring relationships that made the difference for them. (Meier, 1995; Higgins, 1994; Miller, 1990; Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

The Family Ecosystem:

The Authoritative/Democratic Parenting style has been consistently and highly correlated with positive outcomes in youth including: higher academic achievement, psychological adjustment, social competence, self-reliance, creativity and responsibility (Dornbusch, et.al, 1997; Cohen & Rice, 1997; Shek, Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn & Dornbusch, 1991; 1997; Vandell & Posner, 1998; Marjoribanks, 1996).

Even in violent communities, parents are powerful protective factors with adjustment failure (i.e., interpersonal problem behaviors) occurring in only 6% of youth from sable, safe homes but this increased by 300% in unstable OR unsafe homes and by 1500% for youth from unsafe AND unstable homes (Richters & Martinez, 1993).

The single most consistently protective factor found in the lives of youth is that of a positive parent-family relationship (Blum, Shew, Beuhring et.al., 2000).

Positive outcomes in adolescents is correlated with three dimensions of the parent-child relationship: warmth/connection, guidance/regulation, and psychological autonomy (Barber & Olsen, 1997; Egeland et.al, 1993; Herman, et.al., 1997; Lahey, et.al., 1999; Steinberg, 2000; Thornberry, 1998).

A national longitudinal study of adolescents in North America found a sense of connectedness (belonging) with family and school to be the two most powerful protective factors against all the major health (physical and emotional) risk factors in youth (Resnick, et.al, 1997).

A five-year study found that strong bonding or connectedness with school and family resulted in the greatest associations with reduced substance abuse in at-risk adolescents (Sale & Springer, 2001).

The greater the number/type of adverse childhood experiences (ACE’s) in one’s life the more likely the development of both learning & behavioral disorders in children/adolescents (Tough, 2012; Lucenko, et.al., 2012).

The greater the number/type of adverse childhood experiences (ACE’s) in one’s life the higher the probability of experiencing one or more mental and emotional disorders in adulthood. (Anda & Felliti, 1998).

Of children with ACE score of 0 only 3% display learning or behavior problems, those with ACE of 1-3 = 21% and of those with ACE of 4 or more = 51% had learning or behavior problems in school (Burke, et al, 2011)
**School & Classroom Ecosystems**

- One of the most important and consistent findings in the resiliency research is the power of schools, and particularly teachers, to turn a child’s life around from risk to resilience (Garbarino, 1992; Higgins, 1994; Mastern & Coatsworth, 1998; Werner, 1996; Werner & Smith, 1992).

- These “turnaround teachers/mentors” are described as providing, in their own personal styles, the three protective factors of caring/connected relationships, participation/contribution, and high expectations/capability focused within a safe and structured (via fair rules and discipline) environment. (Benard, 1996; Deiro, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Moorman, 2001).

- Teacher relationship styles consistent with the Authoritative parenting style are correlated with higher academic achievement and motivation to learn (Paulsen, Marchant & Rothlisberg, 1997).

- Teachers viewed by students as empathic, warm, friendly and having a genuine concern for the students as individuals are associated with student outcomes such as better academic performance, higher learning motivation, more positive attitudes toward school and decreased behavior problems (Niebuhr & Niebuhr, 1999; Chiu & Tulley, 1997; Pert & Campbell, 1999; Wentzel, 1997).

- Depending on the quality of the school environment (i.e. caring relationships, high expectations and opportunity for participation) the outcomes for school success for minority cultural and linguistic groups ranges from high engagement and college attendance to 75% drop out rates (Ayers & Ford, 1995; Sleeter & McLaren, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999).

**Community Ecosystems:**

- “Collective Efficacy”, regardless of the socio-economic status, is associated with dramatically lower crime rates and more positive social adjustment of youth; i.e. when community residents interact in a positive and cooperative manner with close social networks and shared concern for the young people (Samson, et.al., 1997).

- Providing opportunities for youth to develop a sense of connection and contribution via participation in engaging, challenging and interesting activities promotes the whole range of personal resilience and strengths (Hattie, et.al, 1997; Larson, 2000; Werner & Smith, 1992).

- Opportunities for participation in group or cooperative activities in home, school and community helps youth fulfill their psychological needs for belonging and can connect them to a group that can serve as a “surrogate family” (Werner & Smith, 1992).

- Opportunity for authentic decision making and leadership responsibilities are often the characteristics distinguishing successful from unsuccessful programs for adolescents (Gambone & Arbreton, 1997; Tierney et.al., 1997).

- Providing opportunities for youth to engage in positive after school programs (sports, arts, etc) along with a commitment to school, home & community collaboration has been demonstrated to significantly reduce adolescence drug and alcohol abuse. (Iceland Youth Program (2016).

**MINDSETS:**

- Student mindsets predict their academic trajectories and are malleable; with the right intervention strategies students can be moved from a fixed to a growth mindset with academic performance rising as a result. (Dweck, C; 2006 1998, 2012)

- Children with growth mindsets have been found to have more positive mental health with higher self-esteem and lower aggression, depression and anxiety. (Schleider, J., Abel, M, & Weisz, J. 2014).
Supportive, Nurturing Social Ecosystems: The 5 Essential Maintenance Tasks

1. SAFETY MAINTENANCE
   - Basic food, clothing and shelter needs are met
   - Personal safety needs are met; everyone feels physically, emotionally, verbally, psychologically, and sexually safe here. 
   **NOTE:** Failure here is termed Abuse, Neglect, & Maltreatment!

4. LIFE SKILLS MAINTENANCE
   - Developing the **academic skills** and knowledge base members will need in a positive, encouraging manner.
   - Developing the **social-emotional competencies** members will need for success in life: Understanding/Respecting self & others, Empathy, Communication, Cooperation and Responsibility skills.

2. COHESION MAINTENANCE
   - Actively seeking to develop a deep sense of belonging, caring and mutual support and cohesion among all members.
   - Positive, supportive, direct and encouraging communication among all members.
   - Rituals and Traditions are established and honored.
   - Regularly engage in fun, shared activities together.
   - A **5:1 ratio** or greater of positive interactions to negative/corrective interactions exists among all family member relationships

3. BEHAVIORAL MAINTENANCE
   - Behavioral expectations are established and maintained in a firm, fair, and appropriate manner.
   - Discipline is understood as an educational, not punitive, process and based in the authoritative parenting/teacher style

5. BOUNDARY MAINTENANCE
   - Individual’s privacy, autonomy, and interests are respected.
   - Subsystem boundaries (parents/siblings; extended family, teacher/parent, professional, etc.) are respected.
   - Time is devoted to actively maintain collaborative, cooperative subsystems (Marital, Student, Parents, etc.)
   - Roles & responsibilities are assigned appropriately by age, generation, expertise, professional roles, etc.
   (e.g. teacher responsible for instruction & behavior at school, parents role is as “cheerleader” & to encourage learning.
   Most Common Boundary Breach = school calling home to report behavior problems at school – see Hockey’s 3rd Man in Rule!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose/Goal</th>
<th>Rules of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition &amp; Connection</td>
<td>“I’m wanted &amp; belong here”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>“My individuality, identity and interests are respected”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality &amp; Respect</td>
<td>“I am of equal value, worth as everyone else here.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful Contribution</td>
<td>“I’m needed here; my talents and contributions are valued &amp; appreciated.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence &amp; Mastery</td>
<td>“I’m capable, competent and optimistic that with effort I’ll continually improve!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social Ecosystems that provide opportunities for youth to experience these foundational psychological needs, essential for all youth, facilitate the development of a positive self-identity, psychosocial well-being, and mental health!

But, when a child perceives these goals as being blocked or unattainable, they will then compensate by resorting to one or more of the 5 goals of challenging misbehavior.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOGNITION / CONNECTION:</th>
<th>AUTONOMY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUALITY/RESPECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION</th>
<th>MASTERY/COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Greet by name** at door of classroom at beginning of day/class. (can develop own ‘unique’ greeting)

2. **Invite for lunch** (individual or in small ‘lunch box’ groups)

3. Attend student activities both IN and OUTSIDE of school

4. **Classroom Meetings** (start and/or end) of day to review goals, highlights, news, etc..

5. **Go to recess/free time/PE** and ‘play’ with students (yes, even at secondary level!)

6. **Journals** for writing to you about what is on their mind and you respond in their journal.

7. **Breakfast ‘club’** invitation in your classroom

8. **MBWA:** Management By Wandering Around, Move around the classroom constantly briefly connect to each student in positive, encouraging manner verbally or nonverbally

9. **Students Create and Post** their personal ‘Coat of Arms’ and/or Autobiographies.

10. **Be where students are** (hallways, cafeteria, playground) daily to greet & talk informally.

**NOTE:** For the most “Challenging Student”: Assign a ‘Mentor Teacher’ to check in with at beginning of day and end or more as needed…. Focus is on encouraging support, “how are you today?”, call if absent!}
1. **Recognize** each student’s unique interests, talents, abilities (academic & non-academic)

2. **Provide Choices** for students as to when and in what order to do their assignments.

3. **Students Book Choices**: books, etc. of interest to them rather than assign only.

4. **Learn about** and take interest in, incorporate each student’s unique interests, hobbies, etc.

5. **Provide choices regarding activities** in free time, learning centers, research topics, etc.

6. **Be a “Talent Scout”**: identifying hidden talents, skills, abilities (both academic and non)

7. **Flexible seating** rather than assigned seats in the classroom.

8. **Conference with** students regarding their goals for the day or week and check on progress with them daily.

9. **Class Input** invited on sequence of subjects, learning methods, etc. when possible.

1. **VOICE TONE**: speak to students with voice tone you expect from them at all times!

2. **Respect by name** (first or Ms/Mr) as you would speak to parent or a colleague.

3. **Avoid “praising”** which is evaluative; instead, comment on progress, effort, improvement.

4. **Request students’ advice**, ideas and input on content and process of classroom.

5. **Develop class ‘rules’ collaboratively**; this is ‘our’ classroom so “What’s needed for all to learn, to feel safe and supported here?”

6. **Recognize and celebrate ALL** holidays and traditions of your students’ cultures, nationality & ethnic heritages...invite parents too to share food, traditions, etc.

7. **Request private conference** with the struggling or misbehaving student and seek solutions **WITH** them in mutual problem solving style.

8. **Send “Notes of Encouragement”** to student & parents recognizing progress, contribution.

9. **Speak “WITH”** not “TO or AT” students.

10. **Growth Mindset feedback**: improvement, progress, effort; not judgment of quality/status.
MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION:  
10 Sample Strategies

1. **Identify** student expertise/skill and involve it in the class instruction.

2. **Provide opportunities** to work with/assist school staff (office, custodial, cook, etc.)

3. **“Thank you Notes”**: Be aware of positive, cooperative, helpful behaviors (no matter how minor) and comment with thanks & appreciation.

4. **Peer tutors** for special education or younger struggling students

5. **Community service projects** that are student led/student labor (food banks, assisted living/nursing homes, disadvantaged populations, etc. etc. etc…)

6. **Reading ‘buddies’** for younger students (teach how to encourage growth mindsets).

7. **Positive referrals** to principal for contributions, progress, effort, improvement (principal then sends home a quick note to parents “Salute from the Principal”).

8. ‘**Notes of Encouragement**’ sent to parents RE: student progress, positive behavior, Contributions, effort, improvement (instead of destructive negative calls, notes home)

9. **“I Spy” Bulletin Board** where observed positive, helpful acts of students that day are posted each evening to greet them the next morning.

10. **“We Appreciate You” Tickets** issued by **ALL school staff** when “catch” student
1. **Yesterday/Today/Tomorrow Notices** Students identify each Friday what they could not do/know on Monday that they know/can do today and what they plan to learn next.

2. **“Provide opportunities to Learn”** and do things of interest to them (fish, carpentry, dance, musical instruments, etc….bring in volunteers to teach once a week)

3. **All Inclusive Extra Curricular Programs**: “No Cut” sports teams, bands, art clubs, glee clubs, chess clubs, etc. Give all a chance to develop and improve their skills.

4. **“Book of Heroic Failures”** in the classroom and post one daily/discuss (authored by the “Not so Terribly Good Club of Great Britain”. Add new Heroic Failures as discovered.

5. **“Those Who ‘Couldn’t/But Could” Corner** in classroom posting weekly people who were told they can’t or couldn’t but proved they could. (*e.g. I. Newton, E. Presley, T. Edison, C. Darwin, Beatles, GK Chesterton, W. Disney, J. Watt, O. Winfrey, A. Lincoln, G. Puccini)*

6. **“Expert Tags”** given to students to acknowledge skills, knowledge, experience they have to share with others (academic and non-academic so all expertise acknowledged.

7. **“Growth Mindset”** feedback focused on progress, effort, improvement, & belief in them.

8. **“I Believe in You”** feedback when student expresses self-doubt, too hard, etc…
9. “MY PR Journals” students keep journals of their “Personal Records” in all areas important to them (e.g., running, test grade in math/science/spelling, and so forth.)

10. “Class PR Chart” list subject competencies to master by year’s end. Give weekly tests with items randomly selected from the full list. Compute combined correct Class Score.

**ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR SCHOOL STAFF**

Remember not all schools are the same, & not all school demographics are the same, so avoid looking to adopt a “One Size Fits All” marketed program off the shelf. Use these programs as guidelines and models to modify to your school’s specific needs.

- Brainstorm additional ideas that fit for your classroom and school culture for each of the 5 Goals for developing a Positive Self-Identity.

- Consider inviting Parents to develop a similar list for applications at home in parenting and share with total school community.
1. Expressing Confidence in the child:
   - “Knowing you, I’m sure you’ll do fine”
   - “you’ll make it!”
   - “I have confidence in your judgment, abilities”
   - “Boy, that’s a tough one, but I’m sure you’ll work it out, let me know how you work it out!”
   - “Hang I there, you can do it”
   - “How would you like to handle this problem?”
   - “You’d like to confidence me that you can’t do it, but I’ni sure you’ll get it!”
   - “you did all that already? Fantastic, you’re learning quickly.”
   - “Yes, it is hard, but you can do hard things!”

2. Identifying Strengths, Assets and Contributions
   - “Thanks, that really helped me/us a lot!”
   - “It was very thoughtful of you to…”
   - ‘Thanks, I really appreciate your …, it makes my job easier.”
   - “I could really use your help on…”
   - “You have a lot of skill (knowledge) in…, would you help me by..?”
   - “you seem to really enjoy learning about….”
   - “I really like the way you…”
   - “That was a kind/helpful thing you just did, I’m so proud you are my son/daughter”
   - “I really enjoy/admire/respect your… (be specific! E.g. sense of humor, singing, art, effort, etc.)

3. Recognizing Effort and Improvement
   - “It looks as though you really worked hard on that”
   - “It looks as if you spent a lot of time thinking that through”
   - “I see that you are moving along”
   - “Look at the progress you have made” (be specific, a yesterday to today focus)
   - “I can see you are improving in …. keep going!”
   - “you may not have reached your goal yet, but just look at how far you’ve come so far”
   - “I’ve noticed that you are getting better at…”

Adult-Child Communication & the Promoting of Growth vs. Fixed Mindsets!
Classroom Communication Patterns:
Keeping Students “On Track vs. Derailed”

Positive/Connecting Affective Response
Feelings of empowerment, connection, belonging, value, & Hope

Negative/Destructive Affective Response
Lowered self-worth, discouraged, inadequate, disrespected, angry/resentful & hopeless

Cognitive Response “Growth Mindset”
Develops a *Growth Mindset* believing in own ability to grow & succeed via effort.

Positive Behavioral Response
Forms positive interpersonal relationships and Social-Emotional competence

Positive-Constructive ‘Growth Mindset’ Feedback Patterns
TEACHER SWITCHING STATION

Negative-Destructive ‘Fixed Mindset’ Feedback Patterns

Cognitive Virus & Fixed Mindset
Develops a *Fixed Mindset* with self-stigmatized view of self as inept, disliked, disrespected, hopeless, & disconnected. etc..

Positive Behavioral Response
Retreats, Rebels or seeks Revenge... compensates via negative/destructive behavior. marginalized peers
A student in your class, Bobby, has failed yet again to complete his assigned classwork this morning. He has been largely inattentive and disinterested in class.

The lunchroom aide brings Bobby to you during the lunch period and informs you that he verbally insulted one female classmate and then made fun of a special needs child in the cafeteria.

Further, the aide tells you that when she reprimanded him, he responded in a very disrespectful tone and made a disparaging comment to her. Therefore, she is sending him back to you, his teacher, for the remainder of the lunch period.

As the aide leaves, Bobby enters your classroom and you say, “… [Have teachers alternate reading “Resilience-based, problem resolving” comments vs. “Authoritarian-based, punitive” comments…. How is the teacher in role of “Bobby” impacted/feel with each comment? Which moves to escalation vs. de-escalation of conflict?}
Responding to an Acute Classroom Behavior Problem: Guidelines for Teacher Responses

**Axiom #1**: Teacher Self-Regulation, be aware of your initial impulse as to feelings and how to respond. Then, AVOID doing that! Your instinctive response will engage you in re-traumatization and Maintain the destructive “Infinity Loop” pattern (pg. 33).

**Instead**, use Logical Consequence and the providing of ‘Choices’

**The 4 R’s of a Logical Consequence**

**Related**: Directly & logically to the behavior at issue

**Reasonable**: Goal is to “Teach” not Intimidate/punish!

**Respectful**: Monitor tone of voice; be calm and respectful if you want to be respected!

**Reliable**: Consistency in follow thru, not arbitrary via chances, warnings, counting to 3, etc.

[NOTE: Logical Consequences are best when developed collaboratively between the teacher and the student in a private conference regarding, I.E., “Let’s agree on a plan for what would be the best
Begin with a ‘firm & friendly’ statement identifying the problem behavior.

Then

Calmly acknowledgement that the choice is the child/adolescent’s

Then

State the Desired Behavior, “I’d appreciate it if…”

Then

“Oh, you may…” State Option of the Logical Consequence

Then

State, “You decide”

If the behavior continues:

Implement the consequence:

“I see you’ve chosen to .....” and implement the logical consequence

If desired behavior is chosen:

Acknowledge your appreciation quietly and personally say,

“I really appreciate your cooperation, thank you!”
GOAL: Attention & Special Service

[Note: This is the LEAST common primary goal in today’s classroom, frequently “misdiagnosed”]

➢ Minimize the attention or service given

➢ Notice appropriate behavior

➢ Clarify the desired behavior

➢ Do the unexpected, join in!

➢ Distract the student or class (e.g., ask a question, request Assistance)

➢ Offer Logical Consequence ‘choice’ of a self-calming space or, cooperating with class lesson and rights of fellow students.
GOAL: Control & Revenge Behaviors

1. Control Your Emotions  Maintain calm, respectful & firm voice

2. Initial “Rumbling Stage”: Make a graceful exit; avoid escalation!
   Acknowledge understanding of student’s feeling upset, agitated and
   Offer choice of staying or settling oneself down in a safe, calming spaces

3. Full “Eruption Stage”: Use emotional self-regulation, self-calming
   time out (for self and student!).
   Do not seek to overpower or engage in a power struggle. It “Takes 2 to
   tangle”, do not be #2. Model calm conflict de-escalation for all students!

4. Schedule & Conduct a student/teacher Conference
   - Discuss what was student feeling, needing?
   - Identify impact on others
   - Agree on future consequence (use 4R’s)
     - Loss or delay of privileges
     - Loss of freedom of interaction
     - Making Restitution/Restorative options
     - Teach or Re-teach appropriate behavior

5. Focus on student’s strengths & potential for contribution
   - Request student’s cooperation & assistance in future
GOAL: Superiority & Power Behaviors
(AKA: Bullying & Abuse)

1. Remain calm and use firm, friendly & controlled tone of voice:

2. If directed at another student, position yourself physically between student and victim [Include “active bystanders” also]

3. State in calm, firm tone State clearly:
   “That kind of behavior is abusive; we don’t treat one another in that way here!”

4. State student’s choices: i.e., to Self-calm or move to a safe place for doing so without interfering with others rights or emotional safety

5. Check that others or victims are OK!

6. Schedule a Student/Teacher Problem Resolution Conference (include both bullies and active bystander bullies/abusers as equally responsible.) [DO NOT include victims; see separately]
GOAL: Avoidance of Failure & Emotional Pain

1. Modify instructional strategies focusing on interests and growth/progress
2. Encourage POSITIVE self-dialogue
3. Reframe the “I can’t” refrain to “I’m improving, I’ll get it!”
4. Identify “He Can’t” role models who proved they “could”
   [E.g., A. Edison, G.K. Chesterton, J. Watt, P. Picaso, G. Puccini, see “Book of Heroic Failures, etc.”]
5. Learning ENRICHMENT programs; focus on interest first, skills second.
6. Reach out and Enlist parents and put them in a “Cheerleader” role!
7. Use “Growth Mindset” Communication skills: effort, progress, improve,
8. Take time to KNOW the student as a person, not just as a student!

**WARNING:**
These are your most seriously discouraged students!! Be cognizant of ACE’s in the Family → School → Community → Prison/Addiction “Pipelines”
Guiding Assumptions:

- Classroom Teachers are in the best position to resolve most learning and behavioral problems.
- Interventions are most effective when implemented early before problems reach a crisis stage!
- Intervention is an on-going process focused on improvement, not cure! Staff must have ‘Growth Mindsets”
- There is no “Philosopher’s Stone” or “Magic Pill”!
  - Always be suspicious of any point of view that suggests source of one’s behavior/emotion lies outside one’s self  
    “Beware of educators bearing neurological theories and pharmacological cures”.
- The Goal is to “Win Students Over” to learning and well-being; NOT “to make” them learn/behave”!
School Team Process for Assessment & Designing of Resilience Based Intervention Strategies

The Initial Assessment Stage:

Step 1: **Background data:** name, gender, grade level, age, cultural background, language.

Step 2: **Objective description of the Student Behavioral concern:**
“What would you like to change or improve with this student?” Focus on providing an objective description of the current behavioral interactions of concern (avoid verbs “to be”, “to have”, and “to cause”). Seek to delineate the interaction steps in both student behaviors and teacher/adult responses (see “Infinity Loop” above).

Step 3: **Subjective response of the teacher:** “How did you feel (an emotion) during this situation? Why?”

Step 4: **Previous solution survey:** “What have you tried so far to improve the situation?”

Step 5: **Pertinent Social, School & Family History:** Sibling descriptions, parental factors, cultural contexts, school history, community factors, etc.

Step 6: **Initial Diagnostic “Hypotheses”:** Likely goal/function of behavior?
Underlying Rules of Interaction or “cognitive virus” at root of the student’s behavior?
Possible problem maintaining interaction patterns that have evolved (circular causality)?
The Resilience-Focused Intervention Planning Stage:

Step 7: Identify “Infinity Loop” Patterns: Identify staff responses that may be reinforcing the student’s trauma or ACE’s based mindset that need to be changed.

Step 8: Formulate a Resilience-Focused Intervention Strategy: Staff brainstorms possible long-term Resilience building strategies to foster a) supportive school/classroom ecosystem, b) foster needed social-emotional competencies, c) Develop a Growth Mindset perspective, and d) Provide opportunities for experiencing 5 goals for a positive self-identity.

Step 9: Formulate Strategies for Handling Acute Classroom/School Incidents: Staff brainstorms short-term strategies for handling acute problem issues (i.e., logical consequences, offering agreed upon choice/options or positive/resilience building interventions, and any needed supportive services, etc.)

Step 10: Providing Support and Collaboration: Identify positive parent involvement strategies and potential need for supportive involvement of other staff in school or outside professional services.

Schedule date/time for follow-up to evaluate progress [Maintain staff ‘growth mindset’ perspective!!]
Part Three

Home-School Collaboration: Winning over parents as partners
1. **Authoritarian / Autocratic:**
The authoritarian leader seeks to shape, control, and evaluate all aspects of the child’s behavior.

*Style associated in the research with lower academic achievement (C’s), low goal directedness, low learning motivation, and increased relationship conflicts (including bullying and conduct problems)*

2. **Permissive-Indulgent:**
Attempts to be non-punitive and accepting of all the child’s actions and desires. Limits are seldom, if ever, firmly & consistently enforced. Adult/Child boundaries very diffuse. Parent seeks to do everything for the child to make him/her happy & successful

*Style associated with lower achievement (C’s) and greater involvement in self-destructive behaviors (drugs, alcohol, sex) and manipulative or verbally abusive relationships*

3. **Permissive-Disengaged:**
Allows the child to regulate his or her own activities without parent interference; shows little to no active interest in the child, BUT, most likely to resort to harsh disciplinary action (e.g., corporal punishment, anger, harsh verbal abuse, etc.) if child interferes in parents life. Most common at the two ends of SES continuum.

*Style associated with lowest achievement (D or Failure) and greatest behavioral adjustment difficulties including gangs, delinquency, and substance abuse.*
4. Authoritative / Democratic:
Parent employs a rational, issue-oriented approach. Reasonable expectations are set with firm limits maintained for inappropriate behavior. This adult utilizes a positive, encouraging communication style takes a strong, active interest in the totality of the child’s life and a strong, encouraging personal relationship is established and maintained. At the same time, the authoritative adult expects the child to assume. Problems and conflicts are dealt with in a calm, issue-oriented and rational manner focusing on resolving problems and teaching positive/constructive social-emotional competencies.

*Style associated in research evidence with:*
- Higher academic achievement *(mean in high schoolers of ‘A’ & B’ range)*
- Better school adjustment,
- More positive relationships with peers and adults,
- Lowest incidences of behavior problems,
- Higher intellectual functioning and
- Greater intellectual curiosity; more creative.

**For more information on working with parents/families in schools:**


The primary purpose of the Parent/Teacher Conference is to help school staff better understand the ‘Challenging Student’s’ behavior at all 3 levels and identify possible strategies for fostering resilience & psychosocial well-being; parents are their consultants. School seeks strategies to employ at school, parents to be in supportive, encouraging roles only!

William G. Nicoll, Ph.D.
Resilience Counseling & Training Center
Part Three

Infusing Social-Emotional Learning into the Curriculum
Social-Emotional Learning: What the research evidence tells us

1. **DECREASED**: Bullying & Social Aggression Incidents

2. **DECREASED**: Behavioral Problems & Discipline Referrals

3. **DECREASED**: Truancy and drop-out rates

4. **INCREASED**: Academic Achievement/Test Scores (*11 – 17%!*)
   
   [*NOTE: Resilience predicts success 70% greater than does IQ*]

5. **INCREASED**: Learning motivation & life/career aspirations

6. **IMPROVED**: Social behaviors with both peers and adults

7. **INCREASED COMMUNITY SUPPORT** for schools
8. **COLLEGE & WORKPLACE READINESS:** Studies find significant gaps in what schools teach and the competencies necessary for successful transition to adulthood, college and the workplace. These are in the domains of: psychological, social, cognitive, & spiritual/ethical development. **The focus of SEL!**

9. **COST-BENEFITS:** Research indicates for every $1 spent on SEL programs there is an $11 return on investment.

10. **A PRIORITY FOR 93% of TEACHERS** nationally identified an increased focus on SEL to be a priority need in our schools!

11. **IMPROVED SCHOOL CULTURE & CLIMATE** which leads to narrower SES achievement gaps, improved achievement, & greater social mobility for lower SES students.

12. **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION** social-emotional competencies & supportive school, family & community environments are the KEYS to mental health & substance abuse prevention…

   **[IT’S NOT ABOUT THE DRUGS; IT’S ABOUT CONNECTION & SUPPORT!!]**
STAGE 1: An **INNATE APTITUDE** for positive mental health possessed by all children; a potential that can be developed through training in the essential social-emotional competencies of resilience.

STAGE 2: A set of **OBJECTIVE, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES** to be **TAUGHT** in the family and the school.

- **Understanding & Respecting Self & Others**
  [e.g., emotional self-regulation skills, cultural awareness, knowing oneself & peers]

- **Empathy Skills**
  [e.g. recognizing emotions, thoughts and perceptions of others]

- **Positive/Constructive Communication Skills**
  [e.g., receptive, expressive and non-verbal]

- **Cooperation Skills**
  [e.g., team building, collaboration problem solving, etc.]

- **Responsible Contribution Skills**
  [e.g., helping others, interpersonal problem resolution, bullying & social justice, etc.]

STAGE 3: A **SUBJECTIVE ATTITUDE** toward self, life and others from which one attaches meaning to life events and based on which one makes behavioral choices.

**NOTE:** SEL programs should strive to integrate SEL into the academic curriculum as well as to involve parents/caregivers in the SEL topics such that the school & family are collaborating in fostering personal resilience and psychosocial well-being…. **"It takes a village!"**
Lesson 1: Social-Emotional Competency: Understanding & Respecting Self & Others [Grades 4 - 12]  

Class Autobiographies

Objective(s):
- To assist students in getting to know more about one another
- To promote class cohesiveness
- To assist students in finding commonalities and interesting aspects of one another

Materials:
- Writing materials

Lesson Plan:

Introduction: Discuss with the class what an autobiography is and the types of information which might be found in someone’s autobiography (e.g., early life, family history, important events in one’s life, interesting or fun incidents, places lived, friends, favorite activities, etc)

Activity: Have student write their own autobiography. Have students also make a book cover for their autobiography and bind them into a class folder (3 ring binder) as a Collection of Class ## Autobiographies. Leave time daily for anyone to read part or all of their autobiography (or the teacher may read sections from each student’s autobiography to the class). Make several copies such that they can be located somewhere in the room for “free reading” time. Also, by using a 3-ring binder, students can be encouraged to add new sections at any time.

Closure: After a student has read a section of his/her autobiography to the class, the teacher may invite the class to respond by noting particularly interesting parts and/or to make requests for further information and/or details about their classmate’s life (e.g. for developing a later chapter). Be clear that only positive comments are acceptable regarding another student’s autobiography. (e.g. “I’d really like to hear more about your old neighborhood if you could write more sometime”… avoid, “good, but” statements as the “but” discourages further effort!).

Have the students keep their autobiographies on a selected table or bookshelf in the classroom Such that during free time, or reading/writing time, they can add to their booklets or read a classmate’s autobiography. A “Comments” sheet can be included as the last page of each student’s autobiography. Anytime someone reads a classmate’s booklet, he or she can make some positive and encouraging comments.
**Suggested Classroom Follow-Up Activities (within the academic Curriculum):**

- Have students read (or read to students) autobiographies of famous individuals from throughout history. Discuss how these life events may have helped form their character in later life.

- Use the autobiographies as part of an on-going class writing project encouraging students to add chapters/sections to their initial effort.

- The classroom teacher should contribute his/her own autobiography to the class book. Also invite other school staff to contribute short autobiographies (e.g. principal, counselor, custodian, bus driver, cafeteria workers, etc).

**Suggested Home Follow-Up Activities (for parents or caregivers):**

- Ask parents to write their own autobiographies (provide prompts and ideas to get them started) and include this in your classroom’s Library; “Autobiographies of Our Parents”.

- Have students invite grandparents or other elderly friends, family and neighbors to write similar autobiographies focusing on how times were different (or similar) in their childhoods and how they experienced important historical events (e.g. WWII, McCarthyism, Kennedy presidency and assassination, Civil Rights Movement and Segregation, Berlin Wall, Vietnam, Gulf War, Nixon and Watergate, etc.)

- Provide students with a selection of autobiographies from the library and ask parents to read the books to or with their child at home and discuss what they learned interesting about this person’s life. (e.g. sports figures, historical figures, entertainers, etc.)
Lesson 2: Social-Emotional Competency: Responsible Contribution
(Grades 4 – 12)

Lean on Me

Objective(s):
- Develop students empathy skills
- Foster a caring and supportive classroom climate
- Increase awareness of times when we face choices to help or hurt others
- Increase awareness that “I’m not involved” is never an option in life.

Materials:
- Choose any book dealing with a true life situation where an individual needed the help of others to survive.

Lesson Plan:
**Introduction:** Begin by playing the song, Lean on Me. Ask students to discuss a time when they needed someone (friend, parent, etc) to lean on in order to get through a difficult time. Inform students that the class will be reading books describing such situations over the next couple weeks.

**Activity:** Discuss the role of a bully, a victim and the bystanders in any type of conflict or injustice situation. Then read to the class or together a chapter each day from one of the books listed below with the focus on identifying who are the bullies, the victims and the bystanders.

**Closure:** Following each chapter, discuss with the class how they think each character felt and why they may have decided to act as they did in that situation.

Suggested Books:
1. **Diary of Anne Frank** (Frank, A,f) Diary of girl in early teens kept in hiding from Nazi occupation in the Netherlands.)
2. **Your Name is Renee** (Cretzmeyer, S., 1999) Story of Ruth Kapp Hartz’s experience as a hidden child in Nazi occupied France. Oxford University Press)
3. **A Long Way Gone** (Beah, Ishmael, 2007. Memoirs of a 12 year old boy forced to become a boy soldier in Sierra Leone, Africa and his eventual rehabilitation).
4. **My Name is Nujood: Age 10 and Divorced** (Nujood & Minoui, D, 2010).Girl in Yemen sold into marriage bravely struggles to find help to get her freedom.
5. **I am Malala: The girl who stood up for education** (Yousafzai, M., 2013).
**Suggested Classroom Follow-Up Activities:**

1. Have small groups of students choose a similar book from a list prepared by your librarian to read, discuss and write their reaction to as a class assignment.

2. Invite in a guest speaker who has been in a situation of helping or being helped during a stressful time (hurricane, tsunami, war, genocide, holocaust, homelessness, catastrophic events, etc). Have them tell their story and then open class up for question/answers.

3. Invite students to write essays regarding “A time when I let a friend “lean on me”.

4. Have the students learn the song, “Lean on Me” in music

5. Have the students research various individuals who were responsible (altruistic) bystanders in history, i.e., individuals who displayed “heroic altruism” in situations dangerous to themselves. *Examples*: Miep Gies, Varian Fry, Albert Goering, Emile Schindler, Kurt Gerstein, Wilm Hosenfeld, Berthold Beitz, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King, John Adams, Emile Schindler, Hans Hedtoft, Georg Duckwitz, Harriet Tubman, Paul Rosesabaagina,

6. Have students write in their journals how they view Dante’s quote below as it applies to us as Bystanders in regard to bullying, maltreatment, domestic violence, child abuse, poverty, homelessness, child labor, sex/slave trade, and other adverse life conditions impacting the lives of people today, “The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in time of great moral crises maintain their neutrality.”

**Suggested Home Follow-Up Activities:**

1. Ask students to interview a parent or family member about a time they stepped in and let someone lean on them when times were bad.

2. Have students identify a local group (village, homeless, children’s home, etc.) who need a lending hand to help them survive and develop a home-school partnership to assist.


**For additional Sample SEL Lessons see:**

Support Wall #1:
Supportive Environments
Authoritative Leadership Styles:
Parent, Teachers & Administrators
High Caring & High Expectations
High Involvement & Support
Opportunities for a Positive Self-identity via 5 Positive Goals

Support Wall #2
Social-Emotional Competencies
Understanding/Respecting Self/Others
Empathy Skills
Communication Skills
Cooperation Skills
Responsible Contribution Skills

Academic Competencies:
Reading / Language Arts
Mathematics
Science / Technology
Arts & Humanities
Social Sciences
Health & Recreation
Languages

A Solid School Foundation
An Inclusive, Growth Mindset school philosophy of:

“Every child is welcome & Every child will succeed!!”

A healthy, nurturing ecosystem is a pre-requisite for the healthy development & wellbeing of all living organisms!

William G. Nicoll, Ph.D.
Resilience Counseling & Training Center
Divergent Paradigms in Education:
“Taking the Education Road Less Traveled”

Two paradigms diverged in a little red schoolhouse
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the empirical research

Then took the transformative, Trauma-Sensitive/Resilience-Based path,
Less traveled but much more fair
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was optimistic, affirming and wanted wear.
Although as for that, the passing there
Had worn the first far beyond its claims and fame

And both this morning equally lay
The first in strategies Educators had long trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet, knowing how way leads onto way
I doubted if I would ever come back

I shall be telling this to colleagues and future teachers with a sigh
Somewhere in a classroom ages and ages hence.
Two paradigms diverged in a little red schoolhouse
And I took the one less traveled by
And that has made all the difference!

[with apologies to New Hampshire’s poet, Robert Frost and his poem, “The Road Not Taken”]
Resilience Counseling & Training Center

William G. Nicoll, Ph.D. Monica A. Nicoll, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 1435 – 24 Reporter Court
North Conway, New Hampshire 03860
Tel: 603-730-5467
Email: resiliencectc@aol.com
Website: www.resiliencecounselingcenter.com

**Resilience:**
The ability to set a positive, productive and fulfilling course in life while also being equipped to handle adversity, stress, failures and setback in stride. Resilient people are able to “bounce back” and continue moving forward in that positive life direction. Our degree of Personal Resilience serves as both a ‘social vaccine’ inoculating us from effects of adverse life events, as well as an ‘antidote’ for difficulties in resolving problems and challenges in life

**Services Provided by RCTC**
- Counseling & Therapy (individuals, couples, families) – in office or online
- 3-day Intensive Counseling interventions for individuals, couples or families
- Parent Coaching / Parent Education
- Couples Enrichment Workshops
- Consulting & Professional Development for Schools (teachers, counselors & administrators)
- Consulting & Professional Development for Mental Health organizations or agencies

*Follow RCTC on Facebook*