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## CHAPTER 8

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### The Glasser Model:

*Good Behavior Comes from Meeting  
Needs Without Coercion*



## GLASSER BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Glasser (1925– ) is a Los Angeles psychiatrist who for many years has consulted and spoken extensively on issues related to quality education. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, he first trained to be a chemical engineer, but later turned to psychology and then to psychiatry. Glasser first achieved national acclaim in psychiatry for the theories expressed in his book *Reality Therapy: A New Approach to Psychiatry* (1965), which shifted a long-standing focus in treating behavior problems. Instead of seeking to uncover the conditions in one's past that contributed to inappropriate behavior (the traditional approach in psychoanalysis), Glasser directed attention to the present, to the reality of the situation, contending that it is what one does in the present to work out problems that matters.

Glasser soon extended his ideas from reality therapy to the school arena. His work with juvenile offenders further convinced him that teachers could help students make better choices about their school behavior. Glasser insisted that teachers should never excuse bad student behavior. Poor background or undesirable living conditions do not exempt students from their responsibility to learn and to behave properly in school. This point of view, together with practical advice for carrying it out, was set forth in Glasser's book *Schools Without Failure* (1969), acknowledged to be one of the century's most influential books in education.

In 1985, Glasser published a book entitled *Control Theory in the Classroom*, in which he gave a new emphasis to his contentions concerning discipline, encapsulated in the following pronouncement: If students are to continue working and behaving properly, they must "believe that if they do some work, they will be able to satisfy their needs enough so that it makes sense to keep working." Glasser thus has put much greater emphasis than before on the school's role in meeting basic student needs, as a prime factor in discipline and work output. This theme is furthered in Glasser's 1990 book, *The Quality School: Managing Students Without Coercion*. Because of the different emphases in Glasser's earlier and later works, together with the historical importance of his earlier work, his model of discipline is presented in two parts—pre-1985 and post-1985. The pre-1985 model, as it does not represent Glasser's current thinking, is presented in condensed form.

### GLASSER: PRE-1985

#### Main Focus

Prior to 1985, Glasser's focus was on helping students make good behavioral choices that led ultimately to personal success.

#### Key Ideas

1. Students are rational beings. They can control their behavior. They choose to act the way they do.
2. Good choices produce good behavior. Bad choices produce bad behavior.

3. Teachers must always
4. Teachers who truly care
5. Reasonable consequences
6. Class rules are essential
7. Classroom meetings, rules, behavior, and

[Note: You have seen many models of discipline.]

## WHAT SCHOOLS OFFER

Prior to 1985, Glasser contended that schools were not successful and to be recognized as providing opportunities to meet those needs and a success identity, which begins with a good relationship with atrocious backgrounds, schools interested in them.

Yet students often resist. They may fear teachers, distancing themselves from teachers. Teachers must help students make responsible choices until they can make such choices, peacefully.

## WHAT TEACHERS SHOULD

Glasser has always maintained that teachers should describe their responsibilities.

1. Stress student responsibility to live with the choice.
2. Establish class rules that are essential and wrote down the mistaken belief that rules were to be followed. Rules were to be followed for the point that students should accept no excuses. Conditions outside the classroom affect behavior in school. Glasser's model states that students fail to live with their choices.

3. Teachers must always try to help students make good choices.
4. Teachers who truly care about their students accept no excuses for bad behavior.
5. Reasonable consequences should always follow student behavior, good or bad.
6. Class rules are essential and they must be enforced.
7. Classroom meetings are effective vehicles for attending to matters of class rules, behavior, and discipline.

[Note: You have seen many of these points incorporated into the Jones and Canter models of discipline.]

### WHAT SCHOOL OFFERS

Prior to 1985, Glasser contended that schools offer students a good chance to be successful and to be recognized. Indeed, for many students schools offered the only opportunities to meet those needs. Success in school produces a sense of self-worth and a success identity, which mitigate deviant behavior. The road to a success identity begins with a good relationship with people who care. For students who come from atrocious backgrounds, school may be the only place to find a person genuinely interested in them.

Yet students often resist entering into quality relationships with their teachers. They may fear teachers, distrust adults in general, or obtain peer rewards by disdain-ing teachers. Teachers must therefore be very persistent, never waning in their efforts to help students. Glasser maintains that students cannot begin to make better, more responsible choices until they become deeply involved emotionally with people who can make such choices, people such as teachers.

### WHAT TEACHERS SHOULD DO

Glasser has always maintained that teachers hold the key to good discipline. In 1978 he described their responsibilities as follows:

1. Stress student responsibility in making good choices, showing that they must live with the choices they make. Keep this in the forefront.
2. Establish class rules that lead to success. Glasser considered class rules essential and wrote disparagingly of teachers who tried to function without them, in the mistaken belief that rules stifle initiative, self-direction, and responsibility. Rules were to be formulated jointly by teachers and students, always reinforcing the point that students are in school to study and learn.
3. Accept no excuses. Glasser used the "no excuse" dictum with regard both to conditions outside the school and to students' failure to live up to commitments. Conditions outside the school, however bad, do not excuse misbehavior in school. Glasser also said teachers should accept no excuses when students fail to live up to commitments they have made. A teacher who

accepts an excuse says, in effect, that it is all right to break a commitment, that it is all right for students to harm themselves. Teachers who care about their students accept no excuses.

4. Call for value judgments. When students misbehave, they should make value judgments about it. Glasser (1977) suggested the following procedure:

TEACHER: What are you doing? (Asked in nonthreatening tone of voice.)

STUDENT: (Will usually give an honest answer if not threatened.)

TEACHER: Is that helping you or the class?

STUDENT: No.

TEACHER: What could you do that would help?

STUDENT: (Names better behavior; if student can think of none, teacher suggests appropriate alternatives and lets student choose.)

5. Suggest suitable alternatives. When students misbehave, teachers should call on students to identify suitable alternatives. If unable to think of any, two or three should be suggested to them, from which they are expected to select.
6. Invoke reasonable consequences. Glasser stressed that reasonable consequences should follow any behavior the student chooses—desirable consequences when good behavior is chosen and undesirable when poor behavior is chosen. Teachers must see to it consistently. The knowledge that behavior always brings consequences and that individuals can largely choose behavior that brings pleasant as opposed to unpleasant consequences builds the sense that people are in charge of their own lives and in control of their own behavior.
7. Be persistent. Caring teachers work toward one major goal—getting students to commit themselves to desirable courses of behavior. They must always help students make choices and have them make value judgments about their bad choices.
8. Carry out continual review. Glasser insisted that any discipline system be reviewed periodically and revised as necessary. This was to involve students and be done through classroom meetings, which as mentioned earlier were not for the purpose of finding fault, but of finding solutions to problems.

The classroom meeting was to be conducted with teacher and students sitting together in a closed circle, an arrangement that came to be known as the Glasser Circle.

Sometimes the student does not respond in an acceptable way, but instead replies hostilely or caustically. For that eventuality, Glasser presents the following scenario:

1. Student is misbehaving.

TEACHER: What are you doing? Is it against the rules? What should you be doing?

STUDENT: (Responds negatively, unacceptably.)

TEACHER: I would like to talk with you privately at (specifies time).

2. Private conference between teacher and student.

TEACHER: What were you doing? Was it against the rules? What should you have been doing?

STUDENT: (Agrees to

3. Student later repence.

TEACHER: We have to follow the rules?

STUDENT: I'll stop do

TEACHER: No, we need plan you can follow.

4. Student later rep signs "time out." participate with adhere to the pl: the classroom. (principal.)

5. Student, after re

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6. If student is out student at school
7. Students who ar class, or to a di

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## COMMENTS ON G

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STUDENT: (Agrees to proper course of behavior.)

3. Student later repeats the misbehavior. Teacher calls for another private conference.

TEACHER: We have to work this out. What kind of plan can you make so you can follow the rules?

STUDENT: I'll stop doing it.

TEACHER: No, we need a plan that says exactly what you *will do*. Let's make a simple plan you can follow. I'll help you.

4. Student later repeats misbehavior; does not abide by own plan. Teacher assigns "time out." This is isolation from the group. Student is not allowed to participate with the group again until making a commitment to the teacher to adhere to the plan. If student disrupts during time out, he is excluded from the classroom. (A contingency plan should be set up in advance with the principal.)

5. Student, after returning to the group, disrupts again.

TEACHER: Things are not working out here for you and me. We have tried hard. You must leave the class. As soon as you have a plan you are sure will allow you to follow the rules of the class, let me know. We can try again. But for now, please report to the principal's office. (Principal was informed in advance of this possibility.)

6. If student is out of control, principal notifies parents and asks them to pick up student at school immediately.
7. Students who are repeatedly sent home are referred to a special school or class, or to a different community agency.

By following this procedure consistently, teachers can cause students to doubt the value of their misbehavior, make responsible and better choices, and thus gradually make a commitment to choosing behaviors that bring personal success instead of failure.

### COMMENTS ON GLASSER: PRE-1985

In Glasser's earlier work, he depicted the school in a positive light. While acknowledging that problems existed for some students, he steadfastly maintained that schools afforded students the best—often the *only*—opportunity to associate with quality adults who genuinely cared about them. Schools therefore offered students the best opportunity many would ever have for finding belonging, success, and positive self-identity. In order to take advantage of this crucial opportunity, students were continually asked to make value judgments about their misbehavior and urged to make good choices and plans that improved the chances for good choices. Meanwhile, they were consistently made to confront the consequences of whatever behavior they chose, good or bad.

**GLASSER: POST-1985****Major Focus**

If schools are to survive, they must be refocused to emphasize quality in all student work. They must no longer attempt to coerce students, but must lead them deeply into learning activities that meet basic needs for belonging, power, fun, and freedom.

**Key Ideas**

1. All of our behavior is our best attempt to control ourselves to meet five basic needs—survival, belonging, power, fun, and freedom. The school experience is intimately associated with all but survival.
2. We feel pleasure when these needs are met, frustration when they are not.
3. Today's schools must create quality conditions in which fewer students and teachers are frustrated. Students must feel they belong, have some power, have fun in learning, and enjoy a sense of freedom in the process.
4. Few students in today's schools do their best work. The overwhelming majority is apathetic. Many do no school work at all.
5. What is needed is a commitment to quality education, brought about through quality schools, in which students are encouraged, supported, and helped by the teacher.
6. In quality teaching, teachers do not scold, punish, or coerce. Instead they befriend students, provide encouragement and stimulation, and show an unending willingness to help.

**THE REFOCUS ON STUDENT NEEDS**

For one who long and staunchly maintained that it was a student's responsibility to make choices that brought success, Glasser has taken an interesting new tack. What could have prompted so important a redirecting, a refocusing on the nexus of classroom discipline?

Glasser's newer views have grown from his conclusions that the majority of students are quite satisfied to do low quality work or even no work at all. He maintains that "no more than half of our secondary school students are willing to make an effort to learn, and therefore cannot be taught" (1985, p. 3), and further, "I believe (in light of student apathy) that we have gone as far as we can go with the traditional structure of our secondary schools" (1985, p. 6).

What we must find, he says, is a way to improve instruction which now sees no more than 15% of high school students doing quality work (1990, p. 5). This can be done by managing students "so that a substantial majority do high-quality schoolwork: Nothing less will solve the problems of our schools" (1990, p. 1). The solution he proposes involves stimulating students to work while providing encouragement and assistance, done so as to meet students' needs. This would require little change in

curricula, materials, or physical work with students.

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**Students' Needs**

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**Quality Work**

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curricula, materials, or physical facilities, but a significant change in the way teachers work with students.

Glasser contends that teaching effectively is the hardest job in the world (1990, p. 14) and expresses sympathy for beleaguered secondary teachers who yearn to work with dedicated, high-achieving students, but who are continually frustrated by the majority who make little effort to learn. Those teachers report that their main discipline problems are not defiance or disruption, but students' overwhelming apathy and benign unwillingness to participate in classroom activities and assignments. Students, for their part, tell Glasser that the problem with school work is not its difficulty; the problem is that it is too boring (1990, p. 7). For Glasser, this means that school work does not meet students' primary psychological needs.

He has a remedy for this problem, which he puts forth in three fundamental propositions:

1. Schools must be organized to meet students' needs for belonging, power, fun, and freedom.
2. Quality school work and self-evaluation (of quality) by students must replace the fragmented and boring requirements on which students are typically tested and evaluated.
3. Teachers must stop functioning as "boss-managers" (who dictate) and begin functioning as "lead-managers" (who stimulate and help).

Let us examine what Glasser means by these three points.

### Students' Needs

Glasser is very plain about needs. Students, like all of us, have genetic needs for (1) survival (food, shelter, freedom from harm), (2) belonging (security, comfort, legitimate membership in the group), (3) power (sense of importance, of stature, of being considered by others), (4) fun (having a good time, emotionally and intellectually), and (5) freedom (exercise in choice, self-direction, and responsibility).

Glasser is adamant in his contention that education that does not give those needs top priority is bound to fail.

### Quality Work

Glasser says that present-day education is defined in terms of how many fragments of information students can retain long enough to be measured on standardized achievement tests (1990, p. 22). Students agree, and they resist education of that sort. Most critics of education want to change the curriculum, but Glasser finds little fault with curriculum contents. He finds much fault, however, with the way material is presented and learning evaluated. School, he says, should be a place where students learn interesting things well. Plenty of interesting topics are in the curriculum. Glasser suggests that teachers discuss the curriculum contents with students and ask them to identify what they would like to explore in depth. Adequate time should then be spent

on those topics, and students should regularly do written self-evaluations concerning the quality of their own work.

### Boss-Teachers and Lead-Teachers

Teachers typically function as bosses, Glasser contends, not realizing that motivation cannot be furnished to students; it must come from within. Boss-teachers, as Glasser describes them, do the following:

1. Set the task and standards.
2. Talk rather than demonstrate, rarely asking for student input.
3. Grade the work without involving students in evaluation.
4. Use coercion when students resist.

To illustrate how a boss-teacher functions, consider the example of Mr. Marquez, who introduces his unit of study on South American geography in this way:

Class, today we are going to begin our study of the geography of South America. You are expected to do the following things:

1. Learn the names of the South American countries.
2. Be able to locate those countries on a blank map.
3. Describe the types of terrain typical of each country.
4. Name two products associated with each country.
5. Describe the population of each country in terms of ethnic origin and economic well being.
6. Name and locate the most important rivers that drain to the north, east, and southeast.

We will learn this information from our textbooks plus encyclopedias. You will have two tests, one at . . . [and so forth].

Mr. Marquez's boss approach limits both productivity and quality of work. Most students will probably find the work boring and will do only enough, and only well enough, to get by.

Glasser would have teachers forego Mr. Marquez' style and function not as boss-teachers but as lead-teachers. Lead-teachers realize that genuine motivation to learn must arise within students. They also realize that their task in teaching is to help students learn, in any way they can. Glasser says teachers should spend most of their time on two things: organizing interesting activities and providing assistance to students. Such lead teachers would:

1. Discuss the curriculum with the class in such a way that many topics of interest are identified.
2. Encourage students to identify topics they would like to explore in depth.
3. Discuss with students the nature of the school work that might ensue, emphasizing quality and asking for input on criteria of quality.

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5. Demonstrate ways quality.
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To illustrate how lea Garcia's introduction to a

Class, have any of you Peru? Fantastic! What a Amazon quite a bit and l at one time. But not nov tribe. Samuel, did you e ways, but very different into the Andes? They "Chariots of the Gods" graphs or slides you cou could teach us a lot!

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4. Explore with students resources that might be needed for quality work and the amount of time such work might require.
5. Demonstrate ways in which the work can be done, with models that reflect quality.
6. Emphasize the importance of students' continually inspecting and evaluating their own work in terms of quality.
7. Make evident to students that everything possible will be done to provide them with good tools and a good workplace that is noncoercive and nonadversarial.

To illustrate how lead-teaching might proceed, consider the example of Mr. Garcia's introduction to a unit of study on the geography of South America:

Class, have any of you ever lived in South America? You did, Samuel? Which country? Peru? Fantastic! What an interesting country! I used to live in Brazil. I traveled in the Amazon quite a bit and lived for a while with Indians. Supposedly they were head hunters at one time. But not now. Tomorrow I'll show you a bow and arrow I brought from that tribe. Samuel, did you ever taste monkey? I think Peru and Brazil are very alike in some ways, but very different in others. What was Peru like compared to here? Did you get up into the Andes? They have fabulous ruins all over Peru, I hear, and those fantastic "Chariots of the Gods" lines and drawings on the landscape. Do you have any photographs or slides you could bring for us to see? What a resource you could be for us! You could teach us a lot!

Class, Samuel lived in Peru and traveled in the Andes. If we could get him to teach us about that country, what do you think you would most like to learn?

[Class discusses, identifies topics]

We have the opportunity in our class to learn a great deal about South America, its mountains and grasslands and dense rain forests and huge rivers and interesting people and strange animals. Did you know there were colonies of English and Welsh and Italians and Germans living in many parts of South America, especially in Argentina? Did you know there are still thought to be tribes of Indians in the jungles that have no contact with the outside world? Did you know that almost half of all the river water in the world is in the Amazon basin, that in some places the Amazon river is so wide that from the middle you can't see either shore?

Speaking of the Amazon, I swam in a lake there that contained piranhas, and look, I still have my legs and arms. Surprised about that? If you wanted to learn more about living in the Amazon jungle, what would you be interested in knowing?

[Discuss]

How about people of the high Andes? Those Incas for example, who in some mysterious way cut and placed enormous boulders into gigantic, perfectly fitting fortress walls? Samuel knows about them. They were very civilized and powerful, with an empire that stretched for three thousand miles. Yet they were conquered by a few Spaniards on horseback. How in the world could that have happened? If you could learn more about those amazing people, what would you like to know?

[Discussion continues in this manner, identifying topics about which students would be willing to make an effort to learn]

Now let me see what you think of this idea: I have written down the topics you said you were interested in, and I can help you with resources and materials. I have lots of my

own, including slides, South American music, and many artifacts I have collected. I know two other people who lived in Argentina and Colombia that we could invite to talk with us. We can concentrate on what you have said you would like to learn about. But if we decide to do so, I want to see if we can make this deal: We explore what interests you; I help you all I can; and you, for your part, agree to do quality work—to do some of the best work you are capable of. We would need to discuss that, to get some ideas of what you might do that would show the quality of your learning. In addition, I would want each of you regularly to evaluate yourselves as to how well you believe you are doing. Understand, this would not be me evaluating you—it would be you evaluating yourself, not for a grade, but for you to decide what you are doing very well and what you think you might be able to do better.

What do you think of that idea? Want to give it a try?

### HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO DISCIPLINE?

Glasser believes that teachers who learn to function as lead-managers will avoid the trap of becoming adversaries of their students, a trap that destroys both incentive to learn and pleasure in teaching. If they can stay out of that trap, teachers will not only foster quality learning but in so doing will reduce discipline problems to a minimum.

That notion, whether correct or not, appeals to teachers, at least at first glance. However, Glasser has found that when it comes time to change their style of teaching, teachers become nervous and reticent. Glasser maintains that the change is not nearly so difficult as one might imagine.

Glasser does admit that no approach to teaching can eliminate all behavior problems. He continues to say that it is, therefore, necessary to work with students to establish standards of conduct in the classroom. He makes the following suggestions.

#### Rules

The teacher should begin with a discussion of the importance of quality work, which is to be given priority in the class, and of how the teacher will do all possible to help students while not forcing them. That discussion should lead naturally into asking students about class rules they believe will help them get their work done, truly help them learn. Glasser says that if teachers can get students to see the importance of courtesy, no other rules may be necessary.

Mrs. Bentley's second graders decided they needed only two rules in order to do their work well:

1. Be kind to others.
2. Do our best work.

Mr. Jason's physical education class decided on these:

1. Be on time.
2. Play safely.

3. Show good sportsman.
4. Take care of the equ

Teachers should also soli broken. Glasser says students is not effective. If asked fu solved by looking for ways Glasser urges teachers to ask

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#### When Rules Are Broken

Every teacher knows that ru Glasser acknowledges that intervention—nonpunitive int student's mind on class wor student would suggest the fol

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many artifacts I have collected. I would like to learn about. But if this deal: We explore what interests you to do quality work—to do some to discuss that, to get some ideas of your learning. In addition, I would like to know how well you believe you are doing—you—it would be you evaluating what you are doing very well and what

try?

NE?

As lead-managers will avoid the trap that destroys both incentive to do that trap, teachers will not only discipline problems to a minimum. For teachers, at least at first glance, it is not easy to change their style of teaching, but it is important to maintain that the change is not nearly

teaching can eliminate all behavior problems. It is necessary to work with students to do this. I make the following suggestions.

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these:

3. Show good sportsmanship.
4. Take care of the equipment.

Teachers should also solicit student advice on what should happen when rules are broken. Glasser says students will suggest punishment, though they know punishment is not effective. If asked further, they will agree that behavior problems are best solved by looking for ways to remedy whatever is causing the rule to be broken. Glasser urges teachers to ask, "What could I do to help?"

Once the rules and consequences are agreed to, they should be written down. All students sign, attesting that they understand the rules and that, if they break them, they will try—with the teacher's help—to correct the underlying problem.

Rules established and dealt with in this way, says Glasser, show that the teacher's main concern lies in quality, not power, recognizing that power struggles are the main enemy of quality education.

### When Rules Are Broken

Every teacher knows that rules will invariably be broken, even in the best classes. Glasser acknowledges that fact and provides specific guidance for teacher intervention—nonpunitive intervention that will stop the misbehavior and refocus the student's mind on class work (1990, p. 138). Applied to angry Jonathan, Glasser's advice would suggest the following:

Jonathan has come into the room angry. As the lesson begins, he turns heatedly and throws something at Michael.

TEACHER: It looks like you have a problem, Jonathan. How can I help you solve it? (Jonathan frowns, still obviously upset).

TEACHER: If you will calm down, I will discuss it with you in a little while. I think we can work something out.

Glasser says you should make it clear that you will not help Jonathan until he calms down. You are to speak without emotion, recognizing that your anger will only put Jonathan on the defensive.

If Jonathan doesn't calm down, there is no good way to deal with the problem. Glasser says to allow him 20 seconds, and if he isn't calm by then, admit that there is no way to solve the problem at that time. Give Jonathan "time out" from the lesson, but don't threaten or warn:

YOU: Jonathan, I want to help you work this out. I am not interested in punishing you. Whatever the problem is, let's solve it. But for now you must go sit at the table. When you are calm, come back to your seat.

Later, at an opportune time, you discuss the situation with Jonathan, approximately as follows (1990, p. 141):

YOU: What were you doing when the problem started? Was it against the rules? Can we work things out so it won't happen again? What could you and I do to keep it from happening?

If the problem involves hostilities between Jonathan and Michael, the discussion should involve both boys and proceed along these lines (1990, p. 141):

YOU: What were you doing, Jonathan? What were you doing, Michael? How can the three of us work things out so this won't happen any more?

It is important to note that *no blame* is assigned to either Jonathan or Michael. No time is spent on trying to find out whose fault it was. You remind the boys that all you are looking for is a solution, so that the problem won't occur again.

Glasser contends that if you treat Jonathan and Michael with respect and courtesy, if you show you don't want to punish them or throw your weight around, and if you talk to them as a problem solver, both their classroom behavior and the quality of their work will gradually improve.

### COMMENTS ON GLASSER'S MODEL

In the preceding illustration, teachers are advised to talk with misbehaving students "at an appropriate time," meaning later in the period or day. Arranging times and places for these talks can be awkward. Here is how it is done by Maureen Lewnes, who teaches a fourth- and fifth-grade combination class:

For conferencing with students I use a "consultation corner," which in my room is not a corner at all but rather four feet of wall space to the rear of my desk between a table and file cabinet. A small kindergarten chair is there for students to sit in, which they love to do as I bend down low to converse with them, out of sight of the rest of the class, which creates an impression of closeness between the two of us.

I introduce the consultation corner at the beginning of the year, telling my students I may request them to join me there to discuss matters of class work or behavior, or to tell them how much I appreciate their help and good work, which I make sure to emphasize.

Several benefits have come from use of the corner. When the need arises, I say to the student, "May I see you in the consultation corner at study time?" The chat there gives me insights into matters that might be troubling the students and it encourages shy students to share feelings, interests, and problems.

Most students react well to the talks, appreciating the privacy, and I find that problems of misbehavior are more easily resolved there. When I ask their opinions, my students say that every room should have a consultation corner because it makes them more comfortable about talking with the teacher.

As you have seen, Glasser no longer blames students for poor classroom behavior, pointing out that schools expect students to do boring work while sitting and waiting, against which their inherent natures rebel. In his eloquent way, Glasser in 1985 wrote that what we expect students to do in school ". . . is like asking someone who is sitting on a hot stove to sit still and stop complaining" (1985, p. 53, italics added).

At that time, he insisted that "teachers should not depend on any discipline program that demands that they do something *to* or *for* students to get them to stop behaving badly in unsatisfying classes. Only a discipline program that is also concerned with classroom satisfaction will work" (1985, p. 56).

Glasser expanded on this describing how schools can function as "lead-managers" — not coerce, throw their weight around, or use genetic needs met sufficiently.

In changing his emphasis, he gives much less attention than before to keeping with his "quality" of work easily resolved.

The difficulty for teachers in the transition to the scheme Glasser advocates, for the present it is commented information of the tests.

Can teachers, then, manage to answer is yes. Like Jones' system and set into place lead managers as problem solvers without coercion. His procedures create the effect on classroom behavior didn't imply that his quality of work are human beings, and even when work assignments, and have behavior occurs, any teacher assigning blame, enlist the

In the commentary on Dreikurs' approach, while teachers a good procedure responsible. Glasser's 1990 dependent on special skills,

Concept Cases: Kris, Sara

#### CASE #1. KRIS WILL NOT

Kris, a student in Mrs. Jones' class, does her work. She rarely complains, a log, putting forth no effort.

How would Glasser deal with her? He would deal carefully about the classroom obstacles that prevent Kris from having freedom. He would then

Glasser expanded on that theme in his 1990 work, *The Quality School*, by describing how schools can emphasize quality work. This depends on teachers functioning as "lead-managers" who provide great support and encouragement but who do not coerce, throw their weight around, or punish. In such schools, students find their genetic needs met sufficiently that they will stay in school and do better quality work.

In changing his emphasis, Glasser now gives discipline, our main concern here, much less attention than before, insisting that if schools and classes are conducted in keeping with his "quality" concept, discipline problems will be few and relatively easily resolved.

The difficulty for teachers is that schools are not likely to make a sudden transition to the scheme Glasser proposes. Though such a change may well occur over time, for the present it is certain that most classes will continue to emphasize fragmented information of the type that enables students to perform better on achievement tests.

Can teachers, then, make any use of Glasser's newest model of discipline? The answer is yes. Like Jones's model, Glasser's does not have to be taken as a total system and set into place lock, stock, and barrel. His suggestions for teachers' acting as problem solvers without arguing or punishing should be seriously considered by all teachers. His procedures can be practiced, allowing teachers to evaluate for themselves the effect on classroom climate and morale. Let's remember too that Glasser didn't imply that his quality school would forestall all discipline problems. Students are human beings, and even the best-intentioned sometimes violate rules, short-change work assignments, and have conflict with others, including teachers. When such behavior occurs, any teacher can calmly try to identify the problem and then, without assigning blame, enlist the help of everyone in correcting its cause.

In the commentary on Dreikurs' model, Chapter 5, it was suggested that Dreikurs' approach, while time-consuming and requiring counseling skills, offered teachers a good procedure for helping students become genuinely self-directing and responsible. Glasser's 1990 model, less time-consuming than Dreikurs' and less dependent on special skills, may well possess the same potential.

#### Application Exercises

Concept Cases: Kris, Sara, Joshua, and Tom.

##### CASE #1. KRIS WILL NOT WORK:

Kris, a student in Mr. Jake's class, is quite docile. She socializes little with other students and never disrupts class. However, despite Mr. Jake's best efforts, Kris never does her work. She rarely completes an assignment. She is simply there, like a bump on a log, putting forth no effort.

*How would Glasser deal with Kris?* Glasser would first suggest that Mr. Jake think carefully about the classroom and the program to try to determine whether they contain obstacles that prevent Kris from meeting her needs for belonging, power, fun, and freedom. He would then have Mr. Jake discuss the matter with Kris, not blaming her,

**Application Exercises** (continued)

but noting the problem of nonproductivity asking what the problem is and what he might be able to do to help. In that discussion, Mr. Jake might ask Kris questions such as:

- You have a problem with this work, don't you? Is there anything I can do to help you with it?
- Is there anything I could do to make the class more interesting for you?
- Is there anything in this class that you enjoy doing?
- Do you think that, for a while, you might like to do only those things?
- Is there anything we have discussed that you would like to learn very, very well?
- How could I help you do that?
- What could I do differently that would help you want to learn?

Mr. Jake would not punish Kris nor would he use a disapproving tone of voice. Meanwhile, every day he would make a point of talking with her in a friendly and courteous way about non-school matters—trips, pets, movies, and so forth—casually, but often, showing he is interested in her, willing to be her friend.

Glasser would remind Mr. Jake that there is no magic formula for success with all students. Mr. Jake can only encourage and support Kris. Scolding and coercion are likely to make matters worse, but as Mr. Jake befriends Kris she is likely to begin to do more work, of better quality.

**CASE #2. SARA CANNOT STOP TALKING:**

Sara is a pleasant girl who participates in class activities and does most, though not all, of her assigned work. She cannot seem to refrain from talking to classmates, however. Her teacher, Mr. Gonzales, has to speak to her repeatedly during lessons, to the point that he often becomes exasperated and loses his temper.

*What suggestions would Glasser give Mr. Gonzales for dealing with Sara?*

**CASE #3. JOSHUA CLOWNS AND INTIMIDATES:**

Joshua, larger and louder than his classmates, always wants to be the center of attention, which he accomplishes through a combination of clowning and intimidation. He makes wise remarks, talks back (smilingly) to the teacher, utters a variety of sound effect noises such as automobile crashes and gunshots, and makes limitless sarcastic comments and put-downs of his classmates. Other students will not stand up to him, apparently fearing his size and verbal aggression. His teacher, Miss Pearl, has come to her wits' end.

*How do you think Glasser would have Miss Pearl deal with Joshua?*

**CASE #4. TOM IS HOSTILE AND DEFIANT:**

Tom has appeared to be in his usual foul mood ever since arriving in class. He gets up and on his way to sharpen his pencil he bumps into Frank. Frank complains. Tom tells him loudly to shut up. Miss Baines, the teacher, says, "Tom, go back to your seat." Tom wheels around, swears loudly and says heatedly, "I'll go when I'm damned good and ready!"

*How would Glasser have Miss Baines deal with Tom?*

**ACTIVITIES:**

1. Select a preferred model you would consider a) Organizing the class to meet your students' needs b) Your continual improvement c) Effectiveness in implementation d) Effect on student learning e) Effect on bonding and behavior.
2. Do a comparative analysis of terms of:
  - a) Effectiveness in implementation
  - b) Effectiveness in student learning
  - c) Ease of implementation
  - d) Effect on student learning
  - e) Effect on bonding and behavior.

**FURTHER ANALYSIS AND**

Examine scenario #5. How would Glasser give Mr. W. the classroom?

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## ACTIVITIES:

1. Select a preferred grade level and/or subject. As the teacher, outline what you would consider and do, along the lines of Glasser's suggestions, concerning:
  - a) Organizing the classroom, class, curriculum, and activities so as better to meet your students' needs for belonging, fun, power, and freedom.
  - b) Your continual efforts to help students improve the quality of their work.
2. Do a comparative analysis of Glasser's and Canter's systems of discipline, in terms of:
  - a) Effectiveness in suppressing inappropriate behavior;
  - b) Effectiveness in improving long-term behavior;
  - c) Ease of implementation;
  - d) Effect on student self-concept;
  - e) Effect on bonds of trust between teacher and student.
  - f) The degree to which each model accurately depicts realities of student attitude and behavior.

## FURTHER ANALYSIS AND APPLICATION:

Examine scenario #9 (secondary) or #10 (elementary) in Chapter 13. What advice would Glasser give Mr. Wong or Miss Thorpe in order to improve learning conditions in the classroom?

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GLASSER - DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM.

1. Become Involved. Spend a minute with the child every day in informal contact.
2. Confront the Behaviour - What are you doing? (Be specific, only behaviour can be changed. Do not accept labels for behaviour - do not be misled by emotion).
3. Evaluate the Behaviour - How has this helped you? (... the class, group, school, family)
4. Make a plan for responsible behaviour - When in a similar situation again, what can you do that is different? (The child may need your help to draw up a list of alternatives and to devise another plan of behaviour).
5. Make a commitment to the plan - We will try this plan for ... (Minutes/hours/days/weeks, and then review the progress)
6. Accept no excuses - for failure to follow through with the plan. (It is the child's responsibility to be confronted with that failure, but not criticised for the failure)
7. Impose no punishment - but discipline through the consequences of the child's behaviour (i.e. if a school has been broken, the consequence must be applied but then go back to stage 2 and work through the stages again).
8. Hang in - don't give up on the child - even though his behaviour may force you to feel what is the use. A failing child will try to make you fail with him too.
9. Refer on - Try not to see yourself as the saviour of all children and the answer to all their problems. Some children may need to be passed onto a more expert for treatment. (This is also true of professionals)

ch. 2 'Reality Therapy and Failure' p.12-24 "Schools Without Failure"

W. Glasser



## GLASSER'S APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE.

The ten-step approach can really be divided into three parts. In the first three steps, you use the process of Reality Therapy to look at how you are dealing with disruptive students. Steps Four through Seven are used by you with the student who is having difficulty. And, the eight, ninth and tenth steps bring in other resources within the school and/or community.

### Step One.

Set aside some quiet thinking time for yourself. During this time, choose a student who is an on-going discipline problem. In this initial stage of learning the technique, try not to focus on the worst student in your class. Build in a chance for success by choosing someone you think you could be successful in helping. Make a list of the things you currently do when this child is disruptive. In other words, ask yourself this question, "What am I doing?" Your list may surprise you because we often are not as aware of our behaviour as we think we are. Regardless of any surprise, be honest and list the things you usually do even if they are things like yelling, threatening, ignoring, being sarcastic and/or hitting.

### Step Two.

Analyse your list carefully and ask yourself, "Are these techniques working?" Probably your answer will be, "No, they are not. The student's behaviour keeps repeating itself and often things get worse." If your answer parallels the above in any way, you should seriously consider stopping these behaviours. You are spinning your wheels and digging a deeper hole which will become increasingly more difficult to get out of. So, make a commitment that you will not use any of the responses on your list the next time a problem develops unless these things correspond to the procedures suggested in Steps Three through Seven.

### Step Three.

Make a small, practical plan that will help your student have a better day tomorrow. This step is founded on the old adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." When you initiate your plan it should positively say to the student, "You are special, I care about you." The plan can be a pat on the back, a special errand, a homemade cookie or any other thing that gives the student an indication of your personal concern for him. Continue these little plans, but don't expect to be repaid immediately. Your student didn't become "nasty" overnight nor will become a model of responsibility in one or two days. In fact, in some extreme cases, the student may reject you even more strongly than before. You must stay calm and be persistent. Treating your most difficult students well, will eventually lead to their behaving better.

### Step four.

When a problem occurs, and you have done Steps One, Two and Three - especially Step Three - then just say to the student 'please stop it.'

This is the same thing you have done before, but you have not done it in conjunction with Step Three. The improved relationship with your student will now help him to do as you ask

Step Four isn't working. Now, ask the student two questions, "What are you doing?" and, "Is what you are doing against the rules?" If the student says nothing or refuses to answer the questions, shift slightly and say, "This is what I saw you doing, and it is against the rules." Again, in conjunction with Steps One, Two and Three, asking these simple questions may be all you need to ask. These questions are especially effective with younger children, but they are also powerful when used with older students.

Step Six.

Repeat Step Five briefly, and then when that doesn't work tell the student very firmly, "We have to work this out. We've got to come up with a plan for you to follow our rules."

At this point you have to make some time available to talk with the student about this brief simple plan. It may be that your student will stop the behaviour if you say, "We will work it out later." But, some time has to be made available.

Even though this takes time it is our experience that the time expended is usually much less than the time teachers now spend with procedures that don't work. The plan has to be more than just "I'll stop it." It has to be a positive action plan that helps the student move toward responsible behaviour. In order to work, the plan should be short term, specific and simple. In the beginning you may have to put many of your ideas into the plan because this process will be unusual to the student. Gradually as the student gains strength, he will make more contributions to the plan. The more the student considers the plan his own, the better it will work.

Step Seven.

The student disrupts again, and because of repeated use of all of the previous steps, you are sure that their further use will not work. It is now time for the student to be isolated or "timed out". This decision to "time out" may be entirely made by you or else it may have been established as a reasoned/natural consequence at the conclusion of your planning conference. from step Six. "Timing Out" is done right in the immediate classroom in elementary schools or the immediate classroom area in junior or senior high schools. In the elementary classroom, you need to create a place where students can sit comfortably. Perhaps an overstuffed chair or a cushioned area on the floor or the corner of a loft. This place should be a place where other students who are not having a hard time would choose to visit during spare time activities. In secondary schools a table and chair arrangement is often set up in an unused portion of an open space area, or a desk is set up in the hallway within viewing distance of the door.

In either situation, the student knows that he or she is no longer involved in active participation in the class. Students may listen, but may not take part in classroom activities until they have devised a plan for following the rules, informed you of the plan and made a commitment to follow the plan if it is mutually agreed upon by you and the student. The other rule that is mandatory at this point is that if the student disrupts while he is in isolation, his only alternative is to be excluded from the classroom or quiet area.

### Step Eight

In-school suspension is the next step. You have been patient, you have bent over backwards, but you can't continue to teach with a constantly disruptive student; it's not fair to you or the other students, and for that matter, it's not really fair to the disruptive student either because he is not learning and is not gaining success identity. At this step, there are no questions to be asked. Make this statement, 'things are not working out for you here. You and I have tried hard to work out the problem but now it's time for you to spend some time outside of the class and perhaps talk with some other people. Please report to the Principal's office.' (or councillor's office, or in-school suspension room, or whatever name you have for your place).

The in-school suspension place should be set up along the same lines as the in-class "time-out" place. That is, it should be a not uncomfortable, non-punitive place which is staffed by someone who communicates the basic ideas to the students that, "We want you to be in the school. We want you to be in class, but we expect you to follow our reasonable rules. As soon as you have a plan as to how you can return to class and follow the rules, let me know and we'll help you to return to your room. If you need help with your plan, let me know and I'll help you." Helping out on the plan usually means asking more questions. First, you have to ask, "What did you do?" next, "What kind of a plan can you make to do better?" At this stage, you should be prepared for a lot of excuses and blaming and talking about making a plan, but be patient, even if it takes a day or two or three. If the student says, "But, I'm getting behind in my work," you should respond, "Yes, I see that, and that does present a problem for you. Please feel free to do your school work right here. But, you cannot go back to the class until you have a plan." You have to help the student understand that there are really only two alternatives: return to class and follow reasonable rules - or continue to sit here and be outside of class. Most problems can be worked out in a day or less. If more than one day is required, the parents should be notified that their son or daughter is not in class.

Sometimes a week or more is required. In one high school in Texas, a student sat for two months, but when he finally decided to return to class, it was a decision that he did not go back on. And, although his work suffered, he perhaps learned one of the most important things we all have to learn: We need to be responsible for our behaviour and we all have the power to behave in a way which is beneficial for us and those we live and work and learn with.

### Step Nine

If any student is totally out of control and cannot be contained in an in-school suspension room or office, the parents must be notified and asked to take their child home. Further, both the parents and the students should be told that tomorrow is a new day. You can do this by saying, "We would like your son to return and to stay with us as long as he maintains reasonable behaviour. When his behaviour goes beyond reasonableness, your son will again be asked to go home." If every teacher and administrator in your school follows these steps consistently, and if you have a good school, a place where students enjoy being, then less than one percent of your students should ever get to Step Ten.

## Step Ten

Any student who continually is unsuccessful in Step Nine, must stay home permanently or be referred to some other community agency. Even juvenile hall is a possibility as a last resort. Though it sounds harsh, remember that sometimes this will finally jolt the student awake, and he will then be ready to plan a way to return to school. If the student is in juvenile hall perhaps the judge can be persuaded to try letting him come back to school on a tolerance day. The student should always be welcome to return to school from home, the juvenile hall, or any other agency, but not unless a specific plan and commitment has been made to follow reasonable rules. Remember that Step Ten is for a very rare student but when a student can no longer make it in school, this step must be used.



for dealing with UNSATISFACTORY CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR and leading to SELF DISCIPLINE. Not for TEACHING AND LEARNING PROBLEMS.

REMEMBER:

- (a) be COURTEOUS.
- (b) Avoid CONFRONTATION - COOL IT.
- (c) ACCEPT THE PERSON. Reject the behaviour.
- (d) Make STUDENT ACCEPT what happens as a CONSEQUENCE OF MISBEHAVIOUR
- (e) Students are NEVER ALLOWED to HAMPER others 'RIGHT TO LEARN'.
- (f) Keep trying - DON'T GIVE UP - USE STEPS REPEATEDLY.

