


Using Reality Therapy to Enhance Student Achievement

Sylinda Gilchrist Banks, Ed.D.

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Have you ever thought
about using this
counseling style?

[..\NSU\theories\Mad TV Bob Newhart Skit - Mo Collins - Stop it.mpg](#)

Reality Theory

Dr. William Glasser

- Psychiatrist -
 - *Consulted with Ventura School*
- 1961 published his first book – “*Mental Health or Mental Illness?*”
- 1965 published “Reality Therapy”
 - “Choice Theory”
- 1969 published “Schools Without Failure”
 - No grades – work until competent
 - Students have choices in assignments
 - All assignments are meaningful – no busy work
- Founder of the *Institute for Reality Therapy* renamed *The William Glasser Institute*
- Resides in southern California

Choice Theory / Reality Therapy

- 10 Axioms of Choice Theory
- 4 principles
 - Needs – 5 basic needs
 - Wants – Quality World
 - Behavior – Total Behavior
 - Perceptions
- Procedures – WDEP
- Help students to take responsibility for their behavior rather than accept that they are victims of impulse

Reality

- We live in a world we can
 - See
 - Hear
 - Touch
 - Taste
 - Smell
- We call it the real world or reality
- No two people perceive the world the same
 - Parent/child
 - Optimists/pessimists
 - Sane/insane
 - We all live in the same world but each person sees it differently



Read the statement

HOPE IS NOWHERE

Reality

- Both individuals are right
- Reality is based on who is in power and how he/she perceives it
 - Umpire - ball/strike

10 Axioms of Choice Theory

- **The only person's behavior we can control is our own.**
 - External control
 - Others control your behavior
 - External forces
 - Internal control
 - Individuals control their behavior internally

We Divide the World 2 Groups

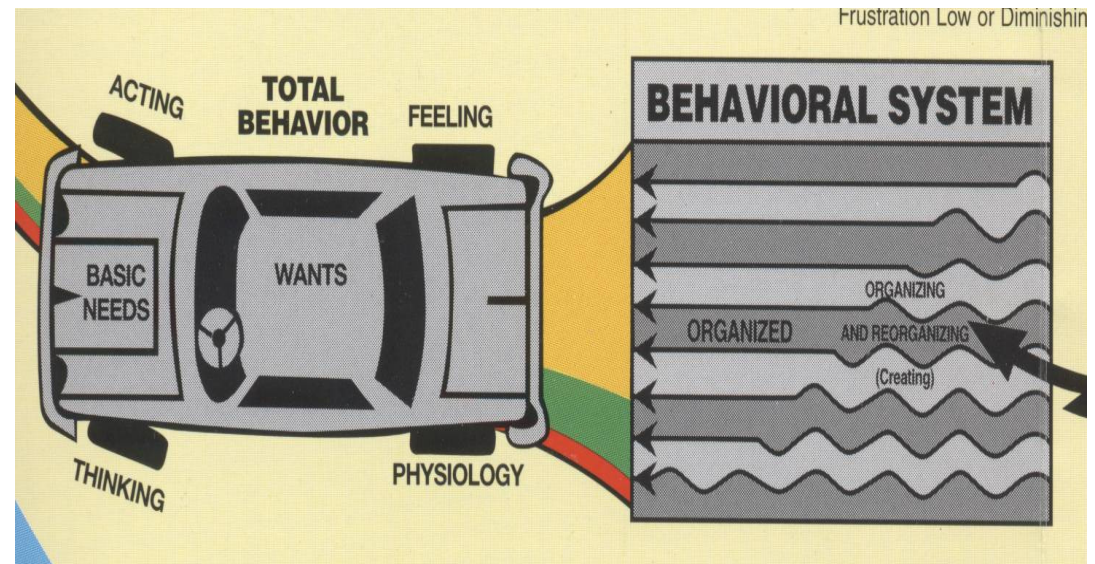
- We own/try own or control
 - Spouses
 - Children
 - Students
 - Lovers
 - Employees
- We don't try to own/control
 - Good friends
 - Acquaintances
 - Bosses
 - Strangers

Behavior

- You control every behavior
- You have a choice to behave or not
- Every behavior has a purpose
- Even doing nothing is a choice
- We can not make anyone do anything they do not want to do
- Any behavior is our attempt to satisfy a need at that specific time
- **Activity** - “**You hit me**”

Behavior System

- Organized
- Reorganizing
- Creating
- Total Behavior
 - Acting
 - Thinking
 - Feeling
 - Physiology



Behavior is labeled by its most recognizable component.

Choice

- Individuals choose behaviors
- When choices are made, people discover that the result attained is desirable or undesirable...effective or ineffective.
- Choice means that the behavior is generated from within the person for the purpose of need satisfaction.
- Choice is not *caused* by environmental stimuli.
- As a person grows and develops, choices become more conscious and explicit and adults become more clearly aware of choices

10 Axioms of Choice Theory (cont.)

- We are driven by five genetic needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun.

Basic Needs

- Human needs are genetically encoded from birth
- Universal and common to every human being
- Specific behaviors that each person will choose to satisfy these needs are unique to each individual human being,
- the universal observation is that humans will feel
 - pleasure when a need is met
 - frustration when a need goes unsatisfied

Five Basic Needs

- Belonging – loving and being loved, having contact, connections, relationships with people
- Power/achievement – feelings of accomplishment and competence, self-esteem, control over one's own life
- Fun/enjoyment - Pleasure; the ability to laugh, play, and appreciate being human
- Freedom/Independence – ability to make choices; to live without excessive and unnecessary
- Survival – essential of life, including good health, food, shelter, etc.

Basic Needs

- Belonging is most difficult need to satisfy because it involves others
- Power is difficult to satisfy because it operates on external control
 - 75% of all classroom behavior problems results from students' power need
- Belonging is considered the most important need
- Regardless of the presenting problem, all clients seen in counseling are struggling to satisfy a need
- Satisfying our basic needs leads to quality in our lives
- We create pictures that satisfy our needs and the Quality world grows and becomes filled with pictures
- [My Basic Needs Worksheet](#)

Gang Participation

5 Basic Needs

- Need for affiliation
- Possibility of “making it”
- Gangs give failing students hope
- A way to use leisure time productively
- Inability for parents to show the students how to achieve the good life
- Belonging
- Power
- Achievement
- Fun
- Power, recognition, fame, and belonging



Are your basic needs satisfied?

Relationship - 4th R

Working with Students

- All long-lasting psychological problems are relationship problems
 - “My teacher does not like me”
 - Students have conflicts with peers, teachers/adults and/or parents
- Relationships are critical for students
 - What is your relationship with your teacher?
- Students need to know they “matter”

Mattering

Why is it important?

- Adolescents who believe they matter to their families are less likely to engage in violent behavior.
- Loneliness often leads to failure
 - Seeking an identity
 - Lonely students do not see a pathway to success
 - Tend to be frustrated, angry and isolated
- Bullies are often lonely students
- Students “in the middle”

Mattering

Why is it important?

- Schools can increase or decrease loneliness in students
 - Offering basic ingredients of self-worth:
 - knowledge and thinking
- Schools assume that students have built-in motivation
 - If not, schools try to force students
- Schools need to teach students to solve problems, both academic and social
- Students need to be involved with others to develop a positive identity, motivation, and self-worth
- Involvement starts with one person

What is Mattering?

(Elliott et.al, 2011)

- Is the belief people make a difference in the world around them.
- For students:
 - I make a difference in this world and someone notices
- 3 Components
 - Awareness – “Do others know I exist?”
 - Importance – “Do they invest time and resources in me?” or “Do they see the contribution I make?”
 - Reliance – “Do you believe in me?” or “Do you see me as a resource?”

“Creating Mattering”

- Students need to know
 - someone is interested in them
 - someone knows they exist
 - they are valued because of who they are not what they do
 - they have resources, abilities and skills
- Students only need one person or one connection to feel important
- Do your students have connections?
- **Connecting Circle / School Connections Handouts**

“Creating Mattering”

- Teacher-Student relationship is the most important factor for success for minority students
- Students need to know the teacher care
- Failure breeds failure
 - Break the circle by working in present – don’t remind students of their failures –
 - “Don’t cry over spilled milk, get a paper towel!”
- Teachers can talk to their students about
 - Weekend plans
 - Activities in/out of school
 - “You matter to me”



“Creating Mattering”

Awareness/Important/Reliance

- Greeting students – Use your duty time
 - By name
 - Show an interest in them
 - You matter to me
- Personal notes – (i.e. 25 per week)
- Student Corner – Bulletin Board, Newsletter, Website
- CBG (Caught Being Good) Calls, notes, emails

“Creating Mattering”

Awareness/Important/Reliance

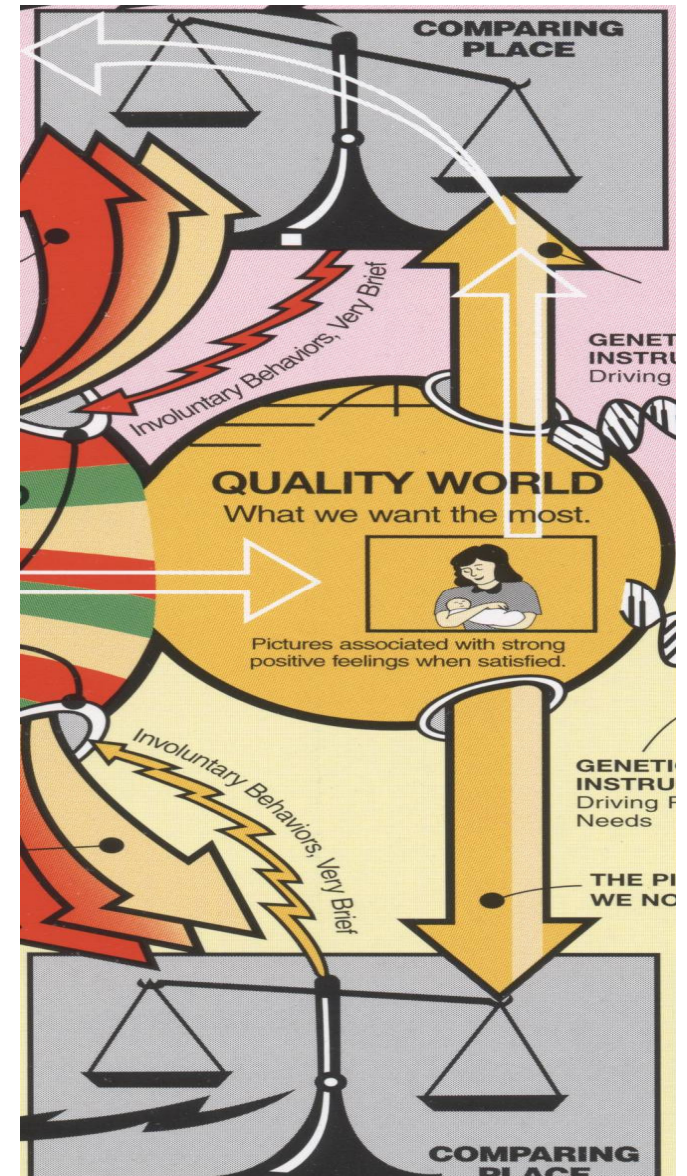
- Highlight Students’ talents and accomplishments beyond academics (school and community)
- Celebrate Students’ Birthday (bulletin board, morning announcements)
- Raising Stars Celebrations
- GAS/OIL Groups - special duties
 - Gentlemen, Athletes, Scholars – Outstanding Intelligent Ladies

10 Axioms of Choice Theory (cont.)

- We can satisfy these needs only by satisfying a picture or pictures in our quality world

Quality World

- Specific ways we want to satisfy our basic needs and increase quality in our lives
- Group of Pictures
- We organize these pictures into 3 categories
 - The people we most want to be with
 - The things we most want to own or experience
 - The ideas or systems or beliefs that control our behavior
- Only contains positive pictures




Personal Picture Album / Quality World

- Pictures are removable, changeable, adjustable, and replaceable.
- Some pictures are realistic; others are unrealistic
- Pictures can be blurred, distorted, and lack development
- Pictures exist in priority.
- Pictures can be in conflict.
- Pictures are not easily changed
- Good relationships are built by sharing common pictures
- Some people will not give up their pictures, therefore living a life of misery
- The pictures of an individual make sense to that individual.

First Step

- What are the pictures in your student's personal world?
 - School – achievement, behavior, attendance
 - Family/Friends
 - Career
- We order, rank, make decisions based on those pictures
- You need to understand the pictures in your students' world
- Important to know your personal reality
- Listen and Don't judge
- Linking is very important
 - student's personal world to goals and wants



“People change when they evaluate their own behavior and develop and implement specific plans”

(adapted from Wubbolding, 2000)

Second Step WDEP

- Teaching tool useful for understanding and teaching the concepts to students
- A cluster of possible skills and techniques for assisting students to take better control of their own lives
 - **W** - Wants
 - **D** - Do and Direction
 - **E** – Evaluation
 - **P** – Plan

My Achievement Plan Worksheet

W - Wants

WDEP

- Asking the student, what does he want?
 - Exploration
 - What do you want for?
 - Situation
 - Yourself
 - school
 - How hard do you want to work at solving the problem?
(Commitment)
 - What are you trying to avoid? (fear)
 - How do you perceive your control of the problem?
(perception)

Level of Commitment

1. “I don’t want to be here. Leave me alone”
No commitment
2. I want the outcome, but I don’t want to make the effort
More of a wish than intense desire
3. “I’ll Try” or “Maybe”
Middle level of commitment- willing to make a change. “To try” allows room for excuses and failure
4. “I will do my best”
Higher level of commitment and the beginning of action planning. Yet it still contains an escape hatch for failure
5. “I *will* do whatever it takes”
Highest level of commitment- person is willing to make choices and produce the desired results

D- Direction and Doing WDEP

- Asking the student, are you headed in the direction you want to be?
 - Goal is to help the student understand that he is choosing his path
- Asking the student, what are you doing?
 - What – specifically (time, amount, etc.)
 - Are – current or recent behaviors
 - You – controllables – the student's behavior
- No one changes behavior unless a judgment is first made that current behaviors are not helpful

E- Self-Evaluation

WDEP

- Help the student make judgments about his behavior
- Is the Behavior, Choices, Beliefs, feelings
 - Helpful or hurtful
 - Useful or useless
 - Significant or meaningless
 - Effective or Ineffective
 - Acceptable or unacceptable
- Evaluate the want
 - Obtainable or unobtainable
 - Beneficial or Harmful
 - Highly desirable or mere wishes

E- Self-Evaluation

WDEP

- **Students do not change until they decide that what they are doing does not help them accomplish what they want**
- **Add or Subtract**
 - **Is the behavior adding to or subtracting**
- E – Self-evaluation
 - Student makes judgments on what he is doing.
 - Is this helping or hurting?
 - Put a **(+)** or **(-)** beside the behavior

P - Plan

WDEP

- What is your plan for change?
- Effective Plans
 - Best plan – initiated by student
 - 2nd best plan – initiated by counselor and student
 - 3rd – Initiated by counselor
 - Only works if the student accepts that his current behavior is not working
- Stages of Planning
 - Could you?
 - Would you?
 - Will you?

P - Plan

WDEP

- Goal is to help students make plans and follow through
- Characteristics of Successful Planning
 - SAMI²C³
 - S- simple or understandable, not complicated
 - A- Attainable or realistically doable
 - M- measurable or exact, not vague
 - I- Immediate or soon
 - I- Involved (who can assist with plan)
 - C- Controlled by the student not an “if” plan or depending on
 - C- Committed to or firm, not “I might” or “maybe”
 - C – Consistent or repetitive, the ideal plan is one that is repeated and becomes habitual

Put it all Together

- W – Want
 - What do you want?
- D – Doing and Direction
 - What are you doing to get what you want?
- E – Self-evaluation
 - Is your behavior helping or hurting?
 - Is it working?
- P – Plan
 - What is your plan?

What if the student fails to follow through on the plan?


- Student has not judged that current behaviors are ineffective
 - “If you don’t follow through will anything change?”
- Ask the student to experiment with the plan – “try it for a week”
- Try to do something for a limited amount of time – “try it for 30 minutes”
 - temporary change and then determine if it is worth the effort to continue

Suggestions

- Goals
 - Start small
- Help student
 - Gain control over their lives by making wise choices
 - Meet their basic needs and pictures in quality world
 - Responsible for choices
- Questions – avoid telling what is not working for a student
 - Say “Is what you are doing helping you?”
- Renegotiation – developing new or revised plans with a high likelihood of success – (e.g. re-lapse)
- Relationships – coach them to form rewarding relationships

In Classroom WDEP

- Ask students to write what they want to get out of your class (i.e. grade, knowledge or skills)
 - Post its - wants
- What will they(students) do
- Develop a plan
- Periodically evaluate the behavior or plan (interim, end grading period, monthly)
- “Is this getting you what you want?”



“The art of counseling is to weave these components together in ways that lead students to evaluate their lives and to decide to move in more effective directions”

(Glasser, 1996B)

Questions



THE FOUR CANDLES





*THE FOUR CANDLES BURN
SLOWLY...*



*THE AMBIANCE WAS
SO SOFT YOU
COULD HEAR THEM
TALKING...*



THE FIRST ONE SAID:

“I AM PEACE”!

***“HOWEVER, NOBODY CAN
KEEP ME LIT.***

I BELIEVE I WILL GO OUT.”

It's flame rapidly diminishes and goes out completely.

THE SECOND ONE SAYS:

“I AM FAITH” !

***“MOST OF ALL, I AM NO
LONGER INDISPENSABLE ,
SO IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY
SENSE THAT I STAY LIT ANY
LONGER.”***



When it finished talking, a breeze softly blew on it putting it out.

***SADLY, THE THIRD CANDLE SPOKE
IN ITS TURN:***

“I AM LOVE” !

***“I HAVEN’T GOT THE STRENGTH
TO STAY LIT. PEOPLE PUT ME
ASIDE AND DON’T UNDERSTAND
MY IMPORTANCE. THEY EVEN
FORGET TO LOVE THOSE WHO
ARE NEAREST TO THEM.”***



And waiting no longer, it goes out.

SUDDENLY...

***A CHILD ENTERS THE
ROOM AND SEES THREE
CANDLES NOT BURNING.***

***“WHY ARE YOU NOT
BURNING? YOU ARE
SUPPOSED TO STAY LIT TILL
THE END.”***

Saying this, the child begins to cry.



***THEN THE FOURTH CANDLE
SAID:***

***“DON’T BE AFRAID, WHILE
I AM STILL BURNING WE CAN
RE-LIGHT THE OTHER
CANDLES,***

I AM

HOPE !”





*WITH SHINING EYES, THE CHILD
TOOK THE CANDLE OF HOPE
AND LIT THE OTHER CANDLES.*

**You maintain
the flame of
Hope in
students' lives
everyday**



*Utah
School
Counselors
never choose to
let your light go
out!!*



Reference

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Sylinda Gilchrist Banks, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Norfolk State University
757-823-8504
sogilchrist@nsu.edu