

PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITY & LEARNING  
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1. WELCOME

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MONTHLY QUOTE:

"My argument is that a motivational operating system built almost entirely on that REWARD and PUNISHMENT drive no longer works, and the reason for that goes back to the science. The science show that motivating people with what you might think of as if/then rewards (If you do this, then you get that) can be very effective for simple, straightforward tasks where you march down a set of rules and deliver a right answer. HOWEVER, THE SCIENCE IS VERY CLEAR THAT IF YOU'RE ASKING PEOPLE TO DO WORK THAT ISN'T ROUTINE, THAT REQUIRES CONCEPTUAL AND CREATIVE THINKING AND HAS SOME DEGREE OF COMPLEXITY, THEN IF/THEN MOTIVATORS DON'T WORK VERY WELL AND THEY OFTEN BACKFIRE." (caps added)

--Daniel Pink, "DRIVE: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us," (that uses 40 years of behavior science to overturn the conventional wisdom about human motivation).  
EDGE: The Pathway to High Performance, Phi Delta Kappa, May/June, 2010, interview with the author.

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The following may be of interest for those who like to do their holiday shopping early.

I am very pleased to announce that the parenting book at <http://parentingwithoutstress.com/> is now the  
Winner of the Eric Hoffer Book Award  
Winner of the International Book Award  
Winner of the ForeWord Reviews Book Award  
Winner of the USA Book News Best Books Award

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## 2. PROMOTING RESPONSIBILITY

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Michael Paul Goldenberg wrote a very informative critique about the Los Angeles Times and the Los Angeles Unified School District's employing test scores to evaluate teacher effectiveness.

"The TIMES and its reporters have done is to pillory one 5th grade teacher on the wheel of meaningless test scores. They have, in fact, violated two fundamental principles of psychometrics: NEVER USE A TEST DESIGNED TO MEASURE ONE THING (e.g., student achievement) TO MEASURE SOMETHING IT WAS NOT DESIGNED TO MEASURE (e.g., teacher effectiveness), and NEVER USE A SINGLE TEST SCORE OR MEASUREMENT TYPE TO DRAW DEFINITIVE CONCLUSIONS (particularly not in the social sciences). Further, they have made the fundamental error of assuming that CORRELATION (Teacher A's kids scores are higher than Teacher B's scores) EQUATES WITH CAUSATION (Scores rose primarily BECAUSE of the superior teaching skills and methods of Teacher A).

"In fact, the article is so fraught with error and leaps of logic and bad faith as to be utterly, irredeemably worthless, not unlike the test scores upon which its false (and probably libelous) conclusions are based. But then, the article's authors began with a patently incorrect assumption, and they very likely had its conclusions well in mind to begin with."

Nido Quebein, President of High Point University in North Carolina and one of the world's most respected speakers, puts it succinctly:

If the premise is erroneous,  
the question will be erroneous,  
the answer will be erroneous, and  
the outcome will be erroneous.

Dr. Quebein continued:

Never allow erroneous premises to enter your life or you will be constipated in no time.

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## 3. INCREASING EFFECTIVENESS

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During a hike in the woods, a group of Boy Scouts came across an abandoned section of a railroad track. Each boy tried walking the rail but eventually lost balance and had to step off.

Suddenly, two of the boys, after considerable whispering, offered to bet that they could both walk the entire length of the track without falling off.

Challenged to make good their boast, the two boys jumped up on opposite rails, extended a handle to balance each with other, and walked the entire length of the track with no difficulty.

Here in a nutshell is a principle of modern life as it pertains to parenting, teaching, and even business. We do better and become more effective by empowering and helping each other

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4. IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS  
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If you want friends to help you during the bad times, then you need to make and keep friends during the good times.

A good way to think about how well you are currently nurturing your relationships with your friends is to use the metaphor of the "emotional bank account" (EBA for short). To begin, think of just one friend in particular. Now go back over the past several months and try to answer this question: "How many deposits have I made in my EBA with that person?"

If you can say that you've been making regular deposits, then you're doing what you need to do. But if you haven't been making many deposits recently, or worse, if you've made a number of withdrawals (in the form of selfishness or insensitivity), then you probably have some work to do.

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5. PROMOTING LEARNING  
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Back in September, on the first day of school, Martha Cothren, a social studies teacher at Robinson High School, did something not to be forgotten. On the first day of school, with the permission of the school superintendent, the principal, and the building supervisor, she removed all of the desks from her classroom.

When the first period kids entered the room, they discovered that there were no desks.

"Ms. Cothren, where are our desks?" She replied, "You can't have a desk until you tell me how you earn the right to sit at a desk." They thought, "Well, maybe it's our grades." "No," she said. "Maybe it's our behavior." She told them, "No, it's not even your behavior."

And so, they came and went, the first period, second period, third period. Still no desks in the classroom. By early afternoon, television news crews had started gathering in Ms. Cothren's classroom to report about this crazy teacher who had taken all the desks out of her room.

The final period of the day came and as the puzzled students sat on the floor of the deskless classroom, Martha Cothren said, "Throughout the day no one has been able to tell me just what he or she has done to earn the right to sit at the desks that are ordinarily found in this classroom. Now I am going to tell you."

At this point, Martha Cothren went over to the door of her classroom and opened it. Twenty-seven (27) war veterans, all in uniforms, walked into that classroom, each one carrying a school desk. The vets began placing the school desks in rows, and then they walked over and stood alongside the wall. By the time the last soldier had set the final desk in place, those kids started to understand, perhaps for the first time in their lives, just how the right to sit at those desks had been earned.

Martha said, "You didn't earn the right to sit at these desks. These heroes did it for you. They placed the desks here for you. Now it's up to you to sit in them. It is your

responsibility to learn, to be good students, to be good citizens. They paid the price so that you could have the freedom to get an education. Don't ever forget it."

A belated Veterans Day!

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6. PARENTING  
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When you were growing up, your mother may have told you to sit up straight. She gave good advice because good posture helps you look confident and make a good impression.

It turns out that sitting up straight can also improve how you feel about yourself, according to a study in the October 2009 issue of the European Journal of Social Psychology.

Researchers asked college students to rate themselves on how good they would be as job candidates and employees. Those who were told to sit up straight before filling out a form gave themselves higher ratings than those instructed to slouch while filling out the rating form.

Once again, Mom was right.

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7. DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS (DWS)  
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I thought you may be interested to read how your book has impacted on my teaching and learning experiences in the Western suburbs of Sydney Australia, through your book "DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS."

I am a primary school teacher (elementary school) and attended a 2-day Conference in which your book "DISCIPLINE WITHOUT STRESS" was discussed and explained by a wonderful man, Don White. He is a retired principal from an all boys high school in a difficult part of Sydney, and we are all convinced after listening to him that your system will actually make a change for the better in our schools.

I just have to let you know what has happened to me since attending the workshop about your book. I ordered the book. Every time I saw a crucial point it was highlighted. My highlighter pen is covered over many, many pages that I have reread and absorb once again.

This has changed my WHOLE approach to teaching. I am carefully selecting the questions I ask the children and am constantly referring to the ABCD level chart downloaded off the website. What a wonderful resource that is.

I started to introduce the program, teaching 'Anarchy' to my year 1 and 2 composite class. They range in age from 6-8 years old. They learned the meaning, discussed it, and 'think pair share' occurred a lot.

We acted it and we illustrated it. By the time they went home, they were using the word at home and explaining what it meant to the parents. We had all discussed how horrible it would be in a classroom, a school, or even outside of school to have this type of environment. They really understood it well.

We continued a new word each day...Bullying, Bossing,

Bothering....in the same manner, etc. Cooperation and Democracy.

In a conversation with some parents and a brief explanation, I asked their son to let us all know what he understood about the levels. He got up and walked to the board. My poster was stuck to the board and he picked up some chalk and proceeded to teach the levels to his parents. He placed a tick beside the acceptable behaviours and explained what they looked like, then he placed an X beside the unacceptable, below the line behaviours. He explained that if anyone continued to choose Level A or Level B behaviour, we would have to decide together what we will do about it.

I explained that it is not about evaluating OTHER people's behaviour; it is about checking YOUR OWN behaviour. I continued to explain that if you continue to choose level A or B behaviour than YOU need to be BOSSSED by your parent or a teacher to get above that line and that is a consequence of being below the acceptable line.

Mum and Dad then said to me, "What you are teaching our child is not just behaviour responsibility but you are giving him skills for LIFE!!!"

They called me a pioneer and said it's always tough trying out new things. I directed them to the website and I also explained there was a parenting book that I would highly recommend. They did indeed purchase that, too.

I have cut down on my rewards just as a natural consequence of going with the program as I DON'T NEED THEM ANYMORE. The children understand why they are not really needed as they are working at either level C or D simply because they either feel good about achieving or because they now CARE. Our classroom is VERY productive and my children are also achieving in some cases year 3 targets for reading and math.

I can't explain in this email how much more this has improved our whole classroom, but I can tell you, I will NEVER go back to my old way of teaching. This is far too effective and so much LESS stressful!!!!

I indeed will be very sad at the end of this school year to see my children go as our relationships are so strong now.\*

I am certainly going to pass on my experiences.

Thank you once again from the bottom of my heart.

Regards,

Dianne Hall  
Dean Park, Sydney  
Australia

\* To see a similar statement from a principal, link to the top comment at <http://www.marvinmarshall.com/>

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8. TESTIMONIALS/RESEARCH

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To this day I still credit you for helping me get my child off the ADHD meds when he was younger; it was the best thing I could have ever done!

You and I were talking about the fight I had every morning to get my youngest to take his meds and you asked me, "Is the fight worth ruining both of your days?" I couldn't get that question out of my mind and when I went home, I took him off the medications.

A few years ago both my boys were diagnosed with high-functioning Autism/Aspergers so my son wasn't even on meds that would help him. They were only harming him!

Now my youngest is 13 1/2, in 8th grade, and doing wonderfully well because I followed so many things in your book and learned to listen and give him choices.

My oldest is now 17 1/2 years old and I used the same approach with him. When he came to live with me, he was just out of middle school, had nothing but F's on his report card, and was running around getting into trouble.

He is graduating from high school this year with more credits than needed so they go towards college. He is excelling in school, is taking his second year of Japanese, and is also taking pre-calculus. I have to keep on both of them since the autistic tendencies makes them forget to turn work in even though they do it. But with a little help they have been able to do what people swore they would never be able to do.

I always wanted to say thank you and have finally decided to do it.

Diane T.  
Huntington Beach, California