



Barbara Coloroso

“A major goal of education is to teach students to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner. To do so, students must acquire an inner sense of responsibility and self-control.”



Problem Solving Guide for Students

1. Identify the reality and define the problem
2. List possible solutions for dealing with the problem
3. Evaluate the options
4. Select the option that seems most promising
5. Make a plan and carry it out
6. In retrospect, reevaluate the solution

Teachers act as guides for students during problem solving and suggest best options, they do not solve problems for students

Key Strategies

Show students what they have done wrong

Give students ownership of the problems involved

Suggest strategies for solving misbehaviors and problems

Ensure students' dignity remains intact

Provide real opportunities to solve problems independently

Use in Diverse Classrooms

1. Being allowed to make discipline choices is more akin to the lives of students who may hold great responsibilities at home.
2. Ensures even students who are seen as troublemakers are not punished or bribed which does not promote development.
3. If all students are allowed to make choices, students can trust the teacher and a positive classroom community can develop.

+ Misbehavior:

Mistakes – Simple errors that provide opportunities for learning better choices

Mischief – Not necessarily serious, but intentional misbehavior

Mayhem – Willfully serious misbehavior that calls for *reconciliatory justice*

Principles of Coloroso's Theory

- School should be neither adult dominated nor student controlled. Joint efforts create a sense of community
- Students who consistently experience realistic consequences for misbehavior learn that they themselves have positive control over their lives.
- Punishment can provoke anger, resentment and conflict and removes opportunities to develop integrity and wisdom.
- Students respond to punishment with the 3 F's: fear, fighting back, or fleeing.
- Teachers can enforce consequences: these should be reasonable, purposeful, associated with rules and invoked consistently when rules are violated.
- **'Backbone'** teachers provide support necessary for students to behave creatively, cooperatively and responsibly, which leads to inner discipline.

Theory in Practice: A Scenario

Issue: For the entire first nine weeks, Kevin has not turned in any weekly homework assignments. While he does well on tests and in-class work, not doing homework has left him with a C in the class. Upon first notifying him of this grade, it is clear Kevin (and his parents) would like him to earn a better grade moving forward.

Resolution: Since this behavior does not cause any mayhem in the classroom, it is best to guide and talk Kevin through the Problem Solving Guide. The problem identified is not turning in homework. After reviewing options such as detentions wherein he must makeup the homework, sitting with the teacher at lunch until he makes it up, or doing his homework when he gets home, Kevin chooses the last option. After 2 weeks, there has been no significant change. At this point, the teacher suggests that sitting in the room at lunch is the most *promising* option since Kevin will feel pressure to do his homework. After 4 weeks, Kevin was able to make up all of his homework and is continuing to work during lunch.

Note: Decisions were left to the student. The teacher's role is to guide this decision making, even allowing for a bad choice to occur and neither punishing nor insulting Kevin for his mistakes, and thus leaving his dignity intact.

Reconciliatory Justice

1. Restitution – Do whatever is necessary to repair any damage that occurred

2. Resolution – Identify and correct whatever caused misbehavior so it won't happen again

3. Reconciliation -- Heal relationships with people who were hurt by misbehavior

Humanist and Combination Theories: Commonalities

Jane Nelson and Lynn Lott

Nelson and Lott's theory focuses on creating solutions to student misbehavior rather than on punishments. Nelson and Lott promote student's development of discipline through the use of class meetings.

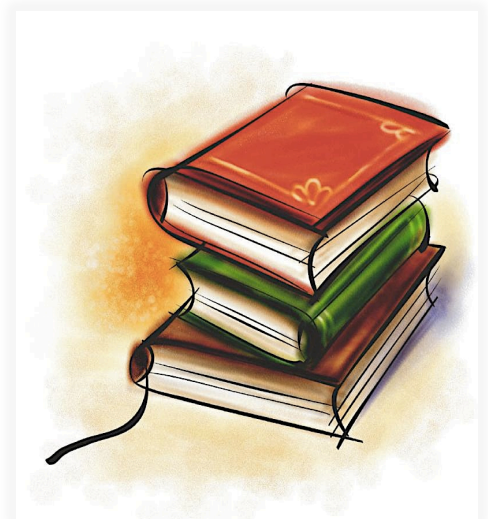
William Glasser

Glasser sees punishment and *coercive* discipline as ineffective at managing and promoting student learning.

Glasser further emphasizes the need for engaging curricula to avoid student misbehaviors.

Marvin Marshall

Marshall's discipline theory relies on activating student motivation and responsibility by 1) having clear expectations, 2) empowering students to reach them, 3) using positivity in all teaching and 4) promoting 'doing the right thing' instead of 'obedience.'



Pros / Cons



Pros

- Helps students learn to solve problems they will encounter throughout life
- Does not provoke conflict the way punishment can sometimes result in
- Builds and fosters respect and classroom community between students and teacher

Cons

- In urban classrooms, students may respond better to direct orders.
- Since it helps provide long-term learning, this theory may be too slow to resolve in-class disruptions
- Coloroso's theory does not suggest how to deal with disruptions or when teacher-made consequences are appropriate.

References:

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