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In Memoriam

William B. Stafford

Friend, Colleague, and
Founding Member of IAIE

The International Alliance for Invitational Education

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In Memory of

William B. Stafford

It is most appropriate and fitting that this issue of the *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice* be dedicated to Bill Stafford. He was a founding father of our International Alliance for Invitational Education and immediate past editor of the JITP. Bill is no longer with us, but as he reminded us, "Death does not end a relationship." This is certainly true of our deep and abiding affection that we all have for Bill Stafford.

Bill directed the very first Invitational Education Conference, which was held at Lehigh University in the summer of 1982. At the end of the Conference, twelve of us came together under Bill's leadership and officially formed the Alliance for Invitational Education. Since that modest beginning, Bill served many leadership roles in the Alliance. Always the innovator, he became the first IAIE Webmaster and dragged us, kicking and screaming, into the information age. Our dynamic growth to over 700 members can be attributed in large part to Bill's visionary leadership.

As vital as Bill's leadership abilities were to the Alliance, they cannot match his deep humanity. He was one of the most generous, caring, and loving individuals I have ever known. His life defined what Invitational Theory and Practice are all about.

William Watson Purkey

Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice

Volume 10, 2004

Editorial

Articles

Editorial—

Procedural Justice and the Inviting Stance

Two years ago, I used this space to demonstrate that, despite all the problems and deficits that beleaguer us, the world has never been better. That has always been a difficult proposition for me since I am acutely aware of the pervasive injustices that infiltrate every society at all levels. Yet, when we take the empirical approach, that startling finding is supported again and again. This is good news and should provide encouragement and reinforce our determination. However, there are still many problems to conquer and in some areas we are not making the progress needed. Recently I have been developing instructional modules for pre-service teachers on programs for the prevention of child abuse and neglect, for developing pro-social attitudes and behaviors in students, and for programs that assist children in selecting modes of societal participation that are advantageous to them while rejecting the attraction of the youth street gang. In that research, I found an underbelly of society, often referred to as the American underclass, where many of the assumptions about life I take for granted are threatened if not lacking.

I rarely worry about my next meal, about the occupants of a car turning the corner while I walk down the street, about passing a store, or about wearing the wrong color clothing for the current neighborhood. Yet, this is a reality for far too many children and adults. In studying the antecedents to violence, poverty is typically the first culprit that is identified as a leading cause of this malaise. In the United States, about 50% of children under six live in poverty and about 25% of children six to 18 meet the criteria of poverty. Yet, the numbers of children who resort to violence to resolve their

problems does not approach those figures. Certainly, most children who live in poverty find alternative ways to resolve unpleasant situations. In reading hundreds of pages of student accounts of their daily lives, I have begun to suspect an even more fundamental cause of behavior that lashes out at society: a lack of procedural justice.

The theory is straightforward: If people's expectations regarding fair procedures are not met, they often will be upset, even if they agree with the end result. The basic theory of procedural justice operates quite logically in fulfilling the demands of living in a society as opposed to a solitary life: We put our personal rights "in trust" with an organization such as the school. We expect these rights to be honored and protected by fair and equitable procedures we use to operate the institution and establish relationships. In a more concrete description, parents will put their children "in trust" to the school but in return they expect the school to protect the rights of the child. As children mature during later childhood, they also become aware of this expectation of procedural justice. How many times do the parents of a teenager hear, "But that's not fair!" "Not fair" is a synonym for the problem of unfulfilled expectations established by an emerging understanding of procedural justice.

Unfulfilled expectations can be sharply reduced by carefully establishing and following a clearly defined decision-making process. There should also be a fair and clearly defined way for making, enforcing, and changing the rules that everyone can find agreement. Procedural justice allows us to connect with our students, parents, and community in ways that engender trust and credibility.

True to the perceptual tradition, whether we feel our expectations of procedural justice are being met is truly an individual determination. When those expectations are denied, anger results. In fact, I think every angry person I've met in some way feels the procedures have wronged him. Our crav-

ings for justice can be so strong that even if the offending procedures included bad weather and uncooperative fish, we can feel mistreated. The *perception* is, "I've made arrangements to go fishing. I expect the weather and the fish to fulfill their duties to make this an enjoyable outing." In this case, of course, the expectations may be out of line with what one can reasonably expect. However, to someone feeling anger, those expectations are very real and very influential. I might add, that if someone understands the nature of the conditions, has reasonable expectations, and has used this knowledge to form many differing expectations of outcomes and, perhaps, to plan alternatives, the individual may be sad, or inconvenienced, or even irritated, but not angry. If the injustice happens to be real and justified, as they so often are, anger and alienation is almost inevitable unless replaced by disengagement, subterfuge, aggression, or violence. Fortunately, we can find an antidote.

Invitational Education has as a cornerstone all of the elements of procedural justice. It accounts for perceptual differences. It places extraordinary emphasis on student and client perceptions of procedures and policies and how they are practiced (three of the five "Ps").

When procedures, policies, and practices are considered "petty and "unnecessary" and are discarded when inconvenient, the research clearly shows that administrative units, whether the classroom or workplace, dissolve into confusion, angst, and, at least for the disenfranchised, disengagement. Confusion abounds. Thus, we can safely conclude that invitational theory's emphases are well placed. An emphasis on procedures, polices, and practices are appropriate and valuable guides to principals, teachers, counselors, and parents. This edition of the JITP illustrates this concept quite well. It includes studies that examine ways of assessing student perceptions of procedures and policies; the theoretical underpinnings of the conditions of fairness; and case studies

where the use of the "5P" starfish analogy was central to the creation of enhanced learning environments.

Ken Smith and John Barnard present an elaborate project "The psychometric properties of the Invitational School Survey (ISS): An Australian Study." In it, they example the ISS for reliability and validity. The ISS passed muster on all accounts. However, with a series of statistical analyses they were able to create a shortened version of the ISS while maintaining the positive psychometric characteristics of the much longer version. For those planning to use the ISS, this shortened version will simplify the process of assessing the inviting qualities of your school.

In "Diversity and Invitational Theory and Practice," Jack Schmidt explores how invitational approaches can be used to expand our understanding of students and clients. He finds that invitational theory is congruent with multicultural literature and can be used to guide educational and counseling approaches with diverse populations. The article revisits the basic concepts presented by invitational theory and practice, and relates them to issues of diversity. Specifically, it examines constructs and processes espoused by invitational theory in the context of establishing helpful relationships with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Dan Shaw's piece "Genuineness: An Overlooked Element of Inviting Behavior" reminds us that action without commitment is inadequate. We must mean what we say; care when we say we care; help when we say we will help; and share the futures of our clients when we assure them we will there for them in their time of need.

Donna Thompson provides the first of two case histories of how schools can undergo a transformation to become more inviting in her article "Organizational Learning in Action: Becoming an Inviting School." Donna demonstrates how invitational education enhances organizational learning that cre-

ates an environment that is better understood and managed. Ann Kalec describes our second transformational journey with an account of her personal experiences in "Invitational Education at Cooper Elementary." Instead of addressing school improvement on all fronts, Ann describes an incremental approach where key elements are chosen to receive priority treatment. Once inertia is overcome, success breeds success and Cooper certainly is a success story that needs to be shared. Both articles provide strategies and experiential perspectives on how inviting approaches can be realized.

In "Why Not . . . "On Purpose?" Al Milliren and Wes Wingett provide an analysis of several psychological approaches to counseling. In Adlerian humanistic theory they find the roots of invitational education and further extend its theoretical base.

As an editor, I'm particularly fond of this edition of the JITP because of its representative breadth of approaches. It is reassuring that as an organization we study invitational education from statistical, theoretical, or practical approaches. Invitational Education is truly an inclusive approach to improving the quality of life for others and ourselves.

Phil Riner

The Psychometric Properties of the Invitational School Survey (ISS): An Australian Study

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This study provides psychometric data on the Inviting School Survey (Purkey & Fuller, 1995) using a rating scale analysis within the framework of the Rasch measurement philosophy (Bond & Fox, 2001; Rasch, 1980). The Inviting School Survey's factor structure and internal consistency are examined and compared with the Invitational Education Model (Purkey, 1978; Purkey & Novak. 1996; Purkey & Schimdt, 1996; Purkey & Stanley, 1991). The Invitational School Survey (ISS) is based on five areas (5 "Ps"): People, Places, Policies, Processes, and Programs. The ISS purports to assess these qualities of the global school climate. Suggestions for further development and refinement of the Inviting School Survey are presented.

Introduction

Based on perceptual psychology tenets, Invitational theory was developed to provide a model of practice to promote people to realise their potential in all areas of worthwhile endeavours.

Perceptual psychology postulates that each person creates their own reality through their perceptions of what they believe to be real (Combs, Richards, & Richards, 1988; Combs & Gonzales, 1994; Kelly, 1955, 1963; Jourard, 1971). Furthermore, a person's behaviour is contingent on how an individual perceives and interprets his/her experiences. Purkey and Novak (1996) identified three assumptions of the percep-

tual psychology approach that are relevant to the present study:

1. Behaviour is based on perceptions. Individuals behave according to their subjective perception of the environment (internal and external).
2. Perceptions are learned. One's interpretation of the environment is learned and therefore can be unlearned given new information and new experiences. This particular assumption embraces the idea that a change in perception will bring about a change in behaviour.
3. Perceptions can be reflected upon. Being aware of one's past and present perception and being able to go beyond them allows for further development and understanding of oneself, others, and the world.

From the perspective of perceptual psychology, it is clear that to understand an individual's behaviour we need to know how that individual perceives and interprets his/her life experiences. An individual's personal interpretation or frame of reference is more important than "objective reality" because an individual responds to their perception of reality and not to reality itself (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996; Seligman, 1991).

Invitational theory focuses on five environmental areas (5 "Ps") that support or hinder an individual's success or failure. The areas identified involve people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Purkey & Lehr, 1996; Purkey & Novak, 1996).

"People" assesses respect, caring, and the honouring of diversity and refers to the positive or "inviting" influence of the teachers and support staff in the school. "Places" relates to the physical aspects of the school. "Policies" refers to the procedures, codes, and rules (written and unwritten), used to regulate the ongoing functions of individuals and organisations. "Programs" refers to the curriculum for students to de-

velop both academically, physically, and socially inviting environment. "Processes" refers to such issues as cooperative spirit, democratic activities, values, and attitudes of students, teachers, administrators, and support staff.

Aims

The Inviting School Survey (Purkey & Fuller, 1995) was developed to assess how teachers, administrators, support staff, and students perceive the level of "invitation" in schools across the five areas (5 "Ps") identified in the Invitational Education paradigm. However, there has been limited investigation in the instrument's psychometric integrity and properties.

The main aim of this study was to address this void by providing psychometric data on the Inviting School Survey using a rating scale analysis within the framework of the Rasch measurement philosophy (Bond & Fox, 2001; Rasch, 1980).

If the instrument is to be useful to administrators and counsellors who work in the school setting the present instrument needs to be reduced in number of items without loosing too much of its psychometric properties. An instrument of 50-items would be efficient and yet still effective in assessing the global school environment. Presently, the 100-item instrument takes too much time for students, particularly at the lower grade levels to complete.

As such the goal of this study was to produce the rating scale that yields the highest quality measure for the constructs under study. In order to achieve this goal the following tasks were undertaken:

1. Analysis of participants' responses.
2. Verification of the five subscales and the total measure empirically.

3. Calculate statistics that provide guidance in assessing how the response categories and statements are functioning.
4. Create an interpretable measure.

Method

Participants

A total of 539 students from 3 Catholic secondary schools (Years 8-12) completed the 100-item instrument. Two schools were single-sex (males) from the Melbourne metropolitan area while the third school was a co-ed school from a major Victoria rural area.

Of the 539 instruments completed, 46 (8.5%) had 10 or more missing data or were inappropriately completed and were eliminated from further analysis.

The final sample consisted of 434 male students and 59 female students (493 total participants) with a mean age of 16.03 years (Range = 13yrs – 19yrs; SD = 1.25).

Instrument

The Inviting School Survey (ISS) is a self-report 100-item instrument based on the Invitational Education model (Purkey & Fuller, 1995). All items pertain to school environment and were designed to assess the qualities of the total school environment in the areas of people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Refer to Appendix 1). Respondents report their agreement with each item using a five-point response (Likert) scale where 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree.

The ISS consists of five subscales representing the degree to which schools are inviting in the five environmental areas as outlined in Invitational Education theory: 30 people items (e.g. "The principal involves students in the decision-making process"), 10 program items (e.g. "There is a student health program in this school"); 20 process items (e.g. "Grades are assigned by means of fair and comprehensive assessment of work and effort"); 20 policy items (e.g. "Few, if any, students fail in this school"); 20 place items (e.g. "Soap and towels are available in student toilets").

There are 27 items that are negatively stated such that a high score reflects a negative invitation (9 policy items, 1 program item, 6 process items, 7 people items; 4 place items).

For this study, American words were replaced with Australian words (e.g. 'cafeteria' changed to 'tuck shop', 'restrooms' changed to 'toilets', etc.).

Procedure

Participants voluntarily completed the instrument during their regularly scheduled homeroom program and assured of anonymity. Between 30-45 minutes was required to complete the 100-item instrument.

Response sheets were reviewed and screened for completeness, and answer sheets that had more than 10 missing items or were inappropriately completed (n = 46, 8.5%) were eliminated from further analyses. Missing values were replaced with the mean for that particular domain.

Data was "cleaned" and all items (n = 27) that were phrased in the opposite direction were reversed coded so that the codes allocated had the same meaning.

Rasch Measurement Model[1]

Often Likert-scale[2] data is analysed by only allocating "scores" to certain responses and then adding the statement scores to yield an overall "score." For example, on a 5-point scale a 1 is given to a "strongly disagree" response; a 2 to a "disagree"; a 3 to a "neutral"; a 4 to an "agree" and a 5 to a "strongly agree" response. A person's "score" is then computed by adding the individual statement scores. If 20 statements are given, a maximum score of 100 can be achieved and the closer the score is to 100, the more the person generally agrees with whatever is being measured. However, by merely adding the statement scores at least two assumptions are made, namely (i) that the differences between the response categories are constant and the same, and (ii) that each statement contributes equally to the construct being measured. In other words it is assumed that the difference between Strongly Disagree and Disagree is the same as the difference between Disagree and Neutral, and so on. It is further assumed that all the categories have the same meaning over all the statements. Although counts and means are useful statistics for "eyeball inspection", they are less useful for further examination of the underlying structure of the scale. Such counts and standard methods disregard the subjective nature of the data.

Modern Test Theory[3] models in general and Rasch measurement in particular do not make these assumptions. In Rasch models the probability of a person of a certain "ability" achieving a certain score on an item of a certain difficulty is estimated from the data instead of calculating the difficulty of an item as the proportion of people who answered the item correct and expressing a person's performance in terms of how many items were answered correctly. Rasch models thus propose a relationship between person ability and item difficulty and express the relationship as the probability of a certain response. The more able the person, the higher the person's chance to answer the item correctly. If it is known how a person has performed on other items, an estimate of

his/her ability can be obtained, and if it is known how other persons have performed on an item, an estimate of how difficult the item is can be obtained. The chances of a correct response are therefore a function of the difference between the person's ability and the difficulty of the item.

It should be noted that Rasch measures are traditionally expressed as "person abilities" and "item difficulties" on an interval scale—opposed to raw scores on an ordinal scale. A logit is the unit of measurement that results when the Rasch model is used to transform raw scores to log odds ratios on the logit scale[4]. The value of 0.00 logits is usually allocated to the mean of the item difficulty estimates and typically estimated values vary between -3 and 3 logits where negative values indicate estimates below the mean and positive values indicate estimates above the mean. An ability or difficulty measure is obtained by converting a raw score percentage into odds of success. For example, a raw score of 30% correct converts to –0.85 logits and a raw score of 80% correct converts to 1.39 logits.

In the simple Rasch model where questions (items) are scored dichotomously (either right or wrong) ability estimates of persons and difficulties estimates of items are usually derived from the analysis. However, when Likert scales are used and the items are statements, a more complex model such as a Rating Scale model is commonly used. Statements are not scored as correct or incorrect, and therefore the term "ability" will mean "agreeability" in this context, i.e. a higher estimate would indicate more in agreement with the statements. A person with a high agreeability estimate is more likely to endorse the statements than a person with a lower agreeability estimate.

Also, in addition to establishing the position of each item (statement) on the scale, the pattern of the categories in the items is also established—where categories are labels such as "strongly disagree", "agree", etc. The relative position of

each category of each item is estimated. The "difficulty" of a statement gives an indication of how difficult it is to endorse the statement. But, since each statement has different categories, the likelihood of choosing one option rather than another should also be explored. The points where the likelihood changes from the one category to the next are called thresholds. Since there are 5 categories in the statements, there are 4 thresholds for each statement.

Associated with estimates are errors that indicate the amount of imprecision associated with each estimate. In addition to the error, fit statistics are also usually computed. Where an aberrant response pattern is identified for a particular item across all the persons in the group, this may indicate that the item is flawed in some way, or that it does not tap the same ability as the others in the set, or, in certain systematic inconsistencies in the responses of identifiable subgroups are observed, that the item is biased. Likewise, a lack of fit for an individual person indicates that the model is an inappropriate means of describing the behaviour of the student on that set of items. Where most persons have responded largely in accordance with the model's expectations, misfit of an individual person can be attributed to anomalous test taking behaviour of some kind. Whatever the underlying cause, a response vector which is inconsistent with an otherwise well-fitting model may indicate that the test, though possibly functioning well for the group as a whole, has failed to provide an appropriate measure of the relevant ability for that particular person.

Four fit statistics were produced for each estimate, namely INFIT Mean Square, OUTFIT Mean Square, INFIT t and OUTFIT t. An estimate of infit is obtained by weighing up the residuals (discrepancies between predicted and observed data) near the central point to the residuals at the extremes which are weighted down by using the expression for the variance as the weighting variable. The outfit statistic is summed over persons, which are assumed to be independent

estimates. Since it examines the residuals for an item across persons, and is more sensitive to outliers, the infit statistic is usually preferred. Mean square values have an expected value of 1 and individual values above or below this show greater variation (values above 1) or less variation (values less than 1) than might normally be expected. As a rule of thumb values in the range 0.75 to 1.30 are considered acceptable, but for larger samples the range is usually computed in terms of the standard deviation. Fit values in terms of the t-distribution will vary around a mean of zero and will be positive (if observed values show greater variation) or negative (if observed values show less variation). Values outside the range –2 to 2 are said to indicate significant departure from the expectations of the model.

Results

Participant Analysis

Following Rasch analysis, 24 of the 493 participants were identified as misfitting (Infit Mean Squares of 1.9 or more). These participants were not involved in any further analysis leaving 469 final total participants. Details of the participants are found in Table 1.

Item Analysis

One of the aims of the study was to determine whether the 100-item instrument could be shortened without compromising its psychometric properties. The focus of the item analysis was therefore to identify misfitting items in sequential calibrations, remove the identified item(s) and repeat the computations. The infit mean square statistic was used as the criterion for uni-dimensionality and to investigate whether the subgroups of items "hang together" which is also a check of validity.

- In the first round analysis Question 67 was deleted as a result of non-fit statistics.

- In the second round analysis Questions 12, 24, 34, 45, 72, and 80 were then removed.

Table 1

Participants' age by gender by year level

Year	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Year 8					
Males	14	13.57	.51	13	14
Females	21	13.62	.50	13	14
Year 9					
Males	9	14.33	.50	14	15
Females	12	14.33	.49	14	15
Year 10					
Males	146	15.27	.46	14	16
Females	10	15.50	.53	15	16
Year 11					
Males	102	16.30	.46	16	17
Females	7	16.29	.49	16	17
Year 12					
Males	139	17.39	.52	17	19
Females	9	17.67	.50	17	18
Total					
Males	410	16.16	1.16	13	19
Females	59	15.02	1.54	13	18
Total	469	16.02	1.27	13	19

- In the third round analysis Questions 18 and 38 were removed.
- In the fourth round analysis Questions 15, 48, and 70 were removed.
- In the fifth round analysis Questions 6, 9, 27, 29, 41, 54, 56, 59, 61, 77, and 82 were removed. Question 47 also had a fit outside the acceptable range but was left in because of the small number of items in the program subscale.
- In the final round of analysis Questions 1, 8, 10, 20, 23, 32, 47, 52, 65, 66, 68, 73, 78, 79, 88, 97, and 99 were deleted as a result of non-fit statistics. Question 74 should have been deleted but was retained to ensure at least 7 items in the Program subscale was achieved.

The final instrument had 60 items with at least 7 items per subscale (see Tables 2 and 3 for detailed descriptive statistics). The overall reliability of 0.92 for the 100-item instrument was reduced to 0.88 for the 60-item instrument.

Discussion

These results have shown that reducing the present 100-item ISS to 60 items does not compromise its reliability significantly. In fact it may be advisable to reduce the ISS to 50-items since the 'People' subscale still has 20 items. One could take the best 10 'People' items and still have a very reliable instrument.

It is important to have an instrument in which all items are performing adequately. However, previous research has show that the domain, Programs, is problematic (Shoffner & Vacc, 1999). That is, this particular domain may be subsumed under the other four domains. This study has also shown that few 'Programs' items have strong psychometric properties. It is suggested that more specific reliable items need to be writ-

ten so as to have a comprehensive instrument to measure this specific subscale area.

Regarding the other domains, it is suggested that no more than 10 items be allocated to each domain. In order for the ISS to be used more extensively it is highly recommended that no more than 50 items be used. As shown by this study, reducing the number of items has not reduced the reliability of the instrument significantly. A shorter version of the ISS would lend itself to be used more often by school personnel to assess school culture as perceived by the major stakeholders: students, teachers, parents, and administrators.

Table 2
Invitational School Survey (ISS) Chronbach's Coefficient Alphas

Number of Items	*People*	*Places*	*Programs*	*Polices*	*Processes*	*Total*
100	.81	.71	.54	.61	.68	.92
	30 Items	20 Items	10 Items	20 Items	20 Items	100 Items
60	.77	.66	.48	.50	.48	.88
	20 Items	13 Items	7 Items	11 Items	9 Items	60 Items

n = 469

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the psychometrics of the ISS it is suggested that further research, using the Rasch measurement model (Bond a& Fox, 2001) and classical test measurement principles (e.g. Factor Analysis, Structural Equation Modelling), be undertaken. Additionally,

future psychometric studies of the Inviting School Survey need to examine the stability of the instrument across age, gender, country, and other school environment demographics.

Table 3
Invitational School Survey (ISS) Means and Standard Deviations

Number of Items	*People*	*Places*	*Programs*	*Polices*	*Processes*	*Total*
Mean 100	2.93	3.02	2.62	2.93	2.95	2.92
SD	.42	.43	.45	.36	.38	.35
Mean 60	3.06	3.11	2.69	2.92	2.91	2.98
SD	.47	.50	.50	.43	.45	.38

n = 469

Notes:

1. *Rasch measurement* is a philosophy of measurement in which a person's probability of responding correctly to a question is expressed as a function of the ability of the person and the difficulty of the question. In more advanced models the probability that a person will agree with a statement can be estimated – see Likert-scale.
2. A Likert-scale is a rating scale consisting of two parts, namely a declarative statement and a list of response categories, usually ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". Such scales are popular in attitude questionnaires, etc.
3. *Modern Test Theory* is a generic term used to distinguish Rash measurement and Item Response Theory from Classical Test Theory (e.g. Factor Analysis). Models of Modern Test Theory are probabilistic rather than deterministic.
4. Just like metres is a unit for measuring distances or degree Celsius is a unit for measuring temperature.

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Appendix 1: Invitational School Survey (ISS)

* Denotes negatively worded statement. ~~denotes deleted item.~~

~~1. Rules in this school are fairly administered.~~
*2. Teachers are unwilling to help students who have special problems.
3. People in this school have ample time to go to the bathroom.
*4. Furniture is unpleasant and uncomfortable.
5. Everyone is encouraged to participate in athletic programs.
~~6. School policy provides for assistance for those students who need it.~~
7. Students work cooperatively with one another.
~~8. Teachers express appreciation for students' presence in their classes.~~
~~9. Custodians take pride in keeping the school as clean as possible.~~
~~10. Special efforts are made to recognize the cultural contributions of minority groups.~~
11. The principal involves everyone in the decision-making process.
~~12. Soap and towels are available in student restrooms.~~
13. Everyone in this school takes responsibility for keeping it clean.
14. The air smells fresh in this school.
~~*15. Bathroom time is strictly scheduled into the school day.~~
*16. Teachers in this school show a lack of respect for students.
17. Few, if any, students fail in this school.
~~*18. Tardiness is a problem in this school.~~
19. Students have the opportunity to talk to one another during class activities.
~~20. Students are pleased when they are called upon.~~
*21. Teachers are difficult to talk with.

22. School policy permits and encourages freedom of expression of students, faculty, parents and administrators.
~~23. People in this school laugh a lot.~~
~~*24. Observations indicate that space is cluttered and otherwise misused.~~
25. The school grounds are clean and well-maintained.
26. People in this school find ways to serve the surrounding community.
~~27. There are many living green plants inside this school.~~
*28. Teachers take little or no time to talk with students about their out-of-class activities.
~~29. Teachers and principals work cooperatively in this school.~~
30. Teachers are generally prepared for class.
31. The restrooms in this school are clean and properly maintained.
~~32. Students like to visit the school library.~~
33. Teachers exhibit a sense of humor.
~~34. The lunch program at this school is a pleasant addition to the school day.~~
35. Grades are assigned by means of fair and comprehensive assessment of work and effort.
36. There is a school wellness program in this school.
*37. People in this school are impolite to one another.
~~38. The library is open before and after school.~~
39. The principal's or headmaster's office is attractive.
40. Teachers work to encourage students' self-confidence.
~~41. Teachers expect high academic performance from students.~~
42. Signs posted in and around this school are positively worded.
43. School programs involve out of school experience.
44. Bulletin boards are attractive and up-to-date.
~~*45. The cafeteria food is unappetizing.~~
*46. Trash is left on school buses.
~~47. Provisions are made for students of varying needs.~~

48. Everyone in this school has a say in deciding school rules.
49. All telephone calls to this school are answered promptly and politely.
50. The principal treats people as though they are responsible.
51. Everyone arrives on time for school.
52. Creative thinking is encouraged in this school.
53. Space is available for student independent study.
54. Student discipline is approached from a positive standpoint.
55. Fire alarm instructions are well posted and seem reasonable.
56. Music is played in gym classes during indoor exercise periods.
57. The messages and notes sent home are positive.
*58. Teachers show insensitivity to the feelings of students.
59. Teachers discuss planning and student process in teams.
60. Students work cooperatively with each other.
61. Teachers maintain clear and reasonable work standards.
62. Classrooms offer a variety of furniture arrangements.
63. People in this school want to be here.
*64. People often feel unwelcome when they enter the school facility.
*65. Communicating directly with this school is a difficult and time consuming task.
*66. Much of this school's correspondence is negative in tone.
*67. Corporal punishment is used to punish students.
*68. Parents feel they are not welcome in this school.
69. People in this school try to stop vandalism when they see it happening.
70. Salad bar/salad/fresh fruit choices are available in the cafeteria.
71. Clocks and water fountains are in good repair.

*72. The school intercom (P.A. System) interrupts classroom learning.
*73. The cafeteria is an unpleasant place to eat lunch.
74. Good health practices are encouraged in this school.
*75. A high percentage of students fail in this school.
76. Teachers appear to enjoy life.
77. The school administrators show a strong interest in making this school inviting.
78. Teachers use a variety of methods to help students learn.
*79. Teachers demonstrate a lack of enthusiasm about their work.
80. The principal of this school knows the names of many students.
81. Interruptions to classroom academic activities are kept to a minimum in this school.
82. People in this school succeed in doing what is expected of them.
83. School pride is evident among students.
84. Teachers share out-of-class experiences with students.
*85. This school's policy provides for guidance in academic matters and athletic activities only.
*86. Only a select few in this school are involved in making decisions.
87. Daily attendance by students, staff and faculty is high.
88. Grass, evergreens, shrubs around the school are well kept.
89. There are comfortable chairs for visitors.
90. Nutritious and health-promoting refreshments are served at school meetings.
91. Teachers spend time after school with those who need extra help.
92. The lighting in this school is more than adequate.
*93. People are ignored when they enter offices in this school.
94. Classes get started quickly.

95. The school sponsors extracurricular activities beyond sports.
96. Mini courses are available to students.
~~97. People in this school feel free to disagree with one another.~~
*98. School buses sometimes leave without waiting for students.
~~*99. People are discouraged from beginning new projects in this school.~~
*100. The grading practices in this school are unfair.

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Diversity and Invitational Theory and Practice

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In their self-concept approach to counseling, Purkey and Schmidt (1996) introduced the tenets and assumptions of *invitational education* (Purkey & Novak, 1996) and applied them to professional helping relationships. Although their model is a general approach to helping and not specific to counseling culturally diverse clients, many of its components are similar to other counseling approaches presented in the multicultural literature (Schmidt, in press). At the same time, principles put forth by Purkey and Schmidt (1996) are relevant to the broader application of invitational education practices with diverse populations. This article revisits some of the basic concepts and constructs presented by invitational theory and practice, and relates them to issues of diversity. Specifically, it examines constructs and processes espoused by invitational theory in the context of establishing helpful relationships with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Assumptions and Basic Constructs of Invitational Theory

As an integrated approach, invitational theory embraces a broad perspective of the educational, health care, counseling, and other services that help people meet the diverse challenges of today's world. At the same time, it encourages caring professionals to move beyond alleviation of immediate concerns towards an exploration of relatively boundless potential for future human development (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996).

Founded on the assumptions of perceptual psychology and self-concept theory, invitational theory acknowledges the

power of human perception and its impact on self-development. Furthermore, it advocates for educational programs and services that incorporate beneficial human relationships, improved physical environments, and respectful systems in which all people, regardless of culture, ethnicity, sex, gender, or other diversity factor can thrive. Professionals who apply the principles of invitational theory and practice adhere to four fundamental beliefs:

1. Every person wants to be accepted and affirmed as valuable, capable, and responsible, and wants to be treated accordingly.
2. Every person has the power to create beneficial messages for themselves and others, and because they have this power, they have the responsibility.
3. Every person possesses relatively untapped potential in all areas of learning and human development.
4. Human potential is best realized by creating places, programs, policies, and processes intentionally designed to invite optimal development and encourage people to realize this potential in themselves and others (Purkey & Novak, 1996).

In addition, the invitational approach identifies four continuous levels of functioning across a spectrum of helpful and harmful behaviors, which encompass an infinite range of purposeful and accidental actions called intentional and unintentional behaviors. The four levels of functioning are presented here with brief comments about diversity issues:

I. Intentionally Disinviting. People who behave in purposefully hurtful and harmful ways—towards either themselves or other people—function at the lowest desirable level. When people are intentionally disinviting, they intend to demean, degrade, and destroy the value and worth of themselves and/or others. Racism, sexism, homophobia, religious intolerance, and other op-

pressive beliefs, when intentionally acted upon, demonstrate this level of functioning.

II. Unintentionally Disinviting. Sometimes hurtful and harmful messages happen although people do not intend them. When behaviors are ill timed, careless, misguided, or exaggerated, they might be misinterpreted by others, particularly people of diverse backgrounds. Actions based on misconceptions of cultural differences and stereotypic views of diverse characteristics fall into this category. Although the harm that results from such behavior might be unintended, the damage is nonetheless hurtful, counter-productive, and sometimes irreparable.

III. Unintentionally Inviting. Occasionally people observe positive results from their actions, even when they are uncertain what they did to achieve such outcomes. For instance, school counselors who begin helping relationships without establishing an understanding of the student's worldview and purpose for seeking assistance, likely will be unsure about where the relationship is going or unaware of what they are doing. However, because these counselors have good intentions, their relationships might prove beneficial to a wide range of students. One danger of functioning at this level is that a lack of knowing what one is doing makes it uncertain, and perhaps unlikely, that consistently effective relationships will be achieved. Such lack of consistency may prevent counselors, educators, nurses, and other professionals from repeating successful relationships with culturally diverse students, clients, and patients.

IV. Intentionally Inviting. Consistently successful professionals aim for the highest level of functioning with all their clients. They dependably demonstrate command of appropriate skills while remaining sensitive to cul-

> tural contexts. They maintain a broad knowledge base and demonstrate unconditional regard for themselves and others. In schools for example, teachers, administrators, and counselors who function at a high level of professional practice consistently create intentional messages that enable diverse populations to feel accepted, valued, and worthwhile. These beneficial messages encourage optimal human development that helps people of diverse backgrounds to construct healthy self-views and correspondingly beneficial worldviews.

In addition to the four levels of functioning, invitational theory identifies five factors that contribute to, or detract from, human development. These five factors are people, places, policies, programs, and processes, and individually and combined, they function at one or more of the levels described above. We might readily understand that people behave at different levels of functioning, but it is less obvious how the other four factors send positive or negative messages that influence human development and relationships. A few examples help to illustrate the effects of these messages:

> *Policies* that emphasize punitive approaches, such as school regulations that fail students according to some arbitrary cut-off score on state-mandated tests, do little to invite all students to the celebration of learning. Rather, they ignore the significance of cultural diversity and collective worldviews. They adhere to a misguided belief that everyone should be treated "the same," disregarding individual and collective differences.

> *Places* that demonstrate disrespect by being unsanitary, unsafe, or inaccessible dissuade and discourage people in deceptive, yet powerful ways. At the same time, places that reflect only the dominant culture without recognizing the presence of diverse populations practice exclusion rather than inclusion in daily life.

> *Programs* that neglect or ignore cultural or individual differences, or *processes* adopted for the convenience of an elite few, may disinvite people who feel slighted or set apart from the rest of the population. For example, schools that offer English Language Learner (ELL) programs because of a growing Hispanic/Latino population without also offering Spanish lessons to students of the dominant culture, convey the message that the dominant language is preferred and more highly regarded than Spanish.

Invitational theory embraces beliefs and practices that are compatible with multicultural approaches and philosophies (Schmidt, in press). Purkey and Schmidt (1996) listed four elements of compatibility: (1) an acceptance of a perceptual orientation to understanding human behavior (i.e., a combined self-view and worldview), (2) an emphasis on self-concept as a dynamic force in human development, (3) an unwavering respect for human respect and dignity, and (4) the encouragement of wide applicability (i.e., advocacy and social justice). As a belief system and guide for professional practice, invitational theory can be integrated with compatible approaches in working with diverse populations.

The study and application of invitational theory and practice, called *invitational education*, relies on understandable language to describe complex human relationships (Purkey & Novak, 1996). For this reason, the concepts of *inviting* and *disinviting*, and intentionality and unintentionality (Schmidt, 2002), are teachable to diverse clients at all developmental levels. With students and clients who speak languages different from the professional, a first step might be to ask them to substitute suitable and meaningful terms for invitational concepts from their native language.

People can learn the concepts of invitational functioning and use this knowledge to assess their own development and re-

lationships with others. As they comprehend personal, social, and cultural concerns from an invitational perspective, people are able to distinguish external causes from internal perceptions, understand related responsibilities, and choose behaviors to address challenging situations and concerns. By teaching invitational levels of functioning within a cultural context, professionals empower diverse students, clients, and patients to make appropriate decisions giving positive direction to their lives. To do so on a consistent basis, professionals want to understand other aspects of invitational theory that are related to processes of establishing beneficial relationships. These aspects include choices and styles of interacting as well as the stages of creating inviting messages (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996).

Choices

Invitational practice proposes four choices that exist among human interactions and the messages that comprise them: (a) sending, (b) not sending, (c) accepting, and (d) not accepting. These choices influence every human relationship. The first two are in the domain of the person who creates the initial message to begin an interaction or relationship.

Sending. An invitation does not exist until it becomes a purposeful action. Simply thinking about doing good things is insufficient. To establish effective and beneficial relationships requires substantive action. For example, "to respect is to *act* respectfully, to trust is to *act* trustfully, to care is to *act* caringly, and to love is to *act* lovingly" (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996, p. 15; accentuation by author). Invitational practices require that helping professionals act on their good intentions.

Not sending. Sometimes, people do not accomplish intended goals because they lack planning or they exhibit poor timing. Occasionally, intentional professionals understand that it is best *not* to take a specific action. In these instances, timing is essential to invitational practice, especially when working

with diverse populations. Appreciating the times to remain silent, for example, may be more important than what a professional decides to say during an interaction with a client (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996).

Accepting. The receiver of a message controls the remaining two choices. The first is whether to accept a message and act on it. By accepting an inviting message, a receiver agrees to the interaction. Furthermore, by accepting a message, a person exhibits trust in the sender, indicating a belief that the intended relationship will be beneficial rather than harmful. Acceptance by a receiver indicates to the sender a willingness to engage in a trusting relationship. For example, when an employee accepts a supervisor's invitation to receive assistance with a project, the employee does so with the understanding that the supervisor will be respectful and protective of the employee to avoid embarrassment or other negative repercussion.

Not accepting. Whether or not a particular message is acceptable or unacceptable always remains in the domain of the receiver. Perception plays a significant role in this process. Culturally diverse people will draw different conclusions about the same messages. This is particularly important to understand when working with clients from diverse cultures. Sometimes, what we view as seemingly beneficial messages, other people from diverse backgrounds might perceive as inappropriate, untrustworthy, or uncaring behaviors simply because we overlook or ignore cultural nuances. When people reject seemingly helpful messages, helping professionals might consider the components of invitational theory to explore alternative messages that are more acceptable. At the same time, when working with diverse populations, they acknowledge that people might need time to consider unfamiliar surroundings, customs, and traditions before making a commitment to a new relationship, particularly ones that might encourage them to rethink some of their cultural beliefs.

In addition to the four choices involved in deciding to send or not send, accept or not accept messages, invitational theory also suggests that people select different styles of functioning. Understanding these styles of functioning can be useful to professional helpers who want to maximize their working relationships with people of different cultural backgrounds.

Styles

According to Purkey & Schmidt (1996), the four styles are: (a) invisibly inappropriate, (b) visibly inappropriate, (c) visibly appropriate, and (d) invisibly appropriate. The following paragraphs explain each style and its implications when working with diverse populations.

Invisibly inappropriate. Sometimes, people form relationships that feel uncomfortable and inappropriate even though all apparent intentions seem worthwhile. For example, when being introduced to a new acquaintance, certain behaviors might cause discomfort during the initial interaction. How the person looks at you or gazes off, certain facial gestures, and other behaviors might give you a sense of disconnection or rejection. In counseling relationships, Purkey and Schmidt (1996) noted, "Although such differences are hard to describe, experienced counselors are keenly aware of them. They sense that something in the counseling relationship is not right, although they would have difficulty explaining what that 'something' is" (p. 17). In all types of relationships, particularly when working with diverse clientele, professionals remain sensitive to situations when trust is not attained but instead replaced by an aura of uncertainty, inconsistency, and unreliability. By being aware of such obstacles, they are able to face these challenges genuinely and responsibly. When done with all appropriate consideration of cultural differences, professionals are able to confront and resolve invisibly inappropriate behaviors that detract from productive relationships.

Visibly inappropriate. Everyone is familiar with disinviting behaviors, places, policies, processes, and programs that are clearly visible to most observers. Sometimes, as Purkey & Schmidt (1996) noted, "These disinviting forces are so obvious that they call attention to themselves" (p. 17). However, culturally diverse people might see inappropriate themes that go unnoticed by professionals of the dominant culture. When working with diverse clients, awareness of cultural nuances will heighten sensitivity to customs, behaviors, language, and other conditions that might otherwise seem harmless. Because these conditions are perceived as degrading, distasteful, or otherwise inappropriate by persons being served, they inhibit beneficial relationships. Awareness of discriminatory behaviors, the impact of policies that require Standard English, humor that relies on sexist or racist content, and other inappropriate action is a starting place for challenging visibly inappropriate styles of relating with diverse groups and individuals.

Visibly appropriate. Purkey and Schmidt (1996) observed that the third style of functioning is indicative of a professional who is technically proficient, uses precise strategies to gain appropriate objectives, and establishes beneficial relationships in a skillful manner. All these conditions would normally seem to relate with a high level of being intentionally inviting. When considering relationships with diverse populations, however, we keep in mind the power of the receiver in determining what messages are "inviting" versus which are "disinviting." Notwithstanding Schmidt's (1992) argument that "too much emphasis on individual perception . . . allows little possibility for the existence of universal invitations" (p. 44), by accepting the impact of culturally diverse perceptual lenses, professionals are more likely to create inviting stances with the potential to be helpful across populations. Such awareness and sensitivity allow professionals to apply a more advanced style of functioning,

what Purkey and Schmidt (1996) referred to as *invisibly appropriate*.

Invisibly appropriate. Acquiring consistent performance of visibly appropriate behavior enables professionals to gradually move to a less obvious level or style of functioning. In this style of being *invisibly appropriate*, professionals use helpful behaviors that "do not call attention to themselves" (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996, p. 18). Functioning in an invisibly appropriate style is analogous to learning to ride a bicycle. Recalling the scary event that launched you into a "mobile" world, you might remember a loving parent, grandparent, sibling, or other mentor who held the bicycle seat while you awkwardly peddled forward valiantly attempting maintain an unsteady balance. After what seemed like an eternity, comprised of several mishaps and falls with perhaps a scraped knee or shin, you eventually went solo, conquering your fears and becoming an expert cyclist. With additional experience, you soon became *one* with your bicycle, riding confidently, peddling without thinking, and sometimes biking with no hands on the handlebars! The more you rode, the stronger you performed, and the more *invisible* the effort it took to propel the bicycle forward.

Invisibly appropriate styles of functioning are effortless as well. They pay full attention to the person being served rather than to the professional offering services. When working with culturally diverse populations, certainty about their desires, needs, and other perceptions is paramount. Without knowledge about the people being served, we risk creating invisibly inappropriate rather than appropriate messages.

In addition to the four styles of functioning, Purkey and Schmidt (1996) also explained the stages of preparing, creating, and sending inviting messages. Elements in each of these stages help protect the integrity of invitations and, therefore, are particularly meaningful when assisting or working with diverse clientele.

Stages of Creating Inviting Messages

Invitational theory and practice propose a preparation stage, an initiating/responding stage, and a follow-up stage in the process of creating and sending messages. Each stage contains four parts, which are reviewed here briefly.

Preparation Stage

Preparing a beneficial message requires four conditions that include: (1) having the desire, (2) expecting good things, (3) preparing the setting, and (4) reading the situation. Each condition is essential to the initial stage of creating messages that have a chance of being received and accepted by the persons for whom they are intended.

Having the desire. It may seem obvious, but the desire to extend inviting messages is essential from the start. When working with diverse clients, the desire to be accepting and helpful either exists or does not. In most cases, desire is apparent to those who seek assistance early in a relationship. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors often give a clear measure, even among diverse populations, whether a willingness and desire to be of assistance are genuine.

Expecting good things. Optimism is a foundation for creating positive messages (Schmidt 2002). When professionals exhibit an optimistic posture and expect good things to happen as a result of their helping relationships, the clientele they aim to help will sense this level of confidence, and will act on it. Often, people from diverse backgrounds bring a history of oppression, deprivation, and discrimination to relationships. By maintaining a positive posture, helpers state that past transgressions by society, groups, or individuals will not keep them from moving forward.

Preparing the setting. Although desire and expectation of good things are essential to inviting messages, it is impera-

tive that each message is attractive to the person for whom it is intended. It requires careful preparation, particularly when professionals extend messages to people of diverse backgrounds. In invitational terminology, Purkey and Schmidt (1996) refer to this process as *preparing the setting*. Educators, counselors, healthcare providers, and other professionals who take the time to prepare the setting have a head start in creating successful messages and developing beneficial relationships. When considering messages for diverse clients, careful preparation of the setting includes aspects of orientation to time, understandable language or appropriate interpretation, adequate information, and a facilitative environment for the message to be received.

Reading situations. Professionals who *read situations* accurately exhibit the sensitivity, empathy, and interpersonal skill to understand what others are feeling and how they are likely to respond. With all clients in all situations this is a powerful skill and especially important when working with diverse populations. The ability to enter another person's world of perceptions is essential to creating invitational messages. It requires the use of all senses, particularly listening and observing, to understand fully whether the recipient has received the message, understood it as intended, and what the response is.

Initiating/Responding Stage

The initiating/responding stage involves verbal and nonverbal behaviors, selected by the professional to send a created message and ensure that it is received as intended. This stage includes behaviors related to (1) choosing carefully, (2) acting appropriately, and (3) ensuring reception.

Choosing carefully. In choosing behaviors carefully, professional helpers make every attempt to create (1) safe environments where messages can be accepted without fear, (2) repeated opportunities for recipients to accept invitations, (3)

clear and unambiguous messages, and (4) messages that are not too rigorous in either intensity or duration (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996). People from diverse cultural backgrounds face many challenges as they enter educational, mental health clinics, or other institutions attempting to access various services in the community. By creating safe environments in which to interact, offering repeated opportunities for clients to consider various services and programs, checking language and terminology, and spacing messages and information appropriately, professionals increase the likelihood of establishing trustful relationships. Such careful selection allows clients to consider more complex, challenging, and long-term messages and invitations in the future.

Acting appropriately. Choosing carefully is important, but it must be followed by appropriate actions. In working with diverse populations, acting appropriately requires a sensitivity toward and acceptance of cultural differences (Schmidt, in press). Professionals who are the most responsible in this endeavor are those who reflect on their thoughts and actions, always willing to examine how their perceptions, beliefs, and values might interfere with the creation of successful helping relationships. When such beliefs and values are identified, professionals alter them when appropriate to accommodate clients they are trying to assist. When these beliefs and values are so integral to the professional's self-being that they cannot be altered, the practitioner knows to refer the client to another who might better facilitate a successful relationship.

Ensuring reception. Purkey and Schmidt (1996) noted that many messages are sent but never received. Sometimes, "notes are misfiled, comments go unheard, questions remain unanswered, phone messages are misplaced, and gestures escape unnoticed" (p. 88). These types of mishaps and miscues detract from successful helping relationships.

It is the sender's responsibility to ensure that the content of messages is received and acknowledged by recipients. Messages that are sent but not received, or received but misunderstood, contribute to breakdowns in communication. When assisting diverse populations, such breakdowns compound the challenge of creating beneficial relationships. Unless full messages are received and their meaning acknowledged, confusion and misunderstanding may result. To avoid such instances, professionals working with diverse clientele take the time necessary to ensure reception and understanding.

Follow-up Stage

Invitational practice encourages processes that follow-up initial interactions and follow-through on agreements or arrangements made within helping relationships. In the follow-up stage of creating and sending inviting messages, professionals: (1) interpret and understand responses, (2) negotiate different positions, (3) evaluate the overall relationship, and (4) reinforce the trust that has been established.

Interpreting and understanding responses. Working with diverse populations, requires an accurate interpretation and understanding of responses given to numerous messages received. As Purkey and Schmidt (1996) pointed out, "Clients have the options of accepting invitations, not accepting them, ignoring them, modifying them with a counter proposal, or tabling them until another time" (p. 89). How diverse populations demonstrate their acceptance, modification, disregard, or rejection of messages sent to them are important components of the entire process of helping. Again, many cultural aspects must be considered in this complex relationship, including family values, spirituality, community, time orientation, sexual orientation, gender, and others. What might seem like an appropriate decision to the professional could prove stressful to a diverse

client who feels obliged to consider an array of cultural implications.

Negotiating. Invitational practice encourages the use of negotiation when professionals and clients encounter roadblocks to successful relationships. Here, professionals must be careful to understand the cultural implications involved in such a process. For example, people from some cultures might agree with professionals out of deference to authority. In such instances, the process of negotiation, in its purest sense, might be foreign to these clients. Professionals want to be in tune with students, clients, and patients from cultures that espouse strong hierarchical relationships, while exploring collaborative processes that might open reasonable possibilities and alternatives for them to consider. What is essential in this *negotiating* phase is that clients be comfortable with both the process and the choices presented.

Evaluating the process. Various forms of evaluation are unavoidable in most human interactions and relationships. Purkey and Schmidt (1996) observed, "Dinner guests comment on menus, voters choose candidates, judges rule on evidence, teachers grade students, students evaluate teachers, managers get bonuses, parents monitor children, and audiences applaud performances" (p. 90). Proper evaluation of any type of helping process enables both the professional and client to make decisions about the present relationship and future interaction. The professional might ponder, "Am I knowledgeable about this person's culture and language to be of beneficial assistance?" At the same time, a client might wonder, "Does this person accept and understand me, my background, and the situation?"

Sometimes, evaluation processes include information from people who know the client, such as family members, teachers, counselors, healthcare providers, and others. In such instances, cultural sensitivity is paramount to ensure

the integrity of the helping relationship. What are the implications for the client of including family members? Do the teachers, counselors or healthcare professionals who share information have the cultural knowledge and sensitivity to make their contribution credible? In addition, when tests, rating scales, questionnaires, and inventories become part of the evaluation process, is the professional assured of the cultural appropriateness and unbiased validity of these instruments when used with particular clients? By using genuine and unbiased processes, professionals work to strengthen the trust established throughout helping relationships.

Reinforcing trust. Trust is essential in any inviting relationship (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Purkey & Schmidt, 1996). It is especially important when working with clients who are unfamiliar with places, policies, programs, and processes of a newly adopted culture or country. By maintaining a consistently dependable posture, including acceptance and understanding of the diverse backgrounds that people bring to professional interactions, teacher, counselors, administrators, and other helpers are able to reinforce the trust imperative in all successful relationships. As Purkey and Schmidt (1996) noted, "Without a reasonable level of trust, the client will not self-disclose, explore new options, or take the risks necessary to find new ways of being" (p. 92). Establishing such trust, initially, and maintaining a level that invites diverse clients to feel accepted and willing to explore newly adopted worlds while taking personal and social risks that might alter past worldviews are related to another metaphor found in invitational theory and practice called *honoring the net* (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996, Stafford, 1992, 2003).

Honoring the Net

Stafford (2003) emphasized, "One of the more pivotal notions in the discussion of invitational theory has been that

of honoring the net" (p. 9). The net is a metaphor that represents the hypothetical boundaries separating professional helpers from their clients—a sacred boundary that generally is not crossed or violated. As such, "the net" in invitational practice is similar to the sports of tennis and volleyball, where a point is lost when a player touches or crosses the net. This concept is especially important when relating with diverse populations. As Stafford (2003) surmised, it is akin to the notion of unconditional positive regard first mentioned by Carl Rogers (1951). Stafford (2003) also highlighted the important quality of respectfulness and the skill of listening in facilitating beneficial helping relationships while valuing differences that exist between professionals and their clients.

An important aspect of honoring the net is that the client always controls the process. In practice, professionals honor the net, but clients can decide whether to allow them to enter their world and get closer to knowing who they are. "The client needs to be assured that he or she may partially lift the net if the client chooses" (Stafford, 1992, pp. 211-212). At the same time, Stafford (2003) indicated that occasions might happen when professionals feel compelled to violate the net, particularly when clients demonstrate harmful behaviors or destructive decisions. He cautioned that limitations placed on honoring the net "is an issue for each of us individually, and this is an issue which each of us must address in our own way" (p. 17).

When working with diverse populations, the notion of honoring the net requires that professionals be alert to what is happening within helping relationships and remain aware of the cultural influences that matter most to each person involved in the process. Equally important, professionals are aware of their *timing* as "a critical ingredient that affects both the stages and choices available" within the scope of invitational theory and practice (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996, p.97). Being aware of one's timing of suggestions, for example, relates to the intentionality with which professionals form help-

ful interactions with their clients. As noted earlier, intentionality is the condition that often distinguishes differences between inviting and disinviting relationships (Schmidt, 2002).

Conclusion

For more than 30 years, theorists and practitioners have explored, developed, and implemented ideas and concepts that have come to be called *invitational theory and practice* (Purkey, 1992a, 1992b). During that time, professionals from a wide range of educational, therapeutic, and healthcare settings have embraced assumptions and approaches put forth by this field of study, commonly known as *invitational education.* Among these professionals are teachers, counselors, nurses, psychologists, administrators, and others who believe that self-concept theory and perceptual psychology are foundations for understanding human development and interaction. Furthermore, they believe that successful relationships, whether in teaching, counseling, leadership, or other endeavors, are established through the intentional creation of beneficial messages chosen and sent within a caring context that dependably demonstrates optimism, trust, and respect for all persons involved in the process.

This article has revisited many of the assumptions and concepts espoused by invitational theory and practice to illustrate how they might relate to professional interactions with diverse populations. Over the years, literature and research about invitational education has not addressed the nuances of applying this approach with students, parents, employees, clients, patients, or other populations from diverse backgrounds. This article has taken the initial step in this important process. The world of the 1970s has changed considerably in this 21st century, and all expectations are that the populations to be served in the future by schools, counseling centers, health clinics, and other human service

arenas will reflect even greater diversity of culture, family background, sexuality, spirituality, and other statuses that influence people's development and worldviews (Schmidt, in press). In invitational theory and practice continue as viable belief systems and professional approaches to use in a variety of settings, and they will remain so because of reflection and incorporation of relative multicultural considerations.

Such multicultural considerations will include how individuals from diverse backgrounds perceive the language and terminology of invitational education. What adjustments will enable people to understand and incorporate the essence of inviting and disinviting concepts into their language and frame of reference? Another important consideration will be the balance between *individualism*, sometimes touted by self-development theories (e.g., as illustrated by terms such as "self-reliance," "independence," and "autonomy"), and more *collectivistic* philosophies found in other world cultures.

Lastly, this article hopes that by initiating discussion about implications of invitational theory and practice when working with diverse populations, followers of invitational education will be inspired to design and pursue research study about this topic. The veracity of any theory of practice depends on research findings that support its assumptions and concepts. As the world continues to shrink and countries become more diverse in the populations being served, advocates of invitational education worldwide will want to ensure that their approaches can be applied with confidence across student, client, and patient groups.

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Genuineness: An Overlooked Element of Inviting Behavior

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Genuineness, the condition of sincerity in behaving as one's unadulterated self, is a concept that is inherently congruent with inviting behavior yet is not directly addressed in the literature concerned with Invitational Theory. The author discusses the concept of genuineness, describes how it fits Invitational Theory and argues for its inclusion as a fundamental element of Invitational Theory.

Those familiar with the literature or one who has attended conferences featuring Invitational Education may notice that genuineness is a concept not directly addressed in Invitational Theory. Yet, when one is describing behaviors that are consistent with the inviting stance (Purkey & Schmidt, 1996), the concept of genuineness should not be overlooked. Perceptual psychology is one of the key psychological theories underlying Invitational Theory and relies on the concept that attitudes and beliefs determine behavior. Art Combs (1990) the progenitor of Perceptual Psychology addressed the concept of genuineness and refers to it as authenticity. He stated that authenticity is achievement of experience that can give order and unity to the person and his or her impact on others. To further enrich Invitational Theory, one of our next tasks should be to describe and illustrate the concept of genuineness adding it as one of the fundamental elements of the Invitational Model.

As shown in Fig. 1, this author proposes that genuineness should join the ranks along side the fundamental elements of Optimism, Respect, and Trust with Intentionality viewed as the underlying dynamic acting as a catalyst or fuel, distributed commonly across all four elements.

Figure 1

Elements	Optimism	Respect	Trust	Genuineness
	Intentionality			

Inviting behaviors stand in striking contrast to the omnipresent disinviting behaviors of mistrust, contempt, pessimism, aggression, and other common elements of destructive interpersonal interaction. The inviting stance eschews intentional caring, optimism, respect, trust, and cooperation (Purkey& Novak, 1996). Unfortunately, modern western society abounds with individuals who infrequently demonstrate inviting behaviors thus robbing themselves and others of opportunities to reach their potential. One of the goals inherent to Invitational Theory is that the frequency of disinviting behaviors within social interaction decreases as the frequency of inviting behaviors increases. Invitational Theory is in need of greater acceptance with a wider audience. Those individuals who are generous with their inviting behaviors frequently encounter disbelief, suspicion, and caution. Others might ask themselves, "Is this person for real, or is it an act?". It is understandable and natural that people will tend to doubt the sincerity of the person who intentionally invites others. Discussing the concept of genuineness within the context of Invitational Theory should have a high priority as a vehicle for anchoring rhetoric to action.

Genuineness

Genuineness is commonly defined in differing ways: Possessing the apparent attribute of character; not spurious or counterfeit; authentic; honestly felt or experienced; actual; real; free from hypocrisy or dishonesty; and sincere. Having a better understanding of and a functional working

knowledge of the concept of genuineness is critical for those who seek to enhance their invitational abilities. Genuine behavior is based directly and accurately upon that which the individual truly feels and experiences. Their outward behavior is not tainted or misrepresented. Their internal experience matches their external communications. Carl Rogers (1994) and others such as Carkhuff (1969) and Patterson (1996) have used the term *congruence* to describe the condition of human behavior that is genuine. According to these pioneers in the field of counseling, congruence (or genuineness) is being honest and authentic in our dealings with our clients. This requires that we limit our work to clients for whom we can have real empathy, warmth, and respect. Congruence also involves knowing personal limits in terms of skills, time and energy. Brophy (1995) identified general characteristics of teachers that contribute to their success in socializing students. Among these characteristics is the teacher's personal level of social attractiveness. This should be based on a cheerful disposition, friendliness, emotional maturity, sincerity, and other qualities that indicate good mental health and personal adjustment. In this context, sincerity can be seen as parallel to the description of genuineness outlined in this article.

Being genuine is behaving without front or facade. The individual is fully aware of his or her feelings at that moment and is able to communicate this experience openly. For behavior to fit the definition of genuineness there must be a sufficient level of self awareness and choice.

Intentionality

Choosing to behave in a particular manner as it relates to reasoned thoughts and feelings defines the essence of intentionality. Schmidt (1996) describes intentionality as the purposeful application of conscious choice with respect to the direction and purpose of one's behavior. Behaving intentionally is a key element in describing both inviting and

disinviting behavior. The condition of intention adds greater depth and impact to both inviting and disinviting behaviors. Human behavior as described by Purkey (1992) is categorized as consisting of four levels of functioning; Intentionally Disinviting, Unintentionally Disinviting, Unintentionally Inviting, and Intentionally Inviting. It stands to reason that to be inviting, one must be honestly and fully aware of oneself, act with thoughtful intentionality and hold a commitment to behaving genuinely.

Conclusion

Those who endorse Invitational Education should adhere to a belief in the importance of Genuineness. When learning a new behavior having a full and concrete description of the criteria for that behavior is crucial. Because of its congruence with Invitational Theory, genuineness should be one of the elements within the criteria for inviting behaviors. It deserves inclusion in our personal and professional lives. The artful inviter can provide subtle encouragement. This inviting demeanor is viewed as valid by others only if it is also considered genuine.

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Organizational Learning in Action: Becoming an Inviting School

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Public schools have met with increasingly unfavorable reaction in recent years, while private schools, magnet schools and charter schools seem to be gaining interest and public support. This may be due, in part, to the fact that public schools seem to lack a welcoming atmosphere. This action research study examined how teachers and an administrator at an elementary school in Texas used organizational learning strategies to implement the philosophy of invitational education on their campus in an effort to create a more welcoming climate.

Defining the Learning Organization

Bierema (1999) defined a learning organization as a "process that challenges employees and communities to use their collective intelligence, ability to learn, and creativity to transform existing systems" (p. 46). Simply put, Watkins and Marsick (1993) described the learning organization as "one that learns continuously and can transform itself" (p. 8). The organization does not settle for the status quo; it looks for ways to bring about improvement in its functioning. Senge (1990) characterized the learning organization as one where "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (p. 3). Furthermore, he claimed the learning organization is "continually expanding its capacity to create its future" (p. 14).

Learning at All Levels

Senge (1990) stated, "The organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at *all* levels in an organization" (p. 4). This type of school encourages and supports learning for teachers and administrators as well as for students (Becerra-Fernandez & Stevenson, 2001; Quicke, 2000). Barth (1990) agreed that schools should be communities of learners, places "where all participants—teachers, principals, parents, and students—engage in learning and teaching" (p. 43).

The Need for Organizational Learning

Certainly, there is a preponderance of evidence that the world is undergoing radical change at breakneck speeds. Hargreaves (1994) described the effects of globalization in the postmodern world. Herein lies the problem facing schools today: "When the rate of change outside an organization is greater than the rate of change inside, the continuing existence of that organization is threatened" (Schlechty, 2001, p. 1). Bridges (2003) claimed, "Change is the name of the game today, and organizations that can't change quickly aren't going to be around for long" (p. x). Hall and Hord (2001) supported the position that schools must possess the cultural attributes of a learning organization if real and continuous change and improvement are to be obtained. In fact, Schwandt and Marquardt (2000) warned against the fate of those organizations that fail to keep up with the world's fast pace of change. They stated:

> Within the next 10 years only learning organizations will survive. Companies that do not become learning organizations will soon go the way of the dinosaur: die, because they were unable to adjust quickly enough to the changing environment around them (p. 2).

Furthermore, learning organizations are concerned with more than simple cosmetic changes and shallow learning; they engage in double-loop learning whereby deeper structures are examined and questioned and changed when change is indicated as necessary (Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, & Valentine, 1999).

Characteristics and Components

Workers in a learning organization are intentional in efforts to "reflect, research, collaborate, and innovate" (Zederayko & Ward, 1999, p. 35). Watkins and Marsick (1993) list the *Seven C's* of a learning organization as continuous, collaborative, connected, collective, creative, captured, and codified. In an interview with O'Neil (1995), Peter Senge stressed that learning is a process that is always "on-the-job" (p. 20) in that it is always put into action in the context of one's work. He also indicated that the learning process "always occurs over time" (p. 23) requiring continuous attention and practice. Schein (1996) indicated that the modern learning organization must be engaged in "perpetual learning" (p. 67).

Many studies have found that transformational leadership is a key component of the learning organization (Lam, 2002; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1998; Silins, Mulford, & Zarins, 2002). Lam suggested, "But it is the internal school conditions, notably, transformational leaders, school culture and school structure that have exert[ed] the decisive influence on school transition" (p. 440). The leader of the learning organization must be a role model in the process of learning (Senge, 1996). Senge (1996) stated, "In brief, we are coming to believe that leaders are those people who 'walk ahead,' people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organizations. They lead through developing new skills, capabilities, and understandings" (p. 45). Scribner and Reyes (1999) suggested that the principal of the

learning organization should “model open communications, enable others to learn, work long hours, and

listen-listen-listen" (p. 199). In addition, Becerra-Fernandez and Stevenson (2001) indicated that the modern school principal provides practical support and leadership by organizing and providing the necessary resources to support the identified purposes, programs and plans.

Collective learning is also descriptive of the learning organization but should not be equated with the professional development of individual staff members. Leithwood, Leonard, and Sharratt (1998) proposed that, "Collective learning is not just the sum of individual learning, even though individual learning is a necessary part of collective learning" (p. 245). They explained:

> As other team members adapt their contributions not only in response to their sense of the team's new challenge but also in response to the responses of other members, each team member learns about the adequacy of her initial response and perhaps the need to adapt further. This is the way in which the individual learns from the team (p. 247).

Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, and Smith (1994) referred to this collective learning as team learning and explained that it transformed "conversational and collective thinking skills, so that groups of people could reliably develop intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members' talents" (p. 6).

A culture where members of the organization possess shared values and visions was also identified as being a hallmark of the learning organization (Leithwood, Jantzi, et al., 1998; Leithwood, Leonard, et al., 1998; Senge et al., 1994). Leithwood, Leonard, et al. (1998) stated, "To foster OL [organizational learning] in schools, district visions and missions also had to engender a sense of commitment on the part of school staffs" (p. 260). Leithwood, Jantzi, et al. (1998)

added, “A coherent sense of direction for the school is crucial in fostering organizational learning” (p. 88). The various members of the learning organization need to have a shared vision so that they are learning and moving in the same direction.

A Philosophy Built on Caring.

Many of those interested and invested in education (Barth, 1990; Beck, 1994; Noddings, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1992) join in issuing “a special call to educators to recognize and practice a caring ethic” (Beck, p. 1). The philosophy of invitational education, which originated with William Watson Purkey and some of his associates, echoes this call. The work and study of these scholars and researchers evolved into a model of practice called invitational theory. As Purkey and Novak (1996) stated, “Invitational education is… a general framework for thinking and acting about what is believed to be worthwhile in schools” (pp. 2-3). It is a “democratically oriented, perceptually anchored, self-concept approach to the educative process” (p. 3) with evidences of an ethic of caring. It is “education with a heart” (Purkey and Novak, 1998, p. 42). Purkey and Novak (1996) propose that:

> …educators can create and maintain schools that cordially summon all involved in the educative process to value themselves and their abilities, to think more fully and deeply about issues of personal and social concern, and to act imaginatively and caringly in addressing matters of human worth (p. 2).

Foundational Beliefs

Invitational theory (Purkey & Novak, 1988; Purkey & Schmidt, 1990; Purkey & Stanley, 1991) is a “fresh conception of education – forming a new image of what teachers can do and what schools can become” (Purkey & Stanley, p. 13). Invitational education seeks to provide a means of intention-

ally summoning people to realize their potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavor. It is a "democratically oriented, perceptually anchored, self-concept approach to the educative process" (Purkey & Novak, 1996, p. 3). The aim of invitational theory is to "create an educational culture that summons everyone involved to become lifelong learners" (Purkey & Novak, 1996, p. 5). Invitational theory is based on three "cornerstone assumptions of invitational education: the perceptual tradition, self-concept theory, and democratic practice (Purkey & Novak, 1996, p. 19).

Problem Statement

Public schools have been under close scrutiny and have been receiving increasing amounts of criticism in recent years (Sarason, 1990; Schlechty, 1997). Private schools, magnet schools, and charter schools are gaining interest and public support possibly because they are seen as more inviting to students, parents, and the community than are public schools (Eisner, 1991). Instructional leaders of schools are challenged to create schools that are learning organizations; schools that seek to learn and meet the increasing demands of their public stakeholders including the demand for a caring and inviting school climate. There is a need to identify practices and processes that lead to increased organizational learning and continuous improvement in creating an inviting climate.

Purpose of the Study

Creekview Elementary (a pseudonym) was already a great school. With quality teachers dedicated to the school's mission, academic achievement for students was a driving goal as evidenced by the school's ability to be named a "Recognized" campus by the Texas Education Agency for three consecutive years. The campus principal, however, saw a chance for Creekview to become even greater. When she saw sparks

of interest in the invitational education philosophy among her faculty, she determined to create a learning organization that would bring about a more inviting campus.

During faculty meetings, a plan was made to implement reform efforts in the areas of people, places, processes, programs, and policies in order to create a more inviting school. Over the course of the next 2 years, the plan was implemented. Intentional efforts sponsored by the committee and carried out by the faculty and staff were made to make the campus more inviting. In March, 2002, members of the campus' Invitational Education Committee compiled a portfolio/scrapbook which was entered in the International Alliance for Invitational Education (IAIE) competition for the Inviting Schools Award. Creekview was named a winner of the Inviting Schools Award in the elementary school division in June, 2002, and was honored at the IAIE conference in Atlanta, Georgia, in October, 2002. The purpose of this study was to identify the practices and processes that contributed to the success of this reform effort.

Research Questions

The research questions which guided this study were:

- What organizational learning practices and processes contributed to the success of the reform effort?
- What were the leadership acts that contributed to the reform's success?

Context of the Study

Creekview Elementary was built in 1973. Currently serving grades 3 through 5 it was initially a pre-kindergarten through sixth grade campus. The campus, situated in an affluent residential neighborhood in a mid-sized city in East Texas, was originally built on an "open classroom" model ba-

sically without inside walls to separate classrooms, cafeteria, or library. In later years, walls were added inside the

building. The campus also added two additional wings, a new library, and a gymnasium.

Creekview Elementary believes every child can become a confident, self-directed, lifelong learner. The mission of the campus was that the teachers, administration, staff, parents, community, and students work together to create a safe, orderly and inviting environment that allows optimal learning for all students (Creekview Elementary Campus Plan, 2002). In 2000-2001, the school enrolled 345 students across the three grade levels. The ethnic makeup of the student population was representative of the general population in Riverside. At the time of this study, the school had been led by four principals in the years since 1973. The current principal Mary Eliza Bowling (a pseudonym) had held the principal's position at Creekview for 13 years. Creekview Elementary employed approximately 30 professional staff including teachers, a librarian, a counselor, and a principal as well as seven educational aides.

Creekview was one of the city's three elementary schools to achieve a rating of "Recognized" by Texas Education Agency each year between 1999-2002 as a result of student performance on state-mandated assessments. This meant that at least 80% of all ethnic subpopulations had achieved passing scores on all sections of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

Introduction of Invitational Education at Creekview

In August, 2000, William Purkey provided the keynote address for Riverside Independent School District's pre-service staff development opening assembly. Members of Creekview's faculty and staff appreciated the message of Purkey's presentation. Creekview's principal noted the faculty's interest in Purkey's philosophy. The principal talked with

members of the faculty and staff to determine who would be interested in attending the International Alliance for Invitational Education (IAIE) conference. Eight faculty and staff attended and brought back important learning which they shared with the faculty in a series of after-school faculty meetings. These faculty members became known as the Invitational Education Committee at Creekview Elementary. With principal's leadership, the Invitational Education Committee created a shared vision toward transforming Creekview Elementary into an invitational school.

Design of the Study

This study used a qualitative research design employing the interview research technique as the major tool in gathering the necessary data for analysis. Pseudonyms were assigned to participants as well as to the city, campus, and school district. The study involved interviews of teachers and the campus principal. The participants' length of employment in an educational setting ranged from 18 years to 31 years. The study was conducted during the Fall semester of the 2002-2003 school year. A review of documents such as the Texas Education Agency AEIS report, the campus plan, and the Creekview Inviting Schools' scrapbook was also conducted.

Semi-structured interview questions were developed by the researcher and used to determine the effects of reform efforts through organizational learning. Data from each source were coded, categorized, and analyzed for patterns of meaning. A constant comparison of the data generated from interviews and document reviews during the course of the study enabled the researcher to look for recurring patterns in the data which converged into meaningful categories. The researcher created trustworthiness through triangulation by the collection of multiple types of data such as interviews and various document reviews.

The review of the literature revealed that learning organizations are characteristically collaborative in nature. Certainly, the invitational philosophy is also built on a foundation of collaborative activity (Purkey and Novak, 1996). Respondants noted that working together on committees and as teams was a key factor in the successful implementation of the reform effort at Creekview Elementary:

> We have done grade-level planning, and I think that has helped to bring the grade levels together. And we've done a lot of teaming within the grade levels. We had those faculty meetings when we first came back, and we did little things that we had seen there [at the conference], and we shared.
>
> The implementation was done first by the Committee that selected the tables and the wallpaper. They did it. It was not done by the principal. It was strictly done by teachers' committee… It was a campus movement. It was not strictly done from the principal's office.

Another theme that emerged from the remarks of those interviewed involved shared norms, values, and goals. These teachers noted that the organizational learning at Creekview was nurtured and encouraged because those involved shared values and a vision:

> Initially, when they came back from the first conference, we had presentations. The campus was broken up into the parts of programs, policies, procedures, and so forth, and each group of teachers wrote down the things they would like to see…the improvements they would like to see …visually on chart paper.
>
> It was just a bonding experience for us… realizing that we all have the same goals, and that when we came back, we could implement them in our own way, but yet still using the philosophy of invitational schools.

Another respondent talked about the shared values also: "Working with the committee, I think it was a cohesiveness. We just felt like we were part of a group that we all had the same goal in mind, and that's what I enjoyed about it."

Leaders can either encourage and nurture organizational learning, or they can squelch and kill it before it even takes root. The role they play appears to be vital, and it appears to be two-fold. Respondents mentioned two broad areas in which their leader provided the support that they felt was necessary for successful implementation of the reform efforts they undertook. One area was with regards to support for teachers' ideas as indicated by these remarks:

> She [the principal] has encouraged us to do everything that we've wanted to do. I knew that she had bought into it when she wanted to go on the trip [to the conference] this year…that she knew how important it was. I think she saw a big change in all of us.
>
> [The principal] is always supportive of faculty and her students. She's always looking for ways to improve, so when we came with these ideas and suggestions, she was very willing to work with us…

The principal described her own role in this way, "I served, really more than anything, as the encourager."

Respondents were quick to mention another way in which leaders were needed, that being in the area of practical support. One respondent said that the principal worked "to get us money and time and whatever we needed to get these things started." Another said:

> She's supported us in any way she can… with materials and supplies. Anything we couldn't come up with on our own, she's provided for us. Especially

> providing for us to go to the conference for both years… that was a big step.

The principal also described the challenge of providing the practical support necessary for the organizational learning efforts. She stated:

> The leadership in this particular initiative involved me being willing to look for funding for the first group of eight teachers [to attend the conference] which was a costly venture…but for me to be creative in funding…then a year and a half later, for the second group to go…Funding was a challenge. To take this large of a group to an international conference where there was a distance that required airfare.

The Expansion Effect

The transformation of Creekview Elementary into a school that embraced the invitational education philosophy began with a spark of interest among a few teachers at a perfunctory in-service meeting. This spark of interest was heightened by a principal with a vision for the future. As the original group of teachers learned and practiced a new philosophy, interest in the philosophy of invitational education grew and spread among the group's co-workers. The following remarks by those interviewed illustrate the expansion effect of organizational learning:

> It was not a decision. We just came back and did it. I mean, we didn't say, "We're going to go back and we're…all going to try and 'warm up' our places." All of a sudden, these places just started appearing! And it snowballed! When someone saw what someone else had done to brighten up their area, then they would do something else.

> We came back and presented that [invitational education philosophy] to our faculty and everybody bought into it…I think that having representatives on every grade level helped to bring the faculty and the staff closer together. We were able to share with each grade level the importance of being inviting. The philosophy was bought into by the whole faculty.
>
> I think the practices that led to this effort being successful was really more of a process, because there was a team leader from each grade level that was a member of the Committee that made the initial trip to the first conference. When they shared the philosophy…they demonstrated the philosophy…and practiced it…then their team began to buy in to the philosophy of invitational education.

The real power of the change seemed to come from a very modest start wherein a few key players allowed learning to transform their thinking and their behaviors. Then they modeled and practiced the effects of that learning before their co-workers until there was "buy-in" and the co-workers joined the organizational learning process.

Recommendations

There is much that educational leaders can learn from a review of organizational learning literature. These themes were supported by the interviews conducted in this action research study as well.

- Look for sparks of interest. Pay attention to comments made by teachers about staff development opportunities and new teaching strategies or materials. Encourage teachers to explore those opportunities in which they express an interest. Take advantage of that interest and energy to build motivation and commitment.

- Encourage collaboration. Allow teachers to share and work together creating an open door for the de-privatization of practice. When teachers learn something of value and are able to share that knowledge with others, the very process of learning increases in power.
- Build on shared values and goals. Take every opportunity to focus the faculty and staff's attention on the school's mission. Build unity in purpose, values, and goals by constantly aligning conversation and action with the stated mission of the school.
- Support organizational learning both philosophically and practically. Not only is it important for the instructional leader of a campus to encourage staff to learn with positive words and an open mind, it is vital that the leader provide the practical means to allow that learning to take place. This can include providing opportunities for time away from duty for training or for team meetings. It may also involve locating funding for staff development opportunities or materials.

Conclusion

When the principal at Creekview sensed an interest among some of her faculty members in the philosophy of invitational education, she saw the opportunity to initiate positive changes on her campus through organizational learning. The data revealed that Creekview Elementary benefited from the collaboration that took place as faculty members worked together on committees and as grade level teams. As grade level representatives shared the learning they gained through their attendance at the IAIE conference, the learning was passed from person to person among the faculty. Teachers noted that the organizational learning at Creekview Elementary was nurtured and encouraged because those faculty members involved shared values and a vision. They used words like "bonding" and "cohesiveness" when describing

their experiences and stated that the faculty "all had the same goal." Furthermore, the data revealed

that campus leadership was vital in providing support, both philosophically and practically, to bring about the pragmatic reforms seen at Creekview Elementary. Not only did the principal welcome new ideas and suggestions borne out of the organizational learning, she also provided the financial backing to see that the ideas and suggestions were put into practice. She was "creative" in seeking funding to support her faculty's attendance at two international conferences.

The transformation Creekview Elementary brought about by organizational learning began to take on an "expansion effect." As the original group of teachers learned and practiced the new philosophy, interest in the philosophy of invitational education grew and spread among the group's co-workers. One of the teachers interviewed described the expansion effect by saying that the implementation of the invitational education philosophy "snowballed" among faculty members. The real power of the change seemed to come from a very modest start which was nurtured by both the school leadership and followers in the form of teachers, students and parents. With a shared vision and an inviting stance, it seemed that anything was possible.

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Invitational Education at Cooper Elementary

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The Beginnings

In the summer of 1998, I was appointed Principal at Cooper Elementary, one of 21 elementary schools in the Livonia Public Schools' district, the 5th largest district in the state of Michigan. Like many first-year principals, I was full of fresh ideas, lofty goals and endless enthusiasm to inspire students, staff and parents. My mandate: increase student achievement scores at the lowest performing school in the district.

Having taught at another elementary building in the district, I had always heard stories about Cooper, a "tough school" as my colleagues put it, with a reputation of unmotivated kids, uninvolved parents, and consistently low test scores. Cooper's student achievement scores on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) exams were significantly below district and state averages, and had shown little improvement for years. The highest recipient of Title 1 funds in the district, Cooper was in danger of losing its interim accreditation status or facing possible federal sanctions for low achievement.

Staff morale was at an all-time low. Teachers were working diligently to improve student performance but were not seeing the desired results on district or state assessments. Parent involvement was virtually non-existent, creating even greater challenges for staff. Students were frequently late,

absent, or seemingly unaware of the personal benefits for being in school.

Everywhere I turned, someone was unhappy. Parents were unhappy that teachers were unreceptive to their concerns and that more classroom time was often spent on discipline rather than curriculum. Students were unhappy and felt teachers were mean, unfair, or gave too much meaningless homework. Teachers were unhappy that the district "just didn't understand" the unique problems facing the Cooper community and that the district's curriculum expectations were unrealistic and unreasonable. Cooper staff was stuck in the "there's only so much we can do" mode for rationalizing low student achievement scores and poor student behavior. In short, there was an unspoken mantra that seemed to permeate the building: "Cooper Kids Can't" – and it had developed into a deeply rooted belief system that quickly destroyed any attempts for constructive change.

Faced with these difficult circumstances, I made the mistake of many first year principals: I tried to put out all the fires, one at a time. I tried to appease the parents on the lousy hot lunches and changes in the lunchroom schedule. I tried to work with teachers on playground discipline issues that took up so much of their valuable classroom time each day. I tried to work with the district curriculum experts to introduce and implement new materials and strategies to improve student achievement, despite the cynicism and resistance from teachers. I tried to work with students to help them see that their poor decisions on the playground always resulted in consequences, and that doing well in school really was their best hope for the future. I put out these and countless other fires each and every day until January—with no real lasting benefits. No sooner was one situation resolved than two others surfaced—or resurfaced—and everyone was still unhappy, especially me.

Over the winter break, I gave serious consideration to resigning and returning to my comfort zone in a classroom in the north end of the district, miles away and far removed from the hectic, unhappy halls of Cooper Elementary. When I returned for my first principal's meeting in January, I received a flyer that would change everything.

Invitational Education Comes to Cooper

The flyer that was passed around the table that meeting in "School Can Be the Most Inviting Place in Town." There was a silly drawing of a goofy looking man with glasses (Dr. William Purkey) and I quickly passed the workshop flyer on to the next administrator without taking one for myself. I didn't have time for any workshops now—my school, students, staff and parents were a mess, and my escaping to a workshop for an entire day was not going to make things any better for me. Fortunately, one of my more experienced colleagues took the time to urge me to attend the worksho with her. She explained that she had heard Dr. Purkey's message years ago, and that he had an important message that might help me in my quest to improve things at Cooper. Reluctantly, I signed up to attend the workshop with my colleague. As it turned out, that decision marked the beginning of a cultural transformation at Cooper Elementary.

The message I heard from Dr. William Purkey, co-founder of the International Alliance for Invitational Education (IAIE), proved to be an effective model for organizational change that would profoundly impact everything we did and every decision we made as a community of learners working together on behalf of our common goal—student learning and achievement. Throughout the presentation, Dr. Purkey explained that schools that adopt invitational strategies could bring about significant improvements in all aspects of the school. Invitational theory is based on four primary principles: trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality. These prin-

ciples, which serve as the foundation of the school's culture, are supported by the "5 Powerful P's"—people,

places, policies, programs and processes. By altering attitudes and action in these five areas, we could accomplish a systematic change in both the operations and the culture of Cooper.

The simplicity of Dr. Purkey's message intrigued me as I listened to the presentation. Nothing in his presentation was new or shocking to me; in fact, his message was steeped in common sense. We should all send caring, inviting message to students, parents, and staff to create a positive environment! We need to have an invigorating, bright, clean workplace where students want to learn and teachers want to teach. We should have programs and policies that promote student learning, reward progress, and achievement, and ensure that all were made to feel that they are able, valuable, and responsible.

I asked myself a more important question: "Are all these things really happening at Cooper Elementary?" The answer, once I probed past the surface, became shockingly clear to me: Cooper Elementary was becoming a failing school because we were failing ourselves. We were not summoning people to realize their potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavor. Instead, we were listening to the voices of our past that told us "Cooper kids can't" and kept that belief a reality through our self-defeating and negative attitudes.

By the time the 1999 school year began, I decided to implement Invitational theory (Purkey & Novak, 1988, 1996; Purkey & Schmidt, 1990; Purkey & Stanley, 1991) to change the culture of Cooper Elementary so that we, too, could begin to consider our school "the most inviting place in town."

Putting Theory Into Practice

Over the summer, I read every book and article on invitational education and theory that I could find, along with current research on implementing change effectively in

schools. Armed with a variety of research from IAIE as well as other experts on organizational change such Steven Covey, Richard DuFour, Michael Fullan, and Philip Schlechty, I began to formulate a plan for reshaping the culture of Cooper Elementary to the invitational model.

On my first workday with staff, I gave an overview of the basic principles and premises of invitational education. I explained the "5 P's" and reviewed the four cornerstones of trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality. I told the staff that we were going to begin exploring invitational theory slowly, starting with only one "P," the "place," by sprucing up the physical environment of Cooper which, quite frankly, looked more like an institution than an elementary school. We organized a "beautification committee" and before long, teachers were busy turning the halls and walls of the school into a more friendly, warm, and playful environment. Student artwork was prominently displayed where blank, brown brick walls had previously stood. Trash cans were transformed to look like Crayola crayons, and fuse box covers were decorated to look like chalk boards with children's scribbles painted on as decorations. Curtains were sewn and hung in the front lobby, and new bulletin boards were ordered and installed in the hallways. The lobby of the school was painted white, instantly transforming the depressing brown brick walls with a burst of optimism.

Within a few short weeks, people were talking about the changes. Parents commented how much brighter and lighter the school felt. Students beamed with pride at seeing more of their artwork hanging prominently in the halls and in the showcases. The staff started to smile just a little more and feel better about coming to work. This was accomplished with just a simple change in the place.

From that first step, we began to systematically look at the other four "Ps." The next focus was on people. We talked about our feelings of hopelessness and pessimism, and be-

gan to understand that our attitudes were contagious. We talked about the invitational principles of trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality. We began to have meaningful, tough dialog on how we treat each other as a staff and how we treat students and parents. We established an "Inviting Staff" box where staff could slip notes that recognizes and thanking individual members of the staff for their kindness and generosity. One lucky staff member would have his or her name drawn each month to win an exciting prize. We began to plan more social events together, celebrated weddings and births of babies together, and shared good news that was happening in our lives on a more regular basis.

Addressing the first two "Ps," place and people, took up most of our time in the 1999-2000 year. I intentionally began with the two "Ps" that I thought would have the greatest and most immediate impact on staff and student morale. My thinking was to give staff some practical and non-controversial change mechanisms that would peak their interest in exploring Invitational Education in greater detail and depth the following school year. To cement their thinking, I arranged to bring Dr. Purkey to the district to speak to all elementary staffs and share the same dynamic presentation that had so energized me the previous year.

Once my staff heard Dr. Purkey's presentation, convincing them to take on the remaining three "Ps" (programs, policies, and processes) was easy. For the past four years, the Cooper staff has worked together to turn our school into one of the most inviting places in town. Since that time, we have implemented new programs that encourage student learning and parent involvement. We have rejected policies that are demoralizing, demeaning, and destructive in nature in favor of policies that are clear, fair, and that promote a safe, orderly environment where all are treated with respect and dignity. Our processes are always grounded in invitational theory and practice.

In May, 2000, Cooper Elementary won the Golden Apple award by the State of Michigan as a result of our student achievement performances in the 4th and 5th MEAP exams. That year, student achievement in the subject areas of reading, writing, science and mathematics rose a combined 110 percentage points compared to our previous three-year performance rates. Since 2000, Cooper's MEAP scores have continued a slow but steady course of improvement. In the January 2004 MEAP reading exam, Cooper's reading score reached an all-time school high of 84% which was two percentage points above the state average and well over three times greater than our achievement rate five years ago.

While we cannot argue that Invitational Education singularly achieved these gains, we do believe Invitational Education enabled us to organize ourselves in ways that continue to promote the untapped potential of all our students as well as our staff. Our involvement and practice in invitational practices made a significant difference to the culture and climate of Cooper Elementary that continue to be crucial to student success.

Today, the Cooper staff uses the principles of Invitational Education as our framework for school improvement. We look at student data to see how well we have met our goals, and we gauge our goals against the fundamental principles of Invitational Education maintaining a steady path of continuous improvement. Schools must be held accountable for their performance, and we tend to measure school success by student achievement scores, such as the MEAP. Cooper's recent success, however, did not occur overnight, and was not the result of a "quick fix." Instead, Cooper's growth has been the result of a concerted, collaborative effort toward effective change that involved all stakeholders in our community.

School administrators who wish to improve their schools should realize that Invitational Education is not a simple, ready-made prescriptive program that can be implemented in

the same way and manner in every school. Rather, administrators can use the basic principles and premises of Invitational Education as a solid framework for effective and systemic school improvement initiatives. At Cooper Elementary, the staff understands that we are not "there" yet, and we still have much to do to improve as a truly invitational school. But we remain committed to using Invitational Education as our compass as we move forward toward continued growth and success for all members of our community.

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Why Not . . . "On Purpose"?

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Through the use of case examples, the authors present the concept that behavior might best be viewed from the perspective of "goal directedness" as opposed to internal or external causality. With an understanding of the individual's psychological movement, teachers and counselors might be in a better position to provide more effective and inviting psychological services to students.

Jason, a 14 year-old eighth-grader, showed up one morning in early March at the school counselor's office. He explained that he needed to register and that this would be his third school this year. He also explained that his mother was late for her new job waiting tables at one of the local restaurants and couldn't come in with him to sign any papers until her day off. His stepfather had just moved the three of them to town in the hope of finding employment in the oil fields. Jason said that his stepfather was a welder but had a hard time keeping a job since he often showed up for work either hung-over or drunk. They left their last home because they couldn't afford to pay the rent and had previously been evicted from a house they had only lived in for three months in another community.

Jason talked about his past school experiences saying that, as much as he would like to do well, he was pretty frustrated with school and felt like he didn't fit in. He was behind in his classes and failing at his last school. Jason indicated that this school would probably be no better than any of his other

school experiences. His records showed that he had been in and out of AEP (the Alternative Education Program) for various disciplinary issues including confrontations with teachers (and other authority figures), impulsive (negative) behavior, and truancy. When asked about it, Jason explained that he preferred being sent to the AEP because he could do his work there—it was quiet and the teachers were willing to help him. He also said that being in AEP made it easier to be in school: He had no friends and wouldn't need to socialize while in the Alternative Education Program.

Jason talked about the fact that he spends most of his time unsupervised; his mother works extra hours and his stepfather is never home. He also explained that he just got off probation for shoplifting which he said he did only to be initiated into a gang at a previous school. Jason said he no longer was a gang member although the other school reported that he seemed to hang with kids who were. The general impression gained from this first meeting with Jason was that he was angry, disenfranchised, and, often, explosive. However, his records showed him to be quite bright, having a high potential for succeeding in school. At times he seemed to display a real sensitivity toward students who were having difficulty fitting into the conventional student role and talked about how he had helped a couple of kids he met in his probation officer's office.

Frames of Reference

Current psychologies provide us with three basic frames of reference for understanding students such as Jason—Behavioristic, Psychoanalytic, and Humanistic. Each of these is like a pair of glasses that allows us to look at the individual and come to an understanding of his/her behavior. Usually, one of these frames of reference will help us understand Jason and see more clearly what it is like to be him. It is the point of view we choose to operate from that makes a considerable difference in our approach to

working with the various "Jasons" we run across in the schools.

First Force Psychologies, the Behavioristic, particularly those put forth by J. B. Watson, B. F. Skinner, and other behaviorists, consider the individual as being shaped by external factors. This view of the "Jasons" of the world would see them as being victims of external events over which they have no control. Therefore, the external environment would have to be manipulated for change to occur.

Second Force Psychologies constitute the early Freudian or psychoanalytic approaches to understanding behavior. This is an illness oriented model (Goble, 1970) wherein the person is viewed as being driven by "forces within." Evidence of the existence of this point of view can still be seen in such beliefs as a student like Jason being thought of as "filled with anger." With such an orientation, the counselor might focus on how to help Jason control or manage this anger.

There is yet a third view available to us for understanding human behavior. This Third Force in Psychology is represented by such individuals as Alfred Adler, Abraham Maslow, Arthur Combs, Donald Snygg, and William Purkey. These are the phenomenological or "self" psychologies that view behavior as the result of the individual being "drawn toward" goals or outcomes rather than being "pushed by" forces within or factors without. One of the most significant contributions of Alfred Adler to understanding human behavior (Milliren, Evans & Newbauer, 2003) was the concept that behavior should be examined from a purposive view – what is the use for or goal of the behavior?

Without recognizing the teleological (goal-directed) nature of behavior, it is impossible to understand the individual's psychological movement. "In effect, the individual is perceived as being able to *choose* those behaviors that will move him or

her toward a desired objective. Motivation is viewed as more of a pull than a push, with the individual

moving toward those immediate and long-range outcomes or objectives that are important in the frame of reference of the individual" (Milliren, Evans & Newbauer, 2003, p. 101). "Man is not pushed by causes; his behavior is not determined by his heredity or by his environment. Instead, he is pulled toward the goals he creates and chooses to pursue." (Terner & Pew, 1978, p. 41). Thus, the "Jasons" are making choices about their movement through the world and our understanding of their behavior and their being should be based on looking at what is "in front of" them rather than looking at "what lies behind."

This point of view does not exclude some of the tenets of First and Second Force psychologies, it just takes what is workable from these approaches and combines them with the abilities of the human being to dream, adapt, learn, plan, and move. Consider the last time you sat in a meeting with a notepad and pen in hand. Did you take any notes? If so, why? Was it because some internal force inside you just made you write and you couldn't help yourself? Or, was it because the pen was just there in your hand and it forced you to take notes? Or, was it because you wanted to remember something later on? Or, possibly look good by appearing to be involved and interested? It seems almost too obvious that the answer lies in the purpose of the behavior rather than the causes. We do what we do "in order to," rather than "because of." So, rather than looking for the causes of Jason's misbehavior, we may want to begin to look at the goals or purposes these behaviors serve.

"From the time of infancy, goals give direction for a person's actions. The goal need not be stated verbally, and the person need not be consciously aware of the goal" (Ferguson, 1995, p. 4). Rudolf Dreikurs, while working with children and their parents at the Lincoln Center in Chicago in the late 1930s, "… made a significant discovery: that the misbehavior of children, no matter how varied their personality or background, followed one or more of four distinctive

goals (Terner & Pew, 1978, p. 156)." These four immediate goals of misbehavior offer a means for understanding the child's private logic. Briefly, the goals of misbehavior include: (1) Attention-Getting—to obtain undue attention or service; (2) Power—to demonstrate power or defiance; (3) Revenge—to seek to get even or retaliate; and (4) Inadequacy or Assumed Disability—to completely give up and be left alone. Even though these goals might lead to negative outcomes for the child, it is still the child's belief that by pursuing these ends, he/she will be able to achieve status and belonging.

Helping counselors and teachers look at behavior as goal-oriented is not easy. The concept of causality is firmly entrenched in our psychological tradition. It was extremely important to Dreikurs "to help others look at behavior from the standpoint of goals and purposes rather than from antecedent causes. Mechanistic and causal thinking so pervaded people's perception of behavior that it required a reorientation of their reasoning processes to think in terms of goals (Terner & Pew, 1978, pp. 155-6)."

Assumptions about Behavior

Dinkmeyer and Sperry (2000) point out, there are four common mistaken assumptions about human behavior. "These four minitheories of human behavior explain away, rather than understand, behavior" (p. 139).

Behavior Is a Product of Environmental Factors

This (view) suggests that where you live and the associated environment determines how you behave. While environment influences behavior, it is not the sole determinant (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000). We all know those who have commented, "Well, what do you expect? Look at the family (or neighborhood) he/she comes from!" Yet, we also know of individuals who model useful behaviors and have succeeded

in life regardless of their home or family environment. We know of those who, although appearing to come from "ideal" environments, are unsuccessful in their life journey. If an environmental factor, such as divorce, is the cause for behavior, why aren't all persons affected in the same way? We have to realize that it is not one's experiences that dictate behavior but the way one experiences the experience that influences the choices one makes. And our behavior choices are based on what we perceive to be in our best interest (Purkey & Schmidt, 1990).

Behavior Is a Product of Heredity

Current research gives strong evidence of genetic influences on personality characteristics, it is not the sole variable in student behavior (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000). It is not uncommon to hear someone say, "Well, just look at his/her parents!" as if the explanation for behavior is in the genes. Or, we find our evidence for a child's behavior in an uncle, aunt, or some other family member that is "just like that!" This is not to discount the role of genetic influences on temperament and personality, however, we still have choices in how we express that temperament and personality.

Behavior Is a Product of Age and Stage of Development

"Those who hold this view see behavior as a function of chronological age…(however) the opinion ignores the wide variability among individuals …"(Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000, p. 139). Think about our labels for behavior that relate to age or stage of development such as the "terrible twos" and "turbulent teens." This assumes that everyone is subject to the display of certain behaviors just because they have "arrived" at a specific point in their development. However, if we examine a broad spectrum of two-year-olds, not all of them can be described as "terrible."

Many of the teenagers we know are not experiencing "turbulence." Age and stage theories of behavior, although useful in a general sense, obscure our opportunities to understand behavior as it is unfolding – it denies the possibility the there is a purpose or use for acting in a specific way.

Behavior Is a Product of Gender

"Sex-role stereotyping is perhaps becoming less prevalent, but it accounts for differences in behavior by "blaming" the gender of the child "(Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000, p. 139). We know of individuals who discount the misbehavior of boys with a statement like "Boys will be boys." We know many who place higher standards for sexual conduct on teenage girls than on boys. All of these gender related beliefs interfere with a full understanding of behavior. We cannot deny that gender has a powerful influence on behavior. However, gender is only an influence and not a determinant. It is important that we maintain an awareness that individuals have choices and individuals select those behaviors that serve to move toward attaining significance and belonging.

Which Option?

If the modern view of the individual promotes the concept that people have choices, then First and Second Force Psychologies are not the best options for understanding behavior and working with the various Jasons (and Janes). If we view the Jasons (and Janes) as the "dis'd" students in our schools, the disconnected, disruptive, and disenfranchised (Melton, 2002), then something has happened to these students over which they have little or no control. If something has happened to them, there is probably little that can be done to change the precipitating event or condition. This is the problem with First and Second Force thinking: The individual has no responsibility for what has happened or is happening. The individual does not have choices if he/she behaves as the result of internal drives.

A person does not have choices if he/she is a victim of his/her environment.

Brad

Recently, in a supervision conference, a practicum student was discussing one of her clients. Brad was a first grader that had everyone in school buffaloed! They had reached the point where they just did not know what to do with him other than to send him home when he misbehaved. When the teacher asked Brad to do work, he would absolutely refuse to do it. He would not stay in his seat but freely roamed the classroom. Brad would provoke other students and then hit them if they said anything about it. When he was sent to the principal to be disciplined, Brad refused to talk. As we discussed the case, the practicum student kept asking the questions, "Why? What sets him off?" As she continued to ask these questions, it was clear that she was looking for an explanation, she wanted to know the causes. However, even if it were possible to ascertain the specific events that did "set him off," it is likely that there would be little anyone could do about it. The important question then becomes, "What's the use?"

By looking to the purpose for misbehavior, we might begin to understand the child's private logic and his behaviors start to make sense to us. The goal of this child appeared to be control; to have things his way – a kind of "I do what I want whenever I want and no one can stop me" attitude toward life. Three further questions to the practicum student helped confirm the hypothesis:

"Is he cute?" *"Yes."*
"Is he sweet?" *"Yes."*
"Who spoils him?" *"Mother. . . and there is also a grandmother who lives in the home!"*

Thus, we have a child who believes he can get what he wants when he wants it and others should give in to him and let him have his way. When things are going his way, he is pleasant and easy to be around; when things are not to his liking, he does as he pleases and no one can do anything about it. If we approach our intervention from a causal view, Brad should always feel like everything is "going his way" if we wish to have him cooperate and act in a pleasant manner. However, from the perspective of purpose, what "sets him off" is any situation that displeases him. By understanding his goal of power, "I want what I want when I want it," we can begin to help him discover that happiness in life is better achieved by wanting what he gets.

Larry

Larry, 7, has been described as taking advantage of everyone and "knows no boundaries" since he was three. He currently lives with his father and stepmother, although the father doesn't have much involvement with Larry. The stepmother says she is "doing her best" but admits to wanting to give up! She lets Larry do as he pleases because, most of the time, it is just easier than trying to intervene when he misbehaves. Larry has been placed in a classroom for ED (Emotionally Disturbed) students at school and has intimidated the other students as well as the teacher. From a counselor's perspective, the question becomes "What is going on for Larry?" Is he emotionally disturbed or is he disturbing others with his emotions (tantrums, etc.)? Is the behavior caused by some early experience? Or, is he choosing to "do as he pleases"?

Larry's family of origin was quite dysfunctional and he was allowed to pretty much do as he wanted. Most of the time, his parents and others would "buy him off" with things and activities just so he would behave. In many respects, Larry was allowed total freedom to have and do what he wanted and he could "blackmail" others into getting him whatever.

Our choice as his counselor is that we can look at Larry's current problems as being deeply rooted in some unknown early experience that can't be changed or we can look at the attitudes Larry developed as a result of his experiences and help Larry develop more useful attitudes.

Yvette

Parker Elementary School has an open door policy that allows parents to come to lunch with their children whenever they have the time or opportunity. Yvette reportedly cries all the time because she has no one who will come to school to eat lunch with her. If we accept this view of her behavior, then the only way we can offer a resolution would be for someone to come to lunch. However, if we look at behavior as being purposive, then we may want to guess the goal of this behavior—it may be possible that she cries so others will feel sorry for her or so she can manipulate others.

Once her goal is discovered and disclosed, Yvette may begin to change her behavior and having company at lunchtime may not appear to be so important. Yvette has discovered "water power!" When she cries people respond to her and, in some way or another, attempt to get her to "stop the tears." Given this goal of attention, how might the counselor or teacher help her get noticed for more positive behaviors?

As students get older, we may need to take a broader look at some of the basic mistakes an individual might make in terms of how he/she chooses to fit in and find a place in his/her world. These mistaken "life themes" become the goals for behavior and can include any of the following beliefs or combination of beliefs:

"I must be first or on top."
"I am entitled and others must serve me (or give in to me)."

"I must be approved of by others."
"I am morally (or intellectually) right or superior to others."
"I must be the best or most perfect."
"I must be the boss (or in control) of others."
"I am treated unjustly and have a right to retaliate.
"I must be treated as special."
"I am helpless and incapable."
"I am no good and unworthy."
"I am not able to do what I should"
"I am responsible for the behavior (or feelings) of others."
"Others are here to serve me."
"Other people cannot be trusted."
"Others are unfair unless they do what I want."
"Others are ignorant and do not stack up to my level of competence."
"Others should treat me with kid gloves (or cater to my every whim)."
"Others know more than I do and I have to race to catch up."
"Other people are the cause of my misery."
"Others hurt me so I have a right to hurt them back."
"The world is a hostile (unjust) place."
"The world is a dangerous place."
"The world owes me."

The foregoing list is just a sampling of mistaken beliefs held by some adolescents. Counselors must listen to and observe the student's behavior in order to ascertain the beliefs on which they operates.

On Purpose

From an Adlerian perspective of goals or purpose, we are able to begin to more adequately perceive how our students move through the world. It is likely that Jason, for example, believes he can only fit in by acting the rebel. He wants to be a part of the group by behaving in such a way as to be apart

from the group. He is unable to find useful ways of fitting in and so he chooses to be at war with the authority of the school and community. However, there are two specific positive items of interest: Jason's empathy and concern for other youth who are just like him and the statement he made about wanting to do well. Let us think in terms of "on purpose" and help Jason to understand his goals and psychological movement. He is a prime candidate for the exploration of his values and beliefs who could also use a heavy dose of encouragement and invitations (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987).

As much as students like Jason shun adult authority, he is quite likely to be interested in knowing what significant adults have to say (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000). A frank discussion with a caring counselor might allow Jason an opportunity to examine his beliefs about self, others, and how the world should be. The counselor could help Jason through an assessment of his strengths and abilities. "In working with adolescents, either individually or in groups, it is helpful to keep in mind the life-task areas of work, friendship, love, getting along with oneself, search for meaning, and leisure and recreation (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2000, p. 134)." A simple rating of these elements on a scale from 1 to 9, for example, would allow Jason the opportunity to take stock of his satisfaction with life (Milliren, Evans & Newbauer, 2003). With this approach, the counselor is in a position to help Jason re-think what is important to him. It is important that the counselor help Jason develop "the 'psychological muscle' to meet life's challenges (Eckstein, Rasmussen & Wittschen, 1999, p. 46)."

By looking at Jason in terms of his psychological movement rather than as a victim of his circumstances, he can be perceived as being in the process of disconnecting, disrupting, and disenfranchising rather than as stuck in a life space where he is disconnected, disruptive, or disenfranchised. If he is no longer viewed as being in a situation over which he has no control, the outlook for Jason becomes extremely

hopeful. From this alternative perspective, the counselor should work to ascertain what conclusions have been drawn by the student about the self, others and the world. The counselor helps the student understand personal direction achievement. Jason can be encouraged to develop his potential on the useful side of life which is to connect, to find belonging, and to feel enfranchised.

Adlerian psychology offers the opportunity to examine the purpose of the behavior: "What's the use?" What is the payoff?" "What is the goal of the child's behavior?" Once the goal of the behavior has been ascertained; the counselor can begin to understand the private logic of the individual. By our understanding private logic we demonstrate empathy and begin to connect with the child in new and meaningful ways. Then we can begin to purposefully move toward developing opportunities for cooperation and contribution. Jason can connect with other students and contribute to their learning in a positive and powerful way. Brad's, Larry's and Yvette's counselors can help them design ways to gain a sense of belonging and status in their respective classrooms.

Alfred Adler presented a positive approach to understanding the purpose of behavior. It was his belief, where misbehavior was involved, that the purpose of the behavior could be moved from the useless side of life to the useful side of life through goal disclosure, re-education, and encouragement. This view is "basic to invitational counseling and its foundations of the perceptual tradition and self-concept theory….The process of helping a client to examine fictional goals, establish new goals, and choose appropriate alternative behaviors to reach those goals is similar to the inviting sequence" in invitational counseling (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987, p. 113). Through an emphasis on positive contributions and cooperation with others, it is possible for students to increase their feelings of self-respect and community feeling.

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