

able to establish a valuing relationship with Sue and decrease the frequency of her aggressive outbursts. In addition, the amount of time spent in positive interaction increased after the workshop.

Some concerns and questions arose during the workshop. A few people were concerned that we were pushing Sue beyond the limits of her endurance. Initially the valuing was too animated and therefore seemed artificial. The energy required to bring about participation was too great. In addition, the group asked: how meaningful were the activities? Had we eliminated her aggression to the degree hoped for? How would we do Gentle Teaching in the classroom?

The Transition to the Classroom

We had worked with Sue in a setting separate from the classroom, using normal voices and plenty of activity and enthusiasm. Some participants thought that using Gentle Teaching in the classroom would be disruptive and intrusive. However, others argued that past behaviour-management programs, such as taking Sue to time-out, had been disruptive. Despite the doubts, most participants felt that working preventively to establish relationships would, over the long term, lessen the likelihood of disruptions, as opposed to simply reacting and trying to control her outbursts.

Some attention was paid to the setup of the classroom. If classrooms were going to be controlled environments where students sat in rows facing the teacher and were quiet most of the time, then any intervention was going to be a distraction to the class. If classrooms were places where students interacted with each other, then disruption would be less obvious.

Activities during the workshop were geared to Sue's interests and abilities. After the workshop these or similar activities were adapted and used in the daily routine in class. The materials and methods in the training sessions were only a starting point for participation; novel and more complex materials needed to be introduced as soon as meaningful interactions were established. Contrived activities had to be