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TEACH THEM A LESSON!

By Lon Woodbury



It is so sad! The basic dictionary definition of the word "Discipline" is to train, especially training that results in moral or mental improvement. In other words, "Discipline" is basically "Education." Unfortunately, in our society, the definition of "discipline" has morphed into the concept of "punishment." I hear this all the time regarding struggling teens – that when some behavior is objected to, the statement is made that they need some "discipline" and we need to "teach them a lesson." Obviously, what the speaker has in mind is some punishment that will create enough pain that the child will stop doing the behavior that is found objectionable. The thinking seems to be that a child will only stop what is objectionable to stop the pain. What a negative view of human nature – to reject the possibility that people (and adolescents) will want to do the right thing because it is the right thing.

Of course there are times when punishment is necessary, such as with teens who commit violent crimes and the public needs to be protected from their anger and lack of self-control. But, the threat of punishment is not why most people do the right thing. Most children want to do the right thing, but need training (discipline) to learn what the right thing is. For most children, a punishment kind of discipline usually backfires, creating anger, resentment, or withdrawal. At an extreme, a case could be made that many of the juvenile delinquents who commit violent crimes are that way because of being hurt (perhaps punished) in their past. That is not an excuse, (if they do the crime they need to do the time), but some ability to understand the difference between "punishment" and "discipline" on our part could eliminate a lot of future revenge-based anger on the part of some adolescents. This is the danger of extreme behavioral modification systems like Juvenile Boot Camps – they are perceived by the adolescents as punishment and sometimes the wrong lessons are learned.

Julia Steiny, writing in the *Providence Journal* in July, summarized it very well. "Punishment means hurting someone into compliance. Discipline means teaching them community-appropriate social skills."

A lot of negative adolescent behavior is simply that they do not know any better. They have not been properly disciplined (trained). The good quality schools and programs, the ones that consistently rank high in our annual survey of private parent-choice residential schools and programs, know this concept well. They reject punishment oriented approaches and instead focus on building relationships. They realize that building relationships can heal, while punishment can further damage the child. The rest of us could learn from them; doing discipline correctly will get better, longer lasting results than punishment.

To prosper soundly in business, you must satisfy not only your customers, but you must lay yourself out to satisfy also the men who make your product and the men who sell it.

~ Harry Bassett

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WHY BULLYING CONTINUES TO THRIVE

By Malcolm and Laura Gauld
President of Hyde Schools
Bath, ME

What's the hot video on YouTube this week? The latest song by Katy Perry? A Justin Bieber faux pas? Guess again.

It is a video of Congressman Joel Burns of Texas sharing his emotional testimony about bullying at a Fort Worth City Council meeting. The video has garnered more than 1.6 million clicks, his anti-bullying message has gone viral, and it is reported that he has received more than 7,000 messages through e-mail and FaceBook.

"It comes as no surprise that the congressman was a victim of bullying himself, and that he would receive such a substantial response," says Malcolm Gauld, president of Hyde Schools and co-author with his wife Laura of the parenting book "The Biggest Job We'll Ever Have." "Teen bullying has reached epidemic levels in our country, and it is beginning at a younger and younger age."

"Often bullying goes on for years, beginning in elementary school and growing much worse in middle school," says Laura Gauld. "Many parents are concerned that bullying is associated with teen suicide."

At present there is a national focus on bullying, and families are hoping for a solution—one that can include school administrators, the community, students and parents.

The Gaulds have experience in the solution.

"We have found that the way to end bullying is not to address it as an unfortunate outcome, but to prevent it from beginning," says Malcolm. "We have done this by creating and supporting a character culture in our schools and community."

The Hyde Schools are an organization of prep and charter schools in Maine, Connecticut, New York City and Washington DC with 45 years of experience in character education. The result is a respectful school environment with minimal bullying.

Notably, the Hyde School in Washington D.C. is an urban school with the unique absence of metal detectors at the entrance. They are not necessary.

As opposed to typical punitive actions in response to bullying (in environments that tend to encourage bullying) the Gaulds' suggest the creation of a character culture where deeper principles are at the core of relationships and daily life.

"We tend to think that we can tackle bullying by using a defensive approach," says Laura. "If we're serious about diminishing it, we create environments for children that encourage honesty and compassion—THAT has to be the priority. We can't just say we have "intolerance for bullying", we have to live in our environments in a way that doesn't breed it."

Malcolm adds: "Taking an offensive approach means we're serious about raising good, decent human beings with strong character who wouldn't tolerate bullying themselves."

The Gaulds refer to the 10 Priorities or principles, which they have implemented in their schools, to create an environment where bullying won't thrive. The principles include:

Truth Over Harmony-

This priority calls upon us to put the weight of our feet on the side of truth. Find out what is going on in a child's life. Children, tell your parents, teachers and other adults in your life with whom you connect what is happening.

Attitude Over Aptitude-

Our families, schools, and communities can be healthy if we value attitude over aptitude, effort over ability, and

character over talent. Parents and schools focused on only achievements can send the message that successful outcomes are more important than honest efforts. As a result, children often do not share their difficulties for fear of disappointing or giving an unflattering impression of themselves to the adults in their lives.

Humility To Ask For And Receive Help-

While parents and teachers focus on helping children, many avoid asking others for help. Consequently, they raise children who do not ask for help.

"When it comes to bullying, we need to do all these things," says Malcolm. "We need to discuss the matter honestly and freely, value our kids' genuine struggles and trials, and work as a team."

Here are some basic tactics the Gaulds' suggest:

1. Raise the issue. There is no need to wait for bullying to occur. Discuss it at home, in classrooms and groups.

"We tend to have private conversations about bullying," says Laura, "the kind of 'let's talk about this over here, or in the principal's office, conversation. That's one way to fuel the bully. Stop making it a private, personal issue. It's a community issue that needs to be discussed openly, in front of each other, in the classroom, between students, and at home...loudly."

2. Let students know what is expected of them.

"It often isn't spelled out," says Malcolm. "Teachers and parents, tell your students and children exactly what you're expecting of them. I expect you to... act respectfully... treat others well... participate in the positive environment of your home or school... if you don't, you will continue to hear from me."

3. Let it be known there will be zero tolerance for bullying.

4. Focus on the positive.

"We sometimes are so busy focusing on our problems, we can forget to emphasize the positive," says Laura. "Part of countering the bully culture is to show support for all of our children and to tell them when they do something good, right or well."

5. Praise acts of support among peers.

"It is not cool to hurt your peers," says Malcolm. "It is cool to help your friends. Our children and teenagers should hear that message loud and clear."

"An honest and positive school environment where kids look out for each other is possible," say the Gaulds'. "Students can't do it by themselves. We cannot do it for them. But we can form a partnership that gets it done."

For more information on Hyde Schools, Malcolm and Laura Gauld, and "The Biggest Job We'll Ever Have," contact Rose Mulligan at rmulligan@hyde.edu, call 207- 837-9441 or visit www.hyde.edu.

Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.

~ Thomas Jefferson

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WHY SOME STUDENTS HAVE TO GO

(from a therapeutic boarding school)
 By: John A. McKinnon, MD, Co-CEO
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[We reprint here an essay from the series, Letters from Lost Prairie, with permission from the author. Recently it was sent to all parents of current students at the residential boarding school, Montana Academy. We thought readers of The Woodbury Reports might find it useful.-Lon Woodbury.]

Montana Academy recently expelled two students: one sent “back to wilderness” in early November from one team; and a second, at Thanksgiving, from another. The parents of these students know why, of course, but other parents may wonder when they hear this news from a son or daughter. And so, as I inform these particular parents about what happened, within the proper bounds of clinical tact, I will also go beyond those specific decisions to think out loud with you, with all [MA] parents, about this unhappy, taboo topic: a student’s expulsion.

For a start, we hate to expel students, but sometimes have to do it. We always do so reluctantly, and relatively rarely. Because we know we disappoint anguished parents, and because we ourselves feel that we have failed, we probably err on the side of patience and wishful thinking, particularly if the reasons are iffy. Our reluctance is not always a good thing. We sometimes have dallied and wasted a family’s time and tuition. Such delays also affect others. A team is an intimate, interdependent sorority or fraternity, and the ranch and Sky House communities are close.

No man, and no student, is an island. It is never only one student and family who are affected. A treatment impasse, a student’s disruptive misbehavior or dangerous actions, can put others in jeopardy, directly or by contagion, increasing costs and risks for other families.

An expulsion suggests an admissions miscalculation. We worry about these potential debacles during every admission screening. Yet we also know that a surgeon who never has a bad outcome fails to make use of his full capacities. Never to fail is to withhold a help that, often enough, could make all the difference. Nor are we omniscient. Provided histories are imperfect. We do our due diligence, as you all know, prior to making enrollment decisions, but, as someone fatuously remarked, there may still be unknown unknowns.

From time to time, then, parents choose MA and we enroll a son or daughter who later, for various reasons, cannot be allowed to go on. Those reasons start with safety-e.g., risks of suicide; serious self-harm; assault; run-away; contraband drugs or weapons; gross insubordination; psychosis; sexual predation; promiscuity; or anorexia. Because MA’s campuses are unlocked, and supervision relatively relaxed, these are exclusionary criteria at admission and also reasons for expulsion. Moreover, these criteria help define the MA culture for all students who become members. All students and parents soon learn that, if certain lines get crossed, a student cannot stay.

Treatment failure is another reason. Occasionally we must conclude, despite our good intentions and initial calculations, beyond all reasonable patience, that MA’s program is the “wrong” program, because it does not provide what a particular student or family turns out to need. In this situation there is no need for an acute departure, but also no good reason to go on and on, if the likely prospect is only a continued demoralizing failure and no



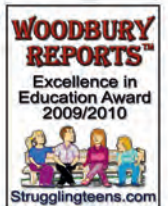
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chance a legitimate graduation. In psychiatry, if not in nation-building, failure is not a valid reason to keep on doing what isn't working.

Expulsion sometimes is a therapeutic intervention, I should add. That is, expulsion may be just the next logical step, even if it feels like a detour, in a protracted, auspicious journey. Over the years we have sent students "to wilderness" with the explicit offer that, if (s)he makes good use of the experience and "processes" this failure constructively, we may allow that student back to finish the program. We offer a hope, never a promise, and of course we may later decide, or parents may well decide, that there may be a better fit elsewhere. Yet over the years some students have been sent away and have come back, chastened and ready to try again, and have successfully completed the program. For some, in short, to be expelled can be au revoir, not good-bye. Two students presently at the ranch have made this detour successfully, long ago, and are now back on track.

Recently, as I say, we sent two students back to wilderness. The occasion for one was a treatment impasse and premeditated run-away that had our worried staff chasing down windy back roads and shouting into the gelid forest. In pitch darkness, cold and scared, he allowed staff to pick him up-and we sent him back to wilderness. The occasion for the other student's departure also was a treatment impasse. For weeks she refused to engage in her own therapy or the program, bullied her vulnerable teammates, subverted therapy by throwing confidential information back at team-mates outside of groups, and (the final straw) made nasty threats to do a team-mate harm in her sleep, and so had to be removed from her bedroom. In both these cases a careful history makes clinical sense of this misbehavior, but those histories properly lie beyond the scope of a letter like this.

This leaves one final issue to discuss: the impact of an

expulsion upon a team and the larger community. I hinted at this issue by suggesting that one student's progress (or lack thereof) may influence the prospects for other students and families. The point is: that a student who resists participation, disrupts class-rooms, holds teachers in contempt, sows division on a team or instills fear in a dorm bedroom, or undermines adult authority, or bullies gentler students, or subverts the trust that makes it safe to speak the truth or talk frankly about grief, pain or trauma, or invites others to collude against adults in sneaky illicit acts-is not just misbehaving, but attacks the very fabric of a culture that makes the Academy's clinical work effective. The adults of the community had better not let such subversive misbehavior go on for long. It is upsetting to fellow students when their polite remonstrance's, even their confrontations, fail to change a fellow student's destructive behavior, but it is profoundly demoralizing and frightening to live in a community where an aggressive student's bullying is permitted, where it is no longer safe to speak honestly, and where the adults seem also to be helpless to put things right. The whole therapeutic enterprise is at stake when this basic trust is under attack-and this constructive culture is what an expulsion, at the limit, is meant to protect.

When I myself arrange for a student to leave under a cloud, I might add, I do it without forewarning and in the early morning, so as to make it safe and to avoid a soap opera. For a student who leaves for most of these reasons has not earned a dignified, emotional send-off. The salutary message to all wants to be clear and grim, without sentimentality.

Young people cannot always say directly what they need, but they corroborate the rightness (or wrongness) of adult

CONTINUED: STUDENTS/ 6

interventions in team and community meetings. On Monday and Tuesday this past week the Student Council helped the Ops team organize a series of community meetings. On Tuesday there was a remarkable pulling together. For an hour students rose to say how much they cared about a community in which they felt respected and enjoyed friendships they had never had before, where they did not need to be defensive or put on an act. Neither of the expelled students came up directly. There was no outcry or protest, no sullen holding back, not even an expression of sadness.

Instead I sensed the meaning of their departures in a community in which it now felt safe enough for expressions of trust and mutual affection. To hear young people speak this way in a crowd of a hundred teenagers and adults is rare and magical. No doubt the magic resulted from difficult months of integrating the new and older members, and no doubt the coming December graduation, and new students in January, will for a time break the spell. But it was a remarkable meeting. A number of students even used what (when I spoke) I called the “L-word”-speaking directly of their love for one another, and for their favorite staff, and for “this place.”

On last Monday, in the company of their team-leader, who was up with me in the night, and again on Wednesday and Friday when I led the team group, myself, in the absence of their much-loved therapist, who was stranded in a snow-bound airport, the girls asked about their missing team-mate. They talked about waking in the night to realize that a team-mate was being sent away. They asked about my decision. I invited them to say frankly whether they objected or thought I had been mistaken. None said so. They were somber and sad about her failures and about her having to go. Some recalled what they liked about her, and confessed that they had been alarmed by the noise and loud

talk that woke them in the night. They wished her well, and, if she got it together, they hoped she might come back.

And then they calmly turned to other matters.

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WILDERNESS THERAPY CAN HELP ASD

By J. Huffine, PhD

Individuals with characteristics associated with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have it harder than the average person. Life is more difficult. The degree of difficulty varies, depending on the degree of Autism, Asperger’s, NLD, etc., but there are certain areas that are problematic. Gillberg (1991) identified the following areas:

1. Social impairment
2. Narrow interest
3. Compulsive need for routine
4. Speech and language peculiarities
5. Non-verbal communication problems
6. Gross-motor skill delays

These problems result from differences in “wiring”, that is, central nervous system differences identified in specific areas of the brain that correspond to social behavior, empathy, communication, and cognition. There is evidence to support the genetic basis for these wiring differences, as well as some indications of pre- and peri-natal factors. ASD does not result from poor parenting as was thought 50 years ago.

Social problems are a circular causal factor in a child’s maladjustment. Children with ASD are a little off, sometimes way off in their understanding of social expectations. Learning social do’s and don’ts does not come intuitively. Some adults with ASD have suggested that the name be changed to “wrong planet” syndrome, like they are from a completely different culture and have a completely different way of perceiving and thinking about the world (Atwood, 2007). They often stand out in a negative light. There are often emotional regulation problems, attentional deficits, and executive functioning deficits. By the time a child reaches adolescence he or she has likely had trouble performing in school, been ostracized and mistreated by peers, and has frequently been misunderstood by adults as a very difficult and rigid child. There may be severe damage to self-esteem, self-efficacy, and hope. Anxiety and depressive disorders are common. And life doesn’t get easier in adolescence. With the increased social, academic, and affective demands placed on one whose foundation is already shaky, it is no wonder there is an increased withdrawal, avoidance of school, and often a retreat into electronics, online gaming, etc. Unfortunately, this avoidance and withdrawal, results in a widening developmental gap between these teens and their peers.

Wilderness therapy can be an ideal intervention for adolescents who have spectrum issues. It is often a first step, but it can help these teens make huge strides. There are numerous reasons for this.

First and foremost, they need to experience successes; successes socially, i.e., fitting in and being accepted by a group of peers, successes in achievement, which involve completing tasks and accomplishing goals, and “emotional successes, being able to effectively manage anxiety, stress, frustration, and self-doubt. Of course, these successes require effort that many adolescents had given up a long time ago. Wilderness therapy was created for



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“treatment resistant” clients, and effort is required if for no other reason than to leave the program. This is an “external motivation” which obviously is not the best in the long run, but in the beginning is often necessary to get someone out of the rut they were in and begin to create some movement.

Once progress begins to occur, there are many necessary aspects of treatment with teenagers who have ASD characteristics. A therapeutic wilderness program has many of these: size, structure, experiential nature, Positive Peer Culture (PPC) model, individualized approach, and, particularly important, specially trained staff, and understanding.

The size (usually nine students to a group) and structure (provided by at least three staff, often four or five to a group when necessary) are crucial. Wilderness therapy incorporates the common treatment modalities including an insight approach (cognitive behavioral), relationship based (humanistic), but it is the experiential component that allows for behavioral shaping, “successive approximation”, a step-by-step method that is so necessary.

This shaping can only be accomplished in a small group with a high staff to student ratio. It is basically “on the job training” for teens who need social and emotional development. The group works together in a wilderness environment, breaking down camp, hiking, setting up camp, cooking meals, making fire with bow drills, setting up shelters, playing games, sharing responsibilities. With literally dozens of challenges a day, tasks to accomplish, interpersonal interactions, all grist for the mill. Feelings come up, issues come out and problems arise. All in an environment in which ongoing help is there to process what is happening, that is, discuss what is happening, how people are feeling, what they are thinking, what they are “choosing” to do,

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how they have typically handled situations like this in the past, how effective their efforts have been, looking at new ways of communicating, new ways of problem solving, all of which results in more positive outcomes. New behaviors are learned and practiced. This process can only be facilitated with a lot of structure. This level of structure can only be accomplished with a small group size and sufficient number of staff to constantly monitor and intervene when opportunities, or learning moments, arise.

These learning opportunities, especially involving peer relations, that normally occur in an unstructured setting like, say, public school, can be much more controlled. Wilderness therapy incorporates a therapeutic model called Positive Peer Culture. This model relies heavily on an individual's desire to fit in, to be accepted by peers. The key word in this model is “positive”. Improving peer relations requires trying out new ways of communicating and relating. It requires being vulnerable and taking emotional risks. This is hard for individuals who have been the target of peer abuse. The PPC model places a high amount of responsibility on students to cultivate a positive culture in which there is mutual respect and “emotional safety” in the group. A safe environment is created in which social and emotional development can occur. Many students have remarked upon leaving the program, that it was the first time in their life that they have felt like they were accepted for who they were.

There are other challenges specific to individuals with ASD. These include sensory integration issues, problems with transitions, difficulties with verbal abstractions, and executive functioning deficits to name a few. It is important to understand that these problem areas are biological in nature and require

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extra patience and individualized approaches. It is important to provide a little more “heads up” about transitions. It helps to be to be more concrete, explaining and even teaching the meaning of metaphors and idioms. It is often necessary to break tasks into smaller units with short-term goals. It is often necessary to provide a significant amount of prompting at first to help students stay focused, to be aware of what they need to be doing, and then fade the external support as they begin to develop some consistency, routine, and self-direction.

Life is harder for individuals who have aspects in their biological makeup that we call Autism Spectrum Disorders. Many important aspects of life that are learned naturally by most people do not come naturally. Learning certain skills that promote flexibility and adaptability are crucial. Wilderness therapy, using nature, a positive community, and some degree of challenge, helps students learn step-by-step. It's like learning to drive with a standard transmission. At first, it requires a lot of thought and attention, but with practice, becomes more automatic.

***About the Author:** Dr. Huffine is a licensed Psychologist and has been practicing psychology for over 20 years, 12 of which have been as a Wilderness Therapist. His Master's Degree and Doctoral degree are in School/Child Clinical Psychology. He worked for several years as a school psychologist, primarily with special education populations and was part of the autism assessment team for the school district. Dr. Huffine is the Executive Director of Second Nature Cascades Therapeutic Wilderness Program in Bend, OR. For more information, visit www.snwp.com, or contact Dr. Huffine at j@2ncascades.com or 541-382-1620.*

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Visit by: Robert “Bob” Kantar, Educational Consultant
November 16-17, 2010

Far too often, I am humbled by a school visit process in which a consultant, responsible for the placement of a struggling youth, must try to hear, observe and evaluate a particular school to quote “recommend it to a client” or even write a review for a wider audience.

Do we know the student we represent well enough to recommend a placement? What is our rationale for selecting this particular placement over others? For me, equally important, and in some ways more challenging, how do I assure myself that the recommendation will meet the needs of the child, assure the safety of the child and do no harm? It is an awesome responsibility, in many respects the same as that of a parent who rightfully is concerned about their decision to send their child to a program. I have no visions of grandeur or crystal ball which will guarantee anyone that my thoughts are objective, accurate and sound. The child will be sent to a place that I may recommend by a decision of the parents or guardians and neither of us will be present day in and day out to see what happens to their child. A school's state of being is a living process which is constantly in flux and can well be affected by such conditions as the Nation's Economy and personnel changes. No one person that I have met has been able to guarantee me all the knowledge I would need of both the child and the school so that I can provide more than my best advice. After almost 46 years as a consultant and literally hundreds of school visits from colleges to boarding schools to treatment centers across the United States, I still find the task of placement a difficult and very personal challenge. There are no automatic solutions, no boiler plate explanations for each child is, thank God, unique.

This report on Valley View Schools was not solicited by school personnel nor was it written arbitrarily, but is a salute to a recent visit, one of about twenty visits over the years and following the placement and outcomes on at least a half a dozen young people. The student I most recently had interviewed was carefully reviewed and many discussions made the parents and me comfortable that a visit was in order. Valley View's refusal to admit the child added measurably to our understanding to the needs of the child and proved to provide some valuable insights for all of us involved.

It was after this interview that I felt I needed to understand better my knowledge of Valley View School, and so the visit transpired.

Valley View School has been operating quietly since the early 70's and generally has ranged from 35 to 56 students over the years. It provides new tennis courts, a fine playing field, a field house, two very well designed and serviceable school classroom buildings, a wonderful theatre dining facility, a climbing wall, appropriate living quarters for each of its students and in all respects presents as a calm, safe, business like school with everything needed to fulfill its mission of helping the middle school or Junior High Male students with ADD/HD and numerous Axis I clinical profiles. It is placed in a rural setting of North Brookfield, Massachusetts, in the middle of the state, not too far from Worcester or Sturbridge, Massachusetts. It has access to the University of Massachusetts Medical School and hospital facilities if needed and students can fish in the pond adjacent to the campus. Canoes are stacked nicely on a trailer in the front parking lot. Prudent, practical, understatement of facilities is not allowed to obscure the heart of this clinically evolved milieu program. The school day provides a seamless opportunity for these children to balance school and play, daily chores, and behavior monitoring as well with their carefully evaluated clinical and developmental needs.

While therapy is provided individually as needed, and while medication is monitored by alert workers and supervised by psychiatric and nursing professionals, the most vital work may be accomplished with the help of every staff member. The highly qualified Chef (who happens to be genuinely French) and his staff produce a range of balanced meals, supervise students in cleanup, and in work opportunities. They understand each child and their level of encouragement is remarkable. They even catered to my coffee addiction feeling I was a big boy and needed to manage that on my own. The Administrative Secretary in the Director's Office knew each student



Photo by Skyler Jepson

THE GATE OF HISTORY SWINGS ON SMALL HINGES, AND SO DO PEOPLE'S LIVES.



OXBOW
ACADEMY

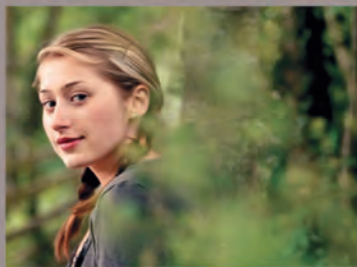
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well when they came in for appointments, advice, or help getting ready for a vacation. She mirrored the strength of this incredible staff. Each student is special and respect is deeply imbedded in the entire school operation.

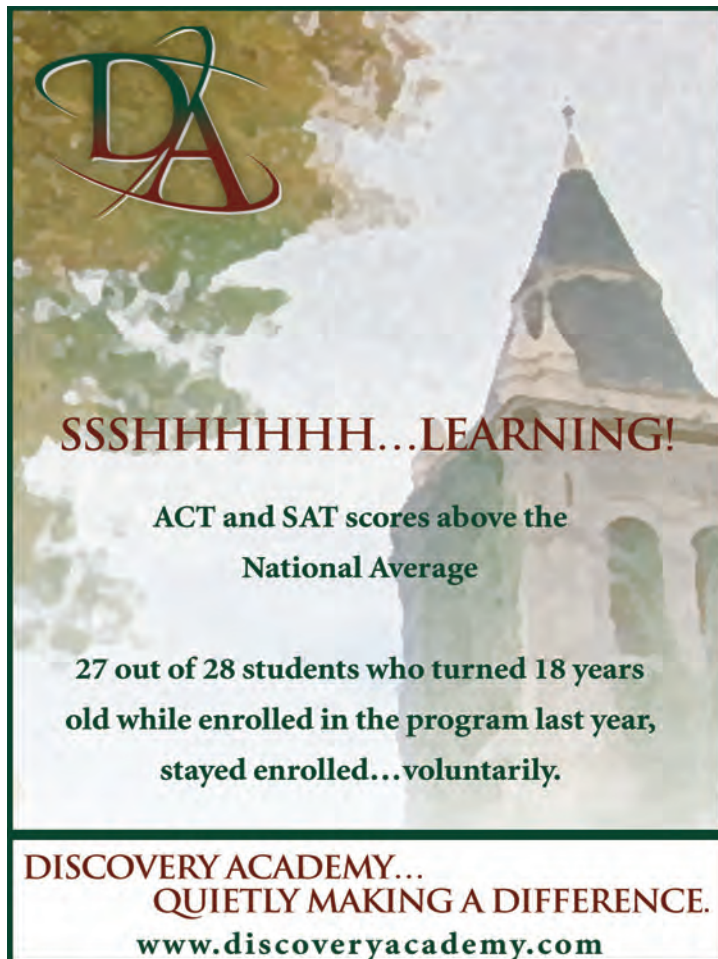
There is a very clear structure in the milieu, morning rituals are appropriate such as keeping your room in order, preparing for breakfast and class before you leave the building. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served family style with boys taking turns serving and waiting on tables so that they each appreciate meal time as an opportunity to learn, eat properly and master table manners. Staff eats with each table and cleanup is managed by the students. There is a rotation system for sitting at tables.

Behind this remarkably warm and friendly community is a barely-visible, behavioral reward system, which unlike so many programs that fail at this, manages to allow students to earn Valley View allowance spending money and merits for good behavior. This system is very carefully monitored and in most respects is under the radar of the average visitor who might not notice its importance to the whole picture.

The school building was very calm, voices were mellow in the classroom and yet the singing from the Spanish teacher's room filtered into a history class so that some of the kids commented they too would like to sing. The academics were quite appropriate for the student body heading toward a future boarding school or even back to their public school. I spent two days visiting classes so that I was able to take notes in English, Mathematics, History, Spanish, Art, Physical education and finally science. I took careful notes and confess that I became involved with the subject matter and went away richer for the experience. The teachers varied in age but virtually all of them like teaching at Valley View, knew their students, and had tenure which I never calculated but was quite impressive. The science teacher had the kind of energy needed to motivate and the supportive skills to make school a new experience from the students past experience. An average of six students to a class gives the teacher an opportunity to hone in the critical material of each period and to relate it well to each student. It is refreshing to see an academic program which helps the student reach up to the academic level they will need for high school and later college rather than pander to the lowest common denominator or watered down material.

Gravity was discussed with various objects being dropped and the students presenting their theories of what was happening. Spanish was taught with good cheer and singing. Mathematics was individualized on well planned computer programs with two, not one, teachers for 6 students asking questions as they struggled with the problems of their particular math needs. The English teacher was excellent with the choice of a wonderful short story which gradually drew the students into a very animated discussion and left me wishing I could attend the next class to see what happened. The art instructor fills his walls with student projects which are quite eclectic. Drawing, painting, ceramics, wood models, masks, you name it they have an opportunity to create with lots of skilled instruction from their teacher. As a former Principal of a public high school of 1300 students and a therapeutic boarding school of 56 students, I have had to visit many classrooms and evaluate many teachers. I was struck by the strength of this faculty and their ability to create a businesslike school which maintained high standards and a curriculum monitored by the local school district and very consistent with state standards.

As I had breakfast, lunch and dinner with the students, I interacted with them at meals and in class and before bedtime and after a night's sleep. They were wonderful people to speak with, to laugh with and to listen to. They spoke openly about their ups and downs but it was clear in the end that they were content at Valley View School.



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27 out of 28 students who turned 18 years old while enrolled in the program last year, stayed enrolled...voluntarily.

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Many had traveled to the exotic list of places where Valley View students travel over the years, Russia, South Africa, Vietnam, Mongolia, China, the Galapagos Islands and I am sure I have left out some.

This school has it all: Strong experienced staff, nice facilities, experienced personnel at all levels who have been at the school for many years; lots of small, incremental, additions and changes over the years, but a commitment to quality, responsibility, in a way that makes them predictable, reliable and a good example of the best in the world of therapeutic boarding schools.

The growth of this school is in quality, not quantity, and it has been able to demonstrate prudent management for all these years. As they age, staffing is carefully reinforced by new people who are just as deeply committed to the students as anyone in the past. The management team is a seasoned group of leaders developed in preparation for the future and in preserving a tradition of excellence.

About the Author: Robert "Bob" Kantar, is an independent Educational Consultant from Vermont. This material was constructed by the Author and represents his views. It was unsolicited. All Bob's reports reflect his training, clinical supervision, and education. For more information about this report or to contact Bob, email rkantar@aol.com or call 603-496-4240.

There are hundreds of languages in the world, but a smile speaks all of them.
 ~ Unknown



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doug.czyz@boystown.org



NEW PERSPECTIVES...

[New Perspectives schools and programs are those new to Woodbury Reports, Inc., and are presented to expand your knowledge, with the disclaimer that we know little more about them at this time than what appears here. Inclusion in Places for Struggling Teens™, of course, does not imply any endorsement by Woodbury Reports, Inc. -Lon]

OAK GROVE SCHOOL - Ojai, CA

Joy Maguire-Parsons, Admissions Director
 805-646-8236

info@oakgroveschool.com - www.oakgroveschool.com

Founded in 1975 by Jiddu Krishnamurti, Oak Grove School is a co-ed day and boarding school for students ages 18 months to 19 years of age. Students that attend are self-motivated and self-disciplined, energetic and have a passion for learning or need a second chance in their academics. Students that have previously attended a wilderness program or Therapeutic boarding school are also considered.

The Oak Grove School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS). They are also members of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), Western Boarding Schools Association (WBSA) and the Association of Boarding Schools (TABS). The Head of School is Meredy Benson Rice who has been with the Oak Grove School for 13 years, Joy Maguire Parsons is the Director of Admissions and Financial Aid and has been with the school for 9 years and Posy Smith is the Assistant Head of School and has been with the Oak Grove School for over 23 years.

This progressive school offers students a college prep academic curriculum in addition to hands on, project based interests including visual and performing arts, fitness and sports that include soccer, volleyball, tennis, basketball and track and field; and outdoor education and travel. Each fall, Oak Grove students and teachers participate in a week long camping trip and each spring students take part in a week long backpacking trip, with both trips containing a community service project. Senior students participate in a month long transformation trip to one of the seven sister schools in India and participate in cultural events, sightseeing, daily living and work on volunteer projects (community service overseas).

All students on campus eat a vegetarian diet, with produce grown in Oak Grove's organic garden, no meat is allowed on campus, but students may eat meat off campus. Weekend trips and activities for boarding school students include trips to local beaches, sightseeing, shopping and leisure time on campus.

[This information came from the Oak Grove School website.]



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A parent recently wrote to us" ...Your approach gives the kids back something they lost along the way; self-esteem and inner strength. Which in turn gives them the power to make appropriate decisions for themselves on life's journey. I might add it gives the parents something back they had lost...their children."

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We utilize a 12 step philosophy in conjunction with sophisticated clinical practice to provide a foundation for sustained recovery.



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PEAK EXPERIENCE TRAINING - Ashland, OR - 541-951-4329

Sandy Newes, Clinical Psychologist
info@peakexperiencetraining.com - www.peakexperiencetraining.com

Peak Experience Training is a hands-on training program for staff of therapeutic wilderness programs. The training lasts three-and-a-half days and is designed specifically for wilderness program staff members who come into direct contact with youth in these programs on a regular basis.

Sandy Newes, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and specializes in wilderness and adventure therapy. She is well known for her expertise in these types of therapy and gives trainings and consultations to wilderness programs in many locations. Katie Asmus, M.A., specializes in body-centered psychotherapy. She is currently a faculty member of Naropa University's MA Wilderness Therapy program and has a private practice. Scott Bandoroff, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist with nearly 25 years of wilderness therapy experience.

This hands-on training program is aimed to give wilderness staff skills to help improve their experiences when working with youth in wilderness programs and increase effectiveness of the interactions. Some of the skills worked on during the training include better communication with clinical staff, deeper understanding of behavioral triggers, de-escalating emotional crises, and employing better flexibility in the application of their skills and knowledge. Participants participate and learn about adventure based metaphor development, ceremony, creative arts therapies, and primitive skills.

The program meets many of the competency requirements for the National Wilderness Counselor Certification.

[This information came from the website and brochure.]

EXTENDED INSIGHTS...

BOUNDARIES

By Margaret Oaks, MS, LMFT

Look around you and you'll find evidences of boundaries in every area of the world. From a class syllabus to a job description, from acceptable behavior in a funeral to acceptable behavior at a rock concert, boundaries are everywhere. Some are black-and-white, others quite nebulous and difficult to pin down. One thing is clear...respect for boundaries are integral to personal effectiveness and success throughout the lifespan. Even boundaries we don't like or don't think are valid must be respected, whether they be established laws or simple social mores. Logan River Academy utilizes the Boundary Model to empower kids and give them tools to function effectively in the real world.

It's hard enough to navigate life's boundaries as an adult with a lifetime of experience and hindsight. Imagine trying to make your way through life's maze without the benefit of experience, and with the added challenges of behavioral, emotional, thinking, or learning difficulties. Our kids come to us with lives literally derailed by emotional instability, trauma, ineffective behaviors, family difficulties, substance use, and social struggles. Add to any one of these the inordinate obstacle presented by process-oriented thinking, and boundaries grow very fuzzy. Because we rarely encounter an outcome-oriented kid in our line of work, let's look at process orientation and how it shortcuts the ability to recognize and respect boundaries in greater detail.

Process-oriented kids think in black-and-white, all-or-nothing, win-or-lose terms. They are mostly blind to boundaries and they consider only the present. They struggle to recognize what consequences their current behavior will bring, and find satisfaction only in engaging an adult in an argument in the moment. From an efficiency standpoint, this behavior is highly effective in the short-term. It serves to deflect attention away from the youth's misdeeds and often distracts the adult with a flood of anger, guilt, and defensiveness.

What adult who interacts even casually with teens doesn't recognize this pattern? Consider two scenarios commonly found in the wake of an inappropriate deed which violates boundaries in one way or another: You approach the youth with the intention of using your hard-won wisdom and logic to take advantage of a glorious teaching opportunity, certain that the kid will mend his/her ways with a newfound respect for boundaries. Before you

know it, you are sucked in to a vortex of verbal negativity, feeling stymied and wondering whether you had any right to try to talk sense to the kid at all. After all, the teen has pointed out accurate instances of your inconsistency and hypocrisy. In fact, maybe you should be apologizing to him!

Another common scenario includes physical or emotional acting out on the part of the teen, which serves to distract from the real issues and makes you think twice before approaching her again. Isn't it easier to let it slide just this once? Pick your battles? Meanwhile, effective boundaries are left in the dust as the focus turns to the battle of wills between you and the adolescent. Unfortunately, the long-term efficacy of either scenario is null, and only results in the increased inability to recognize and respect existing boundaries.

At Logan River Academy, consequences for disrespecting boundaries are designed to teach kids to be outcome oriented. Inappropriate behavior is confronted by dorm counselors when the student is asked to "take a chair", which allows the student to calm down and think things through. The behavior is processed, skills being learned in therapy are discussed, and alternative choices are explored. The way the behavior affected those around the student is validated and appropriate consequences are identified. These may include writing a letter of apology, completing a chore for the offended, teaching a dorm group on effective social skills, etc. If the student follows through with the agreed consequence, there is a 24 hour probation period during which privileges are restricted. If the student refuses to process or doesn't complete the consequence, she opts to spend a couple of hours in a supervised study hall environment. This may seem easier at first glance, but this second option has a 5 day probation period attached. Five days with few privileges affords quite a bit of time for quiet contemplation and reconsidering decisions. The probation period prompts kids into choosing the learning experience rather than removing themselves from greater society. And the learning experience instills the ability to recognize and respect boundaries.

Another way Logan River Academy prepares kids to function effectively in the real world is by taking many of life's boundaries and boiling them down to concrete objectives and outcomes. Some examples include: doing what is asked by dorm counselors, working hard on treatment goals, following the rules of LRA, showing positive peer relations, keeping a positive attitude, completing schoolwork on time, obeying classroom rules, staying

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN: BOUNDARIES

PINE GROVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Hattiesburg, MS

Dr. Diane Walker, Medical Director

888-574-4673 - www.pinegrovetreatment.com

Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Service founded in 1984, is an extension of Forrest General Hospital treating adults, teens and children struggling with psychiatric and addiction issues and specializes in eating disorders and addiction treatment with both inpatient and outpatient and residential services. The inpatient unit for teens and children is designed to treat those struggling with behavior and academic issues, family issues, substance abuse, abuse that includes: physical, emotional and sexual; and psychiatric disorders that include depression, anxiety, PTSD, psychosis and bi-polar disorders.

Diane Walker, MD is the Medical Director and Psychiatrist/Addictionologist at Pine Grove and Leonora Petty, MD specializes in Child and Adolescent services. Samantha, the most popular team member is certified in drug detection and canvases all Pine Grove areas with her handler, Derrick Guinn. Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Service is a member of the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems and accredited by the Joint Commission of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO).

The 24 bed, inpatient program for children and teens offers treatment services that include a psychiatric evaluation and medical assessment, therapy that includes group, family and substance abuse groups, and an on campus school for continuation of studies and individualized discharge planning.

[This information came from the website.]

BOUNDARIES

on task during class, participating in dorm/program activities, participating in group therapy, following dress and grooming guidelines, laundry, hygiene, chores, work opportunities, earning money for activities, etc.

Students receive written feedback in each of these areas from their teachers, dorm counselors and therapists, and then this feedback becomes a topic of discussion in individual and family therapy. Because all students present their own backgrounds and challenges, treatment is different in each case. However, because society requires respect for its boundaries, students are encouraged to learn their issues and acquire skills to “run interference” for themselves in order to be effective in life.

As student’s progress in therapy and this is reflected in their behavior, boundaries gradually grow less concrete. Students begin to generalize their understanding of how to navigate boundaries that are more oblique and less defined. By program completion, students understand ethical pillars such as Respect, Caring, Citizenship, Trustworthiness, Fairness, and Responsibility. They generalize these in a principle-based manner rather than worrying about obeying individual rules.

Every choice we make in life, no matter how small, either increases or decreases our freedom. The Boundary Model at Logan River Academy trains kids to identify and respect the world’s boundaries and watch how life opens up before them.

About The Author: Margaret Oaks, MS, LMFT is the Director of Admissions and Marketing at Logan River Academy, LLC in Logan, Utah. Logan River Academy serves co-ed students ages 13-17 who are having difficulties in home, community and school due to behavioral and emotional problems. For more information, contact Margaret at 435-755-8400, moak@loganriver.com, or visit www.loganriver.com.

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Dean of Admissions,

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Accredited by The Joint Commission

SEEN N HEARD...

ANNIVERSARIES:

Sober Living by the Sea is celebrating 25 years as a leader in the treatment of addiction and dual disorders.

NEWS:

The Woodbury Reports Inc. website, StrugglingTeens.com, has been online since 1995. It has grown to have an international following as well as tens of thousands of visitors a month from throughout the United States.

A Ridge Creek School Basketball player was recognized for his achievements by the commissioner of our conference. He was selected by coaches to the All State team.

Cherokee Creek Boys School discussed the restructuring of the school to alleviate any questions that were left unanswered about their recent transformations.

The Aspiro Group has finalized plans for another powerful Momentum summer program in Peru.

Discovery Academy completed its busiest January in the school's eight year history with more than 17 students enrolling in the therapeutic boarding school in just one month.

Squaw Valley Academy opened a new classroom/dormitory. Pasadena Villa's Smoky Mountain Lodge uses equine assisted learning (EAGALA).

New Beginnings At Seven D's Ranch made many changes and upgrades to their physical plant.

Grove School Announces will actively expand its facilities in order to serve more students and broaden its clinical, academic, and extracurricular offerings in 2011.

The National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs (NATSAP) has announced a partnership with Saving Teens In Crisis Collaborative (STICC)

Hope Renewals will offers a One-Day Parent Workshop, June 3, 2011, 8:00am - 5:00pm in Salt Lake City, UT, to provide an opportunity for parents to connect with other parents who struggle with struggling teens.

The Arc is banding together with its 700+ network of chapters across the nation to mark Developmental Disability (DD) Awareness Month in March.

The Oliverian School Board received a donation from The Townsends to honor the memory of their son.

Cooper Learning Center in Voorhees, NJ, submitted an article entitled Relationship Key to Emotional Fuel, by Paul J. Krupin.

Chad Hepler, alum of Wilderness Treatment Center, wrote a book, "Intervention: Anything But My Own Skin", about his treatment at Wilderness Treatment Center.

Kent Sherman submitted clarification on his request for character letters of reference. The request came about as an enhancement to his level of credibility in the eyes of other professionals and lawmakers, in the event that those people and agencies give an opportunity to hear from people in our network. He has no plans to leave Gatehouse Academy.

The Rose, an addiction treatment center for women, was featured on Dr. Phil.

Elan School in Portland Spring Maine, has just launched a new online radio website designed to provide parents of trouble teens with solutions from industry experts.

The Drug Rehab Sober College and the Southern California Neuropsychological group, headed by Dr. Michelle Conover, recently began a collaborative effort to help better treat young adults suffering from drug and alcohol addiction.

The West Ridge Academy basketball team showed true sportsmanship recently as they lost games played in the public eye and broadcast among media outlets.

The Boys Initiative is an unparalleled national campaign to address alarming negative trends in recent years pertaining to boys' educational achievement and social adjustment. Recently, the Initiative announced a groundbreaking national campaign.

The National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs (NATSAP), a national resource for programs and professionals who assist young people beleaguered by emotional and behavioral difficulties, held its annual national conference in Tucson, AZ in January.

In the wake of the tragedy in Tucson and the appearance of accused Jared Lee Loughner in federal court, Robert Q. Kreider, President and CEO of Devereux, the nation's largest nonprofit behavioral healthcare organization, is available to speak on the impact that early social and emotional support can have on creating mentally healthy adults.

According to pre- and post-testing by ASEBA and Youth Self Report, students at Eckerd Academy's two campuses in Brooksville, FL and Suches, GA are achieving increases in mental health and social skills improvements that are about double what is typically expected in similar behavioral health programs.

Blueprint Education partnered with Cottonwood Residential Treatment Center to increase student academics.

A new evidence report by ECRI Institute comparing the effectiveness of various treatments for bulimia nervosa indicates that cognitive behavioral therapy is more effective than antidepressant medications and supportive therapies in improving eating disorder symptoms.

CasaBlanca Academy offers the only program in the State of Florida solely based on the Developmental, Individual Difference, Relationship-based model; know as DIR®/Floortime™. The approach is unique because it targets social, emotional, and intellectual capacities rather than routine skills and isolated behaviors.

Carlton Williams, Athletic Director at The Family Foundation School in Hancock, NY, announced that the 2010-2011 Boys Basketball Team ranked 14th in the state in Class D competition by the New York State Sportswriters Association, an authoritative voice of interscholastic athletics in the region. The ranking is a first for the Falcons who, led by coach Larry Patrisso, are currently 11-3 for the season.

In Memory of Frank Ware

Frank Holmes Ware, 64, longtime advocate for people with mental illness, died of natural causes in his Rockford home, February 13, 2011. Ware died on the 22nd anniversary of his service to Janet Wattles Center, where he had been president and CEO since February 13, 1989.

PEOPLE:

Talisman Programs announced Jonathan Bassett as the Program Director for Talisman Transitions.

Keith Bishop joined Ridge Creek School as Program Administrator. In addition, Dr. Anne Edens is the new Director of Counseling.

Life Designs, Inc. introduced Clay Garrett, who will join the team as Program Director.

Michael Porter is the newest clinical team member at Aspen Achievement Academy. He is a licensed substance abuse counselor in conjunction with running the recovery group.

Paul Hickling joined Academy of Swift River as Executive Director.

Mike Baldassare and Scott Gilbert, two experienced professionals in the field of Addiction Treatment, have accepted positions offered by Dave Johnson, Owner and CEO of the San Cristobal Academy.

Mark P. Vogel, PhD, Director of Counseling at The Family Foundation School announced the addition of Karen Morris, MA, NCPsyA, LP, to the school's counseling department.

Mountain Springs Preparatory Academy is excited to announce the expansion of our administrative team at the school, adding Greg Allred as an additional Dean of Students.

Executive Director David LaPere announced the appointments of Carla Short as Therapist and Kayla Thompkins as a Primary Counselor.

Discovery Ranch announced Jennifer Charrier as the new Admissions Coordinator.

Cherokee Creek Boys School is pleased to announce that Denise Savage, MA, has accepted the position of Academic Dean at Cherokee Creek Boys School.

Jaywalker Lodge named Mark McGuinness its new Director of Marketing and New Ventures.

The Pinnacle Schools welcomed Lisa Lapidus as Family Services Coordinator at the Elk River Treatment Program.

Dr. Ed Callahan, LMFT joined Adirondack Leadership Expeditions as the Executive Director of the program.

Brendan O'Neil joined the clinical staff at Valley View School.

Malissa Morrell is a nationally registered art therapist and a licensed marriage and family therapist who moved to Utah from Los Angeles and took a position at La Europa.

Pasadena Villa welcomed Kris Houser, MD to the Smoky Mountain Lodge as the Medical Director.

After fifteen years at The Deck House School and seven as Headmaster, Tom Blackford decided to step aside and make room for new leadership. Dr. Melinda Browne has been chosen for the position of Head of School effective June 5, 2011.

SUWS Of The Carolinas announced changes in their clinical department. Trysh Huntington, MA, LMFT has joined us as the lead clinician for our Seasons program. Kelly Moore, LPC will be moving into the role of lead clinician for our adolescent girl's group.

Greenbrier Academy is proud to introduce Jessica Barzee and Professor Theodore Anglas, who both joined Greenbrier in December 2010.

UPCOMING:

March

12th Annual EAGALA Conference, March 9 - 12, Layton, UT
Summit For Clinical Excellence, March 10 - 12, Chicago, IL
17th Las Vegas Conference on Counseling Skills, March 10 - 12, Las Vegas, NV

2011 ASCD Annual Conference Critical Transformations, March 26 - 28, San Francisco, CA

24th Annual Children's Mental Health Research and Policy Conference, March 20 - 23, Tampa, FL

IAEDP Symposium 2011, March 3 - 6, Phoenix, AZ

SBSA 2011 Annual Conference, March 16 - 18, Asheville, NC

AEE Heartland Region Conference, March 18-20, Martinsville, IN

AEE Mid-Atlantic Region Conference, March 18-20, Radford, VA

2011 National CASA Conference, March 19 - 22, Chicago, IL

AEE Northwest Region Conference, March 25-27, Salem, OR

9th National Conference on Adolescents and Young Adults, March 31 - April 2, Las Vegas, NV

April

AEE Northeast Conference, April 8-10, Beckett, MA

AEE Southeast Conference, April 8-10, Chattanooga, TN

Once schooling was yoked to the new industrial economy of the early twentieth century, it advanced largely through the logic of rewards and punishments--those who helped to enlarge or maintain the system were paid off, those who opposed it were punished.

Once the thing matured, its nominal leadership became irrelevant, expendable, interchangeable, human masks over a complex social mechanism, out of control since the end of WWII. The programmed assumptions of this mechanism are that people cannot be trusted, that they are dangerous (and dangerously stupid) with few exceptions.

School is a hospital where young people are prepared for lives of endless tutelage, "lifelong learning" in the current Newspeak.

~ John Taylor Gatto



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