Making the Shift

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"There is a law that man should love his neighbor as himself. In a few hundred years it should be as natural to mankind as breathing or the upright gait; but if he does not learn it, he must perish."

"The science of the mind can only have for its proper goal the understanding of human nature by every human being, and through its use, brings peace to every human soul."

- Alfred Adler -

"When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills."

- Chinese Proverb -

ADLERIAN THEORY

In contrast to other models of understanding human beings, the psychology of Alfred Adler (1870-1937) does not focus primarily on "pathology," but of understanding how the unique individual strives toward goals of belonging, significance, security and success, based on privately held beliefs (purposive behavior).

When we feel **connected, respected, encouraged, empowered and safe**, our sense of belonging, our beliefs and behavior, are more likely to fall on the "socially useful" side of life, leading to personal and social harmony = gemeinschaftsgefuehl. This enhances development of the "Characteristics and Life Skills" of Positive Discipline's* "Two Lists."

If we feel **disconnected, disrespected, discouraged, disempowered or unsafe**, the sense of belonging and significance is thwarted, and our beliefs and behavior are more likely to fall on the "socially useless" side of life. There is personal and social disharmony, demonstrated through compensatory striving toward self-protection and self-elevation. This leads to the "Challenges" of Positive Discipline's "Two Lists."

Positive Discipline provides concepts and tools for socially useful belonging which include encouragement toward the development of relationships of mutual respect = gemeinschaftsgefuehl.

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**Positive Discipline by Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott. www.positivediscipline.com*

Autobiography in Five Chapters

I

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I fall in.
I am lost...
I am hopeless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

II

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I'm in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

III

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in...it's a habit
My eyes are open; I know where I am;
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

IV

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

V

I walk down another street.

Poem from: *There's a Hole in My Sidewalk: The Romance of Self-Discovery*
by Portia Nelson

The Rose

Some say love, it is a river, that drowns the tender reed.
Some say love, it is a razor, that leaves your soul to bleed.
Some say love, it is a hunger, an endless aching need.
I say love, it is a flower, and you, its only seed.

It's the heart afraid of breaking, that never learns to dance.
It's the dream afraid of waking, that never takes the chance.
It's the one who won't be taken, who cannot seem to give,
And the soul afraid of dying, that never learns to live.

When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long,
And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong.
Just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snows
Lies the seed, that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.

Song and Lyrics by Amanda McBroom

Positive Discipline 4 R's of Recovery from Mistakes:

1. **RECOGNIZE** *that you made a mistake. Be comfortable with yourself by realizing there is something to learn from it.*

2. **RESPONSIBILITY** *Take responsibility for your part without blame or shame. Be specific: "I yelled instead of telling you my feelings."*

3. **RECONCILE** *Children are so forgiving when you say: "I'm sorry for ____."*

4. **RESOLVE** *When both are ready, brainstorm for an agreement that works for both of you for the future, or to fix any damage.*

Kind and Firm Problem Solving

(With inspiration from Dina Emser, CPDLT)

1. Does the problem lie with you, with the other person, or both?
2. If it lies with you, take responsibility and fix the mistake (first).
3. If it lies with the other person, state calmly what you noticed.
4. Come from curiosity: "Hmm. What is/was going on for you about____?"
5. Goal: How can we make this work? Brainstorm solutions.
6. Determine where you stand. Decide what you can/will do and communicate this.
7. To the other, "Here's what it will take from you. Are you willing? What do you need?"
8. Conclude with appreciation, and follow through. Re-evaluate as needed.

DO YOU GROW GOOD CORN?

James Bender, in his book "How to Talk Well" (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1994) relates the story of a farmer who grew award-winning corn.

Each year he entered his corn in the state fair where it won a blue ribbon. One year a newspaper reporter interviewed him and learned something interesting about how he grew it. The reporter discovered that the farmer shared his seed corn with his neighbors. "How can you afford to share your best seed corn with your neighbors when they are entering corn in competition with yours each year?" the reporter asked.

"Why, sir," said the farmer, "didn't you know? The wind picks up pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it from field to field. If my neighbors grow inferior corn, cross-pollination will steadily degrade the quality of my corn. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors grow good corn." He is very much aware of the connectedness of life. His corn cannot improve unless his neighbor's corn also improves.

So it is in other dimensions. Those who choose to be at peace must help their neighbors to be at peace. Those who choose to live well must help others to live well, for the value of a life is measured by the lives it touches. And those who choose to be happy must help others to find happiness, for the welfare of each is bound up with the welfare of all.

The lesson for each of us is this: if we are to grow good corn, we must help our neighbors grow good corn. Call it power of collectivity...Call it a principle of success. Call it a law of life. The fact is, none of us truly wins, until we all win.