

Transformative Discipline®

Parenting to Develop Responsible Children

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**TRANSFORMATIVE
DISCIPLINE®**

**Parenting to Develop
Responsible Children**

Jolene Schillinger -Erikson Ph.D.

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TRANSFORMATIVE DISCIPLINE®
is a parenting guide based on
Restorative Justice Principles

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TRANSFORMATIVE DISCIPLINE®
is a pro-active process that:

- **Focuses on building the family community**
- **Identifies the character values of the family**
- **Views discipline problems as character building opportunities**
- **Identifies and addresses any underlying social structure problems**
- **Celebrates the people and the process in a Transformative Gathering**

TRANSFORMATIVE DISCIPLINE®

OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

1. Introduction

2. Foundations

My Journey from Math Professor to Author

3. Interesting Statistics

4. 'How To' Strategies

Defining Character

Building Families

The Five Levels of Intervention

5. The Teenage Brain

6. Zehr's Restorative Justice Signposts

7. Conclusion

Math to Transformative Discipline®

My Journey

- Mathematics of Fairness
 - Fair Division Algorithm
- Mediation/Negotiation
- Restorative Justice
- Transformative Discipline®

Restorative Justice

My students

- Why they 'do the right thing'
- Working to change the C J system.
- Conversion Paper.

Transformative Discipline® Audience

- Parents & Grandparents
- Caregivers for children of all ages.
- Coaches & Youth leaders

Survey of 272,400 US Teens

USA Today Poll - Fall 2007

- 17% of teens say they almost never talk to their parents for more than 15 minutes.
- 33% feel that parents do not value their opinions.
- 18% said they could not remember a positive or encouraging statement.
- 37% have a friend who has considered or tried suicide.
- 70% have experienced depression.

Survey of 272,400 US Teens

USA Today Poll - Fall 2007

- 33% converse daily with parents.
- 37% said they had heard something encouraging or supportive about themselves today.
- 30% of teens want to have a better relationship with their families.
- 70% list parents as having 'a lot of influence' on their lives. This is three times any other group such as peers, teachers or coaches.

Family's Character Values

(From the Character Counts Project)

- **Trustworthiness:** Honesty, reliability, courage, loyalty.
- **Respect:** Golden Rule, tolerant, considerate, no physical harm, peaceful.
- **Responsibility:** To/for self, think before acting, self-disciplined, accountable for actions.

Family's Character Values

(From the Character Counts Project)

- **Fairness:** Play by the rules, take turns, share, don't take advantage, don't blame others.
- **Caring:** Be kind, compassionate, express gratitude, forgive others, help people in need.
- **Citizenship:** Participation, co-operation, be a good neighbor, obey the law, protect the environment.

Ideas for Building the Family Community

- Spend daily time with children and parents or parental surrogates engaged in sharing thoughts, concerns, hopes, and dreams.
- Voice love and pride of the child and family.
- Reinforce belief in the success of the child.
- Consistent treatment among children and in response to events.

Ideas continued

- Read stories to/with children that reflect your values.
- Have discussions about values and their importance.
- Model behavior across generations.
- Create and observe family rituals.
- Plan special events such as holidays or travel.

Ideas continued

- Participate and support cultural, athletic, and educational events of interest to the child.
- Develop family projects that help others.
- Discuss problem behavior in the news.
- Welcome and value people after mistakes are addressed.

Ideas continued

- Find time each day to devote exclusively to your family.
- Place cell phones, iPhones, pagers, and BlackBerries these as well as computers and television, in a 'no access' zone to facilitate engaging with each other.

Focus on the identification and strengthening of child's positive self image

Exercise #1: For each child, list five of his/her strengths, five challenges, and your assessment of his/her self-image.

Strengths:

-
-
-
-

Challenges:

-
-
-
-

Self-image:

Goals of my Work & Book

1. Focus family discipline on character building.
2. Improve family sense of community and communication.
3. Reduce the number of students in juvenile discipline programs.
4. Educate the public about Restorative Justice.
Currently only people working with or in the system are knowledgeable.

The Five levels of Transformative Discipline®

- 1. Notification**
- 2. Dialog**
- 3. Intercession**
- 4. Conference**
- 5. Expanded Conference**

Notification - Level 1

Notification is a quick “stop, look, and listen” chat, where children need to be told that something is a problem and why.

- Examples:
- Toddler interrupting business phone calls for a work at home mom.
 - Sharing toys.

Dialog - Level 2

Dialog is a talk about a more serious event and/or harm to another person.

- Examples:
- Sibling frustration with game playing.
 - Oversleeping creating difficulties for a parent.

Intercession - Level 3

Intercession is a discussion with multiple children, using a more structured format.

- Examples:
- Stealing
 - Discussion of a suicide/bullying event that happened to a schoolmate.

Conference - Level 4

Conference is a family dialog about a behavior of concern using a script.

Example: - Sibling bullying

Expanded Conference - Level 5

Expanded Conference is about behavior that could lead to health problems or criminal proceedings.

It should include some members of the extended family and/or respected professionals who could substantiate the projected outcomes, if the behavior is not changed.

Example: -Alcohol and drug use by a teenager.

Concepts Common to Each level

The process for each level includes a description for:

- Seating arrangement
- Suggested dialog based on Restorative Justice script
- Suggested format including snack
- Commitment to a Transformative Gathering after problem is addressed

The Goals of Transformative Discipline® **for *all* Levels**

- Supporting the victim and repairing the harm he/she has experienced.
- Understanding by the offender that his/her misbehavior has caused harm to a victim.
- Helping the offender take responsibility to repair the harm and to change how they behave in the future.
- Repairing the harm to the victim by the offender.

The Goals of Transformative Discipline® **for *all* Levels**

- Developing consequential thinking by the offender.
- Addressing social structure problems within the family.
- Strengthening of the sense of belonging and approval of victim and offender by community.
- To ensure the growth of strong positive self-images of both victim and offender.

The Teenage Brain

The Science of Brain Development

- **Functional MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) maps regions of the brain to determine their development and reactions to external stimuli.**
- **At six years old, the brain has reached 95% of its size.**
- **The gray matter or thinking area, of the brain continues to grow until puberty (11 -13), when growth stops and pruning begins.**
- **Pruning minimizes or eliminates unused connections or wiring in the grey matter and strengthens the engaged areas by creating more connections.**
- **This process continues until maturity at 20 – 25.**

The Teenage Brain

The Science of Brain Development

- **Children over the age of 11, normally begin to think about the feelings and experiences of others in different situations (Adler).**
- **During the early teen years, the limbic/emotional area is larger and stronger than the prefrontal cortex.**
- **As the brain develops towards maturity at 20 to 25 years, the consequence-based judgment area becomes stronger.**

The Teenage Brain

How the science is reflected in teenager behavior

- **Adolescents over the age of 15 usually possess the ability to make well-reasoned decisions.**
- **However, judgments based on impulse are often a result of outside influences.**
- **In many situations, the areas of the brain controlled by emotion are more likely to be engaged than those dominated by reasoning.**
- **As the brain matures in the twenties, judgment also matures. The area of the brain that controls consequence based thinking, planning, and metacognition becomes stronger.**

TRANSFORMATIVE DISCIPLINE[®] and Teenagers

How can we use these scientific findings to help our children prosper during the teenage years?

Some Suggestions

Find opportunities for both individual and group achievement that build skills and community, such as:

- Athletics
- The Arts
- Academics

Parents need to encourage activities that promote:

- Strong positive self-image
- Character
- Community building
- Consequential thinking
- Sequential reasoning
- Planning
- Execution
- Analysis
- Synthesis

The Teenage Brain

Years of Challenge and Frustration

- Discussions about the brain and how it functions may help everyone to understand why teens react the way they do.
- By discussing potential hazards with teenagers, they can protect themselves and learn to avoid them.
- Parents need to be involved in their teenager's life.

Transformative Discipline[®]

Differences from Restorative Justice

- Focus on building the family as community.
- Identification of family's character values.
- Focus on the identification and strengthening of child's positive self image.
- Identification of social structure problems by participants.
- Addition of a Transformative Gathering after completion of agreement by offender to celebrate the accomplishments.

Key Differences from Restorative Justice

#1 - In Transformative Discipline[®], we explicitly examine the underlying social structures of the family for any contribution to the behavior problem.

Questions are asked of each participant about the underlying social structure.

If a problem is identified, the parent(s) must take responsibility to address the problem.

Key Differences from Restorative Justice

#2 - Transformative Discipline[®] adds a Transformative Gathering after the completion of the agreement.

This meeting consists of all the participants in the original decision making conference.

It is an opportunity to recognize and support the victim, the successful achievement of the agreement by the offender, and to reinforce their importance to the family.

Howard Zehr's **Restorative Justice Signposts**

- Focus on the harms of wrongdoing more than the rules that have been broken.
- Show equal concern and commitment to victims and offenders, involving both in the process of justice.
- Work toward the restoration of victims, empowering them and responding to their needs as they see them.
- Support offenders while encouraging them to understand, accept and carry out their obligations.

Howard Zehr's **Restorative Justice Signposts**

- Recognize that while obligations may be difficult for offenders, they should not be intended as harms and they must be achievable.
- Provide opportunities for dialogue, direct or indirect, between victims and offenders as appropriate.
- Involve and empower the affected community through the justice process, and increase its capacity to recognize and respond to community bases of crime.

Howard Zehr's **Restorative Justice Signposts**

- Encourage collaboration and reintegration rather than coercion and isolation.
- Give attention to the unintended consequences of our actions and programs.
- Show respect to all parties including victims, offenders and justice colleagues.

Transformative Discipline[®] is Effective because it is:

- Proactive - not reactive.
- Timely and efficient.
- Supportive of all participants.
- Promotes responsible and caring behavior.
- A positive method to address concerns.
- A means of building stronger feelings of self-worth and belonging.

Next Steps

- **A parallel book for teachers and administrators**
- **Parent, teacher and parent/teacher workshops**

Concluding Remarks

My Goals:

- to bring the knowledge and research of the Restorative Justice Community to the average family.
- to transfer this knowledge into an easy-to-understand process for families.
- to build strong family communities who can, using the Transformative Discipline[®] model, guide their children to become responsible people.



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Responses from Readers:

“The focus is on a loving, caring, supportive structure for the child versus blame. This is the way all families should be.”

“I liked the style. It seemed like a conversation about raising children, more than a lecture.”

“If only families would follow this guide, the children would be happier. If the school did as well, it would be a great reinforcement for each other.”

Transformative Discipline®: Parenting to Develop Responsible Children is available through
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