

Volume XLI-1
No. %

October 2021

International Journal of
Choice Theory® and
Reality Therapy



The International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy: An On-Line Journal

Vol. XLI-1, No. 1, Fall, 2021

Table of Contents

	Listings of authors and titles and more	2
	Intro to the IJCTRT editor and the editorial board	3
Thomas S. Parish	William Glasser, M.D., and his impact on education ...	4
Sharon Carder-Jackson	Connect and involve—a book review	13
Bette Blance	An example of Lead Management—New Zealand style	18
Robert Wubbolding	A research base for Choice Theory and Reality Therapy	21
Kent B. Provost & Patricia A. Robey	Maintaining Effective Leadership during Times of Environmental Stress	24
Conor Barker	Infusing Choice Theory into ... Behavioral assessment	35
Cynthia P. Mason Lori Mason-Bennett	Enhancing academic achievement in P-12 schools using as Choice Theory framework	48
Robert Wubbolding	Locus of control and self-evaluation	59
Patricia Robey	Finding Mental Freedom within Pandemic Constraints: An Interview with Kim Olver	66

“CT/RT Brief Bio” request: **NEWS YOU CAN USE . . .**

In Spring, 2024, our summary of all CT/RT Brief Bios will be published in that issue of the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*. Many members and friends of the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory (GIFCT) have already provided their CT/RT Brief Bios for listing in either the Fall 2020 or the Spring 2021 issues of IJCTRT. Instructions for preparing your “brief bio” can be found in the Spring 2021 issue. Furthermore, your listings will be circulated around the world, and it be done at no charge to you! So please send your “brief bio” to me at your earliest convenience. If you don’t, just imagine that “invisible really is miserable,” so please send yours to me at parishts@gmail.com

Access to Other Issues of the Journal:

Have you been looking for past issues of the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*? Well, you need look no more. Just go to our website at www.wglasserinternational.org and click journals. There you will find all of our past issues, from 2010 until now, all available to you at no cost. What’s best is that they are all available at this location 24-7, and you’ll also find much more available to you there, too, all at a click of a finger.

Introduction to the Journal Editors and to the Editorial Board:

IJCTRT Editor:

The Editor of the Journal is **Dr. Thomas S. Parish**, who is an Emeritus Professor at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. He earned his Ph.D. in human development and developmental psychology at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. He's CTRT certified and has authored or co-authored more than 300 articles that have appeared in more than 30 professional refereed journals. Dr. Parish and his wife recently served as consultants for LDS Family Services in Independence, Missouri, and they currently co-own Parish Mental Health of Topeka, Kansas. **Any correspondence, including questions and/or manuscript submissions should be sent to parishts@gmail.com** You may also contact him by phone at: (785) 845-2044, (785) 861-7261, or (785) 862-1379. In addition, a website is currently available. It can be accessed by going to: www.wglasserinternational.org Notably, the Journal is no longer password protected on the WGI website, so now anyone can gain access to it, anytime, 24/7!

IJCTRT Editorial Board Members:

Editor: Thomas S. Parish, Ph.D., CTRTC, please see listing printed above.

Other Members of the Board:

Janet M. Fain Morgan, Ed.D., is currently a Director of the William Glasser International Board and the Research Coordinator for William Glasser International. She is also a faculty member of the WGI lectures on Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. In addition, Dr. Morgan has an extensive background in counseling and teaching with specialty areas in Military Issues, Grief and Loss, Marriage Counseling, and Domestic Violence Predator Treatment.

Emerson Capps, Ed.D., Professor Emeritus at Midwest State University, plus serves as a Faculty Member of WGI-US.

Joycelyn G. Parish, Ph.D., CTRTC, is a licensed clinical psychotherapist. She earned her Ph.D. from Kansas State University and is a board-certified clinician and certified reality therapist.

Patricia Robey, Ed.D., Full professor at Governor's State University, Licensed Professional Counselor, and Senior Faculty Member of WGI-US and William Glasser International.

Brandi Roth, Ph.D., Licensed Private Practice Professional Psychologist in Beverly Hills, CA.

Jean Seville Suffield, Ph.D., Senior Faculty, William Glasser International, as well as President and Owner of Choice-Makers@ located in Longueil, Quebec, CANADA.

Robert E. Wubbolding, Ed.D., Professor Emeritus at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and is the Director of the Center for Reality Therapy also in Cincinnati, Ohio.

IJCTRT Technical Advisor:

Denise Daub, Web Administrator and Finance Manager for William Glasser International.

WILLIAM GLASSER, M.D., AND HIS IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND BEYOND

Thomas S. Parish, Ph.D., CTRTC, Editor, International Journal of Choice Theory & Reality Therapy

William Glasser, M.D. (1925-2013). As a young man in the 1940's, he initially thought that he would go into chemical engineering, but soon discovered that psychology was where his heart was. After his medical training at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland, Ohio, he relocated to Los Angeles, California, in order to complete his psychiatric training from 1954-1957 at UCLA, while also working at the Veterans Hospital in West Los Angeles. In 1961, he became Board Certified in psychiatry. He maintained a private practice in West Los Angeles from 1957 to 1986, while creating the William Glasser Institute, which really allowed him to focus on developing ideas and innovations throughout the rest of his life. Dr. Glasser also authored or co-authored more than twenty published self-help books, including such favorites as *Reality Therapy* in 1965, which was a best-seller and drew much national attention. Interestingly, Dr. Glasser published these books, in a myriad of psychologically-related areas, while managing to retain the exclusive copyright to most, if not all, of them.

In 1981, Dr. Larry Litwak offered to publish the journal entitled the *Journal of Reality Therapy*, which became the *International Journal of Reality Therapy* in 1997. Dr. Glasser ably assisted Dr. Litwak, though Dr. Litwak remained at the helm of both journals consecutively as their owner and editor from 1981 until 2009. Then in 2010, I became the editor of this journal, and its owner, too, but its name was changed at the request of Dr. Glasser to the *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*. This journal is now circulated on-line, with a worldwide readership. Importantly, anyone can receive this journal free, just by going to the following website: www.wglasserinternational.org/journals

At this website the reader will find a treasure trove of information about Dr. Glasser, find out about the incredible way that he promoted his ideas to all of his students, followers, and friends so that they, too, might also teach the entire world about Choice Theory, as well as Reality Therapy, Lead Management and Quality Schools, which are all ideas that Dr. Glasser originally created and has freely shared with us, as well as with the rest of the world.

You might wonder, why do Dr. Glasser's ideas command so much attention?

Well, his ideas have been well-distributed across multiple areas in psychology, including counseling, marriage counseling, psychotherapy, social psychology, and sociology, as well as in many educational fields, too, like special education, behavior management, etc. While Dr. Glasser did not himself publish much research in any of these areas, he has authored many books about these topics. For instance,

In counseling and psychotherapy	. . . Read <i>Reality Therapy</i> and <i>Warning: Psychiatry Can be Hazardous to Your Mental Health</i>
In marriage counseling	. . . Read <i>Getting Together and Staying Together</i> and <i>Staying Together or What is This Thing Called Love?</i>
In motivational psychology	. . . Read <i>Positive Addiction</i>
In business management	. . . Read <i>The Choice Theory Manager</i>
In fostering positive control of self	. . . Read <i>Choice Theory</i> and the <i>Language of Choice Theory</i>

Dr. Glasser has also become revered and respected by many in the area of education, and here's why this is so:

Dr. Glasser has authored numerous books on this subject (see partial list below). If you'd like to read any of them, you can do so by going to your local library or by picking up one at any bookstore.

Schools Without Failure
The Quality School
Choice Theory in the Classroom

Every Student Can Succeed
Quality School Teacher

Next, Dr. Glasser has trained and certified individuals in this area through the Choice Theory/Reality Therapy/Lead Management/Quality Schools training process. Several thousand people have already completed this process, including me.

Finally, Members of the William Glasser International Organization have done a substantial amount of research worldwide and have also conducted studies that have demonstrated how educators can become more effective in their classrooms and how their students have also become more effective learners.

Table 1 cites thirty-two authors and titles of educational-oriented articles that were published in the ***International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*** from 2010-2021. These articles demonstrate how Choice Theory (CT), Reality Therapy (RT), Lead Management (LM), and Quality School (QS) Practices/Procedures have been successfully employed in classrooms (and beyond) all around the world, and all within the last decade or so.

Table 2 cites sixty-four authors and titles of educational-oriented articles that were published in the ***International Journal of Reality Therapy*** (from 1997-2009), as well as the authors and titles of four additional articles that were published in the ***International Journal of Choice Theory*** (from 2006-2008). These articles have all demonstrated that their various CT, RT, LM, and QS practices/procedures have greatly improved classroom teaching, as well as students' learning efforts too.

Table 3 cites ninety-six authors and titles of educational-oriented articles that were published in the ***Journal of Reality Therapy*** (from 1981-1997), which also demonstrated innovative CT/RT/LM/QS practices/procedures that have been found to improve classroom teaching methods, and/or help students to learn more effectively.

Notably, all of the articles cited in **Table 1** (plus all the other papers published in this journal since 2010) are available to you, the reader, right now by typing in our website at www.wglasserinternational.org and then clicking on "journals." Then, all you'll need to do is select which articles you wish to download, all without any cost to you.

Regarding **Tables 2 and 3**, that process is a little bit more challenging, but you can once again get your downloads—free—of any article from these three (3) journals by going to:

<http://msutexas.edu/academics/education/journalreality/index.php>

Final remarks

The sources listed above are great sources to help you to educate yourself, and/or your associates, or anyone else who is seeking to improve his/her/their own teaching endeavors and/or his/her/their students' various learning efforts. Notably, however, we have also assembled a number of master teachers who are available to assist you, and/or others, to improve your various teaching and/or learning endeavors. For more information regarding how we could help you . . .

Just e-mail me at: parishts@gmail.com, or call/text me at (785) 845-2044.

Best wishes in all of your endeavors, particularly when it comes to doing research and/or teaching.

TABLE 1*

Selected School-Related Articles That Employed Choice Theory (CT), Reality Therapy (RT), Lead Management (LM) and/or Quality School (QS) Practices/Procedures, All of Which Appeared in *The International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, 2010 -- 2021

<u>Author(s)</u>	<u>Title of Article</u>	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Pp.</u>
T. Parish	Ways to improve our teaching efforts.	29 (2)	50-51
T. Parish/J. Parish	An examination of "connectedness trends" across primary grade levels.	30 (1)	69-72
J. Beebe/P. Robey	Impact of bullying on adolescents: Application of CT/RT	30 (2)	33-44
P. Robey, et al.	Applications of CT/RT with challenging youth.	31 (1)	84-89
D. Hinton, et al.	Choosing success in the classroom by building better relationships.	31 (1)	90-96
M. Watson, et al.	Achievement in second graders with CT and RT.	31 (1)	109-127
B. Faulkner, et al.	Empowering low-income developmental math students.	31 (1)	128-142
O. Kianipour, et al.	Examining the effectiveness of CT on teachers and students.	31 (2)	55-63
B. Olutayo	Using Glasser's Choice Theory to foster creativity.	32 (1)	20-26
C. McClung, et al.	A Glasser Quality School leads to choosing excellence.	32 (2)	54-64
C. Sori/P. Robey	Transitions in children using CT, RT, and sandplay.	33 (1)	63-77
E. Davis, et al.	Combining RT with play therapy in working with children.	33 (1)	78-86
T. Parish	Ways to examine the attitudes and behaviors of youth.	33 (2)	12-18
N. Mateo, et al.	Enhancing self-efficacy of college students with CT.	33 (2)	78-85
D. Nantz	Exposing the roots of external control psychology.	34 (2)	24-34
T. Christiansen, et al.	Using learning community practices with Quality Schools.	35 (1)	7-13
C. Mason	Using RT-trained group counselors to decrease the acad. achievement gap.	35 (2)	14-24
T. Parish/J. Parish	A comparison of external and internal control psychology.	35 (2)	10-13
N. Ismail/A. Jusoh	Truancy among students in a high school in Malaysia.	36 (1)	104-121
M. VanVleet	The Corning, New York quality community project	36 (2)	88-90
P. Mott	Self-evaluation dialogue in early childhood education.	37 (1)	27-31
R. Stones, et al.	Applying CT and LM in school cohesion and performance.	37 (1)	32-40
K. Bertolini	Using ACT method and WDEP process to aid teaching.	37 (1)	41-46
C. Mason/L. Dye	Using RT to enhance academic achievement & career decision-making goals.	37 (1)	47-56
L. Roche	The power of Choice for toddlers.	37 (2)	50-55
J. Nj/A. Jegathesan	Malaysian Chinese youth: Learning CT/RT is fun and impactful.	38 (2)	43-57
C. Mason, et al.	Using CT to reduce the academic achievement gap.	39 (1)	20-26
E. Davis, et al.	Counselors working with children using RT art therapy.	40 (1)	13-22
T. Larijani, et al.	Using CT to enhance nursing students' happiness.	40 (1)	27-31
A. Can/P. Roby	Using RT and CT in counseling to promote student success.	40 (2)	37-45
S. Carder-Jackson	How to connect with students and involve them in learning.	41 (1)	in press
C. Mason, et al.	Enhancing academic achievement in P-12 schools using Choice Theory	41 (1)	in press

*These articles are all readily available to the reader at the following website: www.wglasserinternational.org/journals

TABLE 2
Summary of Education-Related Articles Published Using Choice Theory (CT), Reality Therapy (RT),
Lead Management (LM), and/or Quality School (QS) Practices/Procedures to Affect Various Changes
and/or Provide Insights in Diverse Ways

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF REALITY THERAPY

F1997	D. Basse/J. Slauter	CT and college students with learning disabilities ...	V.17 (#1), pp. 11-16.
F1997	R. Edens	The application of CT/RT to sports psychology	V.17 (#1), pp. 34-36.
F1997	M. Beck	Managing the unmanageable student with CT/RT.	V.17 (#1), pp. 37-41.
F1997	J. Basic, et al.	School in the students' quality world.	V.17 (#1), pp. 46-49.
Sp1998	J. Dryden	Student voice in the process of creating Quality Schools.	V.17 (#2), pp. 34-38.
Sp1998	A. Peterson, et al.	Taiwanese university students meet basic needs ...	V.17 (#2), pp. 27-29.
Sp1999	L. Palmatier	Blueprint for a Quality living community ...	V.18 (#2), pp. 3-12.
Sp1999	T. Parish	Higher education and the QS: A great match.	V.18 (#2), pp. 13-14.
Sp1999	M. Beck	Quality teacher training: Walking the talk.	V.18 (#2), pp. 15-17.
Sp1999	S. Wigle	Incorporating QS principles and practices into univ.	V.18 (#2), pp. 18-21.
Sp1999	R. Wubbolding	RT goes to college: A syllabus for teaching CT and RT.	V.18 (#2), pp. 22-25.
Sp1999	J. Basic	Students and self-evaluation.	V.18 (#2), pp. 28-31.
Sp1999	M. Watson	A goal-oriented self-evaluation model for faculty ...	V.18 (#2), pp. 35-41.
Sp1999	M. Fetter	Using basic needs to solve relation. problems on campus.	V.18 (#2), pp. 42-46.
Sp2000	A. Pease/J. Law	CT/RT/LM and student conduct: A five-year study.	V.19 (#2), pp. 10-14.
Sp2000	L. LaFontaine	A QS program in Jerusalem.	V.19 (#2), pp. 29-34.
Sp2000	E. Collabolletta, et al.	Motivating students to use/not abuse, their assets.	V.19 (#2), pp. 38-45.
Sp2000	C. Samida	CT and the identification of emotionally impaired students	V.19 (@2), Pp. 56-58.
F2000	Wigle/Sandoval	Changes/Challenges in a school of education using CT ...	V.20 (#1), pp. 4-9.
F2000	S. Parson	Creating a QT atmosphere in a post-secondary ... class.	V.20 (#1), pp. 27-29.
F2000	N. Davies	Psychology, CT and the classroom.	V.20 (#1), pp. 47-50.
F2000	K. Rebane	Promoting resiliency in education through CT and QS.	V.20 (#1), pp. 51-55.
F2000	W. Howatt	Coaching Choice: Using RT and CT.	V.20 (#1), pp. 56-59.
Sp2001	R. Ahrens	Quality – Who cares about it in school?	V.20 (#2), pp. 31-32.
Sp2001	B. Richardson, et al.	Five ... challenges for using RT with challenging students.	V.20 (#2), pp. 35-39.
F2001	J. Maley, et al.	Building an ecology for non-violence in schools.	V.21 (#1), pp. 22-26
F2001.	S. Parson	Using QS principles to provide excellence in adult educ.	V.21 (#1), pp. 27-32.
Sp2002	B. Lojk	What is most demanding in teaching, managing ...	V.22 (#2), pp. 19-22.
F2002	T. Carey	A preliminary investigation into self-reports of students ...	V.22 (#1), pp. 4-9.
F2002	K. Kim	The effect of RT on responsibility for grade school stud.	V.22 (#1), pp. 30-33.
F2002	K. Hammond	Serving student teachers with CT/RT.	V.22 (#1), pp. 46-48.
Sp2003	T. Carey	Improving the success of anti-bullying programs ...	V.22 (#2), pp. 16-23.
Sp2003	T. Bratter	Surviving suicide: Challenges for Gifted, Angry, ...	V.22 (#2), pp. 38-43.
Sp2003	M. Banks	Classroom management preparation in Texas colleges ...	V.22 (#2), pp. 48-51.
Sp2003	S. Rose	Relationship between Glasser's QS and brain-based theory.	V.22 (#2), pp. 52-56.

F2003	J. Malley, et al.	Student perceptions of their schools ...	V.23 (#1), pp. 4-11.
F2003	L. Litwack	Ethics for educators.	V.23 (#1), pp. 34-37.
F2003	M. Schlacter, et al.	A school fable.	V.23 (#1), p. 47.
Sp2004	R. Wubbolding, et al.	The art of teaching CT, RT, and LM.	V.23 (#2). pp. 41-43.
F2004	B. Blance	I taught them, but did they learn?	V.24 (#1), pp. 19-20.
F2004	A. Rehak	Problems with youth.	V.24 (#1), pp. 21-22.
F2004	M. Marshall, et al.	Using a discipline system to promote learning.	V.24 (#1), pp. 23-33.
F2004	T. Donaho	Maintenance for the CT/RT student in the classroom.	V.24 (#1), pp. 38-42.
F2004	Z. Rapport	Positive addiction: Self-evaluation and teaching tools.	V.24 (#1), pp. 43-44.
F2004	R. Hoglund	Part I: Choosing to fail?	V.24 (#1), p. 47.
F2004	R. Hoglund	Part II: External evaluation can be helpful.	V.24 (#1), p. 48.
F2005	B. Loyd	Effects of RT/CT principles on ... students' perceptions.	V.25 (#1), pp. 5-9.
F2005	T. Parish	The us of "educational moments" in teaching ... students.	V.25 (#1), pp. 22-23.
F2005	T. Parish/J. Parish	Comparing students' classroom behaviors ...	V.25 (#1), pp. 24-25.
Sp2006	K. Klug	Applying CT and RT to coaching athletes.	V.25 (#2), pp. 36-39.
F2006	J. Kim	The effect of a bullying prevention program ...	V.26 (#1), pp. 4-8.
F2006	T. Bratter	When psychotherapy becomes a war for adolescents	V.26 (#1), pp. 9-13.
F2006	T. Bratter, et al.	Candor, confidentiality, and admissions of ... students.	V.26 (#1), pp. 29-34.
Sp2007	R. Mottern	Working with forensic clients in Quality Education.	V.26 (#2), pp. 33-35.
Sp2007	T. Parish	Some tips regarding how to motivate athletes.	V.26 (#2), pp. 39-40.
F2007	T. Bratter	The myth of ADHD and the scandal of Ritalin ...	V.27 (#1), pp. 4-13.
F2007	D. Gossen	Student behavior.	V.27 (#1), pp. 22-25.
F2008	Shillingford, et al.	CT with students whose parents are incarcerated ...	V.28 (#1), pp. 41-44.
Sp2009	D. Clifton	Cultivating self-awareness and self-management in child.	V.28 (#2), pp. 28-30.
F2009	C. Mason/J.Duba	Using RT in schools: Its potential impact ...	V.29 (#1) pp. 5-12.
F2009	M.Bell/S.Habel	Coaching for a vision for leadership.	V.29 (#1), pp. 18-23.
F2009	P.Pound	CT and psychoeducation for parents of ... adoles. athletes.	V.29 (#1), pp. 34-37.
F2009	P. Hillis	Suggesting the QW through student performance outcomes.	V.29 (#1), pp38-43.
F2009	Parish/Rehbein	Teaching strategies and student orientation	V.29 (#1), pp. 63-64.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHOICE THEORY

Su2006	J. C. Erwin	Boosting students' intrinsic motivation: A CT approach.	V.1 (#1), pp. 11-13.
Su2006	A. Harman	A Quality H.S. fosters students who are Lead Managers.	V.1 (#1), pp. 14-15.
Su2006	B. Roth	The art of teaching through role-play.	V.1 (#1), p, 21
F2007-Sp2008	B. Sullo	Three (New) R's to inspire Quality in your classroom.	V.2 (#1), pp. 14-15.

TABLE 3
Summary of Education-Related Articles Using Choice Theory (CT), Reality Therapy (RT), Lead Management (LM), and/or Quality Schools (QS) Practices/Procedures That Were Published in the Journal of Reality Therapy (1981-1996)

F1981	R. Dalbech D. Evans J. Young	RT in school groups. Schools without failure in action. Discipline with a purpose.	V.1 (#1)	pp.14-15. pp. 16-21. pp. 22-25.
Sp1983	V. Ziegler	RT in continuing education: Cohesive culmination.	V.2 (#2)	pp. 7-9.
Sp1984	C. Sloweik, et al.	Effects of RT on locus of control and self-concepts in ... adolescents.	V.3 (#2)	pp. 1-9.
F1985	E. Johnson Z. Reisberg-Pollack	RT in the elementary/junior high school. Practical application of CoT in the classroom.	V.5 (#1)	pp. 16-18. pp. 19-21.
F1986	P. Yarish C. Heuchert, et al.	RT and the locus of control of juvenile offenders. Increasing appropriate behaviors in students using RT.	V.5 (#1)	pp. 3-10. pp. 11-20.
Sp1987	P. Yellin E. Chance R. Wubbolding R. Hoglund	Special friends: Play therapy based on CoT. RT in the public schools: Some strategies for a successful program. A model for group activities related to teaching RT. Role play evaluation in a practicum setting.	V.6 (#2)	pp. 2-9. pp. 19-22. pp. 23-28. pp. 29-31.
F1987	E. Chance C. Floyd E. Chance et al. M. Franklin	CoT: The missing correlate in the effective school movement. Using the car analogy to teach CoT to gifted elem. school children. Applying CoT in the gifted and talented classroom. RT: Biographical references in education.	V.7 (#1)	pp. 10-11. pp. 16-22. pp. 36-41. pp. 42-46.
Sp1988	T. Parish	Why RT works	V.7 (#2)	pp. 31-32.
F1988	T. Bratter T. Parish	The need for radical educational reform. Helping teachers to take more effective control.	V.8 (#1)	pp. 33-40. pp. 41-43.
Sp1989	T. Bratter, et al. S. Hart-Hester, et al. M. Dempster, et al. R. Sullo A. MacDonald T. Parish	Mentoring: Extending the psychotherapeutic relationship w. adoles. The effects of teaching to elementary students to change behaviors. Managing students in elementary schools ... Using CoT in early childhood education. Me and my shadow: Teaching CoT in elementary school. Taking effective control via Telenet.	V.8 (#2)	pp. 3-12. pp. 13-18. pp. 19-23. pp. 24-29. pp. 30-32. pp. 36-38.
F1989	T. Parish E. Chance et al. R. Hoglund, et al. T. Bratter, et al.	Ways to take effective control and enhance self-concepts. Class meetings: Fulfilling students' pathway to power. Starting the great schools network at Kyrene De La Paloma The John Dewey Academy: Teaching moral thinking in a drug-free envir.	V.9 (#1)	pp. 34-38. pp. 43-48. pp. 49-51. pp. 52-60.
Sp1990	J. Fried	Reality and self-control: Applying RT to students ... in higher ed.	V. 9 (#2)	pp.60-64.
F1990	R. Renna L. Coates S. Schaeffer, et al. T. Parish	Using CoT in the education of students with various physical prob. Using RT as a school administrator with unhappy faculty members. The use of Glasser learning team to evaluate John Dewey Academy. Resolving conflicts in life.	V.10 (#1)	pp. 34-39. pp. 40-41. pp. 46-53. pp. 71-72.

Sp1991	B. Greene, et al. S. Wigle, et al. J. McFadden	Quality education and at-risk students. Conceptual organization model: A step towards QS. Behavior lotto or how train the teacher not to pick on you.	V.10 (#2) pp.3-11. pp. 12-15. pp. 16-19.
F1991	R. Renna T. Parish R. Hoglund L. Barth T. Parish	The use of CoT and RT with "out-of-control" students. The influence of attitudes and beliefs in the classroom ... The cost of educational mediocrity and failure. ...On incorporating Glasser's CoT in the college classroom. Helping students take more effective control ...	V.11 (#1) pp. 3-13. pp.14-20. pp. 21-23. pp. 24-30. pp. 38-39.
Sp1992	R. Williamson P. Cobb, et al. Parish T. Parish, T., et al.	Using group RT to raise self-esteem of adolescent girls. A Quality Day . . . the insight class. Ways of assessing and enhancing student motivation. Enhancing congruence between our real and ideal selves.	V.11 (#2) pp. 3-11. pp. 12-16. pp. 27-36. pp. 37-40.
F1992	E. Hart L. Siebrands S. Brown T. Parish, et al.	Using RT for exercise initiation. Integrating developmental education with CoT ... CoT psychology and self-directed learning in adult education. Teacher effectiveness ratings and student homework ratings ...	V.12 (#1} pp. 24-31. pp. 45-48. pp. 49-51. pp. 52-54.
Sp1993	T. Bratter B. Bratter, et al. S. Wigle, et al. P. Comiskey T. Parish, et al. M. Franklin	Hechinger's fateful choices: Healthy youth for the 21 st century. John Dewey Academy: A residential Quality School ... Portfolio assessment: A quality tool for quality schools. Using RT group training with at-risk high school freshmen. Validating a method to identify "at-risk" students. Eighty-two RT doctoral dissertations written between 1970-1990.	V.13 (#2) pp. 35-41. pp. 42-53. pp. 54-58. pp. 59-64. pp. 65-69. pp. 76-82.
F1993	A. Peterson, et al. R. Edens S. Baskett	Qualitative analysis of the CHOICE drug education program ... Strategies for quality physical education: A Glasser approach ... Quality Schools and the New Jersey writing project in Texas.	V.13 (#1) pp. 40-45. pp. 46-52. pp. 53-54.
Sp1994	S. Wigle, et al. R. Edens, et al. J. McCluskey, et al. T. Parish, et al. T. Parish, et al.	New pictures for teacher preparation programs and Quality Schools Reducing disruptive behaviors in physical education: A pilot study. QS theories applied to our classrooms: Making a difference. Correlates of favorite and least favorite professors' actions. Assessing professors' and students' perceived behaviors toward each other.	V.13 (#2) pp. 35-39. pp. 40-44. pp. 45-46. pp. 47-48. pp. 48-50.
F1994	P. Barbieri L. LaFontaine E. Acevedo M. Chung M. Watson, et al. T. Parish	Using mediation and RT/CT to help students with cognitive challenges Quality schools for gay and lesbian youth: Lifting a cloak of silence. RT: A framework for implementing psychological skills for athletes. Can RT help juvenile delinquents in Hong Kong? The application of CT for exercise initiation and compliance. Professors and students: Are their views in accord with one another?	V14 (#1) pp. 18-25. pp. 26-28. pp. 29-36. pp. 66-78. pp. 79-85. pp. 92-99.
Sp1995	T. Parish, et al. S. Wigle, et al. P. Bray A. Schatz S. Easterbrooks S. Martin, et al.	The failure of support systems in American schools: Are we "at-risk?" Meaning, relevance, and purpose. Motivational factors in QS. The evaluation of a Quality School: A case study of leadership. School reform and restructuring through 'the use of QS philosophy. Improving pragmatic college outcomes a college student with hearing loss. RT and role attainment scaling: A program for freshmen student athletes	V.14 (#2). pp. 3-8. pp. 9-14. pp. 15-22. pp.23-28. pp. 37-44. pp. 45-54

F1995	J. Stehno	Classroom consulting with RT.	V.15 (#1) pp. 81-86.
Sp1996	K. Saviola T. Parish J. Berry	Glasser's quality schoolwork and Dewey's qualitative thought. Who are "at-risk," and what can we do about it? Fifteen RT/CT doctoral dissertations 1990-1995.	V.15 (#2) pp. 78-81. pp. 90-99. pp. 100-101.
F1996	K. Napan J. Dryden S. Wigle L. Palmatier J. Stevens C. Beck	Teaching & learning as a challenge and a new need-fulfilling activity. The QS curriculum: Insights into defining, measuring, and more in school. Transforming a teacher education course: Transforming to QS's. Commentary on Wigle. William Glasser's "Quality School" philosophy in a college speech class. Use of the Native American medicine wheel to facilitate student activities.	V.16 (#1) pp. 39-46. pp. 47-57. pp. 58-62. p. 63. pp. 64-74. pp. 106-110.
Sp1997	R. Renna L. Murphy E. Bowers C. Manges, et al. K. Saviola R. Threadgall J. Curry R. Wubbolding A. Peterson, et al.	Special Education and the QS: Are they above the law? Efficacy of RT in the schools: A review of research from 1980-1995. The effects of CT/RT – Quality School programming on "academics" Quality Schools and constructivist teaching. Glasser's morality and Hume's moral philosophy in an urban educ. Setting. Child-centered education. Student-led parent conferences: A plan for classroom implementation. The school as a system: Quality linkages. The effects of RT on locus of control among students in Asian universities.	V.16 (#2) pp. 3-11. pp. 12-20. pp. 21-30. pp. 45-51. pp. 52-57. pp. 58-64. pp. 65-68. pp. 76-79. pp. 80-87.

CONNECT and INVOLVE: HOW to CONNECT with STUDENTS and INVOLVE THEM in LEARNING

by Dr. Robert J. Martin

Summary:

Dr. Robert Martin has written *Connect and Involve: How to Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning* as a handbook for teachers to promote their students' learning. He strongly recommends first connecting with students and then including them directly in the learning process. Chapters 6 through 13 each introduce a different strategy. Included are procedures that provide concrete action steps to implement each strategy. These procedures when learned, allows both the teacher and students to automate lower-level activities allowing students to attend to higher-order thinking and actions. Each chapter follows a predictable pattern that assists teachers with learning and understanding this information. Supporting documentation is provided for all strategies and procedures.

Connect and Involve: How to Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning is a book I would highly recommend to both beginning and experienced teachers. I would describe it as a **read and use** book. It is written so that the concepts are easily understood and methods to implement are numerous and well documented. It is written in a supportive manner that encourages teachers to attempt changes. Parents, also, might find it beneficial to understand how connecting with their children would benefit their relationships and their learning.

Connect and Involve: How to Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning closely adheres to the concepts developed by Dr. William Glasser. His concepts of Choice Theory, Reality Therapy, and Quality School are all woven in throughout this book. Dr. Martin's involvement with these concepts have spanned most of his professional career and includes training completion at the Certification as well as Level 1 Practicum Supervisor. Additional information about Dr. Glasser's concepts can be found at: GIFCT-US (Glasser Institute for Choice Theory) www.wglasser.com.

Dr. Martin is a licensed psychologist. He has worked with K—12 students, both in public schools and in private practice. He has also taught graduate and undergraduate students in educational psychology and counselor education. He is professor emeritus at Truman State University in Kirksville, MO 63501.

Most important aspects of the book:

Connect and Involve: How to Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning is well documented with numerous references and additional readings. The overall organization of the book begins with the suggestion to make small changes so that fear is not created and resistance to change is avoided. Next comes two chapters that encourage getting to know your students and allow them, in turn, to get to know you. This knowledge then allows you the teacher to make better decisions about what will work for your students/classes. Each remaining chapter introduces a strategy to increase learning and the procedures (action steps) that can be automated, so that students have more time for higher learning. Each chapter ends with "A Scrap of Conversation" which is a personal comment from the author,

then a conclusion that summarizes the chapter content, followed by a question-and-answer section. The questions and answers address issues over which teachers may have concerns. Additional resources are included at the end each chapter.

Connect and Involve: How to Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning is organized around six themes. The themes are:

- Make Small Changes
- Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning
- Design and Teach from Big Ideas and Key Skills
- Teach Procedures
- Practice
- Encourage Students and Yourself

Make Small Changes:

As the teacher, you decide what and/or when changes are needed. Skills for introducing small changes and assisting your students to make them are provided. The key is to make changes so small there is no resistance or fear. Such small changes in what you the teacher think and does encourage students to make small changes in their thinking and doing. Many times, these small changes increase teaching effectiveness and thus learning.

Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning:

The more connected your students are with you, the greater your influence has with their learning. Getting to know students, their families, and their community, increases this influence. Knowing their likes/dislikes provides you more avenues to present the learning in a more personal and meaningful manner.

Assisting students to be directly involved in their learning also increases their learning. This means students will actively use ideas and materials to understand them. Students may choose how they will use the materials and/or what parts are pertinent to their learning. When new information makes sense, learning happens. Active and increased involvement in learning increases students' learning. Students seldom learn in a passive manner.

"Helping students feel belonging increases their willingness to cooperate and to act responsibly." Chapter Two, p. 17

"Get to know students better and you enhance your ability to design effective lessons and to influence them to try." Chapter Two, p. 22

Design and Teach from Big Ideas and Key Skills:

The teacher needs to decide which big ideas and key skills to emphasize based upon state standards and/or district curriculum guides. What is selected needs to prepare students to succeed at the next level and to do well on high stakes testing. It is often helpful to plan backwards so all the identified big ideas are included. Key skills include describing, explaining, and analyzing which improves both verbal and written language skills. The

biggest challenge is how to work with students who lack prior knowledge and skills needed to succeed while at the same time working with well-prepared students too.

“While it’s not our job to make students happy, it is our job to help them learn to make better choices—especially choices about getting along with others and doing their schoolwork.” Chapter Three, p. 25

“A big content idea is a network of concepts, facts, and applications that constitute an understanding of that big idea. A key skill is what the learner is expected to be able to do with a big content idea.” Chapter Four p. 38

“Teams provide a way for students to use their existing fund of knowledge and vocabulary to acquire and practice the fund of knowledge necessary for them to understand big ideas and practice key skills.” Chapter Ten, p. 101

“Teams can be used to create team products and performances and can also be used to help revise and improve individual projects through activities such as using scoring guides, listening, asking questions, proof-reading—or through combining individual contributions into a group product, such as a video, poster, or in-class magazine designed to meet curriculum goals.” Chapter Eleven, p. 113

Teach Procedures:

Teachers can present more creative and complex lessons once pertinent procedures are taught. They are normally taught through immersion, modeling, and monitoring. An investment in time is needed at first while learning any procedure, but once it is learned, students will participate and learn more effectively. Students are free to pay attention to their learning. Procedures also allow the learner to focus on higher-level thinking.

“A procedure is a schema—a set of behaviors that allows us to perform complex tasks that we do automatically and hardly ever think about (such as to walk, run, type, write, read, and so on). Procedures allow students to think and act in more complex ways.” Chapter Eight, p. 80

“The real power of using scoring guides comes from having students use scoring guides to evaluate examples and their own work, especially if they are allowed to revise their work.” Chapter Six, p. 57

“Motivation and learning are intertwined; the relationship is one of circularity. When we involve students in learning, they feel more motivated and connected. When students feel more motivated and connected, they are more willing to become involved.” Chapter Seven, p. 67

Practice:

To improve achievement, teachers need to identify what students need to practice. If they do not come with the needed knowledge and skills, teachers need to determine how to provide the practice they need to improve their knowledge and skills. Along with practice to read, write, listen, and speak, students need practice in key skills such as describing, explaining, analyzing, contrasting, organizing, and synthesizing. When students practice

the key skills to understand and use big content ideas, they will be better prepared to do well in the next grade and on standardized tests.

"Practice needs to be meaningful, frequent, and focused; it needs to concentrate on what learners cannot yet do. Practice needs to be challenging without becoming discouraging—neither too difficult nor too easy." Chapter Nine, p. 89

"The goal in using activities and projects is both to involve students in ways that provide opportunities for practice and to encourage them to take ownership of the learning process so they will make the effort needed to learn." Chapter Five, p. 51

Encourage Students and Yourself:

Do not forget to recognize gains made by both your students and you. Start with what is known and move from there to additional learning, even difficult concepts. Use strategies and procedures where they are most likely to succeed and with students who most likely will cooperate. Then move to using them with more challenging students. Change often takes time.

Teachers are encouraged to implement the strategies that will best meet their students' needs and their own needs too. Some will be successful without much effort and others may take longer.

Examples of strategies included: Use Scoring Guides, Learn through Practice and Revision, Increase Practice, Use Teams, Use Conversation, and Involve Students in Presentations.

"Conversations build vocabulary, funds of knowledge, language skills, and the ability to think—all of which are necessary for building reading and writing skills." Chapter Twelve, p. 125

"Going back and forth between making a presentation and checking for understanding provides a way to keep students engaged in both the presentation and the activities that check for and solidify understanding." Chapter Thirteen, pp. 135/136

Conclusion:

Connect and Involve: How to Connect with Students and Involve Them in Learning presents easily understood strategies that enhance student learning. The strategies are easily understood, timely, and well documented. Moreover, each strategy is supported with procedures (action steps) needed for students to be able to use them. Throughout the book strategies are provided to become better connected and involved with students, their parents, and their community. Being connected often provides teachers with ideas regarding how to better present information in meaningful ways to their students. The concepts developed by Dr. William Glasser for meeting needs and problem-solving are woven in throughout this book. **This is a read and use book.**

"Whatever we do to build a supportive school community, when combined with appropriate teaching methods, can improve learning and achievement." Chapter Two, p. 22

Submitted by:

Sharon Carder-Jackson

Brief Bio—

Sharon is a William Glasser advanced instructor and a member of the GIFCT- US Board. She serves on the Glasser Quality School (GQS) Committee plus serves as the Mid-America representative. She is a lifelong educator serving in classrooms, special needs students in a resource setting, and as a Process Coordinator for Special Education. Sharon lives just north of Kansas City, Missouri and enjoys anything that involves playing in the dirt or otherwise known as gardening. She also enjoys sewing projects, especially quilting.

AN EXAMPLE OF LEAD MANAGEMENT—NEW ZEALAND STYLE

Bette Blance

A discussion has ensued for many, many years over what type of boss or leader is best. According to Google (2016), the debate regarding these two descriptors is over. More specifically, Google (2016) simply asserts that bosses manage their employees, while a leader seeks to inspire them to (1) innovate, (2) think creatively, and (3) encourage them to strive for perfection. According to Google (2016), every team may have a boss, but what most people really need is a leader who will help his/her team members to achieve greatness.

William Glasser (1994,1998) would have surely agreed with these conclusions but would have directed his remarks to describe these two types of people as “boss managers” and “lead managers” instead. Otherwise, their differences for William Glasser (1994,1998), would likely be very similar to that which was described above.

Thus far, we have generally differentiated between two types of managers, but how would they likely differ in their leadership techniques? Basically, boss managers feel great when they're in control, giving orders, and making sure that everything is done in accordance with their directions. For instance, former president Donald J. Trump once said “I am the only one that can fix everything. Such a statement would put him squarely in control, which is where boss managers prefer to be.

In contrast, lead managers generally avoid the spotlight and being considered to be the “sage on the stage.” Rather, their preferred position when it comes to getting things done, is to be the “guide on the side.” In other words, lead managers are often like cheerleaders and like “fans in the stands,” unless and until more attention to detail is required of them.

For instance, when the pandemic first hit New Zealand, the Prime Minister was (and continues to be) Jacinda Ardern, who took immediate action. She called for a “rahui,”* saying that everyone needed to go “hard and early”!

Notably, Prime Minister Ardern has had to take such actions before. For example, in her short time in office she's had to deal with the Christchurch mosque massacre, as well as the eruption of Whakaari White Island, which killed 24 more people, both incidences occurring in 2019. Then, in 2020, the COVID 19 virus pandemic occurred, and in 2021 a terrorist attack followed, in a supermarket where an individual stabbed and injured 8 people. To say the least, this was not what we were used to.

In each instance, the people of New Zealand went to sleep in one world but woke up in another one!

Nevertheless, for Prime Minister Ardern it was almost like business as usual since with each incidence, she would immediately respond with remarkable courage, collaborative planning and uncanny skill.

*Instead of the word “lockdown,” I prefer the Māori word “rahui”, which is interpreted as meaning – honor the earth, protect the people, and nourish the spirit, all for the greater good.

Truly, through the lens of Dr. William Glasser's work, we can readily see many examples of his Lead Management being put into practice during these challenging times. For instance, through the fight against COVID 19, the building of a comprehensive communication system was paramount. Furthermore, clear expectations were featured in daily media conferences. Where there had been a lack of clarity, the feedback had been listened to, and appropriate actions quickly taken.

Questions posed to the Prime Minister and her staff were immediately responded to in the media, allowing the public to be well-informed on all issues. It became quite apparent that the Prime Minister was firmly in charge, and that others in government always participated in the difficult decisions that had to be made. As H. E. Luccock once said, "No one can whistle a symphony."

Yes, the Prime Minister has done masterfully through it all with Website announcements, Facebook pages, and television posts keeping all informed on every turn of events. In each instance, we were all learning more about the Prime Minister and about her care and concern for the people. She was even able to relate to the young children with her assurance that the Tooth Fairy and the Easter Bunny were all essential workers!

Since the beginning of the pandemic here, the widespread use of themes and catchphrases such as "Stay Home", "Stay Safe," "Stay in Your Bubble," and "Stay Local" were all repeated daily. It has been these consistent messages that seem to have gained, to a great extent, the cooperation of all New Zealanders!

As the rahui of four weeks came to an end, we were asked to remain isolated for another week. The Prime Minister and her Ministers had said, "Let us finish what we started!" One thing was very obvious. Even though people were breaking their necks to be free and for businesses to reopen, there was a strong willingness to follow their leader. If our leader had not inspired everyone to make the hard decisions, and to put their shoulders to the wheel, the successful results that we achieved would likely have fallen very short, indeed!

It seems most likely that we can draw parallels between the leadership of the country and the leadership of a family, a classroom, or a school. Taking the learning from the style of leadership in New Zealand during the COVID 19 pandemic, into these other situations can have many benefits. There is generally a sense of calm, trust, willingness to do the right thing, and to reach out and help others. Many have learned new skills, revived old and forgotten skills, and more. Of course, for some, there was more stress, or more fear, and many of their previous beliefs were sometimes challenged, but overall, they seemed to benefit greatly from the experiences since they certainly learned to pull together better.

Bottom line: Leadership does make a big difference. It can more likely make it possible to effectively deal with various tasks, a project, or a crisis within a family, a class, an organization, or a nation! Keeping in mind Dr. Glasser's Lead Management, we can all inspire others to follow us as we all strive to help one another.

References

Glasser, W. (1994). The Control Theory Manager. Harper Business.

Glasser, W. (1998). Choice Theory. A New Psychology for Personal Freedom. Harper Perennial

Glasser, W. (1998). The Quality School. Managing Students without Coercion. Harper Perennial

Glasser, W. (1998). The Quality School Teacher. A Companion Volume to The Quality School Harper Perennial

Brief Bio--

Bette Blance lives in Aotearoa New Zealand with her husband of 56 years. She was a member of the William Glasser International Board from 2014-2016 when she was the co-creator and co-manager of the Take Charge of Your Life Tribute program. In the newly restructured International Board in 2021, she speaks for the members of Glasser Aotearoa New Zealand as the Board develops new and exciting structures to further the work of Dr Glasser in the Glasser community and to introduce the ideas around the world.

Following her passion for quality education, as a WGI faculty member she trains in schools in New Zealand wanting them to benefit from the concepts of Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management.

A RESEARCH BASE for CHOICE THEORY/REALITY THERAPY

Robert E. Wubbolding, Ed.D., CTRTC

Abstract

Reality therapy has become a widely used and respected system of counseling with applications to education. While there is considerable research validating its use in a wide variety of settings, the author provides several guardrails for future studies. The purpose of this article is to encourage interest for researchers to conduct further studies that evaluate the use of choice theory / reality therapy. It is safe to say that this system is research informed. The author hopes that researchers will conduct studies that align the gold standard, i.e., research that includes control groups and experimental groups, thereby meriting the indisputable label "research-based".

This article is the first of several on research. We will show that CT/RT is valid and effective in many ways, as we endeavor to take the legacy of Glasser to a new more highly respected and mainstreamed level. The first question is, "What is the Glasser legacy?" Glasser (1998) bequeathed to the world 4 components: choice theory, reality therapy, and an organization now called the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory (GIFCT) formerly known as the William Glasser Institute (WGI). It is the responsibility of his associates to preserve, apply and further develop this priceless body of work: the fourth component of his legacy. Researchers who have no special interest in CT/RT outcomes are welcome to join in this effort to evaluate the efficacy of reality therapy. The Institute publishes a forum for such research: *The International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy* edited by Dr. Tom Parish.

Extending Research Base: Institutional Self-Reflection

The first step in establishing a research base for the work of William Glasser is to self-reflect on how we present his work to the public. Meichenbaum and Lillianfeld (2018) provided a 19-item checklist for spotting hype in the field of psychotherapy. The items in this list can be extended to the field of education. This checklist is useful as a foundation for identifying and evaluating claims for offerings made by professional groups. I selected several for comment from the 19-item list. (1.) Substantial exaggeration of claims of treatment effectiveness. A first step is to ask ourselves whether we present a fair and balanced picture of reality therapy and its many applications as well as its limitations. (3.) Excessive appeal to authorities or "gurus". This item on the checklist, as are all of them, requires interpretation and discussion. Certainly, the Institute attempts to remain faithful to the teachings of Glasser. And yet, the Institute is well advised to recognize that more evidence for outcomes needs to be provided than simply teaching, "Glasser says . . ." (6) Establishment of accreditation and credentialing procedures. This item contradicts the basic reason for the existence of GIFCT. Many organizations provide a certification pathway leading to recognition of at least minimal competence. Cognitive therapy, grief therapy, trauma therapy, and many educational organizations offer training intended to lead to competence. The existence of university degree programs has the purpose of awarding credentials. Therefore, #6 is at least questionable. The institute's 18-month certification program is not a valid sign of hype. (8.) Use of "psychobabble". Instruction of CT/RT has been labeled as such when we excessively use such phrases as "choosing to depress", "I'm

sick-ing myself", "I'm angering". The use of -ing has a definite purpose: to indicate that the origin of behavior lies within the person. No attempt should be made to change the way clients, students, and others speak about their feelings. (13.) Claims that treatment is "evidence-based" when the evidence is merely clinical observations.

These randomly selected items from Meichenbaum's list of 19 provide the beginning of our efforts to conduct a searching and fearless self-inventory, i.e., the prelude to more in-depth investigations.

Existing Research: Selected Samples

At this time the Institute can point to a growing body of credible studies that validate the use of choice theory/reality therapy in counseling, psychotherapy and education. Several of them are summarized below.

Lojk (1986) studied the effects of reality therapy on prison residents over a 12 year period and discovered that 69% of them were completely rehabilitated, 15% partially rehabilitated, and 16% either not rehabilitated or could not be contacted. Skeptics challenged the results with such statements as, "The former residents seem okay, but who knows?" "Are they internally happy?" "Could it mean that these methods of correction have broken their will for life?" This last question seems strange in that even the skeptics admitted that the residents were no longer stealing, were earning money for themselves and their children, had no trouble with police, and needed no additional psychological or psychiatric help (p. 30).

McClung and Hoglund (2013) investigated the results of using choice theory and reality therapy in an elementary school in Florida. They state, "Along the way the faculty and staff declared the school to be a Glasser Quality School and received a Governor's Sterling Award for statewide role-model status (p. 54). Among the many areas of improvement, the school lessened its suspensions significantly to 1.7 per hundred students compared to the district elementary school average of 3.0. In addition, they lessened referrals to the "refocus room" by 59% in one year. Consequently, students in this study decidedly increased the amount of time they spent in classrooms.

Hey Sook Kim (2016) University of Pusan, South Korea studied the effects of parenting stress for mothers of children with emotional/behavioral problems. The results showed a significant lessening of parental stress for the experimental group compared with the control group. This study shows the efficacy of reality therapy with persons in Asia as well as the value of a brief program of 10 weeks.

Hinton, Warnke, and Wubbolding (2011) described the effects of using choice theory, reality therapy in a suburban public secondary school with a majority of students from middle-income families. The results showed a significant increase in grade point average, a decrease in courses failed, as well as a notable decrease in discipline referrals, compared with the control group.

Summary

This article aims at providing a base for future research regarding choice theory/reality therapy. It summarizes several guardrails for describing the efficacy of practicing reality therapy based on choice theory as it applies to counseling and education. It includes summaries of several studies illustrating the credible use of choice theory/reality therapy in a variety of settings. These studies point the way forward for future research.

References

Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory*. Harper Collins.

Hinton, D., Warnke, B., and Wubbolding, R. (2011). Choosing success in the classroom by building student relationships. *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, 31(1), 90-96.

Kim, H.S. (2016). *Development and effect of psychological well-being promoting program to reduce parenting stress for mothers of children with emotional behavioral problems* (Doctoral thesis, Inje University, Pusan, Korea).

Lojk, L. (1986). My experiences using reality therapy. *Journal of Reality Therapy*, 5(2), 28-35.

McClung, C. and Hoglund, R. (2013). A Glasser quality school leads to choosing excellence. *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, 32(2), 54-64.

Meichenbaum, D. and Lilienfeld, S. (2018). How to spot hype in the field of psychotherapy: a 19-item checklist. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 29(1), 22-30.

Wubbolding, R. (2017). The three-fold legacy of William Glasser, MD. *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, 37(1), 17-21.

Wubbolding, R. (2019). Legacy more: The fourth component, *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*, 39(1), 41-47.

Brief Bio—

Dr. Robert E. Wubbolding is professor emeritus of Xavier University, former faculty associate at Johns Hopkins University and visiting professor in the overseas program of the University of Southern California. Author of 18 books on reality therapy, he now serves as Director of the Center for Reality Therapy in Cincinnati, Ohio.

MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP DURING TIMES OF ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS

Kent B. Provost, Ph.D., LPC and Patricia A. Robey, Ed.D., LPC

Abstract: Applying the concepts of lead management in a world that has traditionally experienced the external control of boss management is particularly challenging in times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. For many, the pandemic has meant a challenge to getting needs met, both inside and outside the workplace. At the most primal level, survival needs are being threatened, and the quality of our relationships can be influenced as we must find ways to work together from a distance. In the workplace, organizational survival also must be addressed. Deadlines remain in place and workers are expected to function effectively on their jobs despite other challenges they may be facing as a result of the pandemic. In this article, the authors integrate Glasser's (1998) model of lead management with other management strategies that can be effective in addressing workplace concerns. The article concludes with a discussion in which Provost shares his experience in developing his own management style and explains how he focuses on how to balance the needs of individuals and groups within the constraints of the system, particularly in the time of stress within a pandemic.

The COVID 19 pandemic is an international health crisis that has been described by the United Nations as "the greatest challenge we have faced since World War II" (United Nations, 2020, as cited in Hu, et al., 2020, p. 1218). COVID-19 has had devastating effects not only on individuals but also on economies, businesses, and employees. The economic impact threatens survival as a result of business closing, loss of employee income, and financial stress on governments to support people in need.

Terror management theory provides information that is relevant to the stress people feel in response to the pandemic. Burke, et al. (2010) and Greenberg, et al. (1986) noted that in times of environmental stress, adjustments for work, unemployment, health, family, safety needs, isolation, and loneliness remind people of their own mortality, with a resulting sense of anxiety with the loss of the perception of well-being. Applying this information to the current work environment, managers may observe employees struggling with emotional stress as they adjust to systemic changes. For some employees this may manifest itself to include a threat to survival when sharing space with others, uncertainty about the future, and tension in the system as members try to get their needs met.

Research on employee resilience in the face of life-threatening events like COVID-19 indicated that in some cases employees can feel anxiety, focus on self-protection, withdraw from others, and decrease their engagement with their work in time of crisis so they feel less emotionally overwhelmed (Grant & Wade-Benzoni, 2009; Kouchaki & Desai, 2015; Sliter, et al. 2001). However, other research suggested that crisis can motivate individuals to evaluate their lives and put current events into perspective, finding purpose and meaning in life and ways to overcome obstacles, even turning their own anxiety into social action by reaching out to support others (Greenberg et al., 1986; Greenberg and Arndt (2012); Salzman, 2001; Yuan et al., 2019). Historically, when leaders work to help employees feel valued and supported so they know that they don't face the crisis alone, anxiety can be reduced (Hu, et al., 2020). Leaders who apply choice theory to their management strategies are aware of the needs of employees and can work collaboratively with employees to help

them fulfill needs while also addressing the needs of the entire work community and the system itself (Glasser, 1998).

The Glasser Model of Lead Management

Glasser's (1998) lead-management model is based on the integration of choice theory with the ideas of W. Edwards Deming (1966), who explained that a focus of leadership without boss-managed fear would result in higher-quality work outcomes. Glasser summarized four essential elements in a boss-managed system: 1. The boss sets the tasks and seldom consults with employees. Employees are expected to work as the boss instructs or risk being fired; 2. The boss does not model how the job should be accomplished and seldom asks for input from the workers; 3. The work is inspected and evaluated by the boss, and as a result, workers often do just enough work to pass inspection rather than work toward quality; and 4. When workers resist the boss's directives and quality is compromised, the boss responds with threats and punishment, resulting in an adversarial environment.

Lead managers apply choice theory in the workplace (Glasser, 1998). Glasser explained that lead managers understand the importance of creating an environment in which all members feel respected and involved in the process and are invested in producing quality work. Lead managers: 1. engage workers in discussions about quality and ask for suggestions for improvement; 2. provide a model for what is expected while also encouraging input into how the job may be done better; 3. trust workers to evaluate their work; and 4. encourage continual improvement. In summary, a lead manager works to eliminate coercion and fear, focuses on quality, and emphasizes self-evaluation (Wubbolding, 2000).

Group Leadership Theory and Practice Applied to Lead Management

People meet many of their needs through interaction with others (Glasser, 1998). During the pandemic, group interactions that supported caring relationships in the workplace were influenced by mandated isolation and separation from the individuals who sustained productivity and workplace satisfaction (Marmarosh, et. al, 2020). In some cases, the result of this isolation permanently changed workplace dynamics as people were laid-off, resigned, retired, or chose alternative employment. In particular, the need for connection with others is most threatened when the future seems uncertain. In times of threat, people search for support and comfort from others to cope and to find physical and emotional support. Marmarosh, et al. (2020) noted that this is an adaptive reaction to stress, but the urge for association with others provides an alternative threat, that is to the basic need for survival when the association may be unhealthy.

Group leadership theory and practice can be integrated with lead management principles in times of crisis. Yalom and Leszcz (2005) noted that researchers have studied the influence of group cohesion and how cohesive groups are likely to find safety, tolerate tension, and be able to work through crises. Marmarosh, et. al (2020) applied group process to issues related to COVID-19 and found that participation in a cohesive group process resulted in members feeling comforted and enhanced self-esteem and improved goal satisfaction.

Burlingame et al.'s (2018) information related to leadership behaviors reported the importance of encouraging interpersonal interaction as a way to create strong bonds among group members. An effective leader must be willing to allow conversations that encourage open discussion of workplace issues, including conflicts among members, which means having an ability to tolerate and manage conflict while maintaining a caring and empathic response and keeping the focus on the ultimate goal of the group and workplace (Marmarosh, et. al, 2020). Similarly, Yalom and Leszcz (2005) noted that individual stress

will influence group process, so the leader needs to be able to tolerate conflict when it arises. Effective leaders provide empathy and model the behavior they expect from the group such as how to offer feedback and tolerate conflict, provide opportunities for individuals to express vulnerability, and engage the group in setting goals (Johnson et al., 2005).

Strategies for Addressing Workplace Challenges

A basic concept of choice theory is that all people are motivated to meet basic needs for love and belonging (with others and within self), power (a sense of personal significance and accomplishment), freedom (the desire for choices, movement, independence), fun (playfulness, learning, creativity), and survival (safety, reproduction, security). These needs are met through very specific people, things, and/or ideas or beliefs that people find lend value to our lives. Behavior is motivated to meet these needs and people feel an urgency to get their needs met when they perceive that their lives are not need-satisfying (Glasser, 1998).

Understanding choice theory can be helpful for a lead manager when dealing with conflict in the workplace. The leader who understands how to apply choice theory to understand individual and group process knows that the purpose of behavior is to get needs met. Therefore, in planning a response to conflict in the group, the leader might ask: *What basic needs are not being met in the group? What needs to happen to address the groups' concerns? How can this be accomplished within systemic constraints?*

One way to operationalize the types of behavior necessary for quality relationships both in and outside of the workplace, is to utilize relationship habits that are likely to bring people closer together in times of stress and conflict. Glasser (2003) identified what he described as Caring and Deadly Relationship Habits. He taught that the use of the externally controlling "Deadly" habits are commonly used to control others and are likely to result in relationship disconnection. These habits are: Criticizing, Blaming, Complaining, Nagging, Threatening, Punishing, and Bribing or rewarding to control. Glasser proposed that the use of "Caring" habits are more likely to maintain or improve relationships. Caring habits are: Supporting, Encouraging, Listening, Accepting, Trusting, Respecting, and Negotiating Differences.

Servant leadership, a practice in which leaders place an emphasis on employee growth and reject top-down management (van Dierendonck, 2011), employs practices that are easily integrated with the qualities that Glasser identifies as important to lead management. Lead managers focus on creating an environment in which workers are engaged in the process and their input is valued (Glasser, 1998). Servant leaders provide empathy, affirmation, demonstrate confidence in their employees, provide resources, and create opportunities for autonomy (Hu, et al., 2020).

The use of caring habits is inherent in the servant leader model. For example, Heyler and Martin (2018) observed that some leaders are so invested in their own vision that they don't pay attention to their workers. This lack of attention to input means that leaders don't recognize workers' needs and challenges, but also might not see workers' abilities. Therefore, a servant leader will be sure to listen to the input of workers before trying to solve a problem (Greenleaf, 1977).

The relationship between lead managers and workers is based on *respect* and *trust* with the ultimate goal of producing a quality product with input and evaluation from all the individuals involved. With this in mind, servant leaders create an environment of trust in

which workers are *accepted* and their input is encouraged but are still expected to be accountable for the effort that they put into the project (Ferch, 2005; George, 2000; Greenleaf, 1977). "The servant leader must be focused on the current situation while at the same time seeing the present as a piece of the larger environmental context that the organization is a part of. Thus, the better the leader is at putting all of the pieces of the puzzle together, the more successful the leader and the organization will be" (Heyler & Martin, 2018, p. 233).

Negotiating differences is a way of managing conflict in the workplace without damaging relationships. A leader is accountable to the system in which the leader is working. When conflict occurs with individuals or in groups, the lead manager's job is to avoid coercion, instead utilizing caring habits and behavioral strategies to create an outcome that all involved feel that they have been heard and can accept the situation (Glasser, 1998) Effective leaders share their visions for the future in a way that everyone involved becomes engaged, excited, and inspired (Greenleaf, 1977)

Managing Stress in the Workplace

Chronic physical and mental stress is a source of exhaustion and burnout in the workplace. Kranabetter & Niessen (2016) reported four action phases that managers utilized when addressing employee stress. In the first phase, *Information Collection*, managers attempted to clarify what was happening by communicating with the employee. In the second phase, *Planning*, managers researched the problem, considered what they had learned, consulted with others, and worked with the employee to set up a plan, unless the employee was resistant, in which case managers waited to respect the employee's privacy. During this phase, some managers also self-evaluated their own leadership behavior regarding the situation to assess whether their behavior may have contributed to the situation. In the third phase, *Execution*, managers put plans into action, focusing on the identified task, and offering resources and emotional support. In some cases, this included offering resources for changing behaviors that might assist the employee in regulating stress, including making adjustments to the job if possible. In the fourth phase, *Feedback*, managers checked with employees to assess their health, stress levels, and how employees were meeting their goals.

Kranabetter & Niessen (2016) noted 21 behaviors that were helpful in working with employee exhaustion. These behaviors are consistent with Glasser's caring habits and with servant leadership qualities, and included the importance of creating a trusting environment, providing emotional support, involving the employee in solving the problem, and working together to assess what could happen in the workplace to improve the situation.

In her article, *The Future of Work Is Employee Well-Being*, Meister (2021) reported that many leaders in Human Resources are emphasizing the importance of nurturing physical and mental health and linking it to workplace resilience. As part of this initiative, businesses are becoming flexible in how employees work, and are offering support services that address holistic well-being, which includes physical, emotional, financial, social, career, community, and purpose components that have been identified as the Seven Pillars of Holistic Employee Well-being.

"We Care About You."

When lead management is the philosophy of a workplace, good relationships are the key to quality. All stakeholders are invested in one another and in the outcome of the work.

Members are able to work through times of stress by using caring habits and other behaviors like those already discussed in this article. "What makes lead management so successful is that it focuses on creating a cooperative system and on the belief that if you treat people well and explain what you want them to do, you can trust them to do a good job...you will continually see that the message, *we care about you*, is central to this effort. Lead managers know that caring costs nothing and has a huge return. Lead managers keep asking themselves the core choice theory question: If I do this, will I get closer to the people who work for me or further away?" (Glasser, 1998, p. 290).

Developing an Identity as a Lead Manager: Interview with Kent B. Provost

Provost: What I understand of Dr. Glasser's concept of lead management seems to define how I tend to operate. I've always felt that if my staff and I are happy, that's going to flow into the work that they're doing. I always felt like I was facilitating knowledge, which I now see as modeling the behavior I expected. I helped them understand expectations and what the outcome was going to be, and then allowed them to do whatever they felt was their style to do.

Robey: I understand that you didn't always manage in the way that you do now. Can you share how your process changed over time?

Provost: Early on in my business life I was in charge of the family furniture and floor-covering business. I was what I would call a "control freak" where everything had to be done in a certain way. I became aware of this when my staff actually told me when it came to designing vignettes in the front window.

Whenever somebody would do something, I would go in there and kind of alter it and change it and they said can't you trust us and let it stay for at least two weeks before you would do anything? And that was my initial "kick in my whatever" about realizing I need to trust these people to do it. It may not be the way I want to do it, but they're going to be happy about it. They're putting their energy and positive spirits in it, and I need to encourage that to continue. So, I realized that creating that happy family in the working environment increased productivity!

Robey: One of the aspects of lead management is that the manager models the expected behavior or product and then asks employees to inspect, evaluate for quality, and work toward continual improvement. So when you think about that with the way that you now work with your team how do you work with them to get their input and to ensure continual improvement?

Provost: I think basically whenever there is something different or new that needs to be done, I now elicit their advice and suggestions and what they think. especially if they're the ones that are going to do the work, I would ask *How do you think about this? What do you think that you know how to do it better? What it is that we need to do?* My goal is that they would take ownership of it and by giving them that ownership, giving them that ability to have control over their own domain, which I think is so important.

An aspect of lead management is that the manager never asks people to do anything the manager wouldn't do. I always was involved with the business that had to be done and so they all knew that. That's why if somebody also was sick or whatever and we needed someone to step in, often I was the one that stepped in, from delivering furniture to setting things up to unpacking things, to being on the sales floor. So yeah, we started working with a more team spirit in a lot of ways.

Robey: You went from managing a furniture business to being a mediator to counseling and you are now in counselor education. Tell us about the process was that took you from being the teacher to these roles where you had more leadership authority.

Provost: Well, after my doctoral program, I was not looking at becoming a manager, a supervisor, or being the person in charge, just being a faculty member. For me I was always working from what I call person focus, looking at the person inside and trying to connect to that versus the objectives. When I got into some of these administrative positions, that's what I was doing. I like being the facilitator or the go to person. If something is wrong, if anything was not working properly, I was the go-to person and I said I'll take it, I'll wear it, put it on my shoulders. I'll take it off your shoulders, 'cause you don't need to be dealing with that. I know some managers that say, well, "you need to take care of that. That's your responsibility." I would say if you don't want that, I'll work with you on it. The buck stops here, you know, and people really appreciate it.

Robey: When I hear you say that you take it off the shoulders of your workers, I wonder if someone would say that's laissez-faire management.

Provost: Well, I know for sure that I don't want to be referred to as "the boss." Even before we talked about Glasser and lead management, I always felt that a boss was like a dictator or person that just would put their thumb down on things and just bark at you and yell and **** you off. I've had some people that did that to me and I said I never want to be that way, but I also know I'm not going to be laissez-faire and just like let workers do whatever they want because that doesn't work either. I just want to I want to be engaged. I want to be supportive, encouraging, but also knowing that part of that support is having this step in to help somebody to accomplish something that I was hoping they would be able to do on their own.

Robey: The pandemic created a whole new set of complications for administration. I know you were charged with developing a new faculty group at the same time that we were dealing with new ways of working together. How did you adapt your leadership style to account for systemic constraints in response to COVID-19?

Provost: This is actually at the very beginning of the pandemic. Two people in the program left. One was the director and then I became the director. So, essentially, I was looking at two things. One is that the people who were leaving were jeopardizing our accreditation because of not having enough qualified core faculty. I inherited one person out of everybody who had been there. Everybody else kind of like disappeared, except for the one person who was a new hire. We'd only seen each other in person for maybe three months before the pandemic happened. She had a lot of struggles as a new faculty. So, from the get-go, I told her that I'd be glad to mentor her, help her understand the system that I finally got and just help her along as much as possible. I also had to recruit other new hires. I built relationships by asking how they would fit into the equation of what we were needing for our program and where I would want them to be, what they really enjoyed doing, finding out what they liked to do, what they liked to teach, what areas would they like to focus on, and then I would say that's exactly where we need you.

We had two meetings a month. The first meeting, I had what I called the team together, so it included all the faculty, adjuncts, the academic advisor, our administrative person, and everybody else was part of that first meeting, because I thought it was so important for us all to be together at least once a month. And then the second meeting was just the core full time faculty type thing so that we could do some of the things that the whole department didn't need to have.

Our meetings were very well structured. Everybody had the agenda and we stuck to the agenda. There wasn't a whole lot of the bantering that sometimes happens in meetings that just takes time with nothing really relevant to what we really need to get done.

So the thing is, everybody loved my meetings because sometimes, even though we were scheduled for two hours, we were done in 45 minutes. As a manager I can develop group cohesiveness just by respecting their time! They said this is great and it's productive. So they appreciated how I structured those. We kept those boundaries. I allowed input and discussion in areas that people had something that they wanted to bring up again, if it was relevant. We would open it up and talk about it and something new. I was very open and flexible about that, but unless there was something that needed to be discussed, we were very efficient.

Robey: I can see that you applied lead management skills, especially in engaging your team in discussing what is quality in their work and looking for their input. Even so, I imagine there were times when there was some conflict in your team, or reluctance to take on work, especially when people were tired and anxious from events outside your workplace. How did you handle those kinds of situations?

Provost: There was one person that wasn't fully on board, so I made sure that I reached out her on a continual basis to support her. I gave her ideas, and I made a point of contacting her and letting her know when I heard positive feedback about her so that I was encouraged her productivity.

The biggest challenge was that we ended up having to do an accreditation self-study that we really only had two months to put it together. I did majority of the work because I knew what we need to do, but then I set up the templates and the stuff and I told my staff If you're vested in us continuing our accreditation and getting it for this, I need your help. If you're not vested, then that's understandable, but I said, but I will help you understand what it is where I need your input, but I will do most of the technical nitty gritty work, but then I still need you to be able to do these other pieces for me.

It was amazing. They all came together, and we got it done in six weeks instead of eight weeks. We knew that it wasn't going to be perfect, but it was going to be done to the best of our ability. I would give him timelines or where I really needed it so that I could review it. If there was something that needed to be further updated, they would. I would review it and then I would thank them throughout the whole process. I would remind them that they were doing all this extra work for the good of the entire program. I was really proud of the entire staff coming together for that.

Robey: How would you encourage buy-in with individuals when you have a project that must be addressed, but nobody is interested in doing it?

Provost: It goes back to understanding where they are in this process and being empathic with what's going on for them, understanding if they're burnout or if they're overloaded or anything else. I would express my understanding, but then also say there's these projects that I need some help with. Are you willing to try to do some or all part of it or whatever? I also acknowledging that I know how to do the projects myself and I know that that's what I'm responsible for. If someone really is not invested or is just too stressed out or whatever I just acknowledge them and say OK. I know I can't rely on them, but I can't put this on their plate at this time because it won't go well. I'll do what needs to be done. Then as they see me doing that and taking some of that work or pressure off of them, they tend to be OK and maybe will help me out in other areas that maybe they can be vested in. So I think it's

kind of proving that I'm going to protect them as much as possible and they know that when I really need something that they I need their help with, they understand that. And that if I ask people for help, they probably understand that I really need the help, because I can't do it all. This last venture was one of those examples. And when people give me feedback, I adjust, you know, I make sure that I listen to feedback. I listen to input. I try to make sure that they know I'm hearing and understanding them, and then I'll adjust accordingly if possible. Again, there's certain things that just can't change it or whatever. So that's OK, but if it's something that might be modified or changed and it sounds prudent, I'll try to incorporate their feedback as much as possible, which is what I learned how to do back in the furniture world. That there could be some other way of building this mousetrap.

Robey: Research shows that an effective leader is not afraid to address conflict. How do you manage conflict in the workplace?

Provost: One thing I try to do is acknowledge the elephant in the room. For example, I might say OK, this is what I'm sensing. Although as you know it's happening or not happening. Does anybody want to open up and tell me what's going on? So that we can all talk about it and if something comes up where something can be changed or something can be altered, or something could be done differently, hopefully we have created an environment where that can actually be. I think I try to provide a safe and nurturing environment so discourse can happen without being felt like it's going to be shut down. And sometimes I might be where I need to have just individual discussions with individual members to figure out what's going on for them. Again, that's where that trust and respect piece comes into play, we can just talk one at one. I think it's really just bringing out the elephant in the room and then going on from there.

Robey: Choice theory explains that we all have basic needs and the purpose of our behavior is an effort to get those needs met. A lead manager takes that in consideration and tries to create an environment that is likely to be need-satisfying for the workers. This is hard right now when many people feel a deficit in getting needs met. What are your thoughts about this?

Provost: Well, the first thing that came to mind is connecting with them, basically addressing the need for relationships. But thinking about survival, when they operate from a perception of fear, I empathize that and let them know I also share a lot of fear with what's going on. But then I emphasize where we have control. What do we have control on what do we don't have control on? How can we try to maximize areas we can control, and take an area that we may not be able to control and find what elements or components of that we may have control on, and then exploring that and honoring it and trying to find ways and areas that each one of us can actually feel empowered with what's going on in that environment? I think when there's discourse, there could be some processing that needs to be done, but it needs to be controlled in a way, versus going off, but I think part of it is the acknowledgement of being heard. There may not be any different decision around it but it's important for people to know that they're being heard. Still, we need to get the job done, you know? And so how do we find a way to get our needs met with what we know right now?

Robey: Before we kind of wrap up, is there anything you would like to add?

Provost: After reading some of Glasser's lead management pieces I realize that that really is kind of how I've always felt I tried to operate as a leader. It's been a growing process throughout my life, but I feel like I'm always trying to find ways of being positive and encouraging, making challenging tasks not seem so daunting. I think laughter and humor is

great to help also motivated, especially when things that are challenging. If I can find some way of injecting humor or create a space for others to inject it and it's helpful to not take things personally or so intensely. It's kind of like saying, OK, this is work.

It's going to happen. It might be my job, but if you feel like you know we can get things done. I know that we can do things together. But I also know that sometimes I'm going to have help here and I'm not going to help there. And that's OK because then you also know where to tap into the resources that are really going to assist and help you with, then being mindful not to over tap into that. Helping others as much as they're helping me, I think is really important. It's a two-way street, regardless if I'm a peer, or if I'm a supervisor, or if I'm a manager.

References

- Burke, B. L., Martens, A., & Faucher, E. H. (2010). Two decades of terror management theory: A meta-analysis of mortality salience research. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14, 155–195. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1088868309352321>
- Burlingame, G. M., McClendon, D. T., & Yang, C. (2018). Cohesion in group therapy: A metaanalysis. *Psychotherapy*, 55, 384–398. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pst0000173>
- Deming, W.E. (1966). *Some theory of sampling*. New York: Dover.
- Ferch, S. 2005. "Servant-Leadership, Forgiveness, and Social Justice." *International Journal of Servant-Leadership* 1, 97-113.
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist*, 56, 218–226. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.218>
- George, J. M. 2000. "Emotions and Leadership: The Role of Emotional Intelligence." *Human Relations*, 53, 1027-1055.
- Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory: A new psychology of personal freedom*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Glasser, W. (2003). *Warning: Psychiatry can be hazardous to your mental health*. HarperCollins.
- Grant, A. M., & Wade-Benzoni, K. A. (2009). The hot and cool of death awareness at work: Mortality cues, aging, and self-protective and prosocial motivations. *The Academy of Management Review*, 34, 600–622. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amr.34.4.zok600>
- Greenberg, J., & Arndt, J. (2012). Terror management theory. In P. A. V. Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 398–415). London, UK: Sage. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446249215.n20>
- Greenberg, J., Pyszczynski, T., & Solomon, S. (1986). The causes and consequences of a need for self-esteem: A terror management theory. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), *Public self and private self* (pp. 189–212). New York, NY: Springer. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-9564-5_10

Greenleaf, R. K. 1977. *Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.

Heyler, S. G., & Martin, J. A. (2018). Servant Leadership Theory: Opportunities for Additional Theoretical Integration. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 30 (2), 230-243.

Hu, J., He, W., & Zhou, K. (2020) The Mind, the Heart, and the Leader in Times of Crisis: How and When COVID-19-Triggered Mortality Salience Relates to State Anxiety, Job Engagement, and Prosocial Behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 105 (11), 1218-1233. ISSN: 0021-9010 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000620>

Johnson, J. E., Burlingame, G. M., Olsen, J. A., Davies, D. R., & Gleave, R. L. (2005). Group climate, cohesion, alliance, and empathy in group psychotherapy: Multilevel structural equation models. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 310–321. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.52.3.310>

Kouchaki, M., & Desai, S. D. (2015). Anxious, threatened, and also unethical: How anxiety makes individuals feel threatened and commit unethical acts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100, 360–375. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0037796>

Kranabetter, C. & Niessen, C. (2016). Responding to Exhausted Employees. *Journal of Personnel Psychology* (2016), 15 (3), 106–115 DOI: 10.1027/1866-5888/a000157

Marmarosh, C. L., Forsyth, D. R., Strauss, B., & Burlingame, G. M. (2020). The Psychology of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Group-Level Perspective. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 24(3), 122-138. ISSN: 1089-2699 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/gdn0000142>

Meister, J. (2021). The Future of Work is Worker Well-being. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeannemeister/2021/08/04/the-future-of-work-is-worker-well-being/?sh=4fd05c504aed>

Salzman, M. B. (2001). Cultural trauma and recovery: Perspectives from terror management theory. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 2, 172–191. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1524838001002002005>

Sliter, M. T., Sinclair, R. R., Yuan, Z., & Mohr, C. D. (2014). Don't fear the reaper: Trait death anxiety, mortality salience, and occupational health. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99, 759–769. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0035729>

United Nations. (2020). *The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs remains active and committed: How the covid-19 pandemic is affecting the work of disarmament*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/disarmament/howthe-covid-19-pandemic-is-affecting-the-work-of-disarmament/>

van Dierendonck, D. (2011). Servant leadership: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management*, 37, 1228–1261. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0149206310380462>

Wubbolding, R. (2000). *Reality therapy for the 21st century*. Philadelphia, PA: Brunner-Routledge.

Yalom, I. D., & Leszcz, M. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Yuan, Z., Baranik, L. E., Sinclair, R. R., Sliter, M. T., Rand, K. L., & Salyers, M. P. (2019). Memento mori: The development and validation of the death reflection scale. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40, 417–433. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/job.2339>

Brief Bios—

Kent B. Provost, Ph.D., LPC, is an assistant professor and has earned a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision. He is currently the program coordinator at Governors State University in Illinois. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor maintaining his license in Oregon. Kent has over 35 years experience in various leadership, management, and supervisory positions. Kent has presented at numerous national, regional, and state professional conferences as well as been a former workshop presenter for PESI.

Patricia A. Robey, Ed.D., LPC, CTRTC, is a professor and chair in the Division of Psychology and Counseling at Governors State University in Illinois. She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor, and a senior faculty member of the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory and William Glasser International. Pat has authored and co-authored numerous articles and book chapters on applications of choice theory and reality therapy and is lead editor of the book *Contemporary Issues in Couples Counseling: A Choice theory and Reality Therapy Approach*.

INFUSING CHOICE THEORY INTO FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOURAL ASSESSMENT

Conor Barker, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, School of Education, St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract:

Children with behavioural challenges present clear questions to teachers, classrooms, and schools striving to create inclusive classroom environments for all students. Many of the common modalities used to support students with behavioural challenges involve some form of Functional Behavioural Assessment (FBA) to assist school personnel in identifying the externalizing mediators of behaviour; however, FBA approaches do not necessarily consider internalized motivators of behaviour. This paper explores the use of a Choice Theory informed FBA (CT-FBA) in creating program plans for students who display challenging behaviours. The CT-FBA was developed through a team effort of psychologists, consultants, behavioural coaches, and administrators to improve the FBA, moving it towards a more strength-based, student-centric process. This paper reviews how the CT-FBA is conducted and provides a template for others to use this process to improve student behaviour intervention plans using Choice Theory.

Children who exhibit emotional or behavioural difficulties present challenges to schools and classrooms. Their behaviours can be disruptive to the learning of the individual child, the students in the child's classroom, and in some cases, to the school and community at large. Among teachers and school psychologists, there is a significant interest in knowing what to do to support children with challenging behaviours. Common approaches to manage student behaviour have largely been informed by behavioural-analytic psychology (e.g., functional behavioural analysis, rewards and consequence-based programs) or cognitive psychology (e.g., cognitive-behavioural therapy).

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) is a process by which behavior is assessed, hypotheses are made, baseline data collected, interventions are provided, intervention data is collected, and plans are revised based on the outcomes (Moreno et al., 2014; O'Neill & Stephenson, 2010). Traditional FBA is based on behaviorist theory that posits that behavior can be controlled through operant or classical conditioning of antecedent or consequential events (e.g., reward and/or punishment, reducing aversive stimuli by associating something more pleasurable). The theory behind FBA is that behavior serves a function, either to meet a sensory, escape, attention, or tangible desire (Durand & Crimmins, 1988). FBA was developed primarily for use with individuals with intellectual or developmental difficulties, however, it is increasingly being used in cases of students with disruptive behaviors in classroom settings (Lloyd & Kennedy, 2014).

FBA strategies have demonstrated strong empirical support across multiple settings and student populations. Gage and colleagues (2012) found in their review of 69 FBA studies that FBA based interventions reduced problem behaviour by an average of 70.5%. This was further confirmed by Goh & Bambara (2012) who found similar effectiveness in the use of FBA across diverse student populations and settings, including general education classrooms. They further found that team-based, positive behaviour supports were more effective than FBA on its own. Some researchers (Hurl et al., 2016) report that FBA is approximately four times more likely to increase appropriate behaviour, and that non-FBA approaches are less effective in changing problematic behaviour. There is however, a controversy regarding the procedures involved in the FBA process (Losinski et al., 2014).

These authors reported that the ways that these assessments and determinations are made are not consistent in the literature. While FBA seems to be a promising practice, further work is needed to establish a consistent process across practitioners and researchers to determine most effective implementation practices.

The benefits of FBA are that they are specific and tailored to each individual student. The assessment process includes perspectives from all people who work with the child; hypotheses and interventions are data driven so effectiveness can readily be assessed; and as an evergreen process, something that can be continued if it proven effective, otherwise a new hypothesis testing procedure can be implemented, and programming can be modified. It is also important to note that the interventions selected often change the environment for the student, rather than the forcing the child to comply, as such, students just do better.

A drawback to FBA is that it is very labour intensive. The assessment process can be long, and tedious. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing process can be challenging, as the inappropriate behaviour needs to be observed for several events, and inter-rater reliability of data collection can be inconsistent. In some instances, additional staffing is required to support both data collection and the implementation phases of the process. Although FBA is an evidence-based intervention, its lengthy process is not efficient to get at root causes of behaviour.

Choice Theory

Reality Therapy/Choice Theory (RT/CT) is a therapeutic approach which focuses on goal-directed behaviour and has had many applications to encourage children to become active learners in their school environments. RT/CT was developed by Dr. William Glasser, M.D., who advocated against mainstream treatments of psychiatric disorders at the time, namely, behaviourist or pharmacological approaches in exclusivity. As stated by one of his clinical colleagues, "Reality therapy is a system for mental health, not simply a method to remediate mental disturbance" (Wubbolding, 2015, p. 203). Thus, RT/CT seeks to provide a framework for overall mental health and wellbeing. RT/CT has been used in multiple contexts, including couples counselling, group therapy, individual therapy, Quality Schools, business management, and the like (Glasser, 1998). It has also been used internationally and cross-culturally, but have had specific groundings in North America, Korea, Malaysia, Europe, and the Philippines (Wubbolding, 2015).

Quality World

Glasser's (1998) model describes how individuals navigate the world, and references two worldview constructs. The first being the Perceived World which consists of everything an individual knows or has had experience of. Individuals can each have different perceived worlds based on their life experiences and opportunities for learning. Further, the Perceived World only filters in things that are understood, or things that are valued (i.e., the knowledge filter and the valuing filter). A subset within the Perceived World is the Quality World. Within the Quality World are the pictures or items of the Perceived World that are expected, valued, and needed, and are in a large part informed by one's basic needs. If one's Quality World and reality are congruent, individuals are generally content. If one's Quality World and reality are incongruent, this can signal frustration and causes the system to behave. A foundational theory to Reality Therapy, is that change occurs as a result of frustration in a person's life (Cockrum, 1989), that is, reality not meeting one's expectations. This creates a signal to act in such a way that one's needs or desires can be met.

Basic Needs

A core theoretical tenant to RT/CT is the concept of five basic needs (Glasser, 1998). Our basic needs are genetically encoded, and while theorized in the 1970s, have been affirmed by current neuroscience (Wubbolding, 2015; Glasser, 1998). The first need is primal, and somewhat supersedes the others, and is Survival. Survival includes the need for food, shelter, and security in the immediate environment. The other four needs are not hierarchical and consist of: Love & Belonging (the need to be part of a community and have quality relationships in one's life); Fun (the need to take part in activities, hobbies, or learnings that one enjoys); Freedom (the freedom to do what one chooses to do and/or the freedom from imposed restrictions); and Power (the experience of achievement, recognition, and esteem). Our behaviour and our world view is shaped by our needs, which are individual to the person. Glasser, in several interviews (see Brandt, 1988; Cockrum, 1989; Glasser, 1997, 2000) would indicate that the need for Love & Belonging is often neglected in schools, in favour of coercive strategies which place undue limits on children in schools.

Organized and Organizing Behaviours

Total Behaviour, as described by Glasser (1998), is the culmination of a person's actions, thoughts, feelings, and body physiology in response to a need to behave. Behaviour is needs-oriented, and goal driven. When behaviours result in a basic need being met, they are reinforced, and often repeated. When behaviours are not need-satisfying they are often reorganized and attempted differently. Thus, when an individual displays a behaviour that is consistent and chronic (a habit) it is because on some level it is need-satisfying, whether or not it is a positive or negative behaviour. Children and students are often in a phase of practicing organized behaviours and organizing new behaviours in order to have their needs met. Teaching teams can use this framework to understand behaviours they are observing in their classroom settings.

Development of the CT-FBA.

The CT-FBA was borne from my experience as a school psychologist with a rural school division in Saskatchewan, Canada. I was named to the Behaviour Intervention Team, and we were tasked to set up supports for students who were at-risk for exclusion from regular classroom settings due to behaviour. My training as a psychologist was largely informed by behaviourist approaches, including FBA. One of the issues that I observed as a clinician was that for every child that I worked with, there were several adults who were in some way part of the behavioural issue that I was witnessing. We would gather the adults, and we would discuss the problematic behaviour that the child was exhibiting, and how this behaviour was impacting the teacher, the classroom, other children, and the school community. We would rarely talk about the adults' behaviour, and how these behavioural patterns were impacting the child themselves, and their relationships with their teacher, their classroom, their peers, or themselves as a learner. While as a team we were willing to hold the child accountable for their behaviour, we seemed to not hold the adults to the same level of accountability.

I began to explore the ideas of CT/RT and began to think about shifting the work of our behavioural team away from externalizing psychology (i.e., rewards and punishments) towards processes that included student needs, skills, and choices as it related to their behaviour. There is a role for schools to teach children appropriate behaviours to get their needs met in the school, but we have to use motivational mechanisms that meet our

student's needs more than our own. I also had to use a system that could get buy-in from the adults, who are desperately seeking a solution to the behavioural challenges they are witnessing. Thus, I combined the elements CT/RT with the FBA process.

CT-FBA Process

The CT-FBA is a meeting of relevant stakeholders used to systemically review behavioural data from a student who is displaying challenging behaviours in the school environment. The purpose of the meeting is not to apply externalized control on the student but rather to accomplish two goals: (1) create a need satisfying environment for the student; and (2) identifying skills and behaviours that the child needs to learn. With this information the teaching team creates a plan to create a positive learning environment for the student, and clear direction for teaching skills to assist children in attaining their quality world pieces. The following section will review how the meeting is planned, and how the CT-FBA form is used to guide the team towards a clear plan to support the student.

There are a couple of logistics to consider when setting up this meeting. First, is to identify who the team, and who should be invited to this meeting. Depending on the context, it can involve small teams (e.g., parents, teacher, student), or large teams (e.g., school planning teams, consultants, and administrators). The chair of the meeting should ideally have certification and experience with RT/CT, and if not, a working knowledge of the principles. This form can be reproduced so everyone has a copy, or it can be projected on a computer screen so that everyone can see the work coming together. The meeting will take about 90 minutes, and there may be some questions that cannot be answered by the team present, so a follow up meeting to complete the work and refine the program plan may be necessary. The student may or may not be involved in this plan, given the child's age and capacity. It should be noted that this program planning process is ultimately to change the behaviour of the teachers, parents, and others who are involved in working with the student rather than the student's behaviour directly. Thus, input from the student is very important, however, this may occur outside of the meeting context.

At the onset of the meeting, I review the following tenants of the CT-FBA:

There are a few guiding principles that will guide our discussions today. They include:

- *Teachers have a greater influence on the learning environment, rather than on the student*
- *Students require predictability, relationships, and safety*
- *Behaviour is learned, therefore, it can be unlearned*

From a Choice Theory Perspective further, we understand that students will work hard for teachers that:

- *The student cares about and who care about them (Love & Belonging)*
- *The student respects and who respect them (Power)*
- *Allow the student to think for themselves and provide with choices (Freedom)*
- *Allow for laughter and fun. (Fun)*
- *Provide conditions for physical and emotional security (Survival).*

The following section reviews the meeting agenda, and the data points that need to be collected in order to develop the program plan. A sample form is provided in Appendix A that can be reproduced for readers and their purposes.

1. Identification of the student

This section reviews the essential data about the student. It includes the student's name, date of birth and school. It also identifies classroom teachers that work with the student during the school day. The parents/guardians are also identified as important members of the student's team. A meeting schedule is determined for the initial meeting, and a follow up meeting. An individual is identified as being the chair of the team, ideally this should be an individual who can make sure that all perspectives are being represented during the CT-FBA, and that the basic tenants of choice theory are being privileged. For this reason, it's ideal that the chair be certified and experienced in RT/CT.

2. Identification of the planning team

The planning team members can include teachers, administrators, student support specialists (e.g., counsellors, psychologists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, consultants), educational assistants. It can also include the parents as collaborative team members. In my experience, I have had the parents and school team meet jointly at times, and separately at other times. It is important that the chair be a neutral and encouraging to both parents and the school, particularly in cases where a student's behaviour is challenging to the home and/or school environment. At this point in the meeting, it is helpful to go around the table, having all members introduce themselves and their role working with the child. At times, the team members do not know how everyone that may be involved with the child's academic day.

It is important to note, that the point of a CT-FBA is to get all the adults on the same page when it comes to a child's behaviour. The point is not to exert external control on the child's behaviour. As such, the process that the team will follow is to build insight into the adult's influence on the learning environment and support the creation of a quality school environment where both the teacher and the student can have their needs and expectations met. Thus, it is important that the team be a safe and encouraging space, utilizing the seven connecting habits (i.e., supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting, and negotiating differences).

3. Identification of student strengths

It is important at the onset of the meeting that the first discussion of the child will be on the student's strengths. I have used the *Circle of Courage* philosophy (Brendtro et al., 2006) to assist the team to identify strengths across belonging (i.e., social functioning); mastery (i.e., talents); independence (i.e., able to make choices, solve problems, make decisions); and generosity (i.e., giving of oneself to others). At times this may be a challenging part of the meeting; however, it is essential to assist the team in getting a broad view of the child. Through identifying children's strengths, we also identify the adaptive skills they have already acquired and use this as a basis to scaffold the skills that still need to be acquired.

4. Identification of student challenges

Next, the team identifies the student behaviours that are a challenge in the school environment. The chair must be very diligent to assure that this discussion does not overtake the meeting. Often, I will introduce this section to say, *"What is the most challenging behaviour that we want to address today? Keep in mind, we will not be able to solve all of the problems today, but we can likely work on one or two. What is the problem we wish to address today in this meeting."*

Once everyone has shared and come to an agreement, the behaviour of focus is identified. Other issues may be identified, but these will need to be discussed at a future meeting. It is important to describe the behaviour in specific, observable terms (e.g., *leaving the classroom during instruction vs. storming out when frustrated*).

5. Review of collected data about student behaviour

At this point the team reviews any behavioural data that has been collected, specific to the identified behaviour for this meeting. There may be anecdotal records, observation checklists, office referrals, discipline records, or ABC charts (antecedent, behaviour, consequence). If none of these items are available, the BOATS resource provides two useful checklists to help identify potential functions for the behaviour, including the FAST, and the PBQ. Common outcomes from this review can be sensory (e.g., a response to external environment of light sound or texture or internal physiology, including fatigue, hunger, pain), escape (e.g., from peers, teachers, less preferred tasks), attention (e.g., from peers, teacher, parents), and tangibles (e.g., to acquire an item). This information can be useful in the behavioural analysis.

6. Review of student's quality world

This question shifts the perspective away from the student behaviour, towards the student perspective. This question may be asked of the student ahead of the meeting, or it can be reflected by the participants who know the student well. If this is a difficult question for the team to answer, I will ask prompting questions like:

- When during the school day is the student at their best?
- When does the student seem happiest or most content?
- If you were to ask the student, what would you imagine they would say the best part of their school day is?
- What do you think the child's expectations are when they come to school?

The purpose of this section is to find the environment where the student can do well and use this information to help the team create a learning environment that can meet the child's quality world pictures.

7. Review of student needs

In this section, the team reviews each of the five basic needs (i.e., Survival, Love & Belonging, Fun, Freedom, and Power), and identifies if the child's needs are being met, both on a holistic level, and also in the school. Often, if team members are not aware of the five basic needs, this needs to be reviewed. If the need is being met, the team moves on to the next need. If the need is not being met, the team is asked what organized behaviours does the child demonstrate to meet that need. This question may link directly to the problematic behaviours that are under discussion, or they may identify other behaviours that the child exhibits. Most often, the team starts to make connections between the behaviours the child is displaying to the goals the child is training to attain. Most often, this results in a sense of empathy and understanding towards the child. Finally, the team identifies other behaviours the child may need to learn in order to meet a specific need.

8. Choice-Theory informed Functional Behavioural Analysis

At this point in the meeting, the team returns to the original behaviour, and begins to analyze it across three components. First, they review the antecedents (i.e., the environment where the behaviour is most likely to occur). This could be a time of day, a location, during a particular activity or task, or in a particular social interaction. Next, the team reviews the outcomes from the behaviour from an SEAT perspective (sensory, escape, attention, or tangible). Finally, they identify which need is being met by the behaviour (e.g., Survival, Love & Belonging, Fun, Freedom, and Power). This information will be used subsequently to create the Behaviour Program Plan.

9. Behaviour Program Plan

The behaviour program plan is developed by the team, either at the meeting, or by members taking the information, reflecting on it, and returning back to the team with directions to move forward. A hypothesis can use the following sentence stem: "Student will display (Behaviour) when (Antecedent) in order to (Consequence) and meet their need for (Need)." Once the sentence stem is complete, the team can then consider three types of changes that can be made to the student's environment. These interventions can be proactive (e.g., occur before the behaviour occurs); responsive (e.g., what are the adults going to do in response to the behaviour); and positive program supports (e.g., what structured skill-based teaching will need to occur). Again, the focus of the team is not to punish or reward behaviour, but rather to change the learning environment and instructional practices to assisting the child to learn pro-social organized behaviours to have their needs met.

10. Setting roles and responsibilities

Each of the team members who participate in the meeting should identify their role and responsibilities as it relates to the behaviour program plan. It is important to specifically address issues of communication between the student, teacher, school team, and parents. There may also be specific commitments that each team member takes on. Establishing these roles is vital for the plan to be a success for all.

11. Continued follow up

While the participation in the meeting can instigate a significant change alone through a change of perspective, it is also important that the team who is part of creating this plan review it on a regular schedule. I recommend follow up meetings biweekly when the plan is getting started to work out any details, and increasing the interval as needed.

Benefits of the CT-FBA

In my experience, team members and students have demonstrated a high interest in participating in the CT-FBA process. The structure of the conversation allows for an expression of their concerns as it relates to the student's behaviour, but further allows for a new insight as to why the behaviour is occurring, and what they as teachers can do to support the student. Overall, I have observed a shift among planning team members moving away from disconnecting behaviours as they relate to the student (e.g., criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, or rewarding to control), moving towards connecting behaviours (e.g., supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting, and negotiating differences) (Glasser, 2013). It is important to recognize that the purpose of the CT-FBA is intended to change the behaviours of the teaching team in support of the student who needs to learn new organizing behaviours to have their needs

met. This process results in an exploration of RT/CT principals, greater self-reflection on the part of the teaching team, and allows for a reconsideration and reframing of the student's behaviour.

To illustrate how the CT-FBA can result in behavioural change for teachers and students, I'll provide an example from my work. In this case, my student would often disengage from classroom activities and would actively distract their peers. When their peers would disengage, my student would hit, push, or call the peer a name. When the teacher was called to the situation, the student would fairly easily redirect to the task, but once the teacher's attention moved to someone else, the student would again attempt to bother another student.

Following a traditional FBA, the hypothesis for the behaviour would be that "The student engages in hitting, pushing, and name calling when working on independent classroom tasks in order to gain attention from their peers." A result of this hypothesis could result in the following programming recommendations:

- Provision of a token system to reward child for working independently
- Removal of child from the classroom during independent work tasks (e.g., the hallway)
- Increased consequence for misbehaviour in this environment
- A review of expected behaviours daily

Following a CT-FBA, a deeper analysis would determine that the student has unmet needs for love and belonging and is continuously looking for approval from peers and teachers. Thus, the hypothesis for the behaviour might be that "The student engages in hitting, pushing, and name calling when working on independent classroom tasks to gain attention from their peers in order to meet their need for love and belonging." A result of this hypothesis could result in the following programming recommendations:

- Increased time with teachers and peers throughout the day to model appropriate social skills
- Negotiated and consistent times for cooperative learning
- Review of academic activities and choices during independent work times
- Rewards system to include need satisfying items (e.g., additional peer time after completed work)

Future Work

The development of the CT-FBA has come out of five years of professional practice and embedding its use within one school district. Further evaluation of this measure is indicated by independent practitioners. Further studies reviewing the application of the CT-FBA are planned, and any readers who are interested in using this tool are invited to contact the author to share their feedback and experiences.

References

- Brandt, R. (1988). On students' needs and team learning: A conversation with William Glasser. *Educational Leadership*, 45(6), 38.
- Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Bockern, S. (2006). The circle of courage and positive psychology. *Reclaiming Children and Youth: The Journal of Strength-Based Interventions*, 14.
- Cockrum, J. R. (1989). Reality therapy: Interviews with Dr. William Glasser. *Psychology: A Journal of Human Behavior*, 26(1), 13–16.
- Durand, V. M., & Crimmins, D. B. (1988). Identifying the variables maintaining self-injurious behavior. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 18(1), 99–117.
- Gage, N. A., Lewis, T. J., & Stichter, J. P. (2012). Functional behavioral assessment-based interventions for students with or at risk for emotional and/or behavioral disorders in school: A hierarchical linear modeling meta-analysis. *Behavioral Disorders*, 37(2), 55–77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019874291203700201>
- Glasser, W. (1997). A new look at school failure and school success. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(8), 596–602.
- Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice Theory*. Haper Collins.
- Glasser, W. (2000). School violence from the perspective of William Glasser. *Professional School Counseling*, 4(2), 77.
- Goh, A. E., & Bambara, L. M. (2012). Individualized positive behavior support in school settings: A meta-analysis. *Remedial and Special Education*, 33(5), 271–286. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932510383990>
- Hurl, K., Wightman, J., Haynes, S. N., & Virues-Ortega, J. (2016). Does a pre-intervention functional assessment increase intervention effectiveness? A meta-analysis of within-subject interrupted time-series studies. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 47, 71–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2016.05.003>
- Lloyd, B. P., & Kennedy, C. H. (2014). Assessment and treatment of challenging behaviour for individuals with intellectual disability: a research review. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 27(3), 187–199. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12089>
- Losinski, M., Maag, J. W., Katsiyannis, A., & Ennis, R. P. (2014). Examining the effects and quality of interventions based on the assessment of contextual variables: A meta-analysis. *Exceptional Children*, 80(4), 407–422. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402914527243>
- Moreno, G., Wong-Lo, M., Short, M., & Bullock, L. M. (2014). Implementing a culturally attuned functional behavioural assessment to understand and address challenging behaviours demonstrated by students from diverse backgrounds. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 19(4), 343–355. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2013.860682>
- O'Neill, S., & Stephenson, J. (2010). The use of functional behavioural assessment for students with challenging behaviours: Current patterns and experience of Australian practitioners. *Australian Journal of Educational & Developmental Psychology*, 10, 18.
- Wubbolding, R. E. (2015). The voice of William Glasser: Accessing the continuing evolution of reality therapy. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 37(3), 189–205.

APPENDIX A: CT-FBA Meeting Form

Choice Theory – Functional Behavioural Assessment (CT-FBA) Form

Student: _____ **DOB:** _____ **Grade:** _____
School: _____ **Teacher(s)** _____
Parent/Guardian: _____
Planning Meeting Date: _____ **Next Meeting Date:** _____
Meeting Chaired By: _____

Planners (Names & Positions of people involved in collecting data and developing this plan):

Strengths of the Student:

Behaviours of concern? Prioritize the behaviours of most concern:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

FBA data collected by the school team:

From a Choice Theory/Control Theory perspective, identify the student's Quality World Pictures (what would the child want in an ideal school environment):

Needs:

Questions	<i>Is this need being met?</i>	<i>What organized (consistent, habitual) behaviours does the child demonstrate that are need satisfying?</i>	<i>What behaviours does the child need to learn how to do?</i>
Survival			
Love & Belonging			
Fun			
Freedom			
Power			

Functional Behavioural Analysis

Behaviour	Setting Events where/when behaviour is most likely to occur (Antecedents)	Outcomes (Consequences – SEAT, sensory, escape, attention, tangible)	Satisfied Need (Survival, Love & Belonging, Freedom, Fun, Power)

Behaviour Behaviour Plan

Hypothesis	Proactive (Preventative)	Responsive (Reactive – Consequence)	Positive Program Supports

Roles & Responsibilities:

Teacher		SS Coordinator	
Admin		Psychologist	
EA		Counsellor	
Parent		SST	
Other		Outside Agency	

Brief Bio –

Dr. Conor Barker, Ph.D., CTRTC is an Assistant Professor of Inclusive Education with St. Francis Xavier University. Dr. Barker is a teacher, psychologist, and scholar of inclusive education and educational psychology. Dr. Barker has over 15 years of experience in inclusive education as an educational assistant, classroom teacher, special programs teacher, and school psychologist. Dr. Barker's research area focuses on inclusive practices in rural and minority language contexts, and the development of clinical competency and creative practice within school psychology.

Author's Note

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to Conor Barker, Faculty of Education, 4545 Alumni Drive, Antigonish, NS, B2G 2W5. Email cbarker@stfx.ca

ENHANCING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN P-12 SCHOOLS USING A CHOICE THEORY FRAMEWORK

Cynthia Palmer Mason, Dept. of Counseling and Student Affairs, Western Kentucky U.
Lori Mason-Bennett, Department of Health Sciences, DeVry University

Abstract

This study was designed to examine the perceptions of educators and concerned citizens toward the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools. The participants were school administrators, school counselors, teachers, parents, as well as concerned citizens. Those in each category were asked what they perceived to be important to decreasing the academic achievement gap(s) in schools. In addition, space was provided for each respondent to identify what they thought would be most effective in decreasing the academic achievement gap and to write comments, suggestions, and/or concerns regarding the academic achievement gap(s) identified. Results of these findings suggest that most educators and citizens are concerned about the academic achievement of students in P-12 schools; and they feel that more can be done to diminish the achievement gap(s). Lastly, implications for enhancing academic achievement in P-12 schools using a choice theory framework and suggestions for additional research are explored.

Keywords: academic achievement, achievement gap, choice theory, relationships, training

Enhancing Academic Achievement in P-12 Schools Using a Choice Theory Framework

This study examines the perceptions of school administrators, school counselors, teachers, parents, and concerned citizens toward the academic achievement gap(s) in P-12 schools (Mason, Hughey, & Burke, 2016). The *academic achievement gap* is defined as the term used to describe the difference in the educational and social outcomes for White versus underrepresented racial and ethnic minority students (Darling-Hammond, 2006). "Achievement gaps occur when one group of students (such as, students grouped by race/ethnicity, gender) outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant" (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019). The gaps are reflected mostly in grades, standardized test scores, high school graduation rates, placement in special education and advanced placement courses, and suspension and expulsion rates (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

This topic has been used to encourage teachers to expand their awareness of multiculturalism and diversity as they think and talk about the academic achievement gap in education. Rather than focusing solely on the typical factors of the achievement gap disparities among the different races and ethnicities of students, such as, socioeconomic status and language, etc., it has been suggested to broaden the analysis of what affects the achievement gap in schools (Jeynes, 2015).

The academic achievement gap received national attention in 2001 when the federal "No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)" was enacted (2001). This law authorized several federal education programs that are administered by the states. Under the NCLB law, student academic achievements were monitored within school systems. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 2009 and 2011 reported that Black and Hispanic students

trailed their White peers by an average of more than 20 test-score points on the *National Assessment of Educational Progress* (NAEP, 2019). In addition, math and reading assessments at 4th and 8th grades showed a lag difference of about two grade levels (NCES, 2019).

Research studies focusing on the causes of achievement gaps between low-income minority students and middle-income students have been ongoing since the 1966 publication of the report, *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, which was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education (Equality of Educational Opportunity, 1966). The results of that research indicated that both in-school and home/community factors impact the academic achievement of students and contribute to the gap.

For decades, policymakers, researchers, and school reformers have sought ways for schools to effectively address the achievement gap. One reason for the widespread concern over the gap in student achievement is that it involves significant social and economic costs. Low educational achievement is associated with lower wages, higher unemployment, underemployment, greater dependency on welfare, and higher crime. Another reason for the far-reaching concern over the achievement gap is that the ethnic diversity of the U.S. population is increasingly growing and, by 2020, it is expected that school districts in most cities will have student populations composed of predominantly students of color (Henig, Hula, Orr, & Pedescleaux, 1999).

The focus on the academic achievement gap has intensified since the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was passed in 2001. With the passage of NCLB, decreasing achievement gaps among various student groups became a priority for federal education accountability. Schools and districts were required to disaggregate student performance data to enable better comparisons between groups. This attention led to more targeted interventions to enhance academic achievement for different groups of students (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011).

Efforts to combat the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools have been numerous and have included creating smaller schools, reducing class sizes, expanding early-childhood programs, raising academic standards, improving the quality of teachers for poor and minority students, and encouraging more minority students to take higher-level courses (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011). As a result, the achievement gap seems to have narrowed somewhat in recent years; however, there continues to be large disparities between black and white students and between Hispanic and white students in the U.S. (Achievement Gap, 2011).

Although schools have little influence over poverty or community factors, what happens in schools could lessen their negative impact (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). With every passing year, the damage from the academic achievement gap continues to mount. Lower rates of high school graduation contribute to less employment, higher rates of incarceration, substance abuse, ill health, and intergenerational poverty (Washington State Legislature, 2008). It seems reasonable to suggest that the focus should be somewhat different and other measures to close the achievement gap in schools should be considered.

Method

The design of this study emerged in response to the prevalence of the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools. The investigators (Mason, Hughey, & Burke, 2016) developed an instrument to gather perceptions of the academic achievement gap in schools. They were particularly interested in the feelings of educators and concerned citizens about

what they think is most important to decreasing the achievement gap in schools. The participants were school administrators, school counselors, teachers, parents, and concerned citizens. They were asked to complete a self-report survey using an electronic platform (Qualtrics). Participants were contacted by e-mail and social media.

The survey instrument requested responses to two demographic items: (a) position as parent, teacher, school counselor, school administrator, or concerned citizen; and (b) level of education. These items were followed by eight statements that participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement on; their choices ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In addition, there were two items at the end of the questionnaire that requested written responses. The first item asked each participant to indicate what he/she thought would be most effective in decreasing the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools; the second item asked each participant to make any comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools. Investigators performed statistical item-analysis of the data from the instruments to provide percentages for analysis and comparison.

The investigators were particularly interested in the feelings of educators and concerned citizens who shared similar experiences and concerns. Consequently, they formulated these four research questions:

1. Does it appear that participants believe that more can be done to decrease the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools?
2. What are the basic themes perceived as important to decreasing the academic achievement gap?
3. Do the perceptions of these themes differ significantly by specific participants (parents, teachers, school counselors, school administrators, concerned citizens)?
4. Do the perceptions of these themes differ significantly among participants by their educational level?

Results

A questionnaire, designed by the investigators (Mason, Hughey, & Burke, 2016), served to collect data from the study participants. As shown in Table 1, a total of 136 respondents completed the survey. Of these 136 participants, 39 (28.68%) were parents; 17 (12.50%) were teachers; 2 (1.47%) were school counselors; 5 (3.68%) were school administrators; and 73 (53.68%) were concerned citizens. In addition, of the 135 respondents who provided information indicating their educational attainment, 54 (40.00%) indicated they had a high school or G.E.D. diploma; 14 (10.37%) indicated they had an associate degree; 16 (11.85%) indicated they earned a bachelor's degree; 21 (15.56%) indicated they completed a master's degree; and 16 (11.85%) indicated they had an advanced degree.

The questionnaire asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with statements related to the Achievement Gap in P-12 Schools (See Table 1). Results of the educators and concerned citizens' responses to all eight items on the survey indicate strong agreement with statements related to the Academic Achievement Gap in P-12 Schools. These results suggest that educators and other citizens are concerned with the achievement gap in schools and feel that more can be done to decrease the gap. For instance, 92.64% of all respondents indicated that they strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that more can be done to decrease the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools; 94.11% of all respondents strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that professional development for teachers should focus primarily on enhancing academic achievement; and 85.22 % of all

respondents suggest that teachers' annual evaluations should reflect the academic progress of their students.

The first research question asked, "Does it appear that participants believe that more can be done to decrease the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools?" Results of item-analysis indicate that 92.64% of participants strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that more can be done to decrease the academic achievement gap in schools.

The second research question asked, "What are the basic themes perceived as important to decreasing the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools?" Results of data analysis indicate that most comments seem to fit the basic themes of "the greater need for professional development or training for educators, relationship building, and student assistance."

The third research question asked, "Do the perceptions of these themes differ significantly by specific participants (parents, school counselors, school administrators, teachers, and concerned citizens). The number of participants in each group is not the same; in fact, over 50% of the participants indicated that they are concerned citizens. However, the results of the responses from all participants indicate strong agreement on the basic themes perceived as important to decreasing the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools (96.30% professional development or training for educators; 94.11% relationship building; 97.04% student assistance). These results seem to indicate no significant difference across participants.

The fourth research question asked, "Do the perceptions of these themes differ significantly among participants by their educational level?" As mentioned earlier, the number of participants in each group is not the same; however, item-analysis of the responses from all participants indicate strong agreement on the basic themes perceived as important to decreasing the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools (96.30% professional development or training for educators; 94.11% relationship building; and 97.04% student assistance). Thus, this seems to indicate no significant difference by educational level.

The findings in this study compel the conclusions that participants (school counselors, school administrators, teachers, parents, and concerned citizens) are concerned about the academic achievement of students in P-12 schools and they believe that more can be done to decrease the achievement gaps. In addition, the basic themes perceived as important to decreasing the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools are professional development or training for educators, relationship building, and student assistance. The perceptions of these themes neither differ significantly across participants nor by educational level. These conclusions are supported by the results from our data analysis.

Discussion

As stated previously, studies to determine the causes of gaps in academic achievement between low-income minority students and middle-income white students have been ongoing since the 1966 publication of the report, "Equality of Educational Opportunity," which was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education (Equality of Educational Opportunity, 1966). Trend data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has indicated that attempts to eliminate the gap have been numerous (Achievement Gap, 2011). These efforts have included reducing class sizes, creating smaller schools, expanding early-childhood programs, raising academic standards, improving the quality of teachers provided to poor and minority students, and encouraging minority students to take higher level courses (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011).

Despite these reform efforts, African-American students continue to underachieve in comparison to students from other racial and ethnic backgrounds (Braun, Wang, Jenkins, & Weinbaum, 2006; Campbell, Hombo, & Mazzeo, 2000). In fact, with every passing year, the damage continues to mount. The lower rates of high school graduation contribute to less employment, higher rates of incarceration, substance abuse, ill health, and intergenerational poverty (Washington State Legislature, 2008).

It seems reasonable to suggest that perhaps the problems with academic achievement for African-American and other minority students have more to do with a lack of intrinsic motivation than with external factors. This thinking supports the findings of Ohrt who worked extensively with groups of students who were struggling academically and at-risk of falling behind or dropping out of school (Meyers, 2015). He and his team researched which elements were most predictive of students' academic success or failure and found that social and emotional factors played larger roles than GPA's and test scores.

These findings are consistent with the results of a study by Royle and Brown (2014) that included an analysis of principals' perceptions of the academic achievement gap between African-American students and White students. School administrators from campuses with a substantial number of African-American students within the subgroup were interviewed to explore their perceptions of the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools. The results revealed factors within the principal's role that affect academic achievement with African-American students. The three themes that developed from structured analysis of the interview data were: (a) staff must build authentic relationships to increase students' intrinsic motivation, (b) needs-driven instruction generates higher individual student achievement, and (c) staff members require more professional development to better meet all students' needs (Royle & Brown, 2014).

Moreover, the findings from this study are consistent with the concepts of Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005). They conducted a meta-analysis that included 69 studies and created a list of 21 responsibilities that make an effective school leader. One of the most critical responsibilities was engaging in productive communication with and among teachers and students. Also, the former Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, focused on the need to strengthen school leadership and find better ways to train school principals in his address to the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Duncan, 2013).

In addition, Reeves (2009) posited that the school principal has an important impact on student success by shaping the climate and making changes on the campus that affect not only the students but the teachers as well. Similarly, Glasser (2008) suggested that school principals should be involved in the training recommended for school administrators, faculty, and staff in *Every Student Can Succeed* because their perceptions impact the school environment. Furthermore, he suggested that there will be no major change for the better in schools unless the principals lead the way.

Glasser (2008) explains how to reach and teach every student in your school. *Every Student Can Succeed* is perhaps the most useful book for educators that Dr. Glasser wrote. Teachers will find themselves in the pages of the book, recognize their students, discover effective ways to help them feel included, and become more involved in school.

The school environment is important (Glasser, 1990, 1991, 1996, 2008). Creating a joyful, cooperative environment will not happen, however, without some effort. Schools that have done this have changed the way they relate to students. They have made it a point to get closer to them, individually and as a group. Schools have learned to connect by moving

from an external control environment, which destroys student-teacher-classroom relationships, to a choice theory environment, which connects teachers, students, and parents (Glasser, 2008).

Students, faculty, and staff are taught to use choice theory in their personal lives and in their work at school. Choice theory is the theoretical basis for reality therapy; it explains why and how people function. Reality therapy provides the delivery system for helping individuals take more effective control of their lives. Therapy consists mainly of helping students to make more effective choices as they deal with the people and situations in their lives. For therapy to be effective, it is essential for the counselor/teacher to establish a satisfactory relationship with the student.

Choice theory practitioners stress the importance of the therapeutic relationship which is the foundation for effective counseling outcomes (Wubbolding & Brickell, 1999). The atmosphere is one of firmness and friendliness (Wubbolding, 2000). Choice theory administrators, counselors, and teachers are usually able to develop effective relationships with students because they possess the personal qualities of warmth, sincerity, congruence, understanding, acceptance, concern, openness, and respect for each individual (Corey, 2017).

School counselors and teachers with choice theory training can enhance relationships among students. Glasser (2008) explains how teachers and counselors can use *Circle-Ups* with groups. The Circle-Up is a powerful communal learning tool that gives students practice in speaking and listening while fulfilling the need for belonging and connection. The use of circles with groups offers a safe, welcoming, and receptive space that moves from person-to-person, where everyone can see each other, talk honestly, and all voices can be heard. As such, the circle creates a place that invites sharing and storytelling, as well as facilitates group cohesion. Circles also provide an opportunity for all involved to collectively learn and find solutions as well as build their confidence and skills. With a focus on each person in the group, the use of circles with groups tends to be progressive and change oriented. A common factor in the success of circles with groups is the value of relationships through building collaboration and respect within the group (Dye, Burke, & Mason, 2021).

Before starting a circle, an emphasis should be made to the class that everyone will respect everyone and only one person will speak at a time. Next, emphasize to students that the group is their space as much as it is that of the faculty and the more each member brings things up for discussion, the more the group will be able to help one another. To begin the first Circle-Up, and ask students to arrange their chairs in a circle. Remember that regardless of the format of the course you are teaching, the circle is an opportunity to help one another like a family helping each other when help is needed.

In the Circle-Up, the WDEP procedures will serve as the framework for discussing how faculty can help students understand how they can make decisions that can add to or subtract from their well-being. The acronym WDEP was developed by Wubbolding (2000). Each letter represents a cluster of appropriate skills and techniques to encourage members of the group to take better control of their lives and thereby fulfill their needs in ways that are satisfying to them and possibly to others (W=wants, needs, and perceptions; D=direction and doing; E=self-evaluation; and P=planning). The goal is to weave these components together in ways that can lead students to evaluate their choices and decide how to move in more effective directions.

W=Wants, Needs, and Perceptions. Faculty will ask volunteers to start the discussion by introducing themselves and talking about what they want or need help with and continue

the discussion until each student has had the opportunity to participate. Students are allowed to discuss what they have heard from their classmates, and they should be encouraged to talk, but not pressured. For most of them, the idea that they have learned something in class that is relevant and useful outside of class should be a very positive revelation.

D=Direction and Doing. The focus at this point of the discussion is on helping students to increase their awareness of possible consequences of their choices, including the overall direction of their lives, where they are going, and where their behavior is leading them. A focus of the conversation could be to ponder if their current behavior is leading them in the direction where they want to be in a month, a year, or two years. The intent at this time should be on helping students to increase their awareness of what their choices look like from a distance and gaining awareness of and changing current behavior if they desire.

E=Self-Evaluation. After exploring wants, needs, and perceptions and discussing direction and doing; self-evaluation is the next step. Students are asked to describe their behavior, wants, perceptions, and levels of commitment and then to make judgments about them. Through questioning from the faculty and comments from classmates, students can contemplate and determine if what they are doing is helping and leading them in a direction that will enable them to reach their goals. Questions faculty can pose to the group for self-evaluation can focus on if they perceive their behavior as helping them or hurting them, important or unimportant, meaningful or meaningless, and if it is to their advantage or not to their advantage. Usually, people do not change until they decide that what they are doing is not helping them to accomplish what they want. After this discussion, students are generally ready to explore other possible behaviors and likely formulate plans for change.

P=Planning. During this phase of Circle-Up, students focus on formulating structured plans for change. The process of developing and carrying out plans enables students to begin to gain effective control of their lives, which gives them a starting point. The most effective plans originate within students and should be stated in terms of what the students are willing to do. They should be flexible and open to revision as students gain a deeper understanding of the specific behaviors they want to change. Faculty should encourage students to put their plans in writing and they should attempt to periodically check in throughout the semester to see how students are doing and if they may be of assistance.

Using Circle-Ups in the learning environment can provide support and enhance a student's sense of belonging. The circle creates a place that invites sharing and storytelling and facilitates group cohesion. When students can see each other's faces and be heard, circles offer an opportunity for all involved to collectively learn and find solutions while building confidence and skills which could enhance academic achievement. This thinking is supported by Ohrt who worked extensively with groups of students who were struggling academically and at-risk of falling behind or dropping out of school (Meyers, 2015). As noted earlier, he and his team researched which elements were most predictive of students' academic success or failure and found that social and emotional factors played larger roles than GPA's and test scores.

The focus on the academic achievement gap has intensified since the NCLB Act was passed in 2001. Efforts to combat the gap have been numerous; however, there continues to be large disparities between black and white students and between Hispanic and white students in the U.S. (Achievement Gap, 2011). The complex problem of the achievement gap that exists between African-American and White students needs solutions that are practical and effective (Bulris, 2010). At this point, it appears that the focus for decreasing the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools should be somewhat different and other

measures to close the gap should be considered. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest using a choice theory framework to enhance academic achievement for all students in P-12 schools. In addition, it is recommended that school districts follow the directions from Glasser (2008) by requiring and providing choice theory training with a focus on enhancing academic achievement and relationships for all school personnel which includes principals, faculty, and staff. It is also recommended that additional research is explored, that copies of *Every Student Can Succeed* are purchased for all training participants, and that professional school counselors and teachers are taught to use the WDEP system to facilitate the most effective use of reality therapy.

These proposed changes have the potential to significantly enhance the academic achievement of all students in P-12 schools and are also in accordance with the basic themes perceived as important to decreasing the academic achievement gap in the current study (professional development or training for educators, relationship building, and student assistance). Perhaps, more important, there is reason to believe that these proposed changes have the potential to enhance the academic experience for all students while also creating a better educated and more equitable society.

References

Achievement Gap. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/issues/achievement-gap/index.html>

Braun, H. I., Wang, A., Jenkins, F., & Weinbaum, E. (2006). The Black-white achievement gap; Do state policies matter? Education Policy Analysis Archives, 14(8). Retrieved June 22, 2009, from <http://epaaa.asu.edu/epaa/y14n8/>

Bulris, M. (2010). *A meta-analysis of research on the mediated effects of principal leadership on student achievement: Examining the effect size of school culture on student achievement as an indicator of teacher effectiveness*. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3389429)

Campbell, J., Hombo, C., & Mazzeo, J. (2000). NAEP 1999 trends in academic progress: Three decades of student performance (NCES 2000469). Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Corey, G. (2017). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Gives AERA's third annual brown lecture in education research. *Educational Researcher*, 35(9), 50-51.

Duncan, A. (Director). (2013, February 28). Supporting and strengthening school leadership. *National Association of Secondary Principals National Conference*. Lecture conducted from NASSP, National Harbor.

Dye, L., Burke, M. G., & Mason, C.P. (2021). *Mindful strategies for helping college students manage stress: A guide for higher education professionals*. Routledge.

Editorial Projects in Education Research Center. (2011, July 7). Issues A-Z: Achievement gap. *Education Week*. Retrieved 08/29/2015 from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/achievement-gap/>

Equality of Educational Opportunity. (1966). Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/mobile/doc/89990298>

Glasser, W. (1990). *The quality school*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins.

Glasser, W. (1991). *The quality school teacher*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins.

Glasser, W. (1996). *Choice theory*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins.

Glasser, W. (2008). *Every student can succeed*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins.

Henig, J. R., Hula, R. C., Orr, M., & Pedescleaux, D. S. (1999). *The color of school reform: Race, politics, and the challenge of urban education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2007). *School counseling to close the achievement gap*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Jeynes, W. H. (2015). A meta-analysis on the factors that best reduce the achievement gap. *Education and Urban Society*, 47(5), 523-554.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). The 21 responsibilities of the school leader. *School leadership that works from research to results* (pp. 41-64). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Mason, C. P., Hughey, A. W., & Burke, M. G. (2016). Using Lead Management Principles to Decrease the Achievement Gap in P-12 Schools. www.irbnet.org [964949-1]

Meyers, L. (2015). Group effort. *Counseling Today*, 57, (12), 30-37.

NAEP: The nation's report card. (2019). National assessment of educational progress, 1-1.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2019, July 5). Achievement Gaps. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/studies/gaps>

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. (H. R. 1). Retrieved July 29, 2009 from <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/>

Reeves, D. B. (2009). *Leading change in your school: How to conquer myths, build commitment, and get results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Royle, J., & Brown, C. G. (2014). *School administrators' perceptions of the achievement gap between African American students and White students*. NCPEA Education Leadership Review of Doctoral Research, Vol. 1, No. 2-October, 2014 ISSN: 1532-0723 National Council of Professors of Educational Administration.

Washington State Legislature. (2008). *Educational inequality: A growing crisis*. Report of the HB2722 Advisory Committee. Retrieved from <http://www.us/publications>

Wubbolding, R. (2000). *Reality therapy for the 21st century*. Phila., PA: Brunner-Routledge.

Wubbolding, R., & Brickell, J. (1999). *Counselling with reality therapy*. Oxfordshire, UK: Speechmark.

Table 1**Level of Agreement with Statements Related to the Achievement Gap in P-12 Schools**

Statement	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Somewhat Agreed	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagreed
"I believe more can be done to decrease the academic achievement gap in P-12 schools."	67 (49.26%)	46 (33.82%)	13 (9.56%)	5 (3.68%)	2 (1.47%)	1 (0.74%)	2 (1.47%)
"I think the required professional development for teachers should focus primarily on enhancing academic achievement."	57 (41.91%)	38 (27.94%)	33 (24.26)	5 (3.68%)	1 (0.74%)	1 (0.74%)	1 (0.74%)
"I think teachers' annual evaluations should reflect the academic achievement of their students."	42 (30.88)	37 (27.21)	37 (27.2%)	6 (4.41%)	7 (5.15%)	2 (1.47%)	5 (3.68%)
"I think school administrators should be specifically trained to impact the academic achievement gap in their schools."	61 (45.19)	49 (36.30)	20 (14.8%)	4 (2.96%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (0.74%)
"I think each school should provide after school tutoring in reading and math in grades 1-5."	77 (57.04)	37 (27.41)	17 (12.5%)	2 (1.48%)	1 (0.74%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (0.74%)
"I think elementary teachers in grades 1-5 should be trained to evaluate academic performance consistently, communicate necessary information to parents, and involve parents in writing enhancement programs for their children."	78 (57.35)	42 (30.88)	8 (5.88%)	5 (3.68%)	2 (1.47%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (0.74%)
"I think school counselors should lead the efforts to decrease the academic achievement gaps in P-12 schools."	46 (34.07)	47 (34.81)	21 (15.5%)	9 (6.67%)	5 (3.70%)	4 (2.96%)	3 (2.22%)

"I think it is important for school principals to support the efforts of school counselors as they work to decrease the academic achievement gaps in P-12 schools."	77 (57.04%)	42 (31.11%)	10 (7.41%)	2 (1.48%)	2 (1.48%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (1.48%)
---	----------------	----------------	---------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

Brief Bio –

Cynthia Palmer Mason, EdD, BOE, CTRTC, also Faculty Member of William Glasser International, Professor at Western Kentucky University, and Program Practicum Clinical Coordinator.

Lori Mason-Bennett, EdD, also Visiting Professor at DeVry University and Lead Instructor in the Health Sciences Division at Sinclair Community College.

Author's Note –

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Cynthia Palmer Mason, Department of Counseling and Student Affairs, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101. E-mail: cynthia.mason@wku.edu

LOCUS of CONTROL and SELF-EVALUATION

Robert E. Wubbolding, Ed.D., CTRTC

Abstract: Perceived Locus of Control and Self-Evaluation

Perceived locus of control is a traditional and helpful principle used in counseling and psychotherapy for decades. This major contribution of Julian Rotter is a significant part of the effective use of reality therapy. This article illustrates how a reality therapist can assist clients to move from a sense of powerlessness to the belief that they have more inner control than previously believed. The author illustrates this process with a client and suggests that the principles of perceived locus of control and reality therapy have implications for use on a societal basis.

First, William Glasser, MD, entrusted a legacy of major importance to practitioners, university instructors, trainers and researchers for the general well being of people around the world (Glasser, W, 1998). His legacy is four-fold: first – he developed choice theory that can be described as a negative input, behavioral choice-driven output and goal directed system for satisfying the internal human needs or genetic motivators. He explored and gathered these ideas from many sources altering them significantly by including the human need system and the emphasis on choice or power over behaviors generated from within the human person (Wubbolding, 2017a).

Second, he formulated a delivery system for implementing choice theory that the world knows as reality therapy (Glasser, 1965, 2000). It is a practical system that emphasizes skills for helping clients, students and others deal more effectively with decisions and to discover more satisfying and achievable goals. Glasser C & Glasser W (2008) have described the connection between choice theory and reality therapy as the relationship between the train track that provides direction (choice theory) and the train that operationalizes the theory (reality therapy). These two contributions have been applied to management (Pierce, 2007), parenting (Buck, 2013), and extensively to education.

Third, his contribution has not been merely intellectual. It is also organizational. He founded the William Glasser Institute, now known as the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory. This organization sponsors trainings that lead to certification, and the recognition that individuals have completed enough training to present themselves as reality therapy certified (RTC). Wubbolding (2019) described the fourth component of his legacy as “the dynamism of Glasser’s thinking. He continually changed and developed his ideas . . . He left a legacy containing the explicit principle that his contributions can grow, develop and be applied in innovative ways to the ever-changing world” (p. 41).

Notably, this explanation of perceived locus of control represents an application of Glasser’s thinking on the psychological origin of human behavior, the use of choice, and the incorporation of language that coincides with the work of Julian Rotter.

Perceived Locus of Control

Rotter (1954) formulated the priceless concept of locus of control. It has permeated the world of counseling and psychotherapy for many decades. Wubbolding (2017b) stated that it is at the heart of reality therapy. “If a person perceives that she is a total victim and is completely powerless, she will remain in the perceived state of victimhood and will remain

powerless and perhaps sink deeper into the pit of hopelessness" (p. 119). The goal of the session below is to help the client move from a perception of being controlled to a self-perception of being much more in charge of her life.

Case Example

Marcie, 27 years old, is sent for counseling with her consent by her husband and her parents. Her background includes being raped at age 17, attending college for 2 years before dropping out. She has been employed in several companies with employees difficult to get along with and supervisors who were critical of her work and attendance. She admits to having been "irresponsible" on the job but seems to be unable to maintain any long-term employment. Covid has complicated and intensified her problems. Her husband blames her for her failure(s) to maintain steady employment. Marcie feels victimized by forces external to her: employer, co-workers, her experience as a teenager, and an unhappy childhood. Her husband provides empathic support, but then also says that his patience has about run out.

M = Marcie C = Counselor

The counselor has reviewed with Marcie all the details required by every code of ethics such as informed consent, confidentiality, limits of confidentiality, duty to warn, and other issues. We pick up the dialogue mid-way through the first session.

C: Well Marcie, we've been talking about many things, and you've been very frank about your life story. And I must say, it's quite a story! It's loaded with problems and pain. And yet, you have somehow managed to survive it and you even have a marriage that is successful, though currently a bit strained. I'm wondering if you have talked to other people about your life.

M: Everybody knows about it. I haven't even kept the rape a secret.

C: I imagine that people get tired of hearing about your misery.

M: Yes. Sometimes people just walk away. I've even had therapists more or less tell me that they're tired of hearing about how poorly I'm doing on the job and everywhere else.

C: I noticed when you described your childhood you attributed the cause of your pain to "them" – your parents, your brothers and sisters, your teachers, and in-general to the society around you. Then when you talked about your jobs, you said you were let go from them unfairly. To top it all off, you've been isolated because of the Covid shut-down. Has your outlook on life improved since the country opened-up again?

M: No, I feel just as bad as I did when I couldn't go out. My husband worked at home and in his office downtown. But I was stuck at home, alone. Now I can go out to work, but nothing is better. I just feel I'm suffering from a bad legacy that's been handed to me, a losing poker hand, including lousy bosses and co-workers who put me down. Sometimes I think I just have bad genes. Do you think there's any hope for me?

Commentary: Marcie insists on reciting her sad story. She is practicing a popular theory of behavior that is very current and widespread in our society that we are all externally controlled, i.e., at the mercy of forces outside of us. In fact, it is becoming almost ubiquitous and takes on social characteristics such as racism, sexism, homophobia, able-ism, and many other "isms". In the case of Marcie, the reader is invited to substitute any form of victimization. The application of reality therapy to any form of victimhood would not differ greatly from the case of Marcie.

However, the compassionate counselor listens carefully and empathically to Marcie without adding to her pain. Such statements as "I don't want to hear about your pain," "It's time to move on," "You're choosing your misery," and similar statements result in a severed therapeutic alliance. (The therapeutic alliance consists in the counseling relationship, mutually agreed upon goals, and mutually agreed upon strategies) (Forrest, 2021). The alliance forms the foundation, the *sine qua non* for successful therapeutic outcomes.

As the counseling relationship develops, the well-trained reality therapist listens for *in-control* statements as well as *change talk* (Wubbolding, 2017b & 2020). Miller and Rollnick described change talk as "any client's speech that favors a client's movement toward a particular change goal" (as cited in Jones-Smith, 2016, p. 343). Similarly, the counselor listens for incidences and even words that indicate that the client has shown an inner sense of responsibility for actions or a desire to take better charge of her life.

The session continues:

C: You asked, "Is there hope?" I'll answer that question directly and firmly. I'm in the hope business. I bring hope to people who feel abandoned. I bring joy to people who are sad. And I bring faith in the future to those who have dark expectations. You came to the right place at the right time. One of my goals is to help you evaluate your own situation as well as whether your actions are getting you what you want. Please keep in mind that I am *not* blaming you in the least.

M: You sound pretty confident. (smiles)

C: I noticed you're smiling. When was the last time you smiled heartily or laughed?

M: It's been a while.

C: So, we're off and running. I believe I can help you. But ethically, I'm not allowed to make any guarantees. And improvement will require something from you.

M: I was afraid of that.

C: Human nature is very complicated, isn't it? If we can't guarantee that the sun will rise tomorrow we surely can't guarantee that human beings will make changes.

M: But people do make changes.

C: You just said something that is very significant. You said, "People do make changes." I would like to help you change that sentence to, "I will make changes." Are you ready to say that to me?

M: I'd like to be able to say it to you.

C: What you just said is evidence of an intense and powerful desire, but let's put that on hold for a while. I'd like to make a few inquiries about where you see your pain coming from. I heard you say your parents, your employer, etc. In other words, I didn't hear you say that you had a part to play in this life story. I'm not going to imply that you are to blame. But I'd like to help you to come to the sincere belief that you have more control in your life than you've believed up until now. I'm not saying you had or have total control over every action that you take or every feeling that you have. But I would like to help you believe that you are capable of having better thoughts, better feelings, and making more effective choices. I cannot emphasize enough that I'm not saying you are in any way to blame for even the minutest so-called *failure* in the past. Do you understand what I'm saying and not saying?

M: Yes, I hear you saying that the dark night will not last forever. There will be a dawn and the sun will rise for me.

C: Wow! I love the way you put that. And I'd like to ask you a very important question. What have you done lately, even for a few minutes, that helped you feel better, even a little better?

M: I took a walk in a park near where I live and I felt pretty good. I enjoyed the surroundings, the sunshine, and the nice breeze.

C: And so, you proved that you can feel better by doing something that you enjoy.

M: I never thought of it that way.

C: We'll come back to that point. I want to discuss with you a very basic point. Tell me about your purpose in coming here, and what you hoped to walk away with from this counseling experience.

M: I want to salvage something of my life – plus get rid of the pain.

C: Talk more about what you want to gain from this experience.

M: I want to save my marriage and my job. I can't face any more failures.

C: You're talking quite a bit different than you did when we first met last week. You know what I mean?

M: I'm more relaxed than I was.

C: And that relaxation seems to have allowed you to let go of some of your nervousness.

M: I guess you're right.

C: And so I want to help you with changing your outlook on both life and on yourself. Okay?

M: Yes, that sounds great!

C: My question is, have you felt that you have been victimized by fate, by circumstances and by other people?

M: Yes, I am a victim of my memories and many, many other things.

C: In other words, you have little control of your life.

M: That sums it up.

C: So, let's set the goal of gaining more inner control, a sense of well-being.

M: That sounds good.

C: In the system I use – we call it going from a sense of being oppressed to a sense of liberation, relaxed, and in control. And we don't have to start at zero. The reason is that you've taken a major step on your own.

M: What was that step?

C: You decided to come here. You made a choice, and I can't tell you how important that step is.

M: Well, I was hurting so badly that I decided to try to get relief.

C: So. you apparently have a lot of motivation to make a few changes.

M: I haven't thought of my situation in that way.

C: Let me say a few things: #1. You didn't cause that crap in you life. #2. I'd like to help you leave *some* of the feelings of powerlessness behind you if that is agreeable. And #3, if you want to talk about anything that has happened to you in the past, we can get into that when you're ready.

Commentary:

At this point the counseling is in the relationship building stage. The reality therapist structures the relationship while providing empathic support and assurance. As a good listener the reality therapist helps Marcie take a more comprehensive look at herself including the expression of her choices. In other words, Marcie progresses from a sense of external control to a sense of internal control. She switches her perceived locus of external control to a perceived sense of internal control. A note to the reader: please identify how the counselor, even in this early stage of counseling, helped Marcie evaluate her choices. Keep in mind, self-evaluation can be direct or indirect.

The reader might ask, "You encouraged her to discuss past misery. I thought you would *discourage* such a discussion. Don't we believe that all problems are present

problems not due to past history? Haven't you violated a major principle of reality therapy?"

Answer: The great American novelist, William Faulkner stated in his book *Requiem for a Nun*, "The past is never dead, in fact, it is not even past." I believe we should re-evaluate the notion of present behavior, especially in view of what we know about dealing with traumatized adults and children. It is true that the events are past. The actions that Marcie experienced are history. And yet many people who have had experiences like Marcie, continue to have lingering and oftentimes very painful consequences that in no way are past but rather they constitute present elements of current behavior. These experiences, i.e., behaviors that can last for years, even decades, and can cause pain ranging from mild to severe. For instance, Marcie's current experience might include nightmares, flashbacks, resentments, fears, a sense of victimhood, suspicion of people around her, fits of anger and rage, and many other current thoughts, feelings, actions and even physiological behaviors such as insomnia.

A goal of the reality therapist at this stage is to establish the alliance, i.e., the relationship. One way of doing this is by listening very carefully for past and current successes, i.e., effective behaviors that satisfy her five needs or motivators. A counselor emphasizes that her client's decision to seek help is a huge success, something to be celebrated. David Marquet (2020) suggests that when work teams succeed in business by completing an important project, they are advised to spend a few minutes celebrating their success. "When we pause to celebrate . . . we acknowledge the work we do see, and workers feel valued. Our team feels better about work, and that translates into better engagement, more creative thinking and reduced turnover"(p. 174). How much more does the reality therapist celebrate with Marcie who felt so alone with no one to help her rejoice in her success in deciding to seek help!

Summary

This dialogue with Marcie is intended to be a portion of a counseling session and therefore should be seen as a foundation for future progress. It illustrates several counseling interventions designed to help Marcie gradually move from a sense of victimization and external control to the perception that she has more control than previously believed and felt. Also illustrated is the brevity of comments by the counselor aimed at helping Marcie self-evaluate. The counselor is aware that helping clients self-evaluate is a delicate art that can sound intrusive and critical to a client who feels victimized. Because of a deepening and growing therapeutic relationship, i.e., therapeutic alliance, the counselor will help Marcie establish goals related to her 5 needs and to identify strategies that will give her a sense of meaning and purpose. Any reality therapist dealing with oppressed clients who feel pain needs to be genuinely empathic and respectful, but capable of gently leading them to conduct a fearless and thorough examination of current choices and life direction. This process leads to more rapid progress.

References

- Buck, N. S. (2013). *How to be a great parent*. Beaufort Books.
- Forrest, G. (2021). *Therapeutic alliance in integrative addictions-focused psychotherapy and counseling*. Charles C. Thomas.
- Glasser, W. (1965). *Reality therapy*. Harper & Row.
- Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory*. HarperCollins.
- Glasser, W. (2000). *Reality therapy in action*. HarperCollins.
- Glasser, W., & Glasser, C. (2008). Procedures: The cornerstone of institute training. *The William Glasser Institute Newsletter*. Summer. The William Glasser Institute.
- Jones-Smith, E. (2016). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy*. Sage.
- Marquet, L. D. (2020). *Leadership is language: The hidden power of what you say and what you don't*. Portfolio/Penguin.
- Pierce, K. L. (2007). *Using lead management on purpose*. iUniverse.
- Rotter, J. B. (1954). *Social learning and clinical psychology*. Prentice-Hall.
- Wubbolding, R. (2017a). The three-fold legacy of William Glasser, MD. *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*. 37(1), 18-22.
- Wubbolding, R. (2017b). *Reality therapy and self-evaluation*. American Counseling Association.
- Wubbolding, R. (2019). Legacy More: The fourth component. *International Journal of Choice Theory and Reality Therapy*. 39(1), 41-47.
- Wubbolding, R. (2020). *Cycle of counseling, coaching, managing, supervising, and parenting* (chart) (20th ed.) Center for Reality Therapy.

Brief Bio—

Robert E. Wubbolding, EdD, LPCC, BCC, CTRTC, is currently a senior faculty member of the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory (WGI). Formerly he served as the Director of Training with the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory (GIFCT) (1988 – 2011). He is also Professor Emeritus of Xavier University and is the author of 18 books on Reality Therapy.

FINDING MENTAL FREEDOM WITHIN PANDEMIC CONSTRAINTS: AN INTERVIEW WITH KIM OLVER

Patricia A. Robey, Ed.D., LPC, CTRTC

Abstract: Kimberly Olver is a senior faculty member and executive director of William Glasser International. She is known internationally for her work as a counselor, coach, author, and trainer. Kim's background includes 22 years in social work, a certification in Diversity and Inclusion from Cornell University, and she is a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional. In this interview, Kim explains how she integrates her professional experience with her knowledge of Glasser's ideas and offers strategies that could be immediately useful for individuals struggling to manage some of the current challenges related to the pandemic.

Interview

Pat: Kim, thank you for making time to talk with me today. The purpose of our conversation is to identify some of the challenges that people may have been facing in response to COVID and to get your insight about strategies that can be effective during these challenging times. To begin, please tell us about your background with the Glasser organization and how your knowledge of Choice Theory influenced your own experiences during the pandemic.

Kim: First of all, thank you, Pat for the opportunity and it's great to be here talking with you as well. I am senior faculty of William Glasser International and I started my Choice Theory journey in 1987, so I've been applying Glasser's concepts and practices both personally and professionally for quite some time.

When COVID happened, back then we were calling it coronavirus, when coronavirus first hit, we found out about it in March, 2020. I spent about two weeks in a state of confusion and paralysis. I didn't know what to do. I had been visiting my mother in Florida and so I wasn't even in my own space. I was scheduled to be with her till the end of March but of course, as March wore on, the threat of coronavirus got worse and people weren't flying as much. While I had a ticket back to Chicago, all my work had been canceled, so I made the decision to stay in Florida and help my mom by going to the grocery store for her and doing other things so that she wouldn't be as at risk as she would be if she was living alone. For about two weeks, I was just out of sorts. I couldn't focus on anything. I couldn't do any work. I listened to the news and tried to be as informed about the situation as I could, but it was really challenging. Somewhere around that second week, I said to myself, "Kim, what are you doing? You know choice theory; you don't have to be in this state of angst. You could do something about it by changing what you're doing and changing what you're thinking." So I stopped watching the news throughout the day. Of course, I still listened to the news at night to get the update on what had happened. It was enough to have approximately 15 minutes of news rather than hours of it. I also started to think about the things I wanted to accomplish with my work, even though literally all my speaking engagements were cancelled.

I had no pressing work engagements, but it was important for me to stay productive, so I started to do things around the virus. I had Friday night happy hour which I advertised on Facebook for Zoom, so anyone who was connected to me who just wanted some love and belonging connection could check in on Friday nights and we'd have an hour of chatting. Sometimes we'd listen to music; some people would have cocktails. It was just a nice time

to do that. I did that for the three months that I stayed in Florida but stopped when I came back to Chicago because then I had a lot of work I needed to complete. I also did some presentations for the Army on COVID. I was asked to do that based on some podcasts I had done. In January of 2020, I started my own podcast, "Life = Choices; Choices = Life," and of course, what was most salient at the time was the corona virus. Therefore, I thought about it and put it in a context of Choice Theory and I talked about it on my podcast. People heard it and invited me to speak to some Army audiences about it. There were a lot of people still in that state of paralysis or confusion or angst of not knowing what to do and I had found a way to get through it. I wanted to share what I knew to help others. That's basically been my experience with COVID. I don't know any more about it than anyone else does. It's just that I'm able to think about it from a Choice Theory perspective and focus on the parts of it that I have control over and not get myself out of sorts or frustrated over the parts that I can't control.

Pat: I agree with you that there's a benefit to knowing Choice Theory because it provides a framework about how to approach some of the challenges we have. On the other hand, I'm also hearing your recognition that people who don't have this framework may be looking at the challenges related to the pandemic in a different way, and experience it differently, just because of how they think about it. You mentioned that you did some presentations for the Army. When you were thinking about them as a specific group and what needs they might want to have addressed in relation to COVID, what did you think might have been some of the unique challenges that they faced?

Kim: That's a great question and quite honestly, I don't think any of it was unique to the Army. I believe that their challenges were the same as everyone else's, which were that pre-pandemic most of us had ways of getting our five basic needs met that were satisfying to us. Then the pandemic hits and suddenly, those ways that we used to meet our needs in the past were no longer available to us.

When our needs are frustrated, as the pandemic frustrated many of our needs, we were at a loss as to what to do next. What I talked to the Army about was understanding how the pandemic impacted our ability to meet those needs. Suddenly survival was in question, right? You heard about all these people being on ventilators in the hospital and the death toll rising, rising, rising. People were scared and those I talked to mostly were concerned about their loved ones' health, not so much their own. But I think, inside there had to be a concern about one's own health. Yeah, you might be more worried about your parents because they're older or a relative who has some pre-existing condition but there's still the question, "Am I going to be okay? Am I going to live through this?"

That was challenging, and then the need for love and belonging was also compromised. Suddenly, we're told to socially distance and stay at home. If you happen to live with your family at home, then you had to quarantine with them, which could have been good or bad, right? Most of us don't spend 24/7 with our loved ones, so for many people, that was added stress—they may have had more love and belonging than they needed. It was challenging in that way. Then, you had the people who lived alone, and they had nobody that they could really spend time with in-person. The world discovered Zoom in a way that was very need-satisfying. We couldn't be in person with our loved ones, but we could see and hear them on the computer and have connection with them. Historically speaking, years from now, I believe Zoom is going to be the hero of this pandemic because while we're all Zoom weary by now, it at least gave us that opportunity to connect with people.

Then take the power need. People need to feel like they have agency and control over their own lives; we didn't. Even the simplest thing was crazy; you couldn't go to the store and buy toilet paper. Talk about feeling powerless! You didn't even have what you needed to go to the bathroom; that's pretty basic. Add to that, people's jobs shut down and some even lost their work or they found themselves working from home. It all felt out of control. People didn't have the equipment that they needed. They may not have had the files they needed and so there was some frustration as people adapted to that.

Next is the freedom need. That's why we have a faction of our country screaming about their individual freedoms because freedom was seriously impinged upon during quarantines. People were told to stay home to isolate, to socially distance, to wear a mask and now to get vaccinated. There are people in our society and in the world at large, who believe that those are infringements on their personal freedom and they're pushing back against that.

Then you have the need for fun. People's ability to have fun was greatly impinged upon during COVID. The things people used to do for fun usually involved others. People turned to their video games to get them through. Of course, some outdoor activities were still available to us. COVID helped some people get in better shape because they were doing more walking than normal just to get out and about with people in the neighborhood.

It's the recognition of the loss of the things that we used to be able to do, letting that go, and reminding ourselves, "That was then; this is now. Under the new circumstances that I find myself in, what can I do to get these needs met in a satisfactory way so that I can find some balance in my life again?" Once you can do that, then you can move forward to maybe achieve some happiness, even amid a pandemic. We're still alive.

Pat: You mentioned relationship stress, so I'd like to talk about that a little bit. How would you help people to understand the significance of relationship challenges, especially during a time of struggle like this?

Kim: That's a big question. I think we saw, at least initially, a division with people in terms of extraversion and introversion. Introverts were proudly proclaiming that they were built for this. They loved the ability to just be home and have the down time for processing during this period of coronavirus and COVID. The extraverts were really the ones who suffered the most.

Then we need to look at families, in general, because there were families before the pandemic that didn't live well together. There are people who live in homes with domestic violence and child abuse and now that stress is being exacerbated by not being able to escape in any way shape or form. In those situations, things got much worse. Relationships are challenging in good times; add to that a pandemic, and you have a lot more to think about. If you're in a home with people that like and love each other, then you may need to look at communication and how you're working together to achieve what needs to be done in a day in a household. The division of labor might shift. There needs to be some negotiation around those things. If you're in a family that had trouble pre-pandemic, and those troubles are worse because of being closed up together, then you really need to create some exit for yourself, some sense of safety somewhere, even if that's just having someone you can call and talk to when things are really bad. For the children living in abusive homes, I don't even have an answer for that other than, if it's possible, calling social services to get help for those kids.

Pat: Would you share with us some strategies you have developed to operationalize Choice Theory that can help people understand how they can put Choice Theory into action in their lives? For example, one of the concepts I remember you talking about is “responsibility” versus “response-ability.” Do you want to talk about that a little bit?

Kim: Sure, it was one of my “power pictures” or accomplishments during COVID. I put together this process that I'm calling Mental Freedom,[™] which is a method of internalizing Choice Theory in one's life. The first part of Mental Freedom is about opening your heart; it's about how you relate to others. The first part, like you said, is about deciding between whether things are your responsibility or not. So often, we take responsibility for things that aren't ours to be responsible for. For example, a parent may be taking responsibility for the behavior of their adult children. Others might take responsibility for their abuse. If they're in an abusive relationship, they may take responsibility for the abusive treatment, even though it's the other person who's doing it. People tend to take responsibility for those things.

And then, there's the things that are our responsibility that we don't take responsibility for, like getting our needs met or our own level of happiness. Many people are waiting for someone else to change, so they can be happy. When I talk about opening your heart, it's about recognizing what you are actually responsible for and letting go of the rest. Technically, you're responsible for every single action that you take and it's resulting consequences, even when they're unintended. If you get into a car, and you put it in reverse and you run into someone else, even if it was an accident, even if you didn't mean to do it, you are still responsible for that, because you engaged in the action that brought about that event. It doesn't mean that you need to be punished for it; it's just that you take responsibility and you say, “I did that.” If there's anything you can do to make the situation better, you do what you can to make that situation better.

The other thing we're responsible for is getting our five basic needs met. Other people may make it easy or difficult for us to do that, but we can't count on someone else to meet those needs for us. All they can do is be a willing participant in us meeting our needs with them. They can't meet our needs for us. For those who are reading this who don't know the five basic Choice Theory needs, they are: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom and fun. You are responsible for getting those met. And then after that, ultimately, you're responsible for your own happiness. If you're not happy, you need to look at what is it about your situation that you could change, not what someone else can change, but what you can change, so that you can be happier. That's your responsibility. When we step up to the plate and accept those three main responsibilities, things can really change for us. The response-able part happens even in those areas where we're not responsible, we can always choose to be response-able, which means you have the ability to respond. Sometimes we respond in ways that might help the situation, other times we respond in ways that may hurt, and sometimes, we respond in ways that have no effect and sometimes, we choose not to respond, but whatever we do, or don't do, we are now responsible for. Those are your choices. I want to make sure to give credit to Stephen Covey because he is the first person I heard talk about responsibility versus response-ability in his book, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

One of the things that would make living in a family challenging right now is if you had different perspectives about the virus. Many families do have different perspectives. You may have one person in the household who thinks COVID is a hoax, it's just a flu, it's no big deal, and then, you have someone else in the household who's terrified and believes it's

going to be the end of life as we know it, and then, there's every possible stance in between. If one person is going around unvaccinated without a mask, and the other person is vaccinated and wearing a mask in their own house to defend against their partner, there can be a lot of finger-pointing, criticizing, blaming and things that damage relationships. This is why I really like Choice Theory because there are two things that factor into this. One is perception and the other is an internal locus of control. Let's look at perception first. Choice Theory helps us understand that perception isn't right or wrong. It's just a person's perception. Where do perceptions come from?

One of the things I think is unfortunate about the pandemic is that this pandemic has been politicized. Depending upon whether you find yourself on the liberal, conservative or independent side of politics, you have different information that you're taking in through your knowledge filter, based on the sources you trust. The different information comes from different news sources, social media and the people that you talk with. No matter what you believe, you can find people who support those beliefs. People's natural inclination is to find people who think like they do, so that's how we have these different factions having different beliefs. No one can really know which one is correct. You might think you know, every person thinks that they have the inside track on what is actually happening, but none of us really know for certain.

The second is adopting an internal locus of control. If you want to be happy through these times, then I suggest you learn to live with different perspectives and stay focused on what you have control over. You can't control people getting vaccinated and wearing masks, but you can control whether or not you do. I'll speak about my two sons. One family has been vaccinated and the other family has not. I love both of my sons and visit them often. I am vaccinated, so I believe I'm more protected than those who aren't. Even though my one son and his family aren't vaccinated, I will still visit them. Do I judge them for not being vaccinated? No, because I know that the information he has available to him leads him to believe what he believes. I have different information that leads me to believe what I believe. It's part of the work I do in diversity—learning to make space for varying different opinions because opinions and perceptions are not fact. They're just opinions and perceptions. I have the ability to think one way, while allowing others to think differently. That doesn't make one of us wrong. We can both be right, based on where we come from and what we focus on.

That's hard when you're in the middle of a pandemic and you think that someone else's beliefs might kill you. That's truly what it comes down to, so if that's your belief then I go back to responsibility. You might say it's someone else's responsibility to get vaccinated and wear a mask. I'm not going to argue with you. Based on the information I have, I think that that's true, however one of the things I know is that when people show you who they are and what they believe, it's best to believe them. We are living in a world where some people are choosing not to be vaccinated. We can't make them get vaccinated. What can I control? The United States is not going to force vaccinations on people, so I know that my responsibility, if I want to stay healthy, is to take the precautions I need to take to keep myself from contracting COVID. That may mean wearing a mask long after I think I should have to wear a mask. I will wash my hands frequently and sanitize them. That's all I have power and control over. I choose not to judge people who do it differently because they have different beliefs, different values, and different information than I have. I have no definitive proof that I'm right and they're wrong. I only know what I believe to be true, based on my information and resources.

Pat: I'm hearing that the more we try to force people, the more likely we will be to get push back. So the only thing that we can do is to control ourselves and maybe believe in people. There's something that you talk about called the Unconditional Trust Challenge. Is that relevant to what you're talking about right now?

Kim: It really is, yes. The Unconditional Trust Challenge is almost the same as what Dr. Glasser used to say. He used to say that people are doing the best they can, at any given point in time. I always struggled with that idea because I saw people not doing their best. However, I added these five words to make the statement truer for me: People are doing their best, at any point in time, *to get what they want*. That would explain why someone might murder a person, because in that moment, that's what they wanted. Do they really believe that murdering someone is the best they could do at that moment? I don't think they do, but it's the best thing they can do to get what they want. When you think about the people who wear masks and the people who don't, what the people who wear masks want is to be safe and they want to protect not only themselves, but other people. What I hear from the other side, although I don't know that side as well, is they don't want to live their life in fear. They trust in their own immune system to keep them safe and they don't think that this pandemic is as bad as the media makes it out to be. They're living their life based on what they want.

The Unconditional Trust Challenge is believing that every person on the planet, in every situation, is doing the best they know to get what they want in that moment. If I care about someone, I want them to get what they want. That's where I'm coming from, even if it's not what I want them to want, or even if it causes me problems. With the Unconditional Trust Challenge, you trust that everybody is doing their best to get what they want. Once you recognize what they're doing, you trust that this is who they are until they consistently show you something different.

Of course, I believe people can change. I wouldn't be a therapist if I didn't believe that, but they're not going to change because you want them to change, you nag them into changing, or you threaten them into changing. People don't change for those reasons; they change when it benefits them to change. So, I'm going to believe that they're being who they are. Then, I recommend going back to the responsibility piece. Now that I see you and I know who you are, it's my responsibility to decide what kind of relationship, or any relationship, I want to have with you. Some people have gotten to this place. They have family members and loved ones that they've cut ties with. They've said, "You're unsafe; I can't be around you during this pandemic." That's a choice people can make. They could also make the choice to visit or stay in contact with boundaries, maybe over Zoom or at the window of the home with people inside and them outside. You set boundaries. There are other people who would agree that this is a pandemic and they aren't going to let that separate them from their loved ones. And just because they think differently than me, is not going to change my behavior. I'll still take precautions but I'm going to continue visiting like I normally would. That's your responsibility to figure out what kind of relationship you want, once you're trusting the person to be who they are, instead of who you want them to be.

Pat: It seems so difficult to just throw up your hands and have unconditional trust, while at the same time, you're thinking, "Oh my gosh, there's so many problems." Where does this come into play if you want to be able to influence social change?

Kim: Great question! It goes back to the Choice Theory premise that Dr. Glasser taught us: The only thing you can give or get from people is information. You get to ask for what you

want. You can say, "I would really prefer if you did this and here are the reasons why," but then you need to allow that other person to make their own choices. From that point, you decide what choices you need to make, based on the choices that they're making. You are responsible for only one person, and that is yourself, even though you want to be responsible for the human race and we've got to get rid of this pandemic. All you really are fully responsible for is the way that you respond to the pandemic. If you become response-able and you want to be a spokesperson for mask mandates or vaccinations, you can certainly do that. There are ways for you to get involved. You can become a part of that movement, just like people on the other side can become a part of the freedom movement and the anti-masks, anti-vaxxers. You need to first take responsibility for yourself, and then, decide where and how you want to be response-able in the rest of the world.

Pat: I'm thinking about how much of a challenge all of this might be. So for you, when you're confined or you know you're blocked from doing some of the things that you want to do, has it always been this easy for you?

Kim: Ha, definitely not! Remember in the beginning of this interview, I said I've been doing this since 1987? That longevity probably has a good bit to do with how it's become somewhat easy for me now, but remember, I also said I spent two weeks in total paralysis and confusion. It wasn't easy. I have to talk to myself in my head all the time. The way our control system works is that people definitely judge, even if we don't want to judge. The readers who are familiar with Glasser's Choice Theory chart know that when something doesn't match our quality world picture, our scales get out of balance. That is a judgment; you're basically saying, "This is not right." Then, we get that sensation, which is usually felt as a feeling or a body sensation. That's your signal to know that something is happening that you don't like. Then, you need to move into a proactive, problem-solving mode that helps you choose your best response to get the most of what you want. When I get the signal that I'm judging a person or situation, I ask myself the question, "Is this my place to judge? Is this something I have a right to judge?" Usually it's not, because I really only have the right to judge things that are part of my own life. I really work hard not to judge other people. Do I ever judge? Of course, I do. I think my youngest son is nuts and I want him to get vaccinated, but that is not my responsibility. He is 35 year old and gets to make his own decisions. What if I push him into getting that vaccine? He gets it, and for some reason, he has a crazy reaction and the vaccine kills him? I will never be able to live with that. So I'm constantly reminding myself that I get to make the decisions for my own life. I don't get to make decisions for other people's lives.

Pat: It occurs to me that the Unconditional Trust Challenge is something we also need to use with ourselves!

Kim: Yes, absolutely, the Unconditional Trust Challenge definitely applies to ourselves. What we tend to do is we look back at things we've done in our life with regret and judge those things, like that was a terrible, ugly or stupid thing to do. The problem is we're judging ourselves based on who we are in the present moment for an action that we took in the past. We are not the same person. We are older, more mature, more experienced and hopefully know more than we when we engaged in that behavior. Using the Unconditional Trust Challenge with ourselves is about looking back and saying, "I did the best I could to get what I wanted in that situation. Today, I might want something different. Today I might do something different to get what I want, but back then, I did the best I could. There's nothing to judge." It helps you develop compassion for yourself. And if you're using it with others, you will develop that compassion for other people. Then, from compassion springs

forgiveness, so you can forgive yourself for past errors in judgment. But I don't even think that that's correct because you did the best you could, so there was no error. You engaged the best behavior you could in that moment. There's really nothing to forgive, but if you think you need to forgive yourself, you can, and certainly you can forgive others. Some people who suffered childhood trauma at the hands of their parents may harbor a lot of resentment toward them, but if they realize that their parents were doing the best they could to get what they wanted in those moments, they might be able to have some compassion for them and eventually forgive them. To be clear, the forgiveness isn't for the parents; the forgiveness is for yourself. I love that unattributed quote, "Holding a grudge is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die." We forgive for ourselves, which doesn't mean that we then have to move closer to the person we've forgiven. We might choose to do that, but we also might just forgive and let those resentful feelings go so that we can heal. We don't have to turn our back on the person, giving them another chance to stab us in the back with a knife. We just make the decision based on what we want to be responsible for and response-able for and then, decide what kind of relationship we want to have with that person.

Pat: You offer trainings and products that are available for people who want to learn more about these ideas. In particular, in this interview, you've been talking about Mental Freedom. Can you give us a little bit of an overview about what Mental Freedom is about, for people who are interested in learning more?

Kim: Sure, Mental Freedom is a psycho-educational approach that helps people with pretty much any problem they may be experiencing. What I like about Mental Freedom is that you don't have to tell me what the problem is. You can just learn the concepts and apply it to the problem yourself. It's a little like a do-it-yourself method of incorporating Choice Theory into your life. The first part of Mental Freedom is what we've talked about already. It's called open your heart and is about relationships with others. It entails the difference between responsibility and response-ability, along with the Unconditional Trust Challenge. The second part is about freeing your mind. Under that category, I talk about changing the narratives in your head, as well as the difference between half to versus want to. The final segment is about transforming your life. In that segment, we look at the painful emotions and body signals you get when you aren't getting what you want. You learn how to interpret those, and then, how to transform those painful emotions and body signals into something neutral or even positive. That's what we do in Mental Freedom. I offer individual coaching, which is one session every week for six weeks and I offer group coaching, which is usually one session every two weeks for eleven weeks. I'm also about to launch an online program of Mental Freedom that's simply a do-it-yourself program that you can do at your leisure.

Pat: For people who would like to know more about all of this, how can they contact you?

Kim: My web address is www.OlverInternational.com. You can also get there by typing www.OlverIntl.com. Either one will get you to the same place.

Pat: Are there any final words that you would like to leave us with before we close?

Kim: I'd just like to speak to readers who don't know Choice Theory about the phenomenal freedom that comes from practicing it. And to those who do know it, I invite you to dive even deeper into the concepts. Dr. Glasser developed an amazing theory of human behavior that continues to grow and expand with current knowledge and research. He was way ahead

of his time and Choice Theory still has a lot to teach us. I'm always learning something new about its application.

Pat: Thank you for your time and for sharing your thoughts and strategies with us. I have some new tools for both personal and professional applications and I really enjoyed learning from you today.

Kim: It's been my pleasure. Thanks, Pat, for the interview.

Brief Bio—

Patricia A. Robey, Ed.D., LPC, CTRTC, is a professor and chair in the Division of Psychology and Counseling at Governors State University in Illinois. She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor, and a senior faculty member of the Glasser Institute for Choice Theory and William Glasser International. Pat has authored and co-authored numerous articles and book chapters on applications of choice theory and reality therapy and is lead editor of the book *Contemporary Issues in Couples Counseling: A Choice theory and Reality Therapy Approach*.