Behavior management strategies

Lecture 9
Humanist approaches
May 19

Presented by Ray Handley

Humanist approaches:
- Carl Rogers
- Haim Ginott
- Thomas Gordon

The principles underlying the humanist approach focus on:
- the inner thoughts,
- feelings,
- psychological needs,
- and emotions of the individual learner.
Humanist approaches emphasise allowing the student time to
develop control over his or her behaviour rather than insisting on
immediate behavioural change or compliance.

They use interventions that stress . . .

- the use of communication skills,
- an understanding of student motives,
- private conferences,
- individual and group problem solving,
- and the exercise of referent and expert power.

The structure and organisation of the self appears to become
more rigid under threat, and to relax its boundaries when
completely free from threat.

We cannot teach another person directly; we
can only facilitate his learning.

The educational situation which most effectively promotes
significant learning is one in which:

1. the threat to the learner’s self is reduced to a minimum, and
2. students learn ways to look at experiences and situations
differently.
I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanised or de-humanised.

HAIM GINOTT

Ginott likened a newly graduated teacher to a man who has a thousand-dollar bill, but doesn't have small change to buy a cup of coffee.

One of his rather startling observations was that children are our enemies and we don't know it, and we are their friends and they don't know it.

When things go wrong, it's not a good time to teach lessons ("When someone is drowning it's not a good time to teach them to swim")
HAIM GINOTT


provided the first coherent strategies for building classroom discipline through communication.
clarified his contentions by describing teachers at their best and teachers at their worst.
explained the nature of congruent communication and detailed the techniques for its use.
showed how effective discipline is gained through small, gentle steps rather than strong tactics.
explained how teachers can show genuine emotion without hurting relations with students.

Source: Lynn R. Zubov from the website of the Winston Salem State University
http://gorams.wssu.edu/faculty/zubovl/

Ginott’s contribution to classroom discipline:

- addressed situations rather than character.
- invites cooperation.
- accepts and acknowledges feelings.
- expresses anger appropriately.
- uses brevity in correcting misbehaviour.
- uses appreciative rather than evaluative praise.

Key Features: Congruent Communication

Source: Lynn R. Zubov from the website of the Winston Salem State University
http://gorams.wssu.edu/faculty/zubovl/
**Key Features**

**Non-congruent Communication**

- labels students and name-calls
- asks rhetorical "whys" and gives morallistic lectures
- invades students' privacy
- makes caustic or sarcastic remarks to students
- attacks students' character
- demands rather than invites cooperation
- denies students' feelings
- shows loss of temper
- uses evaluative praise to manipulate students

Source: Lynn R. Zubov from the website of the Winston Salem State University  
http://gorams.wssu.edu/faculty/zubovl/

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**Key Features**

**Main teachings**

- Never deny a child's feelings. Only behaviour is unacceptable.
- Take the personal out of interactions. This means state the problem. "I see muddy boots on the floor" rather than belittling the child who left them. Rules should be attached to things, e.g., "This couch is not for jumping."
- Dependence breeds hostility. Never do for a child what he is capable of doing for him or herself.

Source: Morton, U. from http://www.kingsleyschool.ca/who_was_haim_ginott.htm

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**Key Features**

**Main teachings**

- Children need the security of limits. Think of a firm floor and ceiling, within which children have autonomy and choices. "Would you like a full or half glass of milk?"
- Avoid words like never, always, e.g., "You never listen to me," "Why do you always...", etc.
Ginott’s Special Techniques

- to correct student misconduct use laconic language and show students how to behave.
- to express anger do so genuinely, but with no sarcasm or hostility.
- to praise students show appreciation for what students DO, not what they are.
- to invite cooperation indicate what needs to be done, without bossing.
- to use their hidden asset – ask . . . “How can I be helpful to my students right now?”

Source: Lynn R. Zubov from the website of the Winston Salem State University
http://gorams.wssu.edu/faculty/zubovl/

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Evaluative praise
- That’s a beautiful picture.
- You are strong.
- You’re a great cook.
- Great job.
- That’s fantastic!

Appreciative or descriptive praise
- I like the details you used in your picture.
- The colours you chose are so lifelike.
- That was a heavy load. Thank you for helping me carry it.
- The flavours in your salad were so crisp and fresh.
- You’re using your inside voice. Thank you.
- I appreciate that you didn’t interrupt while I was giving my maths lesson.
- Thank you for not arguing.
- Thank you for cleaning up when you were asked.

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Thomas Gordon  (1918 - 2002)
TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING

Use power, lose influence

More crimes have been committed against humanity in the name of obedience than in the name of rebellion.
Some typical responses that communicate unacceptance are:

1. Ordering, commanding, directing.
   Example: "Stop whining and get back to work."

2. Warning, threatening.
   Example: "You had better get your act together if you expect to pass my class."

3. Moralising, preaching, giving "shoulds" and "oughts".
   Example: "You should leave your personal problems out of the classroom."

4. Advising, offering solutions or suggestions.
   Example: "I think you need to get a daily planner so you can organise your time better to get your homework finished."

5. Teaching, lecturing, giving logical arguments.
   Example: "You better remember you only have four days to complete that project."

These next responses tend to communicate inadequacies and faults:

   Example: "You are such a lazy kid. You never do what you say you will."

7. Name-calling, stereotyping, labelling.
   Example: "Act your age. You are not a kindergartner."

8. Interpreting, analysing, diagnosing.
   Example: "You are avoiding facing this assignment because you missed the directions due to talking."

Other messages try to make the student feel better or deny there is a problem:

9. Praising, agreeing, giving positive evaluations.
   Example: "You are a smart kid. You can figure out a way to finish this assignment."

10. Reassuring, sympathising, consoling, supporting.
    Example: "I know exactly how you are feeling. If you just begin, it won't seem so bad."
This response tends to try to solve the problem for the student:

11. Questioning, probing, interrogating, cross-examining.
   "Why did you wait so long to ask for assistance? What was so hard about this worksheet?"

These messages tend to divert the student or avoid the student altogether:

12. Withdrawing, distracting, being sarcastic, humouring, diverting.
   "Seems like you got up on the wrong side of the bed today."

References

Gordon, T. 1974 Teacher Effectiveness Training. Wyden, NY
Rogers, C. R. 1951 Client-Centered Counselling Houghton-Mifflin, Boston
Woolfolk, A. 2010 Educational Psychology (2nd Edition) Pearson, Australia (pp 244 – 251)

Creativity, diversity and the changing needs of education

Ken Robinson