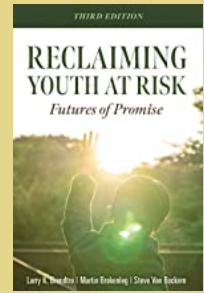




THE MAIN IDEA

current education book summaries



File: Youth at Risk

Reclaiming Youth at Risk: *Futures of Promise*

By Larry K. Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern (Solution Tree Press, 3rd edition, 2019)

S.O.S. (A Summary of the Summary)

The main ideas of the book:

- ~ The book provides a model of resilience that educators can use to connect with and reclaim youth at risk.
- ~ The authors propose that rather than focus on *behavior* (the symptoms), we should focus on the basic *unmet needs* of youth at risk: **ATTACHMENT**, **ACHIEVEMENT**, **AUTONOMY**, and **ALTRUISM**.

Why I chose this book:

I don't think I can fully comprehend the trauma that our students have gone through during this pandemic, but I can't stop thinking about it. Schools have always had a huge role to play in providing opportunities for youth at risk, but with the pandemic, they have an even larger role because so many more students are deeply hurting.

I like that this book's guidance is about looking beyond *behaviors* and attempting to address the *unmet needs* that many of our students experience. This is particularly important now. The authors suggest that all students have a need for **belonging**, **mastery**, **independence**, and **generosity**. When these needs are unmet, youth respond with a range of emotional, behavioral, and learning problems.

Imagine the power if right now all adults in schools and districts understood and took responsibility for these 4 needs. This is not just the work of guidance counselors and social workers. We can all come together and address these needs.

While the current crisis is certainly exacerbating students' problems, it is also during a crisis that humans reach out and have an increased potential to develop trust and connection. Yes, handled poorly this crisis can certainly add to students' alienation. But done well, we have a unique opportunity to connect with disconnected youth at this time.

Finally, I love the way the authors deeply honor children and see them as sacred. Their positive, strengths-based views are deeply grounded in Native American values, and provide profound guidance for educators.

Introduction & Chapter 1:

A Unique Model of Positive Youth Development That Focuses on Unmet Needs

This book takes a unique look at ways to support our most troubled youth. Rather than focusing on their behavior, the authors believe the best approach is to address young people's unmet needs. They believe that most of the difficult behaviors we observe result from youth not having their basic needs met.

The authors put forth a “reclaiming model” that is based on research in resilience, neuroscience, and positive youth development, and also draws on Indigenous wisdom that is rooted in the belief that young people have a basic need to trust and be trusted. In fact, the book's model of positive youth development directly incorporates the Native American values of Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. By helping readers to understand the importance of these four values, the authors hope to make us aware of the importance of these values in our students' lives. With this awareness, we can apply this “reclaiming model” to help the youth we serve follow a path to their “most promising future” as the authors put it.

Rather than proposing a set of evidence-based *practices* to guide your work with youth at risk, the authors delved into the research to find evidence-based *principles*. They examined the research on universal human needs and found that all humans have an inborn need for: **Attachment, Achievement, Autonomy, and Altruism**. These four values parallel the Native American values above and were confirmed over and over in the research on resilience, positive psychology, and neuroscience. If you are familiar with Abraham H. Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, you can see it also, aligns with these four basic needs. And cultures that attend to these four basic needs tend to produce children who are happier and healthier. Given this research, it follows that these four basic values provide a foundation for creating communities and schools where children thrive.

The authors propose we focus on meeting the four basic needs of youth rather than on the *symptoms* (behavior) of those unmet needs:

1. Attachment – belonging, relationships of trust: *I am loved.*
2. Achievement – mastery, opportunities for learning and increasingly complex tasks: *I can succeed*
3. Autonomy – independence, building responsibility, power shifts to the learner: *I control my life*
4. Altruism – generosity, helping others: *I have a purpose for my life.*

Modern research and brain-based science show that these four elements are key in positive youth development. But the authors have found that child-rearing practices in a number of traditional and indigenous cultures have prioritized meeting these needs of children *for generations*. This book aims to “reclaim” what our forbearers knew about raising respectful and responsible children.

Unfortunately and ironically, a number of school-improvement efforts end up working against these four values – we see incentives, high-stakes testing, reinforcement, competition, and behavior control. None of these fundamentally address the *unmet needs* of many youth at risk. In fact, some of our practices in schools interfere with positive development and well-being. While the four values are vital for healthy development, the long-term absence of any of them – that is, a failure to meet any of these four basic psychological needs – can cause trauma. The next chapter provides more in-depth explanations of these four basic human needs.

Note that throughout the book, the authors use the person-first term “youth at risk” rather than “at-risk youth” to avoid the assumption that the blame is the young person's fault.

Chapter 2: Placing Four Values at the Center of Education & Youth Work – *Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity*

In attempting to build a positive culture, schools would benefit from examining the child-rearing practices of Indigenous peoples. These practices received little attention until the 20th century when several well-known professionals studied and amplified them -- including psychiatrist Carl Jung, and psychologists Abraham Maslow and Erik Erikson. They found that the Indigenous cultures they studied were oriented around four key values – Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity – and because of these values, Maslow estimated that 90 percent of their population was emotionally secure compared to perhaps 5-10 percent of those in Western society. These findings have led the authors to propose placing these four values at the center of education and youth work. Below is an overview of each of these values:

Belonging: In traditional Native societies, *all* of the adults took responsibility for nurturing the youth. As a result, children felt related to everyone they came in contact with, creating a deep sense of belonging. In Western society, children often don't have access to an extended family, and contemporary families, schools, and communities often don't fulfill children's basic need to belong. Children need relationships with caring and supportive adults. Without a sense of belonging, children often seek out *artificial belongings* (like gangs). So, the challenge in front of us is to build relational supports that can serve as new tribes for children in our schools, organizations, and communities.

Mastery: Mastery is the drive to strengthen one’s knowledge, skill, or talent. When children feel competent, they become motivated to succeed. The opposite is also true – without opportunities to succeed, youth may resort to troubled behavior or helplessness. Native education supports early responsibility and independence in young children. When children experience mastery and success they not only receive social recognition, but they also develop an inner satisfaction as well. All youth need to feel competent and adults should support them by providing the encouragement needed to develop that competence.

Independence: In traditional Native culture, independent survival, decision making, and self-management begins in early childhood. Independence here is best described as a combination of **self-control**, **self-confidence**, and **shared responsibility**. This is different from what we often see when it comes to discipline – obedience-focused models rely on the adults making the decisions and relying on coercion. Instead, students need to understand the impact of their behavior on others and develop a sense of empathy and responsibility. Our challenge is to help youth learn to solve problems in their own way and become responsible without prizes or rewards. Rather than obedience, we need a system that utilizes modeling, group influence, discussion, and positive expectations.

Generosity: It is by being of value to others that humans are fully satisfied with life. In Native culture, children are raised to have concern for the welfare of all. Research shows that there are positive long-term benefits from students engaging in service – they thrive more (school, community, leadership) and they reduce their risks (of substance abuse, violence, school problems). We need to find ways in schools to nurture the positive value of caring for others.

The above four values are important in reclaiming traumatized youth and creating a school culture that supports all students. This idea is central to the research on resilience and positive youth development. In fact, when one or more of the above needs remain unmet, students may cope in distorted ways. For example, a youth who lacks Belonging may end up in an antisocial gang. Adults will be more equipped to address problem behaviors if they can see what lies beneath those behaviors and which needs are not being met. So, is the revenge by a youth really the result of rejection (lack of Belonging)? Is the frustration a youth displays really the result of failure (lack of Mastery)? All of these examples of problem behavior result from unmet needs. See the chart below excerpted from p.29:

| | Need Met | Need Unmet | Need Distorted |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Belonging | Attachment, trust, cooperation | Disconnection, distrust, isolation | Attention seeking, hypervigilance, gang affiliation |
| Mastery | Achievement, problem solving, motivation | Failure, give up easily, unmotivated | Delinquent skills, manipulative, overly competitive |
| Independence | Autonomy, self-control, assertiveness | Helplessness, impulsivity, easily misled | Oppositional, over-controlling, intimidating |
| Generosity | Altruism, caring, contributing | Selfishness, lack of empathy, lack of purpose | Used by others, overly indulgent, hedonistic |

Below are some examples of typical behaviors that result from unmet needs:

- **Belonging needs unmet:** Some youth disengage and instead turn to artificial belongings, like a gang.
The antidote: Building trusting relationships.
- **Mastery needs unmet:** Those frustrated by failure may just give up and engage in delinquent acts.
The antidote: Provide opportunities for meaningful achievement.
- **Independence needs unmet:** Without power, some will feel helpless. Others will rebel or act out in defiance.
The antidote: Foster the development of self-control and self-confidence and the use of power in prosocial ways.
- **Generosity needs unmet:** Without empathy for others, some youth may lack a purpose in life and may engage in hedonistic acts.
The antidote: Encourage altruism and finding ways to be of value to others.

Overall, adults are more equipped to deal with challenging students when they understand how basic needs shape both positive and negative behaviors. How do you know if students’ needs are being met in these areas? See the markers below from p.30:

| Belonging | Mastery |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am close to my parent or caregiver. • There are other adults in my life that I trust. • My teachers really care about students. • I have a friend who knows me well. • I am accepted in a group of my peers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I usually pay attention in school. • I feel I am making progress in school. • My family encourages my school success. • Teachers expect me to try hard and succeed. • My friends want me to do my best in school. |
| Independence | Generosity |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can keep calm in stressful situations. • I think for myself and take responsibility. • I keep trying even when things get difficult. • I don’t act superior, but show others respect. • I usually get along with those in authority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It bothers me if people are mean to others. • When someone is upset, I try to help him or her. • My family supports one another in hard times. • My friends help and encourage one another. • I find purpose in life by contributing to others. |

Chapter 3: Four Types of Trauma That Result from Unmet Needs

Simply put, our youth become at risk when one of the four basic needs is not met – belonging, mastery, independence, or generosity. When these needs are repeatedly unmet, students may respond with a range of emotional, behavioral, and learning problems.

When youth withdraw or act out, we tend to focus on their *behavior*. We are quick to label them as destructive, defiant, aggressive, attention-disordered, unmotivated, and unteachable. We use hostile or condescending labels, but the behaviors they display are often “pain-based behavior.” When we focus on these outward behaviors we end up neglecting the inner pain that these types of behaviors mask. Once we become more able to tune into their pain, we are able to respond with *empathy* rather than *punishment*. We become more likely to ask, “What happened to you?” rather than, “What’s wrong with you?” This is what a more strength-based approach might look like –responding to the *needs* of our students rather than just their *behaviors*, building *assets* rather than labeling *weaknesses*. This chapter describes four types of trauma that occur when our youth face particular unmet needs.

1. Relational Trauma – lack of belonging

Youth who have experienced conflict, terror, or loss may suffer from relational trauma. Because of this, they may come to believe adults are unreliable and view them with distrust. In addition, modern society may contribute further to these feelings as we see a decline in stable families and neighborhoods. Some practitioners may feel they are not ready to handle this responsibility, but we all have a key role in building the types of restorative relationships that will help all youth thrive. This is not solely the responsibility of those with formal counseling training and titles. Given the daily interactions that happen in schools, the adults have the opportunity to show small acts of kindness and respect, and provide the type of community that students may be lacking. In fact, the school, more than any other institution, is involved in ongoing, daily, and long-term relationships with all youth.

Unfortunately, schools not only have the potential to nurture and reclaim disconnected youth, but they also have the capability to further alienate students. Some schools actually impede relationship-building by breaking up the day into 50-minute periods that are teacher-centered and too short for teachers to approach students as whole people. This is a problem because students without a connection with even one teacher are those who are at the greatest risk of dropping out.

2. Failure as Futility – lack of competence

There is far too much pessimism in contemporary approaches to difficult youth. This leads to feelings of failure not just for children but also for the adults who work with them. Rather than attempting to understand their unmet needs of youth, below are some of the ways that adults respond to youth with negative theories of behavior:

| Professional Orientation | Problem | Deficit-Based Reactions |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| Biophysical | Disease | Diagnose, drug, hospitalize |
| Behavioral | Disorder | Assess, control, coerce |
| Correctional | Delinquency | Adjudicate, punish, imprison |
| Social Work | Dysfunction | Intake, manage, discharge |
| Educational | Disobedience | Reprimand, suspend, expel |
| Special education | Disability | Label, remediate, segregate |

You can see the impact of this pessimistic approach in education where it is common to use behavior checklists to assess challenging youth. These lists outline problem behavior but do not get to the root of the unmet need causing the behavior.

3. Powerlessness – lack of independence

In American culture, we blame youth for their irresponsibility but we tend *not* to give young people real responsibility to begin with. In fact, it is our approach that leads to this lack of responsibility – we require *obedience* in children, we *punish* them, and we *indulge* them – none of which fosters independence. As a result, young people who are not secure in their own personal power, tend to have the following problems: *helplessness*, *rebellion*, *narcissism*, and *abuse of power*.

4. Loss of Purpose – lack of generosity

Originally, our ancestors simply struggled for *survival*, but in modern times the question becomes, *survival for what?* Now people need to feel valuable to survive and thrive. But young people can never develop a sense of being valued by others if we don’t give them opportunities to do so. Because we live in a culture of greed and a community dominated by technology, it is particularly difficult for young people to feel connected to and empathy for those in need. As a result, modern youth suffer from the “misery of unimportance.” Historically, young people apprenticed in fields and shops with elders and were necessary for their family’s survival. Now we ask little of our youth and they have few opportunities to contribute to the community. When they don’t experience genuine productivity, young people end up feeling helpless and unimportant.

To help reclaim our youth, schools need to prioritize the four values of Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity and meet the needs of those we serve. We need to create an environment where we focus on strengths rather than problems so students can thrive. The next four chapters will provide principles and practices to help schools do just that.

Chapter 4: Strengthening ATTACHMENT – Addressing the Need for *Belonging*

The need for belonging is as basic as the need for food. That's why it is first and foremost important to focus on strengthening ATTACHMENT, that is, building the bonds of trust. Children need consistent warmth and stable relationships for healthy development. A blind spot in many organizations that serve disengaged students is having a laser-like focus on trust. Research shows that teachers who build *both* skills and trust are the ones who succeed with previously disengaged students.

It is by forming an attachment with young people that adults can have the maximum impact on their behavior. But for youth who distrust adults, forming attachments can be challenging. As resilience author Paul Hernandez puts it, "The students who need us the most push us away the most." Youth at risk may be wary of adults and develop problem behaviors as a strategy to cope. They may resort to the following four types of behavior:

- **Fight:** Acting out, defiance, rule-breaking
- **Flight:** Being withdrawn, guarded, isolated, or retreating into drug use
- **Fool:** Masking true feelings through manipulation, provoking, or outsmarting authority figures
- **Follow:** Seeking out like-minded peers as a substitute for connecting to adults

The challenge for those who work with disconnected youth is *not* to be drawn into reacting immediately to the above behaviors and instead to take time to understand the unmet need underneath this behavior. In fact, a number of the behaviors of youth who lack belonging are actually *bids for connection*. These bids can range from requests for help to outwardly obnoxious behavior. They might include nonverbal actions like facial expressions, grooming issues, or even humor. Adults can help children connect by responding to these bids positively and by making their own efforts to reach out with bids that suggest, "I am interested in you," "I want to understand you," and "I accept you – even if not all your behavior."

Children *can* learn to connect. Even youth who have been traumatized can be healed by developing positive human relationships. Below are some guidelines for building trust with disconnected youth. These aren't specific strategies or programs, but rather approaches to building trust. "Programs don't change kids – relationships do."

Connect in Times of Crisis – A crisis provides a key opportunity for connection. Humans naturally reach out for support when they are stressed. Poorly handled, crises can increase alienation, but when adults respond sensitively, trust can blossom at these times.

Establish Rapid Trust in the Moment – Yes, building relationships takes time, but *connections* can happen in the moment. Particularly when a student is in the middle of a heated exchange like a student storming out of a class, monitoring your own response and calmly responding, "That's OK. Enough has gone wrong in one day, you're welcome in class" goes a long way toward building trust.

Take the Initiative to Nurture – As was mentioned above, students who most need to develop attachments may be the least likely to reach out. In fact, they may display repugnant behaviors as a way to keep adults at arm's length [correct term?] When you witness these types of behaviors, take a moment to pause and imagine that youth as a small child in need of belonging. Children like this don't have a long line of adults wanting to connect with them. For this reason, take the time to connect with youth who may be particularly rejected or ignored.

Don't Crowd – Disengaged youth may be wary of adults and have an attitude of, "If you get too close, I will back away." Trust develops slowly, in stages:

- **Casing:** At the onset, the youth wants to check out the adult to see, "Will this adult hurt me?" "Does this adult like me?" The child may hold back normal behavioral responses creating a bit of a *honeymoon* period that gives the adult some time to communicate acceptance and respect.
- **Limit testing:** In this stage, the youth may test the adult, purposely misbehave, and provoke to see if the adult is genuine.
- **Predictability:** After getting through the first two stages, the relationship is more stable and adult and child know what to expect from each other.

It's important to allow for each stage rather than jumping in with, "You can trust me." Instead try, "I know you don't feel you can trust me yet, and that's all right."

Model Respect – At times, adults feel they are inherently entitled to respect – they boss children, embarrass them, or condescend to them. This can be even more extreme with devalued groups who experience *microinsults* in the form of prejudice. If adults want to develop trust with children, they need to act the way they themselves want to be treated and must be attuned to even subtle cues they emit that signal dislike, prejudice, or rejection.

Chapter 5: Strengthening ACHIEVEMENT – Addressing the Need for *Mastery*

The desire for mastery is basic in all cultures from the first months of life when humans try to make meaning and learn to survive in their environments. Bit by bit as humans learn to master their environments, their motivation grows. But something happens in school that breaks this flow and when some students experience repeated failure, they no longer have the desire to succeed. As a result, we see students who avoid work, challenge adults, or drop out of school all together.

There are a number of reasons students experience failure at school – including traumatic childhood events that impact the growth and development of the brain (such as physical and sexual abuse, distant parenting, and chaos in the home). These experiences have an impact on both the brain and the body. Fortunately, there are steps we can take to strengthen students' sense of ACHIEVEMENT.

We now have relatively recent findings in brain science that show that the brain experiences *neuroplasticity* – that is, the brain can continue to change and can compensate for the type of trauma and damage described above. To build on this new science, below are some guidelines to help educators build healthy environments that foster learning and growth.

Safety and Learning – Simply put, safety is necessary for learning. The truth is that you need to take risks to learn something new, so if students experience overwhelming distress, they will struggle to learn. Unfortunately, students often face a great deal of threat at school – from teachers, other students, the curriculum, testing, homework, grades, and the school climate, too. Calm adults can help establish an environment in which students feel physically, emotionally, relationally, and culturally safe.

The best way to handle the stress some students feel from peers, grades, and homework is to be *preventative* – create an environment of safety and secure attachment, “Children learn best when they feel connected, appreciated, and safe. The goal of attachment-based teaching is for each child to move from feeling vulnerable, frightened, and unimportant to feeling protected, cared for, and valued.”

Creating this type of environment is also the first step in *healing* childhood trauma. Part of creating such a climate includes being predictable and consistent (rapid changes can trigger feelings of unsafety). It also involves the adult projecting an aura of calmness. Look at an example of a teacher choosing to co-regulate with rather than punish this distraught 13-year-old:

A student was struggling to write a complete sentence in English. Filled with frustration, he crumpled up the paper and threw it toward the teacher. Mr. U. walked toward the student smiling, “Nice throw. What’s up?” The student responded, “I can’t do this crap, it’s stupid.” Mr. U. responded, “Maybe it seems that way, but you can do it, and we’ll do it together. OK?”

Experiential Learning – Students won’t experience mastery unless they have robust learning experiences. John Dewey argues that the most powerful learning is experiential. We support student learning when we provide them with opportunities to learn by *doing* – such as through project-based learning and adventure education – that aim to make learning active, relevant, and challenging. With our emphasis on high-stakes testing we end up doing the opposite – stifling learning and dousing motivation.

Schools that value mastery not only include challenging and engaging tasks, but they also provide alternative approaches for students who are not experiencing success. They also support a *growth mindset* in which the adults believe that intelligence is not innate but rather stems from hard work. When the adults do not believe in youth it is hard for them to rise above these low expectations and thrive.

Making Learning Social – Finally, the brain was made to learn around the campfire with others. Historically, the most important learning took place in social settings. In contrast, much of school focuses far more on lecture than on dialogue. Furthermore, the competitive nature of school means much of the learning is done independently in isolation. However, although the benefits of cooperative learning have been well documented, teachers often don’t fully employ it because it wasn’t how they were taught or they fear a chaotic classroom.

To youth at risk, ACHIEVEMENT can feel unattainable. They fear failure and then they end up rejecting learning. However, teachers can counteract these effects by establishing safe and calm environments and ensuring that learning is experiential and social.

Chapter 6: Strengthening AUTONOMY – Addressing the Need for *Mastery*

While a key aspect of child and youth development is the desire for greater AUTONOMY, we don't always provide opportunities for increased responsibility in the home or in school. When we curtail rather than foster independence, this often leads to conflict. While we say we believe in "empowering youth," we don't necessarily follow that up by providing young people with the skills to make better decisions and engage in more constructive behaviors.

Three Aspects of Autonomy

Fostering independence means helping youth to develop *self-control*, *self-confidence*, and *shared responsibility*:

Self-control – Infants take their first steps toward self-control with caregivers who have a soothing approach. Children have mirror neurons that allow them to mimic the adult's ability to be calm. After enough of these encounters, children learn how to self-calm. When a child has experienced trauma or a more reactive adult, they never learn to self-regulate. While it may seem obvious that an adult dealing with a distressed child or agitated youth should respond calmly, it is easy to get drawn into conflict and lose self-control. Instead, adults need to help children become calm through a process called *coregulation*.

Self-confidence – To develop mature responsibility, young people need self-confidence. Or as Albert Bandura describes it, *self-efficacy* – the sense of being in charge of one's destiny. Without this skill, young people exhibit powerlessness and helplessness which may lead to defeat and depression. It may also lead to the opposite of impotence, in the form of rebellion and oppositional behavior. How do students develop self-confidence? They do so *as* they experience *significance* (being important to someone), *competence* (being skilled at something), *power* (controlling one's destiny), and *virtue* (contributing to others).

Shared responsibility: When young people belong to a community, part of how they develop autonomy is through shared responsibility. All students should have the opportunity to lead as well as to follow.

Rethinking Discipline

Discipline issues offer an opportunity to develop responsibility. While many view the word "discipline" as a synonym of "punishment," it is really a process of teaching. Its roots come from the Latin word *disciplina* which means education to produce self-control. In order for discipline to be instructive, natural consequences should be used whenever available. If not, then at least consequences should be logical. In what is known as *restorative justice*, the goal of discipline is to respair harm rather than administer punishment. The authors suggest the following guidelines in order to have *true discipline* – that is, shifting the focus from consequences to instilling *responsibility*:

- *Going from rules to values*: When schools make all decisions strictly by the book without flexibility, they often lose sight of values. Instead, focus on the needs of youth and shift from persecuting violators to teaching values of respect.
- *Demanding greatness instead of obedience*: Rather than demanding obedience, demand mature, responsible behavior. Yes, hold children accountable, but do it in a way that taps into their great potential. Rather than, "You're punished for bullying the new kid in the class," try, "I know you want to be respected, and that is the way you are expected to treat others in our class."
- *Returning responsibility*: Students need to learn to take responsibility for their actions. Taking ownership of a problem is the first step toward resolving that problem. If a student tries to excuse poor attendance because his parents are alcoholics, the counselor should return the responsibility to the student, "Then I guess it's up to you."

Developing Resilient Problem Solving

In dealing with conflict, it is easy for the adult to get drawn into the drama, and yet it is particularly important for the adult to model how to respond to conflicts calmly and responsibly. Below are some guidelines to help adults:

- *Defuse the youth's agitation*: Tune into facial expression and tone of voice to try to understand the youth's feelings and words.
- *De-escalate your own arousal*: Become aware of your own inner feelings of anger or fear. Self-calm or disengage until you can become calm.
- *Allow time for cooling down*: Emotions naturally fade with time, so use a calm voice to give heated emotions time to cool.
- *Never take anger personally*: Replacing blame with empathy will help ensure we don't add to the student's pain.
- *Model a generous spirit*: Using small acts of kindness like forgiveness has restorative effects and provides a model for restoring ruptured relationships.

When the adult can approach conflict in this way, the *conflict* becomes a *problem to solve*. The brain is already equipped to solve problems – and because our brains are social, we often learn to cope and overcome difficulties with others. Below is the natural three-step process the brain goes through that adults can help youth with:

1. **Connect** – Build trust and calm the person in conflict. Show empathy by responding to *needs* rather than *problems*.
2. **Clarify** – Help the youth make sense of and communicate what has happened by using the *CLEAR timeline* below.
3. **Restore** – Once we understand the problem (which comes from unmet needs), help the youth find ways to foster **attachment, achievement, autonomy, and altruism**. When young people have their basic needs met, balance will be restored to their lives.

CLEAR Conflict and Coping Cycle

The CLEAR process, described below, is the brain's natural process of going through conflict and problem solving. When a conflict arises, the adult can help the youth understand the *path of that conflict* and the choice to respond by *coping* or *more conflict*. Below is a description of each of the steps in a conflict and an example of how this might play out in the classroom from p.99:

| CLEAR | The Brain's Problem-Solving Sequence | An Example of Classroom Conflict |
|---|--|---|
| Challenge: What triggered the event? | A stressful event sparks the brain's amygdala. | A teacher criticizes a student in front of the class. |
| Logic: What was the person thinking? | The logical brain evaluates the event and perceives it as safe or stressful. | The student thinks, "She is disrespecting me." |
| Emotions: What was the person feeling? | The brain triggers emotions as a result. | The student becomes angry at the teacher. |
| Actions: What was the specific behavior? | Behavior occurs based on logic and emotions. | The student insults the teacher. |
| Response: What was the response? | Reactions lead to coping or more conflict. | The teacher responds to the provocation: • Coping: If the adult responds calmly with empathy (see guidelines above – <i>defuse, de-escalate, etc.</i>), the student feels soothed and supported and the ability to cope is strengthened. • Conflict: If the adult mirrors the angry student, then conflict escalates and everyone loses. |

After the conflict, the student and teacher can use the questions in the first column to reconstruct what happened with the event. This is a useful tool for youth to begin to understand what *caused* an event, how conflicts arise, and how their behavior impacts themselves and others. Some schools have students fill out a form like this rather than a behavior incident report that focuses on consequences. Other schools don't use a form but simply have an adult *ask* the student the questions in the first column while jotting down notes.

Teams of adults can also use the CLEAR model as a way to better understand and support youth in conflict. The meeting starts with the adults listing a student's strengths. Then they go through the questions in the CLEAR model with a goal of better understanding underlying stressors that are triggering the student. This information helps the adults to find restorative approaches that involve *external* supports while also helping the student build *internal* strengths (**attachment, achievement, autonomy, and altruism**).

Chapter 7 – Strengthening ALTRUISM – Addressing the Need for *Generosity*

Humans were designed to engage in caring and cooperative behavior. It is part of what has allowed us to survive as a species – being part of a cooperative and caring community. From a young age, children learn to understand what others are thinking and feeling and this empathy motivates them to want to meet the needs of others. Further, it is necessary for youth to contribute to *others* in order to develop their own self-worth. ALTRUISM actually helps people cope with life's stressors – focusing on helping others shifts attention away from one's own problems and a preoccupation with the self. And yet, much of our culture and what happens in schools is individualistic and competitive. It is entirely possible for an 18-year-old to graduate from high school without ever having had to care for or assist another human being who needed help.

An antidote to this is to develop a *curriculum of caring* – not just to teach *about* caring, but to engage youth in spending time caring for others. Youth desperately yearn for a cause that is bigger than themselves. Organizations that aim to re-engage youth who display self-centered and antisocial tendencies often incorporate **service-learning projects** such as the following:

- At one alternative school for students at risk, youth helped out in the Special Olympics and then went camping with the students who were blind.
- Young students prepared a home for a refugee family, planting flowers and bringing toys to welcome children.
- Teenagers chopped firewood for the disabled, visited senior citizens, and put on a clown show for a daycare center.

Some may be skeptical about taking time for public service that should go to academic learning. But research shows that volunteer service not only increases responsibility, moral development, and commitment to democratic values, but it also leads to increased achievement, motivation, and problem-solving abilities. There is also research on how *best* to implement service learning. Rather than very adult-driven, highly regimented service projects, it is best to involve youth in developing and implementing them. It is also key to incorporate more direct people-to-people opportunities rather than indirect service.

Reframing Caring

In addition to implementing service-learning projects, adults can also use language to reframe *caring*, given that students with destructive or antisocial behavior may not view caring as cool. These young people may describe sensitive and caring actions in negative terms. The challenge, then, is for adults to use direct verbal intervention to call out behavior that is unkind and hurting (which may be seen as cool or clever) and at the same time relabel these behaviors as something negative – "That is acting immaturely." Further, adults can frame prosocial behaviors as *strong, courageous, intelligent, or attractive*.

Build a Positive Climate of Caring and Respect

Neuroscience shows that the brain responds well to caring and support. Teachers can build on this by establishing a positive climate in their classrooms. They don't need to add anything to their already crowded curriculum in order to establish a culture of caring. Rather than following any particular reform or fad, teachers can develop the type of developmental relationships the authors propose in this book, in which students learn to respect and help each other as they make responsible decisions together.

Concluding Thoughts

The last chapter includes two stories that show how with struggle, trauma can become resilience. These stories aren't captured in this summary, but they leave us with a few final important messages. First, it is important to keep in mind that adversity doesn't necessarily devastate youth and in fact, can be the key to their resilience and strength. Even those who have experienced prolonged or severe trauma have the resilience to function competently. But the problem is that we often approach trauma by addressing the *symptoms*, not the deep underlying causes. Also, schools focus much more on delivering facts rather than supporting students to thrive. Instead, through developmental relationships, we can address students' needs for Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity and support them on their path to healthy growth and healing trauma.

THE MAIN IDEA's PD ideas for Building Resilience in Youth at Risk

Email Jenn if you would like the **1-page overview** of the book, the **PPT** for the ideas below, and the staff **handout** that goes with it.

A. Introducing the FOUR BASIC NEEDS

1. Provide an introduction to the book.

Either copy and distribute page 1 of the summary, the 1-pager with the 4 *A*'s (email Jenn for this), or simply share the following:

This book takes a unique look at ways to support our most troubled youth. Rather than proposing a set of evidence-based *practices* to guide your work with youth at risk, the authors delved into the research to find evidence-based *principles*. They examined the research on universal human needs and found that all humans have an inborn need for: **Attachment, Achievement, Autonomy, and Altruism.**

2. Share this quote and ask for responses (in writing, in pairs, or as a large group).

"Building restorative relationships is not limited to those with formal training in counseling. An adult who is involved in ongoing daily events has many opportunities to show small acts of kindness and respect. While trained therapists make important contributions, everyday supportive relationships are the most potent way to heal trauma." (p.36)

3. Discuss responsibility for all students.

Next, share the following: The book's authors say that often parents put responsibility for student behavior first with the school, then with the child, third with themselves. Alternatively, schools first put responsibility on the home, then on the child, and last on the school. Have teachers discuss their reactions to this.

In the book it says that in traditional Native society it was the responsibility of *all* adults to care for *all* youth. Because of this, children began to see themselves as related to all adults they came in contact with.

Discuss with teachers: How can we develop this sense that all students, even if they aren't in our classes, are our collective responsibility? What behaviors would we display to convey this message to our students?

4. Think about which students have basic unmet needs.

While the ideas in the book will certainly help *all* students, to get an idea of which students this model might be *particularly helpful* for, have teams of teachers brainstorm which students might already have the four needs *met* for themselves, and which students might *not have those needs met* in the two tables below, based on the chart on p.29 of the book (these are in the **HANDOUT**):

| | Need Met | Examples of Students Who Seem to Have This Need <i>Met</i> |
|--------------------|---|---|
| ATTACHMENT | Belonging, trust, cooperation | |
| ACHIEVEMENT | Mastery, problem solving, motivation | |
| AUTONOMY | Independence, self-control, assertiveness | |
| ALTRUISM | Generosity, caring, contributing | |

| | Need Unmet | Need Distorted | Examples of Students Who Seem to Have This Need <i>Unmet or Distorted</i> |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| ATTACHMENT | Disconnection, distrust, isolation | Attention seeking, hypervigilance, gang affiliation | |
| ACHIEVEMENT | Failure, give up easily, unmotivated | Delinquent skills, manipulative, overly competitive | |
| AUTONOMY | Helplessness, impulsivity, easily misled | Oppositional, over-controlling, intimidating | |
| ALTRUISM | Selfishness, lack of empathy, lack of purpose | Used by others, overly indulgent, hedonistic | |

If teachers are unsure which students might have which unmet needs, give them the chart below (from p.30 of the book) and consider having teams discuss these bullet points *or* having teachers survey individual students (rate each bulleted item from 1-10) and bring the results back to the group.

| ATTACHMENT | ACHIEVEMENT |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am close to my parent or caregiver. • There are other adults in my life that I trust. • My teachers really care about students. • I have a friend who knows me well. • I am accepted in a group of my peers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I usually pay attention in school. • I feel I am making progress in school. • My family encourages my school success. • Teachers expect me to try hard and succeed. • My friends want me to do my best in school. |
| AUTONOMY | ALTRUISM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can keep calm in stressful situations. • I think for myself and take responsibility. • I keep trying even when things get difficult. • I don't act superior, but show others respect. • I usually get along with those in authority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It bothers me if people are mean to others. • When someone is upset, I try to help him or her. • My family supports one another in hard times. • My friends help and encourage one another. • I find purpose in life by contributing to others. |

B. Strategies to Meet the Four Basic Needs

The next four sections will go over more specific ideas to meet students' four basic needs: attachment, achievement, autonomy, and altruism. Before going into those details, have teachers brainstorm ideas for the 3rd column below (on the [HANDOUT](#)).

Then, at the *end* of today's session, you might have them go back and add to these ideas.

| | When this Need is Unmet | Possible Antidotes | Ways to Provide These Antidotes in Our Classrooms |
|-------------|---|--|---|
| ATTACHMENT | Disconnection, distrust, isolation | Build trusting relationships. Foster cooperation. | |
| ACHIEVEMENT | Failure, give up easily, unmotivated | Provide opportunities for mastery, problem solving, and meaningful achievement. Foster motivation. | |
| AUTONOMY | Helplessness, impulsivity, easily misled | Foster the development of self-control, self-confidence, and the use of power in prosocial ways. Provide opportunities for independence. | |
| ALTRUISM | Selfishness, lack of empathy, lack of purpose | Encourage generosity and empathy. Provide opportunities to be of value to others. | |

C. ATTACHMENT

1. Introduce the importance of attachment.

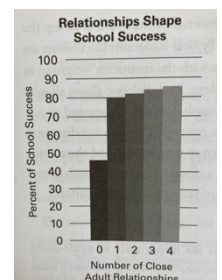
Share the following with teachers: The need for belonging is as basic as the need for food. That's why it is first and foremost important to focus on strengthening ATTACHMENT, that is, building the bonds of trust. It is by forming an attachment with young people that adults can have the maximum impact on their behavior.

2. Share this quote and ask teachers to respond (in writing, in pairs, or as a large group).

"Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her." Urie Brofenbrenner

3. Brainstorm ideas to ensure every student has one connection with an adult.

Share the chart to the right from p.80 of the book or the fact that students are only about 45% likely to be successful when they have *zero* close relationships with an adult. However, that success rate almost *doubles* when they have a connection to *just one* adult.



First, have grade teams list all students and ask adults to put their initials next to students they have a connection with. Which students lack even *one* adult connection? These students are at the greatest risk of dropping out.

Now, in large or small groups, brainstorm: How can we as a school ensure that each student has at least one adult connected to them?

D. ACHIEVEMENT

1. Introduce the importance of achievement.

Share the following with teachers: To youth at risk, ACHIEVEMENT can feel unattainable. They fear failure and then they end up rejecting learning. However, teachers can counteract these effects by establishing safe and calm environments and ensuring that learning is *experiential* and *social*.

2. Share this quote and ask teachers to respond (in writing, in pairs, or as a large group).

“Children learn best when they feel connected, appreciated, and safe. The goal of attachment-based teaching is for each child to move from feeling vulnerable, frightened, and unimportant to feeling protected, cared for, and valued.”

3. Discuss ways school might be adding to students’ feelings of threat.

Unfortunately, students often face a great deal of threat at school – from teachers, other students, the curriculum, testing, homework, grades, and the school climate, too. Discuss the policies and practices (e.g., no late homework accepted) that might be heightening students’ sense of threat. Might there be wiggle room to adjust some of these, especially given the current pandemic?

4. Brainstorm ideas to make learning more experiential and social.

The authors write that students are more likely to experience mastery if they have robust learning experiences (i.e. experiential or project-based learning) and learn with other students (learning that is social). In grade teams, have teachers take their lesson plans for the next day and brainstorm ways to incorporate more experiential or social activities into the lesson.

E. AUTONOMY

1. Introduce the importance of autonomy.

Share the following with teachers: While a key aspect of child and youth development is the desire for greater AUTONOMY, we don’t always provide opportunities for increased responsibility in the home or in school. When we curtail rather than foster independence, this often leads to conflict. While we say we believe in “empowering youth,” we don’t necessarily follow that up by providing young people with the skills to make better decisions and engage in more constructive behaviors.

2. Have teachers reflect on how much responsibility they’ve recently given to students.

Ask teachers to reflect for a moment: In the last 5 days, with a partner, share any examples of when you’ve relinquished responsibility to students. Then as a pair, brainstorm more ways you *could* have given students more responsibility.

3. Help teachers reframe discipline.

Discipline issues offer an opportunity to develop responsibility. While many view the word “discipline” as a synonym of “punishment,” it is really a process of teaching. Have teachers take a look at the chart below (from p.95 in the book) and discuss which side of the chart best captures how they believe your school addresses issues with student behavior.

| <i>Discipline</i> | <i>Punishment</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. Teach to prevent future problems. 2. Develop respect and social responsibility. 3. Discuss natural consequences. 4. Strengthen internal prosocial values. 5. Strengthen empathy circuits in the brain. | 1. Use pain to penalize past behavior. 2. Develop obedience to authority. 3. Administer arbitrary consequences. 4. Impose external rule enforcement. 5. Condition pain circuits in the brain. |

4. Have teachers prepare themselves for reacting to poor student behavior.

It’s hard not to react negatively when a student displays disruptive behavior. However, adults can help students develop better problem-solving skills when conflicts arise if they can model how to respond calmly. Have teachers take the suggestions below and write (in their **HANDOUT**) sentence starters they might say out loud or internally so they don’t get drawn into the drama:

| Authors’ Suggestions | Sentences Educators Can Use Aloud or Internally |
|--|--|
| <i>Defuse the youth’s agitation:</i> Tune into facial expression and tone of voice to try to understand the youth’s feelings and words. | |
| <i>De-escalate your own arousal:</i> Become aware of your own inner feelings of anger or fear. Self-calm or disengage until you can become calm. | |
| <i>Allow time for cooling down:</i> Emotions naturally fade with time, so use a calm voice to give heated emotions time to cool. | |
| <i>Never take anger personally:</i> Replacing blame with empathy will help ensure we don’t add to the student’s pain. | |
| <i>Model a generous spirit:</i> Using small acts of kindness like forgiveness has restorative effects and provides a model for restoring ruptured relationships. | |

5. Practice using the CLEAR problem-solving approach to better understand student conflicts.

The authors provide a 5-step problem-solving process that outlines the natural steps the brain goes through with conflict. Show teachers the CLEAR table below (from p.99 in the book) and do one of the following:

- Have teachers role-play the student and teacher parts of the criticism incident in the chart.
- In the next few weeks, ask teachers to commit to sitting down with a student after a conflict and use the questions in the first column to reconstruct what happened with the event.
- With a team of teachers who have the same students in common, think of a recent incident with a student and see if they can get at underlying causes that might have triggered the event by going through the CLEAR questions below.

| CLEAR | The Brain's Problem-Solving Sequence | An Example of Classroom Conflict |
|---|--|--|
| Challenge: What triggered the event? | A stressful event sparks the brain's amygdala. | A teacher criticizes a student in front of the class. |
| Logic: What was the person thinking? | The logical brain evaluates the event and perceives it as safe or stressful. | The student thinks, "She is disrespecting me." |
| Emotions: What was the person feeling? | The brain triggers emotions as a result. | The student becomes angry at the teacher. |
| Actions: What was the specific behavior? | Behavior occurs based on logic and emotions. | The student insults the teacher. |
| Response: What was the response? | Reactions lead to coping or more conflict. | The teacher responds to the provocation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coping: If the adult responds calmly with empathy (see guidelines above – <i>defuse, de-escalate, etc.</i>), the student feels soothed and supported and the ability to cope is strengthened.• Conflict: If the adult mirrors the angry student, then conflict escalates and everyone loses. |

F. ALTRUISM

1. Introduce the importance of altruism.

Share with teachers: Humans were designed to engage in caring and cooperative behavior. And yet, much of our culture and what happens in schools is individualistic and competitive. It is entirely possible for an 18-year-old to graduate from high school without ever having had to care for or assist another human being who needed help.

2. Have teachers think of ways to incorporate service-learning into their instruction.

An antidote to this individualistic culture is to develop a *curriculum of caring* – not just to teach *about* caring, but to engage youth in spending time caring for others. Have teachers brainstorm in small groups: Are there any service-learning ideas you could incorporate into your instruction?

3. Ask teachers to brainstorm and include opportunities for cooperation and building empathy.

Cooperation requires the development of empathy. In small groups, ask teachers to share the different types of cooperative structures they use in their classrooms with the goal of having teachers learn some new cooperative approaches.

Next, have the same small group brainstorm the types of empathy skills they could teach beforehand so they will be more equipped to handle cooperative situations (listening, communication, body language, putting yourself in someone else's shoes, naming your own feelings and needs, identifying the emotions and concerns of others, etc.) Ask teachers to commit to directly teaching some of these empathy skills before their next cooperative activity.

Now put it all together...

If you have gone through all four of the *A*'s with your teachers, now have them go back to the original chart with the column for "Ways to Provide These Antidotes in Our Classrooms" and ask them to add the newer ideas they came up with today.

Staff HANDOUT for Building Resilience in Youth at Risk

Based on the ideas in the book *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*, by Larry Brento, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern

Email Jenn if you would like the 1-page overview of the book and the PPT that goes with the staff handout below.

The FOUR BASIC NEEDS

This book takes a unique look at ways to support our most troubled youth. Rather than proposing a set of evidence-based *practices* to guide your work with youth at risk, the authors delved into the research to find evidence-based *principles*. They examined the research on universal human needs and found that all humans have an inborn need for: **Attachment, Achievement, Autonomy, and Altruism.**

“Building restorative relationships is not limited to those with formal training in counseling. An adult who is involved in ongoing daily events has many opportunities to show small acts of kindness and respect. While trained therapists make important contributions, everyday supportive relationships are the most potent way to heal trauma.” (p.36)

What does it look like when students have their basic needs met? Unmet?

Which students have their basic needs met and which have unmet needs?

| | Need Met | Examples of Students Who Seem to Have This Need Met |
|--------------------|---|--|
| ATTACHMENT | Belonging, trust, cooperation | |
| ACHIEVEMENT | Mastery, problem solving, motivation | |
| AUTONOMY | Independence, self-control, assertiveness | |
| ALTRUISM | Generosity, caring, contributing | |

| | Need Unmet | Need Distorted | Examples of Students Who Seem to Have This Need Unmet or Distorted |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| ATTACHMENT | Disconnection, distrust, isolation | Attention seeking, hypervigilance, gang affiliation | |
| ACHIEVEMENT | Failure, give up easily, unmotivated | Delinquent skills, manipulative, overly competitive | |
| AUTONOMY | Helplessness, impulsivity, easily misled | Oppositional, over-controlling, intimidating | |
| ALTRUISM | Selfishness, lack of empathy, lack of purpose | Used by others, overly indulgent, hedonistic | |

A tool you can use to survey individual students (rate each bulleted item from 1-10) to determine unmet needs.

| ATTACHMENT | ACHIEVEMENT |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am close to my parent or caregiver. • There are other adults in my life that I trust. • My teachers really care about students. • I have a friend who knows me well. • I am accepted in a group of my peers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I usually pay attention in school. • I feel I am making progress in school. • My family encourages my school success. • Teachers expect me to try hard and succeed. • My friends want me to do my best in school. |
| AUTONOMY | ALTRUISM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can keep calm in stressful situations. • I think for myself and take responsibility. • I keep trying even when things get difficult. • I don't act superior, but show others respect. • I usually get along with those in authority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It bothers me if people are mean to others. • When someone is upset, I try to help him or her. • My family supports one another in hard times. • My friends help and encourage one another. • I find purpose in life by contributing to others. |

Strategies to Meet the Four Basic Needs

| | When this Need is Unmet | Possible Antidotes | Ways to Provide These Antidotes in Our Classrooms |
|--------------------|---|--|--|
| ATTACHMENT | Disconnection, distrust, isolation | Build trusting relationships. Foster cooperation. | |
| ACHIEVEMENT | Failure, give up easily, unmotivated | Provide opportunities for mastery, problem solving, and meaningful achievement. Foster motivation. | |
| AUTONOMY | Helplessness, impulsivity, easily misled | Foster the development of self-control, self-confidence, and the use of power in prosocial ways. Provide opportunities for independence. | |
| ALTRUISM | Selfishness, lack of empathy, lack of purpose | Encourage generosity and empathy. Provide opportunities to be of value to others. | |

ATTACHMENT

“Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her.” Urie Brofenbrenner

Notes from this section:

ACHIEVEMENT

“Children learn best when they feel connected, appreciated, and safe. The goal of attachment-based teaching is for each child to move from feeling vulnerable, frightened, and unimportant to feeling protected, cared for, and valued.”

Notes from this section:

AUTONOMY

While a key aspect of child and youth development is the desire for greater AUTONOMY, we don’t always provide opportunities for increased responsibility in the home or in school.

Notes from this section:

Reframing discipline.

| <i>Discipline</i> | <i>Punishment</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. Teach to prevent future problems. 2. Develop respect and social responsibility. 3. Discuss natural consequences. 4. Strengthen internal prosocial values. 5. Strengthen empathy circuits in the brain. | 1. Use pain to penalize past behavior. 2. Develop obedience to authority. 3. Administer arbitrary consequences. 4. Impose external rule enforcement. 5. Condition pain circuits in the brain. |

Prepare yourself for reacting to poor student behavior.

It's hard not to react negatively when a student displays disruptive behavior. Write in sentence starters you might say out loud or internally so you don't get drawn into the drama:

| Authors' Suggestions | Sentences Educators Can Use Aloud or Internally |
|--|--|
| • <i>Defuse the youth's agitation:</i> Tune into facial expression and tone of voice to try to understand the youth's feelings and words. | |
| <i>De-escalate your own arousal:</i> Become aware of your own inner feelings of anger or fear. Self-calm or disengage until you can become calm. | |
| <i>Allow time for cooling down:</i> Emotions naturally fade with time, so use a calm voice to give heated emotions time to cool. | |
| <i>Never take anger personally:</i> Replacing blame with empathy will help ensure we don't add to the student's pain. | |
| <i>Model a generous spirit:</i> Using small acts of kindness like forgiveness has restorative effects and provides a model for restoring ruptured relationships. | |

The CLEAR problem-solving approach to better understand student conflicts

| CLEAR | The Brain's Problem-Solving Sequence | An Example of Classroom Conflict |
|---|--|---|
| Challenge: What triggered the event? | A stressful event sparks the brain's amygdala. | A teacher criticizes a student in front of the class. |
| Logic: What was the person thinking? | The logical brain evaluates the event and perceives it as safe or stressful. | The student thinks, "She is disrespecting me." |
| Emotions: What was the person feeling? | The brain triggers emotions as a result. | The student becomes angry at the teacher. |
| Actions: What was the specific behavior? | Behavior occurs based on logic and emotions. | The student insults the teacher. |
| Response: What was the response? | Reactions lead to coping or more conflict. | The teacher responds to the provocation: • Coping: If the adult responds calmly with empathy (see guidelines above – <i>defuse</i> , <i>de-escalate</i> , <i>etc.</i>), the student feels soothed and supported and the ability to cope is strengthened. • Conflict: If the adult mirrors the angry student, then conflict escalates and everyone loses. |

F. ALTRUISM

Humans were designed to engage in caring and cooperative behavior. And yet, much of our culture and what happens in schools is individualistic and competitive. It is entirely possible for an 18-year-old to graduate from high school without ever having had to care for or assist another human being who needed help.

Notes from this section: