

THE PURPOSE OF child MISBEHAVIOUR

.... a psychoanalytic - behavioural approach

(adapted from S.T.E.T. - Dinkmeyer, McKay and Dinkmeyer)

GENERAL NOTES

These notes are to assist teachers in understanding children's Misbehaviour and in suggesting different techniques for CHILD management.

In essences..... an awareness of the child's purpose in misbehaving MAY change your habitual or usual response to the negative action.

TYPES OF CHILD MISBEHAVIOUR

	Student's goal*	Attacking behaviour	Defending behaviour	
I	Attention seeking	The clown The nuisance The smart alec The show-off Obtrusive Instability Walking question mark Unpredictable Bright sayings	Lazy Anxious Speech problems Bashful or shy Untidy Self-indulgent Excessively pleasant Fritolous	 <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> I belong <i>only</i> when I'm noticed or served. </div>
II	Power	Argues Rebels Defiant Contradicts Bully Temper tantrums Untruthful Disobedient (carries out forbidden acts)	Unco-operative Dawdles Stubborn Disobedient (won't do what he's told) Forgetful	 <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> I belong <i>only</i> when I'm in control or when I'm proving that no one can make me do anything. </div>
III	Revenge	Stealing Vicious Destructive Cruel Delinquent behaviour Violent	Sullen Moody Morose Passive hate Refuses to participate	 <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> I belong <i>only</i> when I hurt others and get even. I can't be liked. </div>
IV	Escape by withdrawal or Display of Inadequacy		Stupid Idle Incapable 'Hopeless' Juvenile ways Won't mix Fantasy activities Solitary activities	 <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> I belong <i>only</i> when I convince others that I am unable and helpless. </div>

Classification of Behaviours with Undesirable Goals

* goal or purpose (usually pupils are NOT aware of these goals)

2.

In many instances classroom misbehaviour gains a student some QUICK PAY-OFF (some recognition) EVEN if that recognition has NEGATIVE consequences.

i.e. Pupils are always aware of Consequences - but sometimes NOT the goals.

What is Misbehavior?

What you consider misbehavior in your classroom may not be misbehavior in the classroom next door. Students may not agree with either definition. Still, if we are to respond successfully when students misbehave, we need a fairly specific description:

Misbehavior

- violates the rights of others or jeopardizes their safety
- is self-defeating or self-damaging
- is contrary to the requirements of the situation.

In order to respond EFFECTIVELY to a misbehaving student - it is useful to FIRSTLY identify the GOAL of the MISBEHAVIOUR. Determining a pupil's goal, reason, or purpose will help you choose your method of intervention.

THE 4 MAIN GOALS OF MISBEHAVIOUR

Why do students misbehave? After much observation, Rudolf^{*} Dreikurs identified four short-term goals of misbehavior. According to Dreikurs, children misbehave because:

1. They want *attention*.
2. They seek *power*.
3. They're looking for *revenge*.
4. They've given up, want you to leave them alone, and so choose to *display their inadequacy*.

* a Psychiatrist

How does a teacher identify the goals ????

STEP 1. Consider immediately YOUR feelings i.e. "Get in touch with your feelings as soon as the MISBEHAVIOUR is observed."

- i.e.
- * Annoyed attention (?)
 - * Angry, provoked power (?)
 - * Hurt revenge (?)
 - * Despairing
Hopeless display of inadequacy (?)
Discouraged

STEP 2. What were the CONSEQUENCES in previous encounters with the problem behaviour with previous strategies i.e. the behaviour MUST have had some PAY-OFF, hence it WAS repeated.

IDENTIFYING THE GOALS OF MISBEHAVIOUREXAMPLE

(a) Misbehaviour - student tapping on a desk

"Jason"



(b) Teacher's immediate response:

* Feeling aspect - ANNOYANCE

Action - a habitual -----

STOP THAT NOISE JASON



(c) Consequence - Jason is recognized for TAPPING and his short-term goal is achieved. i.e. He received attention - some recognition for his negative behaviour.

some
recognition
at last!



(d) After a few minutes ... the desire for further attention produces - the tapping and the habitual teacher response ...

I belong
ONLY when
I'm NOTICED

Pupils faulty
belief



STOP THAT NOISE JASON

... only louder !!



So if the goal was attention - the tapping behaviour would have been ignored i.e. not re-inforced and some "good" behaviour immediately noticed. i.e. "Tap Tap" --- Teacher response "Jason is

really ready for work
(when TAPPING CEASES!)

i.e. tapping is ignored

The general guideline for responding to attention-seeking students is:

Never give attention on demand, even for useful behavior.
Help students become self-motivated. Give attention in ways they don't expect. Catch them being "good."

Your feelings and the student's response to what you do or say are the two consequences of misbehavior that will direct you toward the student's goal.

So..... Remember: If you feel annoyed, the student's goal is probably attention. If your blood pressure rises, if your feelings intensify, if you're *angry*, the student likely wants power.

I Summary of Student's goal: Attention seeking

Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts	Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts
Is a nuisance	Annoyed and	Lazy	'I must do some-
The show-off	irritated	Wants help	thing'
The clown	'For goodness	Bashful, shy	Sense of
The smart	sake, stop it'	Fearful	responsibility
alec	Feeling of relief	Too tired	Urge or coax
The walking	when the	Untidiness	into action
question mark	annoying	Self-indulgent	Feeling of
Mischief maker	behaviour ceases	Vain	encouragement
Pushing,		Cute	when student
obtrusive		Model child	responds
Latecomer		Speech	In the case of
Instability		impediment	'model' child,
Embarrassing		Anxious	flattered by child's
behaviour		Frivolous	conformity
Pencil tapper			
The talker			

Types of Behaviour Classified as Attention Seeking and Teacher's Feelings and Reaction to Them

Note that in each case If the goal IS attention, then all these Teacher responses ARE ineffective if the problem behaviour persists!!

II Summary of Student's goal: Power!

Attacking behaviour		Defending behaviour	
Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts	Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts
Rebellious	Feels threatened	Stubborn	Feels exasperated
Argues	Feels angry	Unco-operative	Feels irritated
Defiant	Feels authority is	Dawdles	Feels challenged
Truant	being challenged	Forgetful	Feels frustrated
Contradicts	Wants to get on top	Disobedient	'You won't get out
Disobedient	'If you think I'm	(refuses to do	of it this way'
(carries out	going to stand for	what he is told)	'You'll fall into line
forbidden acts)	this, you're		or else'
Temper	mistaken'		Feels victorious
tantrums	'I'll teach you to		when student falls
Bully	defy me'		into line
'Boss'	'You won't get		
	away with this'		
	Feels victorious		
	when behaviour is		
	quelled		

i.e. Basically:

- * *Disobedience*
- * *Stubbornness*
- * *Temper Tantrums*
- * *Defiance*
- * *Argumentativeness*

Useful Teacher STRATEGY:

Withdraw from the conflict. Let the consequences of students' behavior occur. Win their cooperation by enlisting their help.

Nobody can fight without an opponent. Lead the other students to the lunchroom. Quietly refuse to accept the messy paper. Later, after the bid for power has subsided, enlist the help of the student in some socially useful task.

Most common form of misbehaviour

5.

III Student goal - Revenge!

Here the pupils faulty belief is



I belong only when I hurt others and get even. I can't be liked.

The inevitable Teacher Reactions

* Teachers Feelings *-- Hurt, Upset etc. (see summary)

* Teachers Habitual Response

Retaliate, Get Even.

A more useful response to a Misbehaviour that is judged as being "revenge" motivated by the teacher

A Thinks !!



Students who have revenge as their goal are so discouraged that they have given up hope of belonging through constructive and co-operative activities, have been unsuccessful in gaining attention or in demonstrating power, and now feel that the only way of attaining a social position is by being disliked. Not only do they seek to dominate but they seek vengeance in the process. They provoke hostility in order to be recognized. In schools, they will steal from lockers, damage library books, set upon younger children, physically attack others, engage in illicit sexual activity, take drugs, remain sullen, moody, or morose, and destroy property. In the community, these individuals will vandalize trains, physically assault people, burn down schools, send threatening letters, make threatening phone calls, light bushfires, steal cars, and destroy property. In doing so, they gain some satisfaction in getting even with those people and that society which denies them a place. They see themselves as worthless, unfairly treated, pushed around, and disliked; consequently they behave accordingly. Indeed they attempt little else but revengeful behaviours and generate in others considerable resentment, hostility, dislike, hurt, and a desire to punish.

To identify student's goal
1. Examine your own feelings and reactions to the misbehavior.
2. Analyze the student's response to what you do and say.

B and therefore

In this case I will NOT punish too severely and avoid feeling hurt and the desire to RETALIATE and work towards building TRUST AND I WILL be KIND AND PATIENT

IV Summary of Student's Goal: Revenge

Attacking behaviour		Defending behaviour	
Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts	Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts
Vicious	Feels badly upset	Sullen	Feeling of Injustice
'Tough guy'	Feels deeply hurt	Moody	Feels that child is ungrateful
Cruelty	Feels measure of trepidation	Morose	'Well, two can play this game.'
Brutal	'What will he do next?'	Refuses to participate	'This won't get you anywhere.'
Stealing	'What have I done to deserve this?'		'It's not my job to placate or appraise you.'
Destruction	'How could he do this to me?'		'You can make the first move.'
Vandalism	'What an ungrateful person!'		Feeling of self-justification if child displays acceptable behaviour
	'Must be punished'		
	Feeling of immense relief and hope at any sign of improvement		

I belong only when I hurt others and get even. I can't be liked.



To identify student's goal:
1. Examine your own feelings and reactions to the misbehavior.
2. Analyze the student's response to what you do and say.

Types of Behaviour Classified as Revenge and Teacher's Feelings and Reactions to Them

Additional Notes on "Revengeful" Acts

Revenge. No matter what you do, some students will consider you a tyrant with all the advantages on your side. They feel defeated, hurt, unhappy. So they (knowingly or unknowingly) adopt another goal: revenge.

They can't defeat you but they can still inflict hurt. "You hate me and wish I weren't here. I'll make you pay for that." Whether their injury is real or imagined, these students feel mistreated; they are motivated by their private sense of injustice to hurt others as they have been hurt.

Students can pursue revenge physically, verbally, or passively, through inactivity. Their revenge can be entirely silent, revealing itself through hateful looks and gestures. Roger notices that his sullenness has "gotten" to Ms. Schwartz. He tells himself, "Now I'm getting even with her for keeping me after school." If Ms. Schwartz decides to punish Roger again, she provides him with a fresh reason to get even.

A student may pursue revenge against a teacher indirectly, by picking on other students or writing on a desk. The effect is the same: The teacher feels insulted and hurt.

When dealing with revengeful behavior, remember:

REMEMBER



Avoid feeling hurt. Don't get hooked into seeking your own revenge. Instead, work to build a trusting relationship.

The revenge-seeking student is troubled and deeply discouraged. Understanding Roger's perceptions and goals can take the sting out of his sullen looks; he is more hurt than you are. You may not deserve his attacks, but you're just another "enemy" among many for him. Revenge offers hollow satisfaction, for you or for him. Show Roger he's a full member of your class. Be kind and patient with him. Find his strengths and encourage him to use them constructively.

IV Summary of Student's Goal: Display of Inadequacy or

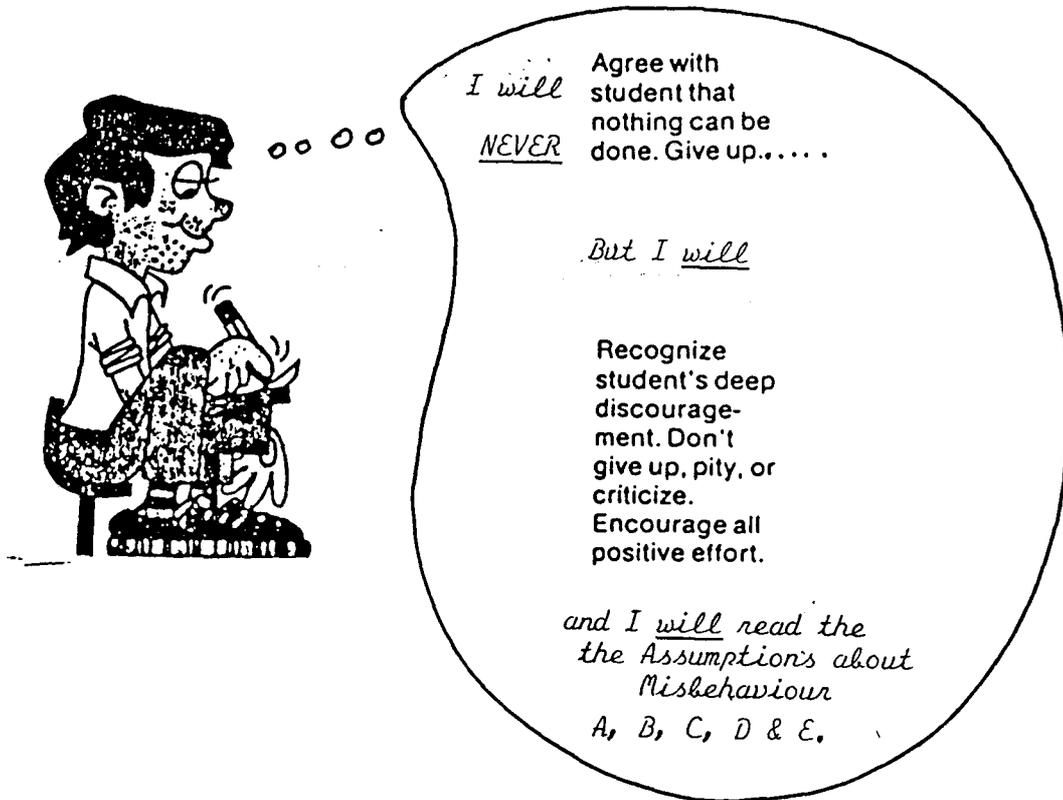
Escape by Withdrawal

Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts
Stupidity	Feeling of inferiority
Idleness	Feeling of helplessness
Indolence	Feeling of despair
Incapable	'I just don't know what more I can do.'
Inferiority	'I am at my wit's end.'
Won't mix	'I give up.'
Solitary activities	'What can I do with him?'
Fantasy activities	Instances of improved behaviour are seized upon hopefully. (Perhaps he's a late developer.)
Babyish ways	Expect nothing of student.'
'Hopeless'	



Types of Behaviour Classified as Escape by Withdrawal and Teacher's Feelings and Reactions to Them

A more appropriate strategy for teachers:



To identify student's goal:
 1. Examine your own feelings and reactions to the misbehavior.
 2. Analyze the student's response to what you do and say.

(A) Misbehavior stems from discouragement. Misbehaving students have decided they can belong only by pestering, fighting, getting even, or giving up. They're discouraged about their ability to find a place in the group through constructive, useful behavior. They're afraid to try, afraid to risk failure, afraid to change their pattern of believing and acting. Their discouragement may be mild (leading them to bid for attention) or extreme (persuading them to display inadequacy). But all misbehaving students are discouraged in some way.

(B) Students are usually aware of the consequences of their behavior, but unaware of their goals. Even if they deliberately set out for revenge, they don't realize the implications of their behavior. They don't recognize their belief that revenge offers them their only significance. Ramon is not likely to tell himself, "I'm going in today to have a power struggle with Mr. MacDonald."

Helpful Assumptions about Misbehavior *ctd*

You can make certain assumptions about misbehavior that will help you respond effectively to it.

Ⓒ *Students may change goals, depending on the situation.* At home, Nathan may find that attracting attention helps him feel significant. At school, he may resort to forcing the teacher to notice him. All four goals of misbehavior are immediate and short-range. What remains constant is the major objective: belonging.

Ⓓ *Students may use different misbehavior for the same goal, or the same misbehavior for different goals.* Helen gets attention by coming in late from recess. Don gets attention by humming under his breath. Gary gets attention by needing all instructions repeated. Same goal — different behavior.

On the other hand, Don may come in late from recess not for attention, as Helen does, but for power. "I'll show him who's boss!" Same behavior — different goal. The student's perception of what it means to belong is all-important

Ⓔ *Attention, power, and revenge can be pursued actively or passively.* Coretta can get attention by chattering. Wayne by being shy and getting the teacher to coax him. Sven can seek power by throwing a temper tantrum, Rebecca by being stubbornly silent. Julio can pursue revenge by verbal attack, Linda by hateful stares.

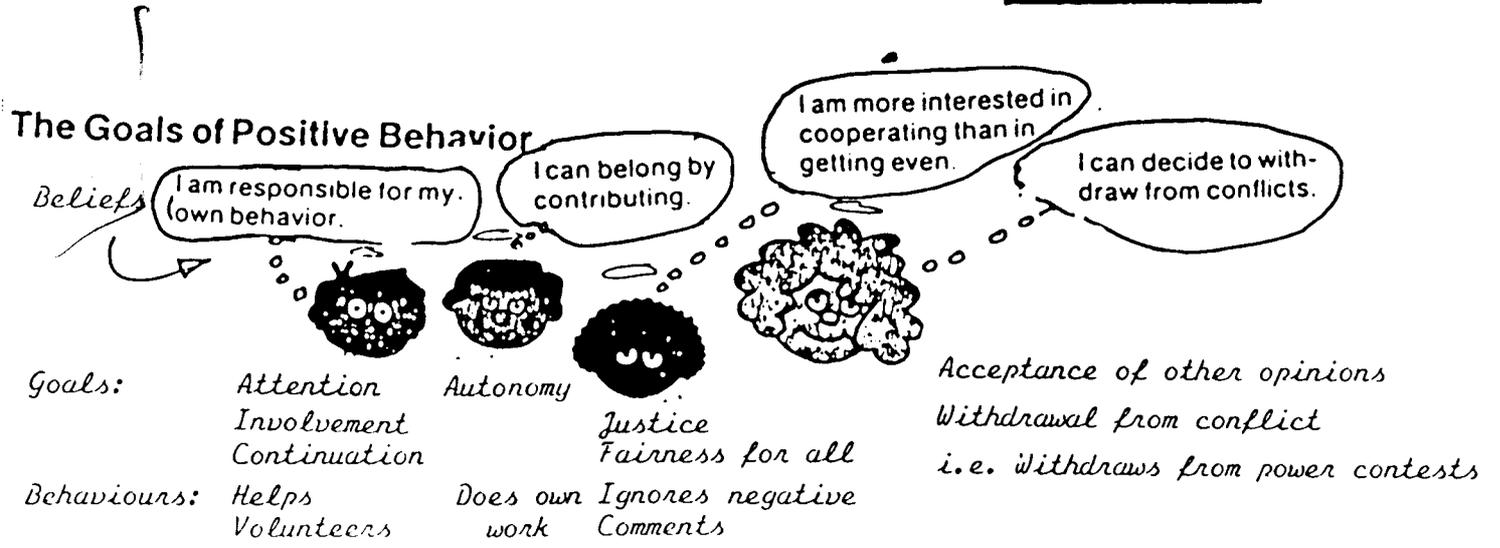
In conclusion, Misbehaviour like Purposeful positive behaviour does have some goal and does lose its MYSTERY if we consider Both the student ACTION AND OUR OWN feelings together

Consequences of Misbehaviour (with the students' response to correction)



To identify student's goal:

1. Examine your own feelings and reactions to the misbehavior.



Types of classroom misbehaviour		
Student's goal	Attacking behaviour	Defending behaviour
Attention seeking	The clown	Lazy
	The nuisance	Anxious
	The smart Alec	Speech problems
	The show-off	Bashful or shy
	Obtrusive	Untidy
	Instability	Self-indulgent
	Walking question mark	Excessively pleasant
	Unpredictable	Frivolous
Power	Bright sayings	
	Argues	Unco-operative
	Rebels	Dawdles
	Defiant	Stubborn
	Contradicts	Disobedient (won't do what he's told)
	Bully	Forgetful
	Temper tantrums	
	Untruthful	
Revenge	Disobedient (carries out forbidden acts)	
	Stealing	Sullen
	Vicious	Moody
	Destructive	Morose
	Cruel	Passive hate
		Refuses to participate
	Delinquent behaviour	
	Violent	
Escape by withdrawal		Stupid
		Idle
		Incapable
		'Hopeless'
		Juvenile ways
		Won't mix
	Fantasy activities	
	Solitary activities	

Figure 1 Classification of Behaviours with Undesirable Goals

Student's goal: Attention seeking			
Attacking behaviour		Defending behaviour	
Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts	Student's strategy	How teacher feels and reacts
Is a nuisance	Annoyed and irritated	Lazy	'I must do something'
The show-off		Wants help	
The clown	'For goodness sake, stop it'	Bashful, shy	Sense of responsibility
The smart Alec	Feeling of relief	Fearful	Urge or coax into action
The walking question mark	when the annoying behaviour ceases	Too tired	
Mischief maker		Untidiness	Feeling of encouragement
Pushing, obtrusive		Self-indulgent	when student responds
Latecomer		Vain	
Instability		Cute	In the case of 'model' child,
Embarrassing behaviour		Model child	flattered by child's conformity
Pencil tapper		Speech impediment	
The talker		Anxious	
		Frivolous	

Figure 2 Types of Behaviour Classified as Attention Seeking and Teacher's Feelings and Reaction to Them