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Developmental Discipline and Moral Education

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Moral and character educators working from different philosophical perspectives have generally acknowledged a major role in students' moral development of the "hidden curriculum" manifested in the interpersonal environment of schools and classrooms (Giroux & Purpel, 1983; Jackson, Boonstrom, & Hansen, 1993; Ryan, 1986; Fallona & Richardson, 2006). Dewey (1909/1975), for example, argued that the mode of social life and the nature of the school community were far more important factors in students' moral growth than direct moral instruction. Ryan (1986), from a quite different theoretical perspective, argues that "very little of the moral education that inevitably occurs in the schools is formally recorded in lesson plans, curriculum guides, or behavioral objectives" Rather, students develop their "conceptions of what being a good person entails" from such aspects of schooling as the rules that are or are not enforced, the rituals and procedures of daily classroom life, the expectations for and consequences of their behavior, and their teachers' warnings, advice, and manner (p. 228).

Classroom management is the educational field that focuses on the overall classroom environment separate from any particular academic content (Brophy, 2006). During the first half of the twentieth century, classroom instruction focused on civic and moral virtues as well as academic skills and competencies (Brophy, 2006; Ryan, 1986). However, probably because of the disappointing findings of Hartshorne and May and their colleagues (Hartshorne & May, 1928; Hartshorne, May, & Maller, 1929; Hartshorne, May, & Shuttleworth, 1930) the general educational community lost interest in instruction in virtues and morals. Consequently, most empirical research on classroom management strategies evaluated effectiveness based on improvements in academic learning (Brophy, 2006).

Also, until quite recently, most classroom management research was conducted assuming teaching to be the transmission of knowledge. Correlatively, the view of human nature was derived from behavioral psychology. Students were seen as blank slates motivated by self-interest to be shaped or socialized through reinforcement into learners and productive citizens. For example, early in the twentieth century, a leading figure in classroom management, William Chandler Bagley (1907), viewed the educational task as "slowly transforming the child from a little savage into a creature of law and order, fit for the life of civilized society" (p. 35, as cited in Brophy, 2006). A similar view is expressed more elegantly at the end of that century by Ryan and

Bohlin (1999), moral educators working within a cultural transmission paradigm. They argue that “we are born both self-centered and ignorant, with our primitive impulses reigning over reason. The point of...education is to bring our inclinations, feelings, and passions into harmony with reason” (pp. 5–6).

In the 1970s and 1980s, good classroom management was about efficient control of students in order to optimize academic learning. The earlier view that classroom management and discipline might also serve to support students’ social and moral development had retreated so far into the background that Walter Doyle’s chapter on classroom organization and management for the 1986 *Handbook of Research on Teaching* didn’t even mention potential social or moral outcomes. Most classroom teachers as well as their university instructors viewed classroom management as a set of procedures for organizing and motivating students to attend to academic instruction along with a set of disciplinary interventions (desists) to stop student misbehavior and refocus student attention on learning (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). Although research on classroom management in the 1970s and 1980s did initiate a focus on management strategies to prevent problems, such as teaching the behaviors required in particular educational settings, and providing cues to situational expectations, most teachers, feeling poorly prepared in these strategies, were concerned with maintaining order and controlling misbehavior (Brophy, 2006; Evertson & Emmer, 1982; Jones, 2006).

With twenty to forty students to a classroom, there were countless behaviors teachers felt compelled to stop, ranging from bullying, hitting, and teasing to hat wearing, gum chewing, and talking out of turn. Teachers felt the need for easy and efficient control techniques and an industry sprung up to fill that need. Efficient and sometimes elaborate control systems involving checks on the board, tokens, stickers, notes of praise, time outs, and so on were developed and rapidly spread to schools across the country. These approaches were generally guided by behavioral psychology and behaviorism’s view of children as self-interested and needing to be shaped by extrinsic reinforcers. Lee Canter’s *Assertive Discipline* (1976) is probably the best known and most influential of these approaches. By 1980 the predominant approach to classroom management and discipline in American public schools was focused on control of students’ behavior by rewards and punishments and the traditional citizenship goals had been largely abandoned.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

On a parallel track, influential, alternative approaches to managing children’s behavior were being generated not out of behavioral psychology or classroom research, but out of Adlerian psychology (Dreikurs, 1968; Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1982), Rogerian therapy (Gordon, 1974), and reality therapy (Glasser, 1965, 1969). These approaches are more consistent with developmental-constructivist education. Children are viewed as having legitimate needs and positive social motivations but sometimes choose misguided means for satisfying their needs. Consistent with developmental/constructivist principles, these approaches stress the importance of understanding the reasons behind student misbehavior.

While Nucci (2001) classified these approaches to discipline as examples of Developmental Discipline, they are not truly developmental. Students are viewed like adults as rational, capable, and socially oriented. Teachers are advised to remain impersonal, as an analyst might, and to help students recognize and solve their own problems. For example, Gordon stresses the importance of demonstrating attention to and concern for a student’s problem by reflecting the student’s statements back, thereby helping the student clarify the problem and find his or her own solution. This approach is respectful of a child’s good will and autonomy, but it risks overestimating the

child's abilities. Gordon does not appear to make adjustments for children's developmental levels, but rather argues that the skills and methods he advocates "are equally useful and applicable for effective teaching of students of all ages" (1974, p. 13).

Glasser's approach stresses the importance of positive teacher-child relationships and of involving students in class meetings to create class rules and to discuss problems. His ten-step approach to student misbehavior begins by improving the teacher-student relationship, involves several steps in which the student describes and strives to create a plan to stop the misbehavior, and ends with three successive steps, in-school suspension, home suspension, and finally removal to another institution. Again, there is much in this approach that is consistent with developmental theory—involving students in setting and discussing rules and problems, and allowing students time to think about their behaviors and solve their own problems. However, the lack of a focus on adult guidance is strikingly nondevelopmental.

The third therapeutic approach developed by Rudolph Dreikurs has a darker view of children and a more controlling role for teachers (Kohn, 1996). Dreikurs argues that students who misbehave are trying to satisfy their legitimate needs through misguided means. He stresses four basic goals for student misbehavior; to gain attention, to exert power, to exact revenge, or to gain sympathy by feigning incompetence. Teachers are instructed to build positive relationships in the classroom and to respond to student misbehavior based on one of these four potential causes. Dreikurs believed that students would willingly abandon their inappropriate goals when confronted with them. If they did not, he advised against expiatory punishments, recommending instead what he called natural or logical consequences. However, in Dreikur's own writing and in the application his principles received in schools, natural and logical consequences are often thinly disguised punishments (Kohn, 1996). For example, a child who tips his chair is made to stand throughout a lesson, and a child who forgets lunch money is made to go without lunch (Dreikurs & Gray, 1968; Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1982).

There is much about these approaches to appeal to developmentalists—the focus on understanding student needs, the respect for student rationality, the idea that students have within them the power to solve their own problems, and for some the idea of controlling behavior using natural or logical consequences. But these approaches lack a developmental perspective—a sense of what the developmental tasks are for children of different ages and the appropriate role of adults in assisting the child's development. Some ideas from these programs have been influential in shaping current developmental approaches to classroom management; for example, problem-solving class meetings are integral to discipline approaches derived from developmental theory and research (DeVries & Zan, 1994; Kohn, 1996; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989; Watson & Ecken, 2003). Mainstream American classrooms remained, until quite recently, focused on teaching academic content and controlling student behavior through rewards and punishments.

EDUCATION FOR MORAL AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

In the 1980s there was a resurgence of interest in the school's role in student's moral or character education. In response to a Gallup poll, 84% of respondents who had children in public schools favored moral instruction, and the U.S. Secretary of Education called for teachers to help students become good people as well as good students (Ryan, 1986).

The traditional approach to teaching values involving, for example, modeling, direct instruction, opportunities to practice values, and the judicious use of rewards and punishments to encourage behavior consistent with core values, easily fit with the then current direct instruction approaches to teaching, and the controlling approaches to classroom management (Ryan, 1989;

Wynne, 1989). It did not require a rethinking of the whole educational endeavor. Whether transmitting values or math skills, the educational processes of telling, modeling, explaining, practice, and correction would be the same. Likewise, whether motivating learning or good behavior the principles of reward and punishment would apply. Traditional moral or character education programs fit well with the then predominant conceptions of teaching and classroom management.

Moral educators working in cognitive-developmental or social constructivist paradigms faced many more barriers to implementing their programs in public schools. From the perspective of these educators the mainstream views (1) of education as the transmission of knowledge; (2) of learning as passive acceptance; and (3) of classroom management and discipline as behavioral control, were wholly unacceptable. Drawing from the theory and research of Piaget, particularly *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (1932/1965), cognitive developmentalists argued that autonomy not obedience and understanding not remembering are the proper aims of education (Cople, Sigel, & Saunders, 1979; DeVries & Zan, 1994; Kamii, 1984; Kohlberg & Meyer, 1972). Constructivist educators also hold a more positive view of children. Children are seen as being in the process of development and naturally predisposed toward cooperation and learning insofar as their level of development allows. The negative view of children as self-interested and work avoidant and the strong emphasis on adult control of children's behavior characteristic of public school education led educators applying developmental, constructivist principles to seek alternative approaches to teaching, classroom management, and discipline.

Kohlberg and his colleagues focused on small, experimental high schools which they organized into "just communities" (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). Others, for example, Rheta DeVries (DeVries & Zan, 1994), Constance Kamii (1984), and Irving Siegel (Cople, Siegel, & Saunders, 1979), focused on early childhood education, where the existing frameworks were more in line with developmental theory and views of children's motivations more positive. The Child Development Project (Brown & Solomon, 1983; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000; Watson, Solomon, Battistich, Schaps, & Solomon, 1989) focused at the elementary level where contemporary classroom management and discipline practices aimed at control through direct instruction and rewards and punishments.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISCIPLINE

During the 1960s and 1970s, developmental, social, and motivational psychologists working from a variety of theoretical perspectives created a substantial body of research related to children's moral or prosocial development (e.g., Aronson, Bridgeman, & Geffner, 1978; Baumrind, 1967; Feshbach, 1979; Hoffman, 1975; Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967; Kohlberg 1978; Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972; Peck & Havighurst, 1960; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, 1980; Sroufe, 1983; Staub, 1971, 1975; Stayton, Hogan & Ainsworth, 1971; Yarrow & Scott, 1972; Yarrow, Scott, & Waxler, 1973; Zahn-Waxler & Radke-Yarrow, 1979; see Solomon, Watson, & Battistich (2001) for a review of this research). During the 1980s and 1990s, developmentally oriented educators focused on moral or prosocial development realized that they needed to create new approaches to classroom management and discipline. While drawing from somewhat different but overlapping bodies of theory and research, all of these approaches have similar assumptions and goals and all stress the necessity of creating a caring or just community as a first principle; see Watson & Battistich (2006) for a detailed description of these community approaches to classroom management.

For example, once the staff of the Child Development Project realized that a classroom environment supportive of children's moral development would need to be quite different from the controlling environments found in most American elementary schools, they began designing

an approach to classroom management and discipline consistent with developmental theory and research. They argued that this alternative management approach would need to fulfill four conditions (Watson, Solomon, Battistich, Schaps, & Solomon, 1989).

1. The teacher–child relationships would need to be warm, supportive, and mutually trusting.
2. The classroom would need to be a caring, democratic community in which each child’s needs for competence, autonomy, and belonging are met.
3. Children would need opportunities to discuss and refine their understanding of moral values and how they apply to everyday life in the classroom.
4. Teachers would need to use both proactive and reactive control techniques to help children act in accordance with prosocial values and that enhance (or at least do not undermine) the above goals.

What Does It Mean to Be Prosocial or Morally Competent?

From the perspective of developmental theory, to act morally one must act for moral reasons; for example, because one cares about or wants to help the other or one wants to live up to internalized moral values. Moral action must be taken for moral reasons and not to avoid punishment, gain pleasure, emulate a powerful model, or please authority. A morally supportive management and discipline system must foster the development of students’ empathic caring, moral awareness, and moral understanding, while minimizing or avoiding the enticement of desirable behavior through praise, rewards, and punishments.

Moral competency also requires that one know how to carry out the actions that are called for by one’s internal moral values, and have the stamina or determination to act in caring or moral ways in the face of obstacles. Thus, a management and discipline system focused on supporting moral behavior also will need to focus on teaching the social and emotional skills and competencies required for moral action and help students build moral stamina and determination (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2005; Narvaez, 2003; see Narvaez [2006] for a description and discussion of a wide range of skills involved in competent moral action). Let us turn now to the four necessary components of a developmental approach to classroom management and discipline supportive of moral development.

Warm, Nurturing, and Trusting Teacher–Child Relationships.

At first it may seem that arguing for warm, nurturing, trusting teacher–child relationships is like arguing for tasty, nutritious, affordable school lunches. Who could argue otherwise? However, if one views children as essentially self-interested, a view that undergirds most control oriented management and discipline systems, it would be difficult to feel warm and nurturing or trusting when children do not behave as we wish. One would feel the obligation to treat children humanely, just as one feels the obligation to treat prisoners humanely. One might feel warm, nurturing, and trusting toward some children, those who have earned our trust through their good behavior, but not toward children in general and especially not toward children who regularly misbehave. As the following two comments from high school students indicate, many classrooms lack warm, nurturing, trusting teacher–child relationships (Watson, 2006).

Tara: It’s like nobody’s really pushing us to do our best. If you don’t understand...they’ll think that you’re not understanding on purpose.

Cindy: ...most teachers now days they just...they don't make relationships with their students. Its, "One year to be here and you're off. As long as you pass my class."

Teaching teachers humane techniques for controlling students is considerably easier than teaching them how to build warm, nurturing, trusting relationships. For many it requires convincing them to change their understanding of children, an understanding that they have acquired over years of hearing about rewards, reinforcements, and self-interest. However, a substantial body of research supports the view that children's moral development is positively related to warm, nurturing, and autonomy supportive parenting styles (Solomon et al., 2001). For example, studies of moral development in families found that morally mature children were more likely to have been raised in families where their parents were

- sensitive to their needs (Baumrind, 1989; Peck & Havinghurst, 1960; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, Stayton, Hogan, & Ainsworth, 1971),
- emotionally involved as opposed to distant from (Main & Weston, 1981; Sroufe, 1988; the Fels longitudinal study, as described in Baldwin, 1955),
- trusting of the child (Peck & Havighurst, 1960; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, 1980),
- involving of the child in decision making (Baldwin, 1955; Baumrind, 1989; Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967; Kochanska, 1991; Peck & Havighurst, 1960; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, 1980), and that
- allowed the child reasonable freedom and responsibility (Baldwin, 1955; Peck & Havinghurst, 1960; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, 1980).

If one assumes that the teacher's role as an agent for moral growth should be similar to the parent's role (Pianta, 1999), the research clearly points to the importance of teachers building warm, nurturing, and trusting relationships with students, relationships that focus on meeting students' needs. Therefore, Developmental Discipline's first principle asks teachers to go beyond being humane and to establish warm, nurturing, trusting relationships with students.

The centrality of such relationships to moral development is not only supported by empirical studies of children's development in families, it is consistent with several powerful theoretical perspectives on children's development. For example, care theorists, Noddings (1988, 1992, 2002) Gilligan (1982), and Kerr (1996) argue that a commitment to care is central to morality and that children learn to become caring by being in caring relationships. Attachment theorists argue that when children are reared in an environment in which their caretakers are available and respond sensitively to their needs, "a disposition for obedience—and indeed a disposition to become socialized—tends to develop in children" (Stayton, Hogan, & Ainsworth, 1971, p.1059). This view of children as developing a cooperative stance to the world based on their cooperative interactions with their caregivers is also consistent with Vygotsky's view of the child as an apprentice to the adult and Piaget's views of the role of parent-child cooperation in socialization. For example, in *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (1932/1965) Piaget says:

There is a spontaneous mutual affection (between parents and children), which from the first prompts the child to acts of generosity, and even of self-sacrifice, to very touching demonstrations which are in no way prescribed. And here no doubt is the starting point for that morality of good.... (p. 195)

From the perspective of Developmental Discipline it is the experience of warm, nurturing, trusting caregiver-child relationships that gives rise to a core aspect of morality, the desire to be

caring, cooperative, or moral. For many children this desire will already have been kindled in their family. But still, if the classroom is not a caring place, if, for example, students need to compete with each other to obtain privileges or teacher attention and favor, then, at the very least, they will find it difficult to behave in caring and moral ways in the classroom. Worse, they may come to think that treating others fairly and kindly applies only at home. They may come to believe that it is justified to shun or tease the students who are less able or who are frequently “disciplined” by the teacher. Even for initially caring or cooperative students an uncaring classroom is unlikely to further and may even hinder their moral development, regardless of how many moral sayings they are taught.

However, some students arrive at school never having experienced the kind of sensitive, nurturing relationships that allowed them to develop a view of others as caring, themselves as worthy of care, and relationships as cooperative (Sroufe, 1988, 1996). These are also the students most likely to cause difficulties in the classroom. Depending on the nature of their earlier experiences of care, they are likely to have poor social skills, lower impulse control, and greater dependency needs, or to be particularly aggressive and defiant (Cohn, 1990; Erickson, Sroufe, & Egeland, 1985; Howes & Hamilton, 1992; Pianta & Nimetz, 1991; Pianta, Nimetz, & Bennett, 1997; Sroufe, 1983, 1988, 1996; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986). If one views these children as capable but self-interested, it will be difficult to like them, let alone form a warm, nurturing, trusting relationship with them. But without such a relationship these students will not have a basis for building a moral worldview—a view of relationships as cooperative and reciprocal.

What’s Involved in Forming Caring Teacher–Child Relationships?

A caring relationship requires not only that the caregiver be reasonably successful in meeting the legitimate needs of the one cared for, but also that the one cared for perceive the caring intent of the caregiver (Noddings, 1984, 2002). Developmental Discipline places more emphasis on building relationships than on controlling students. For example, it stresses the importance of developing a view of children as wanting to learn and wanting to have mutually caring relationships, but often needing help in doing so. It also stresses the importance of teachers getting to know each student personally, of really listening to them, and helping students see that they like them. Doing nice things for students, seriously engaging their issues and concerns, sharing one’s own experiences and stories, and bringing fun and humor into the classroom are some of the ways that teachers help students see that they really care about them. Teachers also need to be able to meet children’s basic needs for friendship, autonomy, and competence. They need to create a moral community that fosters children’s positive peer relationships, provides reasonable opportunities for autonomy and voice, and honors their need for competence.

Building a Caring, Just, Democratic Learning Community

Studies of human motivation support the premise that to flourish humans, children included, need to experience not only a sense of belonging—that they are loved and respected—but also a sense of competence—that they are capable and seen as capable by others—and a sense of autonomy—that their actions are consistent with what they want to do or believe they should do (deCharms, 1968; Deci & Ryan, 1991; Erikson, 1950/1963; Nicholls, 1989; White, 1959; see Watson & Ecken, 2003 for a more detailed discussion of students’ needs). Consistent with this research, studies of family environments found that morally mature children were more likely to experience democratic home environments, characterized by children having opportunities to influence decisions, the freedom to assume some responsibility for their own behavior, and

opportunities to take responsibility for maintaining the environment (Baldwin, 1955; Baumrind, 1989; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, 1980; Peck & Havighurst, 1960).

From the cognitive-developmental perspective, the ideal adult-child relationship for supporting moral growth “is characterized by mutual respect and cooperation” in an environment where children have the possibility to interact with one another and to regulate their behavior voluntarily (DeVries, Zan, Hildebrandt, Edmiaston, & Sales, 2002, p. 17). Dewey (1916/1966) and Kohlberg and his colleagues (Power et al., 1989) stressed the power of participation in a democratic or just community for fostering moral development and a commitment to democratic ideals. From a social-constructivist perspective, children are viewed as biologically predisposed to seek cooperative relationships with more accomplished others (adults) around meaningful tasks within their community (Vygotsky, 1968). Through these collaborative interactions “the child acquires the ‘plane of consciousness’ of the natal society and is socialized, acculturated, made human” (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 30). From this perspective “learning and development occur as people participate in the sociocultural activities of their community” (Rogoff, 1994, p. 209).

Thus, a developmental approach to classroom management and discipline needs to involve students in creating and maintaining caring, democratic learning communities. Students will need ways to influence decisions that affect the community and opportunities to take responsibility for the community. Also, at least with preschool and elementary students, teachers will need to help students develop the skills of friendship and self-regulation. Thus, Developmental Discipline involves some form of collaborative learning—opportunities for students to learn and work together in fair and caring ways under the guidance of the teacher. It also involves guidance in conflict resolution—explicit teaching of strategies to resolve conflicts fairly; class meetings for planning, decision-making, and influencing community decisions and life; and class jobs or responsibilities. Teachers are also advised to limit competition, encourage students to help one another, and, look for ways to provide choice in, for example, learning topic, how the learning is accomplished, when and how long learning activities are engaged in, and how the learning is demonstrated or shared.

Providing Opportunities to Discuss and Think about Moral Values

Developmental theory and research (Berkowitz, Gibbs, & Broughton, 1980; Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Nucci, 2001; Oser, 1986; Turiel, 1989) and studies of the family practices of morally mature children (Baumrind, 1989; Peck & Havighurst, 1960; Pitkanen-Pulkkinen, 1980; Walker & Taylor, 1991) indicate a positive influence on children’s moral development of moral discourse. Care theory also stresses the importance of morally relevant conversations to students’ positive development (Noddings, 1994, 2006). Such conversations can happen as part of the study of literature and history, in response to individual student actions or questions, and in class meetings to make decisions or reflect on class experiences. For example, in the CDP program such conversations often occur at the beginning and end of collaborative learning activities as students are asked to reflect on and discuss ways to treat one another fairly and kindly and their level of success at achieving these goals (Developmental Studies Center, 1997; Watson, Solomon, Dasho, Schwartz, & Kendzior, 1994).

Ways We Want Our Class to Be

Instead of specific lists of do’s and don’t’s such as “Keep your hands and feet to yourself” or “Listen when the teacher is talking,” most developmental approaches to discipline and classroom

management engage students in deciding rules based in moral principles. *Learning to Trust* (Watson & Ecken, 2003) at the elementary level and *Moral Classrooms/Moral Children* (DeVries & Zan, 1994) at the preschool level describe different but related processes for devising class rules through discussion, careful questioning, and guidance by the teacher. In the Just Community (Power et al., 1989) high school students have opportunities for moral discussion in small student advisories and discuss and make all the rules for the school in whole school meetings along with faculty on a one-person, one-vote basis. Teachers can influence the decisions through the power of moral persuasion, but not the power of authority.

Even very young children understand the moral principle of reciprocity and possess such basic moral knowledge that it is wrong to hurt another without reason or to treat people unfairly (Nucci & Turiel, 1978). Thus, they will describe a moral classroom when invited to seriously reflect on how they want their class to be. When children are helped to devise general rules and procedures in these ways, moral concepts such as kindness, fairness, and respect are partly defined by the specific examples and become general class guidelines replacing the more traditional lists of specific behaviors. It becomes clearer to students that when teachers find it necessary to enforce rules, they are exercising moral authority not just the authority of their position.

One potential danger in involving students in formulating classroom rules and norms is that rather than the classroom rules being seen as examples of universal moral imperatives to be kind, fair, and responsible, teachers might attempt to enforce such imperatives on the grounds that they were the group's decision. For example, a teacher might respond to a child who has called another child a name with the statement, "Remember Martin, we said we weren't going to call each other names in this class." Nucci (2001) labels such responses "domain inappropriate" because they give a conventional reason to cease an action that is in the moral domain. This danger will be essentially eliminated, however, if, in response to misbehaviors, teachers focus on the problem that the misbehavior caused. Let us turn now to control and teachers' responses to misbehavior—the most controversial aspect of Developmental Discipline.

Control Techniques—Structure, Guidance, and Responses to Misbehavior

In any classroom, sheer numbers of children as well as their levels of immaturity make it necessary for teachers to exert control. While Developmental Discipline is not primarily about control, how teachers achieve control is important and can be a powerful force for moral development. How students respond to their teachers' efforts at control will depend in large part on the quality of the teacher–student relationship. Hence Developmental Discipline's initial focus is on building the teacher–student relationship. If students view the teacher as responsive to their needs, they are more likely to respond to his or her control efforts in a cooperative spirit. Teachers and students will be able to achieve what Piaget (1932/1965) and others have called a cooperative approach to discipline—an approach that will lead to an autonomous morality (DeVries & Zan, 1994, DeVries et al., 2002; Kamii, 1984). Conversely, how and how much teachers exercise control will affect the student–teacher relationship and the power of the control to foster moral growth. In the sections that follow, the principle control techniques consistent with Developmental Discipline are described and discussed.

Classroom control falls into three categories: indirect control—structures, rules, and procedures that limit the possibility of misbehavior or increase the probability of desired behavior; proactive control—suggestions, guidelines, or explanations offered to students prior to situations in which misbehaviors are likely to occur; and desists—responses to misbehaviors that do occur. Adequate classroom control, at least at the preschool through middle school levels, requires control techniques from all three categories.

Indirect Control

Shaping the environment to interfere with potential misbehavior or to facilitate desirable behavior can make classroom life easier for everyone. How teachers design the environment will depend on the behaviors they want to facilitate or prevent and what their learning goals are. For example, seating students in rows makes it harder for them to talk and observe one another's work, while seating students in table groups encourages conversation and work sharing. Assigning partners for group work helps to assure that all students have opportunities to work with and build friendly relationships with one another, while allowing students to choose work partners honors autonomy and might provide opportunities for students to purposefully reach out to less popular students. Teachers may make these decisions themselves; for example, to help students easily sit in a circle for class meetings a kindergarten teacher might place a circle of tape on the floor; a third grade teacher might arrange seating such that more distractible students are in areas with fewer distractions. Alternatively, teachers might engage the students in drawing up a set of guidelines or creating structures that will help the classroom to run more smoothly. For example, a second grade teacher might use a series of class meetings to devise and assess the effectiveness of guidelines for leaving the classroom to use the restroom down the hall.

Involving students in determining the guidelines and structures that, once established, will exert control is ideal from a developmental perspective. When students are involved in creating structures that facilitate the smooth functioning of the classroom their autonomy is honored and they are helped to understand why the rules and structures are necessary. In *Moral Classroom/Moral Children*, Devries and Zan (1994) provide several examples of ways to involve students in decisions about nearly all the rules or procedures in preschool classrooms. For example, if a teacher wants to begin the year with a rule limiting the number of students in the block areas, the teacher can alert the students to the problem she is anticipating by asking the students if the whole class can fit in the block center at the same time. Then he or she can guide the students in answering the question, "What guidelines do we need so everyone can have a fair turn with blocks" (p. 129)?

However, for efficiency, teachers will often need to take full control in some areas in order to make room for autonomous learning in others. While acknowledging that taking full control, even indirect control, robs students of both autonomy and opportunities to learn, the judicious use of teacher determined structures, rules, and procedures designed to lessen problems and facilitate the teacher's goals and objectives is fully consistent with Developmental Discipline. Fortunately, elementary school children are quite willing to grant teachers the power to regulate a fair number of school and classroom procedures (Nucci, 2001). It is important, however, that teachers offer explanations for the structures if they are questioned, be willing to change them if students present good reasons for so doing, and organize their classrooms to assure that students have meaningful opportunities to act autonomously and solve nontrivial problems on their own.

The following examples of teachers' choices in situations in which indirect control might or might not be used illustrate the range of possibilities consistent with a developmental approach to discipline. In the first example, a teacher in an inner-city, second-third grade class carefully chooses the children who sit at each of the five tables, changing table groups every month. For academic tasks involving partners, this teacher assigns partners either randomly or based on her judgment of optimal pairings for the given activity. When students groan about not being able to work with their preferred friends or try to trade partners, the teacher acknowledges that they might be disappointed not to get to work with their best friends, but that her goal for the class is for them to learn to work with everybody and to see that everybody in the class is worth getting to know. She taught the students how to greet a partner in a friendly way even if they are disap-

pointed, and worked hard to facilitate successful interactions of partnerships when the initial interactions seemed tentative or unfriendly.

Because this is a situation where the students really did mind not having the autonomy to make their own choices, the teacher needed to work hard at establishing this ground rule and used a good deal of humor before the students accepted the teacher's control. The following vignette illustrates one of the humorous ways this teacher made her exercise of control more palatable.

With some students, "if they don't get exactly who they want to work with, they'll say, "I'm not working with them!" So what I've been doing when I introduce a partner activity is to say, "Now, we're going to work with partners in this activity, and I don't care if you get Captain Hook for a partner." If you get Captain Hook, I want you to say, 'I'm glad to be hooked up with you, let's get to work.'" And then I'll go on and say some other goofy stuff. "If you get a boa constrictor for a partner, say, 'Give me a hug, and let's go to work.'"

Well, this week we were going to get new partners for working with the book *Chicken Sunday*. Just as I got ready to name the partners, Rebecca announced, "And remember, Mrs. Ecken, if you get a tiger, say you're glad to be with that tiger and just work with him." And then three or four others piped up with different animals. (Watson & Ecken, 2003, p. 65)

There is no guarantee that this choice was the right choice for this class. The teacher was guided by her goals—helping her students respect and get along with everyone in the class, creating a caring community, and encouraging respect for individual differences—and her ongoing observations of her students. As the vignette shows, the students did stop resisting and appeared to accept the validity of the teacher's goals. Further confirmation of the teacher's choice came several years later when these students were interviewed in high school. One student attributed his ability to work with others to his experiences in the class and several others spontaneously recalled their good feelings toward all their classmates.

John: ...Today I can work with almost anybody. I think it helped me in my life by working with other people in groups

Paul: There weren't really no [sic] bad kids in that class.

Derek: That class was, hands down, the best class of my years, I mean since I've been in school.... Everybody knew everybody and everybody was a friend to everybody.

Tara: ...everybody knew everybody.... Everybody was like in one big group because everybody knew each other.

Louise: ...as our class grew and everything we became like...one big happy family I guess you'd call us.

In the second class, a suburban fifth-sixth grade class, the teacher allowed the students to choose who they sat with and with whom they worked during collaborative activities. No problems seemed to emerge until January when the class had a meeting to assess how they were doing at creating the kind of classroom they said they wanted—a classroom defined by friendship, kindness, and respect. Midway through the meeting, students began to talk about having their feelings hurt, being teased, and of not being able to trust some of the other students in the class. One student offered the explanation that some of the students don't really know one another that well. Another suggested that the teacher should change seating more often, a suggestion the teacher accepted. And another threw out a suggestion to the group of students, saying, "Hey, you guys, I've got a suggestion. How about when Mrs. Lewis lets us change our seats, instead of choosing our special friends, we choose someone we don't know that well." The class agreed and the students had solved the problem autonomously on their own.

The heavier as well as the lighter use of control are consistent with Developmental Discipline. Teachers need to make judgments about how much control to exercise based on what they believe about their students' capabilities, the risks or time involved in not exercising control, and their own particular learning goals. Cognitive developmental and motivation theory and research both point to the importance of autonomy and would seem to imply that less adult control is better. However, as Erikson (1950/1963) argues, it is the adult's role to provide children with "gradual and well-guided experience of the autonomy of free choice" (p. 252). Higher levels of parental control are correlated with moral maturity if that control is seen by children as having been in their best interests (Pitkanen-Pulkkinen) and with higher cognitive ability in situations where high control appeared necessary for safety (Baldwin, Baldwin, & Cole (1990). The positive results of both of the above scenarios along with the family research indicate that decisions about when to exercise indirect control depend on the situation.

Proactive Control

Proactive control is akin to scaffolding in academics (Wood, Bruner, & Ross (1976). As students are about to engage in an activity or enter a situation that will place high demands on their social, emotional, or moral skills, the teacher seeks to prime those skills by, for example, reminding students of the skills that will be called for or asking the students to think in advance how they will solve some of the problems likely to arise in the activity or situation. CDP's approach to cooperative learning provides a good example of the kind of proactive control consistent with Developmental Discipline (Developmental Studies Center, 1997; Watson, Hildebrandt & Solomon, 1988; Watson, Solomon, DASHO, Shwartz, & Kendzior, 1994). Before students set out to work on a collaborative project the teacher either reminds them of the kinds of interpersonal problems they are likely to encounter or asks the students to think of potential problems and then either suggests solutions, teaches a needed skill, or asks students for solutions.

Alerting students to potential social/moral issues likely to be involved in a given activity and reminding students of or teaching those skills is a powerful form of instruction in the social/moral domain. Students immediately need the skills highlighted or taught and have immediate opportunities to practice those skills in the context of authentic learning activities. Such scaffolding can provide students with social/moral success experiences that not only sharpen their skills but also help them see themselves as good people and their classroom as a caring community.

As with indirect control, how much is open to the students to figure out on their own will depend on the teacher's estimate of how much help the students will need to be reasonably successful. One can engage in too much proactive control as well as too little. Too much wastes time, deprives students of the challenge of figuring out for themselves how to solve problems, and can imply that the teacher doesn't think the students are capable of succeeding on their own. Too little can cause students to experience unnecessary pain and frustration, undermine classroom relationships, limit learning, and lead students to feel guilty or inept. The goal is not to eliminate all problems, should that even be possible, but to provide enough help to assure that students can achieve reasonable success or do not flounder unproductively. If no problems occur, either the environment is not providing sufficient challenge or the teacher is providing too much scaffolding.

Rewards and Praise

Rewards and praise are frequently used by teachers as a form of proactive control. It's a basic principle of behavioral theory that organisms tend to repeat behaviors that are followed by positive outcomes. One way for teachers to prevent misbehavior is to reward or praise behaviors that

are inconsistent with the undesirable behaviors they want to eliminate. This sounds like a great form of control, good behaviors are reinforced, misbehaviors are reduced, and nice things happen to students in the form of praise or rewards. Numerous character education and management approaches have been developed around the “catch them being good” concept. At my grandchildren’s school authority figures carry with them little blue slips of paper with the word “Gotcha” on one side and room for the students to write their name and room number on the other. They are distributed whenever someone in authority catches a student doing something praiseworthy. The slips are collected for a weekly drawing and one student from each grade level wins a prize.

While developmental educators disagree on whether rewards and praise have any place in a developmental, constructivist approach to classroom management and discipline, there is general agreement that using praise and rewards proactively to encourage good behavior is likely to undermine a teacher’s effectiveness as a moral educator. For one thing, enticing students to behave in desired ways because of praise or the promise of rewards deprives students of the opportunity to act for their own reasons, because they want to. Because autonomy is a basic human need (Deci & Ryan, 1985) manipulative praise designed to control behavior risks undermining the teacher–student relationship and lessening the desire to perform the praised behavior spontaneously, for intrinsic reasons (Kohn, 1993; Lepper & Greene, 1978.).

Equally important from the perspective of moral education, such praise deprives students of the opportunity to behave in positive ways because they understand that those ways are more helpful, more considerate, or more fair. Moral actions must be done for moral reasons. Thus controlling rewards and praise, while offering students something positive, denies them something more important, autonomy, and prevents them from acting for moral or prosocial reasons.

Some developmental educators argue that rewards and praise, even praise that is meant to show appreciation or approval of a student’s behavior, have no place in moral education. For example, Kohn (1993, 2005) and DeVries and Zan (1994) both argue that praise is counterproductive because it substitutes an authority’s judgment for the student’s own. Kohn argues that “what’s most striking about a positive judgment is that it’s a judgment (2005, p. 155). Similarly, DeVries and Zan (1994) state that when a child does something positive “(t)he constructivist teacher does not praise the behavior” (p. 32). In the place of praise Kohn (2005) suggests various forms of encouragement such as describing the student’s action, pointing out the positive effects of the action on others, and asking the child or student to reflect on or tell about his or her action or accomplishment.

Other developmentally oriented educators view praise that is genuine and not manipulative to be consistent with developmental theory (Nucci, 2003; Watson & Ecken, 2003). Praise that is meant to validate, inform, or celebrate a child’s accomplishment is consistent with a sociocultural view of development in that it can serve to provide children with knowledge of their culture and provide a bonding experience of shared joy.

The use of rewards and awards to shape or celebrate students’ behavior is generally considered counterproductive by developmental educators. While Nucci (2003) allows for the use of rewards such as a good citizenship award to “*validate* what the child is already motivated to do,” he warns that “the routine awarding of pins or other emblems, and the weekly public listing of the names of children who have displayed ‘virtue’ or ‘character’...can lead to competition and undermine genuine moral motivation (pp. 198–199, emphasis in the original). However, Watson and her colleagues (Dalton & Watson, 1995; Watson & Ecken, 2003) worry that singling out students for awards is likely to undermine classroom community and students’ relationships with one another: “When children must compete for limited prizes...their classmates are their rivals, not their colleagues” (Dalton & Watson, p. 79).

Desists—Responding To Misbehavior

From a developmental perspective, children naturally want to build their understanding of their world and form mutually caring relationships, but they are still developing the competencies needed to succeed. From this perspective, student misbehaviors are mistakes. From the point of view of cognitive developmental theory, mistakes are opportunities for learning. From the Vygotskian social constructivist perspective, in an appropriate learning environment mistakes indicate the zone of proximal development (ZPD)—the area where adult guidance or instruction is most likely to help the child advance to a higher plane. It follows from developmental theory that teachers' responses to students' misbehaviors can powerfully affect moral learning.

Research in family socialization supports the role of desists, or disciplinary responses in moral learning and development (Solomon, Watson, & Battistich, 2001). Hoffman (2000) offers two reasons why parental disciplinary actions are important for children's moral development: such encounters are frequent, at least for children between two and ten, and they provide parents with highly salient opportunities to teach the misbehaving child how to respond morally in a moral encounter. Several studies have found significant correlations between parental discipline and children's moral development. For example, parental discipline style has been shown to significantly affect children's aggressiveness, concern for others, and prosocial orientation (Hoffman, 1960, 1963, 1975; Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967; Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, & King, 1979).

Likewise, in the classroom, where desists are also frequent, teachers play a similar socialization role. If teachers view discipline desists as primarily about teaching or scaffolding, their responses to student misbehavior can support moral development as well as create order and prevent harm. Good teaching from a developmental perspective involves believing that students want to learn, understanding the causes of students' failure, providing support based on the presumed causes, and focusing on building student understanding as well as skills. From a developmental perspective, good teaching is also an active collaborative process between student and teacher: it will be best accomplished if students and teachers trust one another. For students to trust their teachers, they have to believe that their teachers care about them and they need to be in an environment where their basic needs for autonomy, belonging, and competence are being met. These aspects of good developmental teaching along with the meaning of what it is to be moral have clear implications for how teachers should respond to student misbehavior. While there are many possible causes for the misbehaviors of individual students, the following guidelines for desists or disciplinary interventions follow from or are consistent with developmental theory:

- Because there are many possible causes for misbehavior, **choose desists that address the most likely cause of the misbehavior**; for example, a reminder for momentary relaxed effort or inattention; instruction or scaffolding for lack of social/emotional skills; discussion or empathy induction for lack of understanding.
- Because children generally want to learn and do what is right, **attribute to the student(s) the best possible motive consistent with the facts.**
- Because autonomy is a basic human need and moral action must be from internal motives, **minimize the use of power assertion and maximize the autonomy of the misbehaving student(s).**
- Because good teaching requires a caring, cooperative relationship, **minimize negative consequences to the misbehaving student(s) while focusing on solving the problems creating or created by the misbehavior.**
- Because good teaching aims at fostering understanding, **focus on the harmful effects of the misbehavior and engage students in defining the problem and finding a solution.**

- Because children are developing and depend on the help of “more accomplished others” to learn, **accept the moral authority and responsibility to insure that students are caring, respectful, and fair toward you and one another.**

Potential Causes of Misbehavior

Sometimes students misbehave because of momentary lapses in self-control, attention to the needs of others, or established rules or procedures. For example, a student who usually fully engages in learning activities and treats others kindly or respectfully fails to do so. If no serious harm has resulted, simply calling the student’s attention to what he or she is doing in a tone that implies the student knows better is frequently all that is needed. There is no instruction: the teacher is simply reminding the student to be guided by his or her better self. Such “call outs” are part of just about all discipline systems. The important difference in Developmental Discipline is that these reminders carry no implied negative judgment or threat of impending consequence. In fact, the implied message is one of trust, “I know you wouldn’t be doing that if you were thinking about what you are doing.” These desists can be quite frequent with some students, particularly in the beginning of the year as relationships and procedures are being established. However, if they continue to be frequent, they may point to a different cause, the demands of the environment may be too high for the student or students.

Sometimes teachers themselves are the cause of student misbehavior (Kohn, 1996). Lessons or class meetings that run longer than the students’ ability to attend, academic assignments that are boring or too difficult, competitive classroom structures that pit students against one another, and insufficient support or scaffolding for new or challenging activities will inevitably result in student “misbehavior.” In these instances, the corrections need to be taken by the teacher. When teachers are faced with misbehavior by a large number of students, Developmental Discipline suggests teachers analyze their own behavior for the potential cause. When teachers surmise that they are the cause, they can acknowledge the problem, explain what they believe has been causing the problem, seek student input and advice, and make adjustments in order to create a better learning environment.

Sometimes student misbehavior is caused by their lack of acceptance of school or classroom rules or procedures. For example, some schools or teachers disallow hats, some forbid running in the halls or going up the slide, some have strict dress codes, many disallow gum chewing or eating in the classroom, and some have neatness requirements; e.g., shirts must be tucked in. Students do not view these as moral issues and, especially by early adolescence, may find such regulations unreasonable or personally intrusive (Nucci, 1981, 2001). Of course teachers can offer reasons for such rules, but students may simply not accept the reasons. If the teacher–student relationship is positive, and the number of such rules small, students will usually comply, especially if the teacher enforces the rules with a light touch, uses humor, or allows for some autonomy in compliance. For example, early in the school year, a student in a middle school wore a dark colored shirt under her white uniform blouse. The school rules explicitly forbid such shirts and students are supposed to remove them or be sent home. Attributing the best possible motive, the teacher told the girl that she must have forgotten the school rule about dark shirts. She did not make her remove the shirt or send her home, but said that she was sure the student would remember not to wear a dark shirt again. The student did remember and the problem was solved in a way that did not undermine the student–teacher relationship.

Of course, teachers need to enforce such rules, whether they agree with them or not. If students persist in violating a non-moral rule, the teacher may have to remove the student from the classroom, but not until he or she has tried to cajole the student into cooperating or talked with

the student to find a way for the student to live with the rule. The teacher–student relationship is central to enforcing these rules. A good relationship will usually lead students to comply even though they don't agree with the rule. A sympathetic, light touch in enforcing such rules will help build teacher–student relationships.

Even in a well-orchestrated classroom environment with engaging and appropriate learning activities and few rules that students find unreasonable, students will misbehave. Potential causes for misbehavior abound: failure to understand the teacher's directions or expectations; relative lack of self-control or interpersonal skills; relaxed effort; inability, relative to their classmates, to do the academic work; belief by some students that they have to fight for what they need; strong self-interest conflicting with that of others; an interpersonal style that is rude or aggressive. In any given incident, if a simple request, reminder, or support does not stop the behavior, the teacher's next response needs to be guided by the presumed cause of the misbehavior—explain directions or rules; teach self-control or interpersonal skills; encourage increased effort; provide extra academic help; deny the applicability of their competitive, aggressive worldview; help them see the need to balance their self-interest with the needs of others; help them see the problems caused by their rude or aggressive behavior; and teach more respectful forms of interaction. A complicated set of possibilities, especially given that few misbehaviors come with a sign identifying their cause.

Time is also an important issue in the classroom. Sometimes there is not time in the moment to follow a request to stop misbehavior with a more elaborate response involving explanation, instruction, or conversation. Even if the student stops the misbehavior, it might be important to check in with the student later, for example, to hear his view, provide an explanation, or offer additional instruction. Sometimes, however, the misbehavior does not stop. For example, the student continues talking to his tablemates during reading time, or continues talking and laughing during instruction. At such times, Developmental Discipline advocates that teachers stop the misbehavior in a way that conveys respect, minimizes pain or embarrassment, and allows the student as much autonomy as possible. The focus is on solving the problem—encouraging the student to read rather than talk with classmates, stopping a student from disrupting instruction—not on punishing the student. A student who is trying to interact with his tablemates during reading may be sent to a quiet part of the room to continue reading. A student who is disrupting a class meeting may be asked to sit away from the group, but still invited to listen and participate. Students can also be offered the opportunity to return to the group when they feel that they will be able to concentrate in the group setting. Students can also be asked to write short reflections on the effect of their behavior on others; see Watson & Ecken (2003, pp. 166–171) for a general discussion of written reflections.

Even disciplinary encounters around non-moral matters—paying attention, not disrupting the learning environment, walking in the halls—convey moral information. When teachers treat all students with respect, even when they are misbehaving and even those who usually misbehave, they are living and modeling important moral principals of mutuality, reciprocity, care, and respect. When teachers respect the needs and dignity of misbehaving students, they convey the message that moral obligation extends to all. Their behavior says that it is not all right to harm or treat someone badly even if they are behaving badly. They are providing to misbehaving students the consideration, care, and respect they are asking from them. This will not only increase student trust and respect for the teacher, it will increase respect for other students, even those who misbehave. In a climate of mutual respect it will be easier for students to treat one another kindly, fairly, and with respect. At the very least, students will get more practice in being kind and respectful and feel less justified in scapegoating those students who, for whatever reason, more frequently misbehave. The following comment from an elementary school teacher addresses this issue.

When a child wouldn't come to the rug, I would put their name up on the board and fuss at them. I was causing that child to be an outcast. The other children were taking their lead from me. To myself I was thinking—this sounds horrible—“nobody likes that child.” But I was setting it up. I just wanted to control the class. I just wanted to dismiss the child who wouldn't be part of the class. Basically I was saying, for everyone to hear, “You're not part of the class.”

As I look back on it, the kids that got made fun of in the cafeteria or in line, the kids everyone refused to play with on the playground, were the kids I wasn't letting participate because they didn't know how to act. (Dalton & Watson, 1997, p. 73)

When misbehaviors pose the possibility of or cause harm they offer powerful opportunities for moral learning. Student–student conflict along with behaviors like teasing, name calling, excluding, laughing at someone's efforts, stealing, and threatening harm, provide teachers with the opportunity to develop many skills involved in moral behavior (e.g., perspective-taking, self-control, and communication skills as well as empathy, moral sensitivity, and moral understanding). And because the other students are often watching, those who have not caused harm are absorbing some of that learning along with the misbehaving student or students. However, such learning is unlikely to happen if the misbehaving student is simply informed that his or her behavior was wrong, and then punished, even if the punishment is commensurate with and related to the misbehavior.

The Problem with Punishment

Punishment is harm purposefully done to someone who has caused harm as a response to the harm. Its purpose may be retaliation, retribution, or to teach a lesson and thus reduce the probability of the person causing harm in the future. From a developmental perspective, punishment as an inducement to moral growth is at best ineffective and at worst counterproductive. A punished person may avoid the punished behavior in order to avoid future punishment, but avoiding personal harm is not a moral reason and thus the better behavior does not amount to moral behavior. Punishment can also cause the punished to focus on the harm done to him or her, lead to resentment of the punisher and take the focus off of the harm the child caused (Hoffman, 2000). For most children, who generally want to be good but may be lacking the skills or understanding to be so at the moment, punishment is unnecessary. For oppositional children, those who have little trust and a confrontational stance toward the world, it will do little good and is likely to reinforce their untrusting, defiant stance (Hall & Hall, 2003).

Recognizing that parents and teachers sometimes have to control children's behavior, many educators have adopted discipline approaches that use negative consequences that are logically or naturally related to the misbehavior (e.g., Charney, 2002; Curwin & Mendler, 1988; Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1982;). Kohn (1996) calls such approaches “punishment lite.” Such consequences may be useful for controlling behaviors that do not cause harm to others, such as forgetting one's lunch money, or not finishing an academic assignment, but letting a child go without lunch or making a student work through recess are not caring or compassionate acts. Nor are they inevitable. They are allowed to happen because the authority figure believes that they will cause the misbehaving child to experience some kind of discomfort or harm logically related to their misbehavior and thus teach the child the lesson that repeating the behavior will cause unpleasant consequences to him or her. They may be expedient but they do not join with the student in an effort to solve the problem. Worse, they carry the message that the punisher does not really care for the child. If done as a matter of course, they can undermine the child–teacher relationship. This is of particular concern in the classroom because teachers have far less time than parents to build relationships. Further, when a teacher causes one student in the classroom to experience a

punitive albeit logical consequence, that student and all the others who are watching have one more reason not to trust in the teacher's caring. Students who already believe that the world is uncaring will have their mistaken view confirmed.

So what is a teacher to do when one student or a group of students misbehaves? There are clearly times when teachers need to use power assertion to control student misbehavior. Some developmentally oriented educators advocate the use of natural or logical consequences (DeVries & Zan, 1994; Hall & Hall, 2003; Nucci, 2003). On close examination, however, most of the examples of logical consequences they provide are actions taken to solve the problem created by the misbehavior. Such actions might be unpleasant for the child, but any unpleasantness is simply the unavoidable consequence of solving the problem. That is, the adult's intention is to solve the problem and sometimes the only way to solve the problem will also cause some unpleasantness for the child. For example, Hall and Hall (2003) describe logical consequences as consequences that "restrict privileges only to the extent necessary to protect people's health and safety, to safeguard property, and to ensure the basic rights of others" (2003, p. 131). In the Just Community "the purpose of the D.C. (Discipline Committee) is to bring students who break rules into a conversation so that they can understand more adequately why their behavior presents a problem for the community and can feel the support of members of the community who genuinely want them to remain a part of the group" (Power et al., 1989, p. 97). Nucci (personal communication) offers the following example of an ideal logical consequence. A middle school teacher assigned a student who had teased a Down's syndrome student to assist in the special education classroom. The special education teacher provided support for the student as he worked with the special education students. Eventually, the student became an advocate in his school for the handicapped.

From a developmental perspective, for all misbehaviors the teacher's goal is to preserve her relationship with the student and provide whatever support the student needs to stop misbehaving. With a conception of students as generally wanting to learn and wanting to be in mutually caring relationships, the teacher needs to guess at the possible causes of the misbehavior, take action designed to address the potential causes, and judge the effectiveness of her actions. For example, is the misbehavior caused by the student's lack of social or emotional competencies? Teach or support the student in the exercise of the underdeveloped competency. Is the misbehavior caused by an untrusting and aggressive stance toward the world? Build a caring relationship and teach the child that he or she can trust you and others. Is the misbehavior caused by frustration at not being able to do the work? Provide extra support or encouragement. Is the student feeling rejected or unappreciated? The teacher can display her own affection and respect for the student and look for ways to encourage good feelings and friendship from other students. And so on.

When misbehavior causes harm, more can and must be done to maintain a caring, moral community. The goal here is moral instruction. The teacher needs to focus students on the harm they have caused—a true consequence of their behavior, encourage their empathic response to the other's distress, and insist that they find a way to repair as much as possible the harm they caused. Oser (2005) argues that truly facing the negative consequences of one's actions can provide a powerful force for moral growth. Two examples illustrate this point.

It was spring and some 6th grade boys at a suburban elementary school were fooling around on the playground during recess. They had discovered a great new trick. One of them would kneel down behind someone and the other would push the person over. The trick worked perfectly with Anna. She fell over with ease. She was hurt and crying. In the process she had broken her wrist. The yard duty staff sent the shaken boys to the principal. He began by saying that he understood that they were playing and hadn't meant to cause serious harm, but that, in fact, they had. He explained that the girl would have to wear a cast for weeks and now lots of ordinary things would be more difficult for her. He pointed out that the girl played the flute and would now not be able to

play in the spring concert. By the time he had finished, all three boys were in tears and very sorry for what they had done. The principal also suspended the boys for a day, explaining to them that even though he knew they were sorry and hadn't meant to cause such harm, he believed suspension was necessary to signal to everyone in the community the seriousness of the situation. On their own, all three boys brought the girl flowers and apologized for hurting her.

In this example, the principal attributed the best possible motive to the boys—they were fooling and hadn't meant to cause serious harm—and he focused on the harm they had caused the girl, arousing their empathy and remorse. The principal might have suggested that the boys come up with ways to make up for the harm they caused; however, the boys' spontaneous act of reparation is evidence that they had learned a moral lesson and would not likely try such a trick again. Morally, the suspension was expiatory punishment and beside the point. It probably didn't hurt, because of the respect the principal showed the boys, and it fit the community's expectation that such actions should be punished, but it was unnecessary for the boys' moral growth or behavioral change.

The next example is from a second-third grade inner city classroom. The teacher, Laura Ecken, had been working hard to build a trusting and supportive relationship with Tralin, a student with many positive characteristics but who had a history of fighting with and teasing classmates. In this incident, the children are getting ready to leave the cafeteria. Tralin shoves another student, Tyrone, out of line so she would be able to stand near her friend, Ella. When Tyrone complained, Laura believed she could simply fix the problem by telling Tralin to give Tyrone back his place in line and proceeded to move the class out of the cafeteria. Here, in the teacher's words is what happened next.

Before we could get all the way outside, she (Tralin) was screaming at Tyrone, "Your mom uses crack cocaine! Your mom's a crackhead!"

I asked her to just step aside so we could talk. I asked her why she had called his mother that, and she said, "Because she is and he lied on me and said I pushed him out of the line and I didn't touch him."

I said, "You know, Tralin, you're lying to yourself. I saw you push him out of the line. You wanted to be with Ella and so you shoved him out of the way."

"You know I'm not going to allow that, and I'm not going to allow you to call his mother names. Can you imagine how painful it is for Tyrone to know that about his mother, to suffer all the pain from that, and then to have to be at school and have you make his pain even worse? That's just not right."

In the process of confronting Tralin, the teacher realizes that Tralin needed to repair the harm she has caused Tyrone, suggests this, and supports Tralin in following through.

I said, "You know, you said some ugly things to Tyrone and I think it'd probably be best to take care of that."

She just looked at me, so I said, "When you have a plan, just find me and let me know, but I think that you should take care of it before the day's over."

About an hour later Tralin came up to me and kind of stood there, so I asked her if she had a plan. She said, "I need to tell him that I'm sorry and that I didn't mean any of it. I was just mad and that's why I said it."

I asked her if she wanted him to come out in the hall so she could tell him that privately, and she said, "Yeah, but first I need a drink."

I told her, "Listen, you go get a drink and I'll tell Tyrone you want to talk to him in the hall."

When Tyrone came back in, he was happy and so was Tralin. (Watson & Ecken, 2003, pp 162–163)

In this example, the best possible motives consistent with the facts are none too good. Tralin pushed Tyrone out of line because she wanted to be by Ella and when the teacher did not allow this Tralin was angry and wanted to hurt Tyrone because she blamed him for her plight. When Tralin denies having pushed Tyrone out of line, the teacher tells her that she is lying to herself and confronts her with the consequences of her ugly words to Tyrone. She helps Tralin see Tyrone's perspective and think about how hard his life must be. She calls upon fairness, and then tells Tralin that she should try in some way to repair the harm she has caused. These are real consequences for Tralin, but they are not designed to inflict discomfort on Tralin. They are designed to induce empathy and moral feelings and provide Tralin with a way to right a moral wrong. The teacher also shows respect and confidence in Tralin by letting her figure out a way to make reparation. This is the kind of moral instruction that has both the power to arouse moral desire through the student's empathic response, increase moral sensitivity by helping Tralin really see what she has done, provide moral knowledge by telling her what a moral person who has caused harm does, and allows Tralin to repair her moral standing with Tyron and the community.

Hoffman (2000) refers to this form of disciplinary response as induction. This response takes different forms depending on the situation, but essentially it involves empathy, moral reasoning, and moral instruction. Induction can also be accompanied by genuine moral outrage and power assertion. In this example, considerable outrage came through in the teacher's voice as she pointed out the unfairness of Tralin's treatment of Tyrone and the teacher essentially ordered Tralin to find a way to make reparation. However, it does not include punishment—causing harm to the misbehaving student in response to her misbehavior. The focus is on moral understanding—helping Tralin understand the harm she has caused and on fixing the problem—requiring Tralin to repair the harm.

When students understand that their teacher's goal is to help and protect them, they are open to learning and do not resent the teacher's power assertion or the discomfort they may experience in the process. I had the opportunity to interview Tralin at the end of her sophomore year in high school. When she said that Laura Ecken's class was different from her other classes, I asked her to tell me how it was different. Prominent in her description was the way Laura responded to student misbehavior.

(W)e had open discussions, like...our morning meetings and afternoon meetings and my other teachers didn't do that. (In my current classes), You did what you did, you got in trouble...next day come back, act like nothing happened.... Just start all over again. And Mrs. Ecken, if we got in trouble,... she'll give us a chance to think about it.... How could we change the situation differently? What could we have done to make it better?... Things like that. (Watson, 2006)

A developmental approach to discipline argues against punishment, even in the form of logical or natural consequences. Sometimes, to allow students autonomy or the opportunity to discover the problem with their behavior on their own, teachers will decide to allow a misbehavior to continue, knowing that the student will soon discover the problem with it and abandon it. But the primary goal in such situations is to allow autonomy or self-discovery, not the negative consequences the child will experience. Sometimes teachers will need to take actions in order to stop misbehaviors, and sometimes those actions will have unpleasant consequences for the student; for example, sending a student who is disrupting a reading group off to work by himself. But the action is taken to solve the problem, stop the disruption, and get all students productively reading.

It does not teach anything. If any teaching is involved it will occur later as the teacher checks in with the student to see how to prevent such disruptions in the future. When teachers need to take controlling actions in order to create a caring and productive learning environment, they try not to display anger and try to honor the child's good will by providing some autonomy and the message that the student is still part of the community. To help students see such disciplinary actions as efforts to solve problems rather than punishments, teachers can either explain these procedures or ideally generate with the students non-punitive ways teachers can solve problems of student misbehavior (Battistich, Watson, Solomon, Schaps, & Solomon, 1991; DeVries & Zan, 1994; Nucci, 2003). During calm moments, when their self-interest is not immediately pulling them toward misbehavior, students know that they should be kind, respectful, and fair and work hard at their learning tasks, and they understand the teacher's responsibility for maintaining order and balancing the needs of individual students with the needs of the whole class.

The Good Enough Teacher¹

A developmental approach to discipline and classroom management is not easy. First, it's not easy to like students who don't work hard, bully other children, defy authority, or continually clamor for attention. It's easier when we view such children as vulnerable and desperately seeking to belong and succeed in a world they perceive as uncaring, but it is still hard. With such children, teachers will need to call upon their capacity for "professional caring," to act as if they liked the students even when they don't (Noddings, 2002). While forming mutually caring relationships with all students is the goal of teachers using Developmental Discipline, it is good enough to treat all students as if we liked them when we cannot make ourselves actually like them.

A developmental approach to discipline requires that teachers balance many needs and goals. It is often difficult to know the best course of action when confronted with student misbehavior. For example, a teacher in the OC School (Rogoff, Turkanis, & Bartlett, 2001) describes allowing a student the freedom to put little effort into a unit on poetry writing knowing that the student would discover the problem in not working hard when he displayed his poor work to the rest of the class. However, the student's embarrassment at showing his poor work led the teacher to plan "to hold conferences more frequently...to support students in managing their time and responsibilities" (Polson, 2001, p. 126). While treating all students with care is the moral obligation of teachers they will frequently make decisions that are not optimally caring. It is good enough to care enough to reflect and learn from one's mistakes. Consider the following anecdote from early in the school year in an elementary classroom.

The other day, I blame myself for this, I was in my reactionary mode, I guess. Yolanda and Martin were hitting each other with the pillows. They do that often and I'm just constantly reminding them. I know it was a fun thing, but I said to her "Every single day I need to talk to you both about this. I think that reminding you isn't working, so tomorrow I want you to stay in and we're going to write about why it's important that you just put these cushions away and come right back out when lessons are over. Yolanda got upset about that: I think she saw it as a punishment.

When she got back to her table group I saw her say something to Tyrone. His mouth dropped open and he said "She's gonna get you fired! She's going to the office as soon as the bell rings and tell 'em you've been cussin' at her. We're gonna have a new teacher tomorrow."

I was upset. So, in front of the kids, I said to Yolanda, "No, now we're not going to have threats in the classroom. We're going to walk to the office right now and talk to them about this." I added, "Yolanda, have I ever used a cuss word with you or to you?"

She said "No."

I said, "Well, you know that and the class knows that, so your plan wouldn't work." I probably

could have left it at that, but I was concerned with letting these kids know that they can't pull this kind of stuff. Anyway, after I did all that, I thought later that I was wrong. I asked myself, "Did you wreck your relationship with this child in one incident?"

So, the next day, when she came in I said, "You know, I made a really big mistake with you yesterday. I dragged you off to the office before I really even sat down and talked with you. I'm really sorry about that, and it won't happen again."

And she said, in a second, "I'm really sorry for what I said."

I said "Yolanda, I know you were upset because I asked you not to go out the next day. I understand the sometimes when we're upset we say things that we shouldn't. And from now on, we're just going to work through things. And she just hugged me." (Laura Ecken, personal communication, 1997)

It is not always possible to do what is the right thing to best support a student's moral and academic development and maintain a caring productive learning community. The good enough teacher genuinely tries and when he or she fails, apologizes, reflects, and goes on trying.

SUMMARY

Moral and character educators have long understood the influence on moral development of the "hidden curriculum" embodied in teachers' discipline and classroom management systems. However, during the second half of the twentieth century when classroom management became a focus of empirical research, the moral mission of schooling was completely overshadowed by the academic mission. Hence, the field of classroom management—its theories, practices, and research—was initially developed with little regard for social and moral outcomes. Additionally, the predominant views of human nature and learning guiding educational research at the time were drawn from behavioral psychology. Children were viewed as primarily pleasure seeking and pain avoiding and learning was regarded as a process of building associations.

In the 1980s, when the field of education returned to a focus on students' moral or character development, teaching was generally viewed as direct instruction and motivating students primarily involved the promise of extrinsic rewards or the threat of punishment. In classrooms across the United States students were told what to learn and what to do, successful learning and compliant behaviors were rewarded while non-compliant behaviors were met with warnings and punishments. However, a growing number of educators deriving their views of human nature and learning from developmental and social rather than behavioral psychology were emerging. From the perspective of these educators learning is an active process of constructing meaning and children are predisposed to learn and fit into their social group.

From the perspective of these educators the entire educational process, including classroom management and discipline, needed to be transformed. Drawing from the work of Piaget and Vygotsky, and research on human development, motivation, and family socialization, these educators viewed children as partners in their own learning and socialization. For these developmentally oriented educators all learning, including moral learning, involves the personal construction of meaning aided by social interaction. All learning, including moral learning, will happen best in a community, variously described as caring, democratic, or moral. To create such communities teachers would need to help all students meet their basic human needs for autonomy, belonging, and competence, and students would need to be helped to treat classmates fairly and kindly. Students would also need opportunities to discuss and explore moral issues, practice exercising moral behavior and judgment, and learn morally relevant skills such as perspective taking. These educators developed alternative approaches to classroom management and discipline that

stressed cooperation, and shared control rather than compliance and adult control.

Developmentally oriented moral educators were quick to realize that socialization based on extrinsic reinforcement was more likely to undermine than enhance moral development. They developed an alternative approach to school and classroom discipline, called Developmental Discipline. Whether drawing from research on parental socialization, cultural environments, or the development of children's moral understanding, these educators stress the importance of caring adult-child relationships. Further, they stress the importance of helping children build their understanding of moral issues and values, teaching the skills needed to enact those values in daily life, and scaffolding or providing support as students strive to live up to those values. Rather than using praise and rewards to encourage desirable and punishments to discourage undesirable behaviors, these educators advocate a focus on children's capacity for empathy and intrinsic motivation to learn and be cooperative, relying on guidance, explanation, teaching, and reparation when students misbehave.

Advocates of Developmental Discipline recognize that there are significant challenges to achieving a caring, moral, democratic classroom characterized by mutually respectful and cooperative relationships. For a variety of reasons some children enter classrooms with an untrusting attitude, viewing their teachers as unreliable and their classmates as competitors. Some have poorly developed social and emotional skills that leave them unable to cope with the normal demands of learning and participating in a group setting. With such children it is difficult to create the basic condition for effective Developmental Discipline, a mutually caring and trusting relationship. It is even difficult for teachers to hold up their end of a caring relationship. These children will be difficult to like because they cause so much trouble, demand so much attention, and interfere with the learning and sense of safety of the rest of the class. If we view these children through the lens of behavioral psychology or even Freudian psychology, we will see them as selfish, motivated by Id impulses. Punishment and control, responses likely to increase the mistrust of these children, will appear to be the only ways to manage these children.

Attachment theory provides an alternative way to understand the attitudes and behaviors of such children. From the view of attachment theory it is through a history of secure attachment relationships that children acquire appropriate social and emotional skills and a belief in the trustworthiness of others, their own self-worth, and the cooperative nature of social relationships. Many children have not had a history of secure attachment and these children are prone to serious misbehavior. Understanding children through the lens of attachment theory can help teachers emotionally engage constantly misbehaving children, sustain belief in the children's potential for good will, see past their troublesome behavior, and provide a basis for genuinely caring for them. With time, in the presence of genuine care and limited use of control, untrusting children can begin to trust and develop a collaborative approach to relationships. They will then be open to the support and moral guidance that is central to Developmental Discipline; see Watson & Ecken (2003) for a description of how one teacher struggled and eventually succeeded in building mutually trusting relationships in a classroom with several oppositional and untrusting students.

Developmental Discipline can help teachers build the trusting relationships necessary for all students to learn and develop academically and morally. It differs from traditional discipline in its goals, view of children, methods, and the source of its power. The primary goal of Developmental Discipline is students' social, emotional, and ethical development. This includes characteristics that Lickona and Davidson (2005) have labeled performance character as well as moral character—the commitment and ability to persevere and do one's best as well as to be responsible and treat others kindly and fairly. The primary goal of traditional discipline is the efficient control of student behavior to maximize academic learning time.

In Developmental Discipline children are viewed as intrinsically motivated to learn (achieve

TABLE 10.1
Comparison of Developmental and Traditional Approaches to Discipline

	<i>Developmental discipline</i>	<i>Traditional discipline</i>
View of children	Intrinsically motivated to learn and establish mutually caring relationships in a caring environment	Primarily motivated by self-interest
Goals	Create a caring community and support social/moral development	Efficient control to maximize academic learning
Methods	Trusting relationships, explanation, discussion, reflection, reminders, teaching social and emotional skills, empathy induction, and reparation.	Praise, rewards, and punishments
Source of power	Trusting teacher–child relationship and child’s intrinsic motivation to learn and establish caring relationships	Teacher’s control of resources and ability to bring about unpleasant consequences

competence) and to establish mutually caring relationships in a supportive and caring environment. There is much they need to learn about, such as managing their emotions and balancing their own needs with the needs of others, but when they realize that they are in a caring relationship they will cooperate with authority figures to learn these things. Traditional discipline assumes quite a different view of children. They are presumed to be primarily motivated by self-interest. They will not work hard to learn or to behave well unless they are enticed by rewards or threatened by unpleasant consequences.

Related to these different views of children, Developmental Discipline and traditional discipline rely of very different methods for supporting and responding to student behavior. Developmental Discipline employs primarily explanation; reflection; reminders; teaching social, emotional, and moral competencies; empathy induction; and reparation. Traditional discipline relies primarily on praise, stickers and rewards or warnings, scoldings, time outs, and loss of privileges. These different methods relate directly to both the different views of children and the sources of the authority figure’s power.

In Developmental Discipline, the source of power comes from the trusting and mutually caring relationship between teacher and children and the children’s intrinsic desire to learn and form caring relationships. In traditional discipline, the source of power comes from the teacher’s control of resources and ability to cause one to experience unpleasant consequences.

The judicious and skilled use of traditional discipline can create orderly classrooms and reasonably good learning environments fairly quickly. But it is unlikely to advance the moral development of students and the over-reliance on extrinsic motivation may well limit student learning. With Developmental Discipline and its focus on building relationships, establishing shared norms and goals, discussion, and mutual problem solving, a well-functioning classroom will take longer to establish. In a climate of extreme pressure for rapid academic learning, teachers may find it difficult to devote the needed time. Effective moral or character education requires that they do so.

NOTE

1. This term is a variation on a term “good enough parent” used by Bettelheim (1987) in support of less than perfect parenting.

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