

Direction

A Handbook for Families

By Duncan Gill, MD and Joseph R. Walsh, LCMHC

Respect

I stop to see the other as me.

Dignity

I reflect balance.

Responsibility

I care for my influence on all things.

Compassion

I share joy and pain.

Perseverance

I commit to life.

Table of Contents

<u>Program Overview</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>A Crash Course in Wholeistic Education</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Groups and Habits</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>The Behavioral Guidelines</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Key Concepts</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>The 4Rs</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Implementing WED at Home</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>Summary</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>Selected Supporting Materials</u>	<u>33</u>

“Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.”

~ Robert Frost

A Program Overview by Our Medical Director

Direction's services consist of psychiatric evaluation and treatment, group therapy, our Parenting Groups, and family therapy.

In the latter two, we teach Wholeistic Education (WED), a model of treatment and education that we employ here in our groups and recommend parents consider implementing at home. This model is the primary subject of this handbook.

We'd like to say a few words about the first service -- psychiatric evaluation and treatment -- before we delve into the world of WED.

Psychiatry's focus is on "biological problems" -- chemical imbalances -- that can impair children's and teenager's functioning. This is the world of mood instability, depression, anxiety, and psychosis. In youth, we also can also see the beginnings of more defined psychiatric conditions, such as bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. The staple treatment of biological problems is medication.

It is important to note here that most struggling kids do *not* have biological factors that impact their functioning enough to warrant medication. Most kids' challenges are "developmental" in nature, and part of the difficult process of growing up.

At a place like Direction, however, we see a disproportionate number of kids who *do* have biological problems significant enough to merit consideration of medication. The reason is that we see a skewed population: those young people in the midst of serious crisis.

It is critical to identify those kids who do in fact have significant biological contributing factors because these kids are at the highest risk. For some of them, medication is the single most important intervention we can make.

Of course, many children present with a mix of biological and developmental problems. For example, a child may have a heavy genetic loading for mood instability (a biological problem), but he has also developed bad habits in dealing with his temper (a developmental problem), on top of this.

During the initial intake with a family, Joe and I can usually discern the relative mix of biological versus developmental contributions in a given case. Sometimes it's not obvious, and occasionally we get it flat wrong. If so, we change our assessment and modify the treatment plan accordingly.

One of the advantages of working in the field in which we do is learning when to worry about a kid, and when not to. Well, we suppose you likely should worry some about any teenager, but you probably get our point. It's not uncommon for concerned parents to bring their kid in only

to be told, after the interview, that we believe that the child suffers from a serious condition: being a teen. Fortunately, this condition only lasts a few years.

A Crash Course in Wholeistic Education

After decades of writing and teaching Wholeistic Education, it occurred to me that Duncan, with his relatively fresh perspective, wit and articulate writing style may introduce the subject better than I. So, here's Dunc to be your escort to the world of WED. Excerpts from my writings are italicized for clarity and we've included quotes and resources that people have told me they value over the years.

~ Joseph R. Walsh

Wholeistic Education is the method we use at Direction to address kid's developmental problems and the associated unhealthy family patterns that contribute.

When we refer to "developmental problems" at Direction, we are talking about kids "bad habits" which reflect unhealthy personal and interpersonal behavior. This behavior might include bingeing on the X-box for 8 hours a day, or a habit of taking out anger out on others.

Of course, we all have bad habits of one kind or another (some worse than others). Our job as parents is to help our children replace bad ones with good ones to the greatest extent possible. In this way, we can help them remove these obstacles and maximize the chance that they grow into healthy, mature adults.

A common mistake in dealing with children's developmental problems is to seek answers for very specific undesirable habits without looking at the bigger picture. We hear questions from parents about kids' concerning behavior all the time in Parenting Group. "How do I get my kid to stop playing video games 24/7?" "How do I get my kid to go to school?" "How do I get my kid to stop being so disrespectful?"

Here's an example exchange in Parenting Group:

Parent: "How do I make my kid go to school?"
Joe: "Sorry, I don't have a simple answer for questions like that."
Parent: "What am I doing here then? What am supposed to do?"
Joe: "What we can offer is an *approach*, called Wholeistic Education."
Parent: "Okay, so Wholeistic Education is going to give me an approach to getting my kid to school?"
Joe: "Well, not really. Wholeistic Education is going to give you an approach to creating a healthier family culture."
Parent: "How's that going to help?"
Joe: "Because then you can your family can solve this problem yourselves."

Wholeistic Education (WED) was developed by Joe over 20 years ago, and he has implemented it in families (including his own), past places of employment, and sports teams for years. He implemented it in Nashua Children's Home, working with the toughest kids facing some of the hardest family and emotional challenges imaginable. (The implementation of WED was followed by a reduction of the incidence of physical restraints by over 95%.) Success of the

approach has been demonstrated time and time again. So WED has something to offer, even if it can't tell parents how to get their kids to school.

A word of warning: WED is simple but not easy. It requires a change of mindset and perspective for most parents. It requires hard work and practice. Sometimes things at home get worse before they get better.

This is what Joe means when he says he “sells pain” in Parenting Group. He expresses frustration with and contempt for “the unethical jerks preying on desperate parents by peddling easy, pain-free, and ineffective-at-best solutions to their specific problems.”

We'll need to start with a little theory before we get into application, and how WED can help your family. The next few chapters outline the basic elements and principles of WED, which taken by themselves may be a bit confusing to the reader. Bear with us, because we will show you how these elements are combined and offer step-by step instructions on how to use WED to benefit your family.

Groups and Habits

“I wish I could go to school here.”

- Typical kid after about 2 weeks in the program.

Healthy and Unhealthy Groups

During life’s journey, kids align with their parents as role models and caregivers. Throughout their lives, they will encounter different potential “parental surrogates” (essentially substitute parents) that will become new role models and help shape their development. Parental surrogates may include a big brother, a therapist, or a sports coach. Or it might be the class bully, a wayward cousin, or a gang leader. Healthy parental surrogates will promote their development, unhealthy ones will inhibit it. Role models come in good and bad varieties!

In parallel fashion, kids are born into families which provide the culture, positive or negative, in which they develop. Throughout life, kids will encounter “family surrogates,” in the form of other groups. Just the way a family shapes development, so can a school class, a sports team, a gang, or therapy group at Direction. Just like a family, a group can either promote positive independence, or inhibit growth.

We therefore can view groups as being “healthy” (i.e. promoting the individual’s development and independence) or “unhealthy” (i.e. stifling the individual’s development and/or encouraging continued dependence).

What has all this to do with WED?

A fundamental goal of Wholeistic Education is to create healthy groups which foster growth and development in all group members.

The world abounds in groups, healthy and unhealthy. We believe that all groups, whether families, youth organizations, or school systems, can become healthy groups through the implementation of the principles of WED.

Personal and Interpersonal Habits

What specifically are we looking for from a healthy group?

We are looking for the healthy group to promote the individual’s good habits and help him or her identify and eliminate the bad ones. This is a critical step toward the goal of functioning better. In WED-speak, the group helps the individual “practice” better habits.

Contrary to the old saying, “practice makes perfect”, practice actually just makes “permanent”. Simply stated, behavior that that we repeatedly engage in, whether healthy or unhealthy, whether conscious or unconscious, becomes habit. Good habits are consistent with better functioning, bad habits with impaired functioning.

Personal habits may be the ones that come to mind immediately when we think about improving our health and functioning: quitting smoking, eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep, etc.

But interpersonal habits are just as important. Good social habits allow us to make and maintain healthy relationships. Bad ones get in the way of these relationships, and are the source of conflict and strife.

Just like becoming physically fit or changing our diet, social habits can be improved through practice, which requires hard work and often discomfort. Establishing an exercise program, or quitting smoking, can feel really crummy for a while. Learning to manage our anger can be frustrating, to be assertive daunting, and to push through our anxiety unsettling. The hope is that the establishment of better habits leads to better functioning, which over the long run, usually leads to feeling better.

The Culture of a Healthy Group

How does a healthy group help the individual foster better habits?

It all hinges on the group culture – the atmosphere and spirit of the group. The healthy group is positive, cooperative, supportive, and non-enabling. Folks are on the same team, they help each other out. When conflicts arise (as they inevitably do in any group), they are addressed and worked out. In WED-speak, this positive group atmosphere is known as an “Educational Culture.”

(For the parent still wondering how WED might help with that kid who isn’t going to school, you might be able to spot where this is headed.)

You can see the power of this culture in action at Direction. Kids and their parents alike are amazed that such a disparate group of teenagers (boys and girls, ages ranging from 13-20, all walks of life, all sorts of problems) not only get along but actively help each other out, challenge each other, and work through solutions together. They let their guard down in ways they have never done elsewhere. You kind of have to see it to believe it.

Importantly, because kids feel supported by one another and the group at large, they accept being challenged by others, and gently pressured by the group, about their own maladaptive habits.

Such a positive environment can be created at home as well, through effort and practice, even in families currently engaged in “civil war.” It has been gratifying to us over the years to hear stories of parents successfully implementing WED at home, and the resultant cessation of hostilities and healing that ultimately follows.

The Voluntary Nature of the Group

Next question: how do we establish and maintain a positive group culture?

First and foremost, we need to recognize that belonging to the group is *voluntary*.

Individuals must be free to join the group, should they agree to the group's terms of conduct, or "social code".

A fundamental tension exists between all individuals belonging to any group. On one hand we have the individual seeking the greatest freedom possible to pursue his or her own goals. On the other, we have the group's need for order and pursuit of "the common good". Balancing the desires of the individual with the desires of the group is an age-old problem. A person wants money, but society says it isn't okay to steal. A kid wants to eat a bag of chips in the living room, but the family isn't okay with the crumbs that inevitably follow. One of the greatest aspects of WED is that it aligns the goals of the individual with the group to dissolve this tension.

So groups come up with a social code delineating what behavior is acceptable, and what isn't.

What happens if an individual is not willing to commit to the social code of a group? An unhealthy group either ignores the errant behavior or tries to force the individual into complying with its wishes. A healthy group respects the right of an individual *not* to commit to the social code, but at the same time does not support that individual's continued membership in the group.

The unhealthy group says: "You aren't following our code, but that's no big deal," or it says "You aren't following our code, but we can make you do so!"

The healthy group says: "You aren't following our code, and we respect that, but you cannot continue to be part of this group. The choice is yours."

What does this matter? It matters because respect of an individual's autonomy to choose whether or not to belong to a group is central to the healthy group, and is at the heart of Wholeistic Education.

Some people have difficulty with the concept of kids *choosing* to be part of certain groups. Kids have trouble with it because they are used to being told what to do. More often than not, for example, they come to Direction with the misconception that we are going to decide for them whether or not they will join our group, or that we are going to try to "force" them to come. We do our best to disabuse them of this notion as soon as possible, and sometimes have to do the same for their parents. Kids are often taken off guard at this point and unsure how to process this into their worldview of adults.

Parents who may be considering implementing WED into their family also have trouble with this concept. After all, they can't just let their 14-year-old child decide he or she doesn't want to belong to the family and take the next bus out of town. It is true that parents are in an unusual

position as group leaders in that they have a legal and ethical obligation to provide basic needs (e.g. food, shelter, care) for their children. So, they really can't let that 14-year-old get on that bus. However, there are other ways the child may effectively "leave the group" in which his or her autonomy can be respected, and he or she is able to experience the positive and negative consequences thereof. (More on this later.)

In any event, even in families, in WED we always respect a person's right to belong to the group, as long as he or she demonstrates commitment to the group's social code. (Note that we are talking about "commitment," not "compliance" -- no one is perfect!) We also respect his or her right to leave the group at any time.

Here's the corollary, though:

Ignoring or otherwise demonstrating a lack of commitment for the social code of the group is a decision in itself to leave to the group.

In other words, should an individual choose not to adhere to the social code, the healthy group *must* accept his or her tendered resignation (or "Restriction," in WED-speak) from the group.

Note that this is very different from a more traditional mindset, which is "If you don't do as the group says, we are going to kick you out." In WED, it is the individual that takes an action *that is respected by* the group, as opposed to the group's *taking an action against* the individual.

This may at this point seem like semantics, but rest assured it is not. The only way to truly understand and apply WED principles is to view the healthy group as being voluntary, and the decision to be part of the group as being solely in the hands of the individual, not the group itself. That's one reason why we recommend people use the Behavioral Guidelines in their unmodified form - exactly as they're written.

The Behavioral Guidelines

“I’d just keep practicing the Guidelines.”

- *Joe Walsh, on how he would respond if a spaceship landed in the parking lot.*

To promote a positive culture, the healthy group ideally adopts a social code that permits individual liberty to the greatest extent possible while still preserving the structural integrity of the group.

Groups implementing WED have a head start, in that Joe has already compiled a one-page, basic but comprehensive social code in the form of “The Behavioral Guidelines.”

He believes it is important that this social code is in writing (rather than informal, vague promises to “be decent” to each other) so there is a black-and-white description of what is expected of each member of the group. This avoids the problem of different group members following different social codes, or having different expectations from others. Knowledge that others are following the same social code is a prerequisite for trust.

Commit to “practicing the Guidelines” and you can be part of a WED group. Don’t commit, or do not demonstrate commitment, and you can’t be part of the group. It’s that simple.

The Guidelines also just-so-happen to represent good social habits. So, in committing to the Guidelines, we are not just reaping the benefits of belonging to the group. We are practicing better social habits, and consequently improving our interpersonal functioning.

THE BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES

1. MAINTAIN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT AND DIGNITY.

- a. Politely greet, welcome, and acknowledge efforts of all.
- b. Calmly request space if emotionally overwhelmed.
- c. Apologize for any possible offense, including accidents.*

2. USE LANGUAGE AND BODY RESPONSIBLY.

- a. Avoid offensive words, including those of a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual nature.
- b. Refrain from using language or body to intimidate or injure.
- c. Calmly ask for explanation of any confusion, disagreement, conflict or concern.

3. PROACTIVELY COOPERATE.

- a. Seek opportunities to assist others, and resist urges to embarrass or undermine.
- b. Gratefully acknowledge authority of leaders. **
- c. Treat all members as teammates, regardless of personal feelings.

4. CAREFULLY ATTEND TO HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- a. Alert an adult to any physical pain or danger.
- b. Control body movement such that self or others are not injured.
- c. Wear activity-appropriate clothing.
- d. Keep body properly groomed (e.g., daily bathing, teeth brushing, etc.).
- e. Take good care of all furniture, equipment, facilities, and environment.

5. HONESTLY GIVE BEST EFFORT.

- a. Calmly communicate all perceived offenses.
- b. Earnestly participate in just resolution of dispute.
- c. Put education, wellness of self and others, and responsibility to community ahead of personal image and interests.

* See Wholeistic Apology

** See Wholeistic Leadership

That's all there is to the Guidelines – nothing really objectionable. Seems like just basic, decent human behavior, right? It might even seem so common-sense as to be unnecessary. It isn't, though, as will become apparent in the next couple chapters.

We require all who come to Direction (including the staff, who are also members of the group) to commit to the Guidelines. We therefore all know what social behavior is expected from us as individuals, and what to expect from other group members.

A family implementing WED at home will use the same Guidelines as the family's social code. Joe goes as far as recommending posting them on the fridge. WED's philosophy can be summed up as follows:

"We have a group here, the Behavioral Guidelines are our social code, and if you commit to the Guidelines you are welcome to be part of our group. If not, we accept your decision not to be in our group. Let us know if you change your mind."

*** Wholeistic Apology**

You'll note a line item with a single asterisk in the Guidelines:

"Apologize for any possible offense, including accidents."*

Proper apology is a skill that eludes many people, sometimes for their entire lives. It requires an openness, a humbling-of-one's-self that just doesn't come naturally for them. In addition, the Guidelines require apology for any "possible offense" and for "accidental" offenses. In other words, excuses like "Come on, that really wasn't an offensive thing to say" or "Well, it's not like I purposely hurt your feelings" simply don't cut it.

Joe's describes the proper apology process as follows:

Wholeistic Apology is true apology. It is a promise that although we did something wrong, we want to have a good relationship, and it is concrete plan to prove that. Because wrongdoing is a natural part of being human, apology is something everyone must do well.

To truly apologize, we do three things:

1. *Accurately understand what we did wrong. This means we must not minimize, ex. "Why are you making such a big deal of this?" That is criticizing the hurt person. Nor can we maximize, ex. "I'm the worst person in the world". That is an attempt to lower the expectations of others. Both are manipulative ways of avoiding responsibility.*
2. *Clearly communicate, "I am sorry" – and really mean it!*
3. *Make restitution. This is how we attempt to "repay" whomever we hurt, and fix or replace whatever we damaged.*

We can do the first step on our own, so we may find it relatively easy. If we accomplish that, the second step is often where the going gets tough. Do we have the strength to remain compassionate? Will we try to minimize or maximize when facing others? This can be especially hard if we have been hurt as well.

Even if we succeed at steps one and two, the third step usually has moments that are difficult. Making restitution can be a long and painful process, because it's hard to know what it will take to re-earn trust. We may have to work at it long after we are again trustworthy and long after we feel we've proven it. So, in a way, whomever we apologize to has some control over us. This can make us feel afraid, sad, and angry.

But it's hard to truly apologize when we are full of our own feelings. Our emotions preoccupy us – we focus on ourselves, and usually place blame or responsibility on someone or something else. If we do that, even a little, we are not truly apologizing – and others will know it.

If when we do wrong, we can really focus on caring for others; if we can truly apologize, even our wrongdoing can be transformed into an educational experience.

**** Wholeistic Leadership**

The double asterisk in the Guidelines refers to “leaders.” Groups leaders safeguard a healthy group culture which promotes a positive, cooperative spirit.

Who are these leaders? Joe believes in the concept of “Wholeistic Leadership,” which holds that *anyone* in the group can be the leader, and the mantle of leadership passes from person to person, depending on who currently is best embodying the principles of WED:

“Wholeistic Leadership is gratefully acknowledging the leadership of whomever is most effectively practicing the Behavioral Guidelines at any given moment, regardless of age or other criteria. It is a most powerful way to increase trust in the group. Wholeistic Leadership helps us prove that we are genuine in our commitment to practice of the Guidelines. Through our own honest practice we become trustworthy group members and may lead by example.”

In reality, this usually ends up being our staff at Direction (all of whom are proficient in the practice of WED), and you, the parent, at home.

Key Concepts

“Showing is better than telling.”

- *Jim Beschta, Duncan’s 10th Grade English Teacher, on the subject of Creative Writing*

The Guidelines constitute WED’s social contract between group members. They’re the “heart” of WED. In addition, there are other key concepts that need to be understood before we are ready to implement WED in a family or other group.

WED’s Overarching Motto

“Embrace All Feelings, Guide All Behaviors.”

We need to acknowledge a fact of life: we can’t control our feelings. Feelings are part of the human condition. Sometimes we feel happy, sometimes sad, sometimes angry, sometimes anxious. People tend to fall into the trap of thinking they “shouldn’t” feel this way or that. This is nonsense. Feeling just are. As Joe says:

Feelings are like the weather, unimaginably complex and not in our control. Most people get upset if it’s raining on the day they’ve planned a picnic. But, most people will not be paralyzed by upsetting emotion. After some (hopefully short) period of overwhelming feeling, most folks just change their plans or grab an umbrella! Humans seem to benefit from the knowledge that nature is busy with important work and so couldn’t care less how they feel. Our Overarching Motto reflects the wisdom of that perspective and follows that dynamic sequence.

Behavior, on the other hand, can be controlled. It done so by establishing better habits.

Here are common mistakes to avoid:

1. *Blaming ourselves for our feelings.*
As we’ve said, feelings just are.
2. *Blaming someone else for his or her own feelings.*
This is a double-standard.
3. *Believing feelings necessarily lead to behavior.*
Feelings and behavior are entirely separate. Feeling a certain way can make us “want” to behave a certain way (e.g. punching our boss in the face because we are angry with him), but it doesn’t “force” us to act in a certain way.
4. *Believing we cannot control our behavior.*
This is a corollary to the previous statement. In the vast majority of cases, a person can control his or her behavior. That’s not to say it may not be really difficult, but it is very rarely impossible. A common thought experiment Joe likes to present is the following:

“If I had a billion dollars of gold in a bag, and would give it to you if you refrained from acting on your impulse, could you do it?” If someone is being truthful, the answer is almost always “yes”!

5. *Believing others cannot control their behavior.*

This is letting others off the hook, absolving them of responsibility.

WED tells us to “embrace all feelings” by acknowledging the real emotional experience of all individuals.

However, WED warns against another mistake:

Dwelling unnecessarily on the feelings.

This is a common mistake made by many people, including therapists. Many therapists in our opinion spend an undue amount of time discussing and “probing” the feeling, or searching for its “root”. Finding “the root” might be helpful, but is not always possible nor in many cases necessary. Energy is often better spent on practicing solutions.

In the second half of the motto, “Guide all behaviors,” the group leader seeks to help the individual approach the problem at hand (which in many cases has been caused by the individual’s existing bad habits).

This practice is of critical importance at Direction, at home, and in any other group wishing to maintain a positive culture.

In a nutshell, the group’s attitude should be:

“Wow, John, it sounds like you had a really tough day – I’m sorry you are so down. Now what are we going to do about it?”

Principles of Wholeistic Leadership

How do we become effective group leaders? By faithfully pursuing the “Three Educator Objectives,” listed below.

1. *“Model Healthy Relationship.”*

The first rule of leadership: lead by example. Talk is cheap. Show the group what healthy interactions look like, how conflict should be addressed, how we use the Guidelines as a roadmap to both improve our social habits and maintain the integrity of the group. Be humble. Acknowledge mistakes made along the way. Apologize for them. At both Direction and at home, we want to be role models for our children.

2. *“Provide Clear Reflection.”*

As group leaders, we need to “reflect,” or mirror, our subjective experience in the group.

This is less important when things are proceeding swimmingly, the culture feels positive, and everyone is getting along. (“It’s easy to be a sage on a mountain.”)

It is more important when things feel “off,” when we feel tension in the room, when we are uncomfortable with a situation, even if we can’t put our finger on the exact cause. We need to acknowledge the elephant in the room, and bring the group’s attention to it.

At Direction it might be an uncomfortable silence suggesting a group member might have gotten her feelings hurt. At home it might be an unacknowledged adversarial feeling between you and your child – that you and he don’t seem to be on the same team.

The way we provide this reflection is critically important. Pronouncements of fact based on assumptions made with an aggressive tone are going to be met with defensiveness. Statements such as “There you go getting all bent-out-of-shape again!” aren’t going to help.

“Humble questions” (you’ll see references to this term again and again) are the way to go. They are far less likely to provoke a negative response or inflame the situation. Humble questions might include “Sam – I’m worried I hurt your feelings – am I right?,” or “I feel like we aren’t on the same team here, Bill. Do you feel the same way?”

Providing clear reflection through the use of “humble questions” can be difficult, and often feels foreign to people. It is a skill that must be acquired through practice.

3. *“Encourage True Focus.”*

Leaders keep the group on track. Regardless of whatever else is going on, maintaining the positive culture is essential. Leaders keep the group attuned to the group’s social code – the Guidelines – and the practice of better social habits.

These Three Educator Objectives remind us what to do as group leaders. Now it’s time to talk about what *not* to do as group leaders.

The “Three Educator Challenges” listed below are counterintuitive to many people. These are the ones that have parents scratching their heads in Parenting Group. They go against the grain of conventional wisdom when it comes to dealing with children and teenagers. Many treatment providers will offer advice directly contrary to them, or pay only lip-service to them.

We believe them to be absolutely sound.

1. *“Give Up Control to Gain Authority.”*

The group leader aims to respect the greatest amount of freedom possible (“minimum interference”) to the individual while safeguarding a basic set of social expectations (the Guidelines). Trying to “control” another individual, trying to “make” him or her do what we want, is a direct violation of this principle. There is no better way to create an adversarial dynamic (see below).

“Controlling” also runs counter to the principle of promoting independence, and respecting autonomy. It does the opposite: it actually fosters dependence.

Attempting to control a child or teenager can look like helicopter-parenting, parent-created schedules and regimens, nagging, or bullying. At its core, it is a lack of respect for autonomy. It is also insulating the child from learning on his or her own through trial and error.

It should be said that “exerting control” has its place in times when emergent issues of health and safety dictate. You don’t want your child to learn about the dangers of playing in a thunderstorm the hard way. You pull your child off when he or she is lying on the railroad tracks. However, these times of real, significant danger are the exception rather than the rule. Flunking a test is not an emergency.

“Authority,” by contrast, is voluntarily-granted influence to a leader based on respect for and trust in his or her wisdom. Authority is earned through leading by example (“Model Healthy Relationship”).

2. *“Neither Punish Nor Enable Imbalanced Behavior.”*

What does a group leader do when faced with an individual’s “bad” behavior? All too often, he or she commits one of two errors.

The first error is punishing the individual. Putting moral objections entirely aside, punishment is an ineffective way to deal with imbalanced behavior. It demeans the cooperative nature of the group, promotes an adversarial dynamic, and is an expression of the desire to control. While punishment may produce in one sense a “short-term relief” for the group from undesirable behavior of an individual, it does no service to the individual (or the group) in the longer term. It deprives him or her of long-term educational benefit.

Punishment comes in many forms: physical, taking things away, verbal, public embarrassment, grounding, “time outs” (usually for smaller kids), etc. We advocate against “punishment” of all forms in any group, including families.

The second error is enabling the individual. Enabling can be as damaging to a group member’s development as punishment. In enabling, a leader is essentially looking the other way when faced with an individual’s bad habits. Worse yet, he or she may actively support the habit. This response does nothing to promote the development of the

individual, and may well retard it. The healthy group considers it to be its right, and more importantly its *responsibility*, to address maladaptive behaviors among its members.

Enabling is allowing violation of the Guidelines to go unaddressed. It sometimes looks like excessive excuse-making for a child (e.g. “She can’t help it – she is depressed”). If a person is struggling with chemical imbalance, they can *least* afford to not practice.

3. “Avoid Adversarial Dynamic.”

The healthy group has a cooperative spirit. This is incompatible with members’ viewing each other as adversaries or opponents. Adversarial dynamics are particularly common in relationships with teenagers, as they are in a developmental stage prone to combativeness anyway. They are also particularly adept at pushing buttons, at drawing parents into a fight.

How do we extricate ourselves from the power struggles so common with our children? By not participating. You can’t have a battle when only one side is fighting.

Note that adversarial dynamics aren’t the same as conflict. Conflict is inevitable in any group from time to time, and can be either approached in a spirit of teaming-up or competition. The difference is that healthy groups approach conflict in the former manner.

What Are We Left With?

WED has just stripped us of the most common strategies of dealing with childhood “bad” behavior: exerting control, punishing, enabling, and fighting back. What, exactly, are we to do?

Group leaders using the misguided approaches described above are all making the following error:

They either are rejecting or forgetting the fundamental principle that belonging to the group is voluntary, and a choice made by the individual. In other words, they are being distracted from their main focus, which is evaluating an individual’s commitment and desire to team-up with others in the group.

If the individual is not committed, he or she (by deed if not word) is *choosing* not to be part of the group. He or she is “Restricting” him or herself from the group. By doing so, the individual is giving up all rights and privileges conferred by the group, including access. This often *feels* like punishment, because he or she is losing out on the tangible and intangible benefits of belonging. But, as Joe says, it is “as if nature’s doing the punishing, not us.”

He or she is welcome back into the group through his or her confirmed commitment to the Guidelines in a process called “Reintegration.”

The Four R's

This is where the action is, where we apply all the principles in the last chapter to conflict resolution within the group. This is also the most challenging part of Wholeistic Education.

WED is about mutual agreement – commitment to the Guidelines and to each other. Lack of commitment is an issue we cannot overlook (“Neither punish nor enable”) as it undermines the integrity of the group. What does lack of commitment look like? Here are some examples:

1. Intentionally offending someone.
2. Refusing to apologize for an unintentional offense.
3. Acting in an intimidating fashion with body or words.
4. Passive-aggressively undermining the group.
5. Encouraging another group member to practice a bad habit.

As will be discussed in a subsequent chapter, in addition to these types of direct violations, there can be violation of the “spirit” of the Guidelines. More on that later.

How does the group leader approach suspected violations of the Guidelines? By using the “Four R's”.

Here's Joe on the subject:

.....

Team With Others – Use The Four Rs!

*Strong feelings are natural and important expressions of our connection to all things.
When strong emotions arise, we practice the Four R's. This process goes as follows:*

1. Reflect

- Be sensitive and aware - **embrace all feelings**. When we have a strong feeling, we don't react – we **pause**, count to ten, and think
- We Remind ourselves of our commitment to practice the **Guidelines** before Reminding others... our spirit must reflect our commitment.
- Ask yourself, “Has a Behavioral Guideline really been violated?” (**Reread** them). If not, there may be no need to Remind others.
- If there has been a **significant** violation of the Guidelines...

2. Remind

- Reminders are **humble questions**.
- We Remind our teammate(s) of our **mutually agreed upon practice**.
- Reminders lead the group back to the group “mind” – they **promote practice** of the Guidelines.
- We resist any urge to **control** – no lectures, or orders – only humble questions!
- We all rely on Reminders to become educated.
- Even when lovingly Reminded, members may demonstrate a **lack of commitment** to the Guidelines. If this is the case, continue with...

3. Restrict

- If a member is not committed to our practice we must accept, however regretfully, that **they have Restricted themselves** from the group.
- Anyone who will not commit must **discontinue contact** with the group and give up all group privileges and resources (other than those necessary for safety and health).
- Restriction is not punishment! It is: a) Proof of the group's respect for autonomy, b) Reassertion of the group's non-negotiable commitment to the Guidelines, c) How the group protects itself from negative influences (specifically, people who are not practicing the Guidelines).
- Because we still **love those who reject the Guidelines**, we want their full education – so we must not interfere with their full experience of what it means to leave the group.
- It can be hard to avoid punishing the Restricted member – remember, **neither enable nor punish!**
- Restriction is **not time based**, its only about one's commitment to practice.
- When a Restricted member **genuinely requests** to reenter the group...

4. Reintegrate

- This should be done **as soon as possible**, to avoid any unnecessary punishment of the Restricted member.
- The Reintegration Meeting's sole function is to **confirm the Restricted member's genuine commitment** to practice the Guidelines.

Using The Four R's: an Example

Let's delve into the Four R's in greater detail, with an example. In the following scenario, bolded bullets are the critical Reminders to oneself to ensure you lead by example. Critical phrases elsewhere are bolded as well.

1. Reflect

"... all moral culture springs solely and immediately from the inner life of the soul, and can only be stimulated in human nature, and never produced by external and artificial contrivances.... Whatever does not spring from a man's free choice, or is only the result of instructions and guidance, does not enter into his very being, but still remains alien to his true nature; he does not perform it with truly human energies, but merely with mechanical exactness."

~ Bertrand Russell

Make a habit of being mindful and embracing your feelings. When you do have an uncomfortable feeling, pause for a moment to ensure you don't react hastily or recklessly. Before you bring your feelings to someone else, remind yourself of your own commitment to practice the Guidelines.

- Has a Behavioral Guideline really been violated? Have I really been wronged? I should reread the Guidelines if I'm not sure. Sometimes our own state of mind leads us to be more critical than we should be.
- Was whatever is bothering me malicious or intentional? (If not, it's sometimes best ignored, at least temporarily.)

Ex. You notice a group member referring to another as "Stupid" (this could be someone speaking to you or another group member, or even themselves). You feel an immediate urge to criticize the insulter. After some Reflection, you realize that you're still angry at the insulter for something he/she did previously. It seems to have been said in jest and without any obviously intended offense, so perhaps the insult is relatively harmless. You decide to let it go and monitor the situation.

- But, does the behavior reflect a pattern or otherwise reflect some unhealthy habit?
- **WED is practice to develop healthy habits. I am always practicing something. So, my faithful dedication to practice of the Guidelines is the most important thing I can do for the group and myself.**

- Reflection is time to Remind myself of my non-negotiable commitment to practice the Guidelines. I must respond (choice-based), not react (impulse-based), so that I may avoid the temptation to control, punish, enable, or participate in conflict. Remind myself before Reminding others!
- Ok, so I'm pretty sure I'm not being unfair, and although the word stupid is relatively mild, and there seems to be no obviously intended offense, I think that in this instance, the term may represent some real disrespect, and attempt to embarrass. So, I should move to the next "R" – Remind.

2. Remind

"I doubt that we can ever successfully impose values or attitudes or behaviors on our children—certainly not by threat, guilt, or punishment. But I do believe they can be induced through relationships where parents and children are growing together. Such relationships are, I believe, built on trust, example, talk, and caring."

~Fred Rogers

If you believe the behavior should be addressed, Remind. That is, lead yourself and the group, back to the "mind" of the group practice. How can the group be sure what and where that is? Luckily, you've got the Guidelines, to which every group member has made a non-negotiable commitment.

- **I must resist any urge to control by criticizing, lecturing, or ordering. Reminders come in the form of humble questions.**

Ex. "Sorry to interrupt, I don't want to be a bother, but I think you might have hurt (group member) by calling him/her, stupid. What do you think?"

- Depending on my tone and body language, my questions can imply a gentle suspicion of wrongdoing or be a clear criticism, so I must remain pure of heart. If I do, my questions will communicate my belief in the person's capacity to accept responsibility without further external guidance.
- **Remember to lead the discussion toward our shared Guidelines and away from conflict between group members.**

Any genuine and sufficient expression of responsibility, including apology where appropriate is praised, and attempts should be made to ease discomfort.

Ex. "Oh, that's ok, it's not really a big deal, I'm really glad to see you practice the Guidelines. Is there something you'd like to do to help make things better?"

- Reinforcing healthy practice will make it more likely to become a habit. I may ask the group member if he/she believes he/she should apologize, but I must be careful not to undermine the member's success with a critical tone.
- Even if this the millionth time I've gone over the same issue, I must remain hopeful in the potential growth of each group member!

Any *appropriate* rejection of the implied wrongdoing should be praised, and either accepted (with apology, if your implication may have been offensive), or politely explored further.

Ex. "Oh, thanks for explaining it to me so politely, now I get it. I'm sorry if I seemed too critical. Have I upset you?"

or,

"Well, thanks for talking to me about this politely, but I still don't understand...can you help me?"

- By always expressing my concern only with reference to the Guidelines and in the form of humble questions, I reduce the ability of the other member to displace attention from his/her behavior to mine, and thereby reduce the possibility for conflict.
- This does not mean I may never show my emotion. It is critical that I am genuine.
- Whenever my behavior possibly strays from the Guidelines, I have an excellent opportunity to model responsibility, Wholeistic Apology and self-forgiveness.

Ex. "I think I offended you. I'm really sorry. I feel like I'm getting frustrated and not practicing the Guidelines as I should. I promise to do better. I know I can. Can you give me another chance... can we please continue?"

Any negative reaction to your humble question means the relationship is currently too stressed. You must always be ready abandon your questions to refocus on your relationship.

- I will ask humble questions about the inappropriate reaction to my questions. I must never allow the past or future (the conflict or potential conflict being explored) to become more important than our practice in the moment - our teaming-up.
- **Remember: Our non-negotiable commitment is to always remain loving by practicing the Guidelines.**

Ex. (Genuinely, no sarcasm or passive-aggression) "Why are you speaking to me with that tone (or ignoring me, or giving me that angry look, etc.) Have I done something to offend you? I'm truly sorry if I have. I'm just concerned you may not be practicing the Guidelines. Remember about avoiding offensive language in 2.a.? Can you please help me understand?"

- **Remember: Until we resolve the negative reaction to my humble questions – until we team-up – successful resolution of the original issue is highly unlikely. I will continue triangulating the discussion with the Guidelines, first in review of my behavior, then others.**

If you believe the dissenting member may not presently commit to practicing the Guidelines, you may gently urge a temporary separation (see Guideline 1.b). The dissenting member could be calmly asked to remove him/herself to a safe location until sufficient resources are available to further review the conflict. Alternately, the leader may choose to remove him/herself (and any other members of the group) away from the dissenting member if appropriate (i.e. safe, non-punitive, and non-enabling of for all). If the dissenting member will not separate voluntarily, they may be required to go to a separate location, like his/her bedroom.

3. Restrict

“The best and safest thing is to keep a balance in your life, acknowledge the great powers around us and in us. If you can do that, and live that way, you are really wise.”

~ Euripides

If a dissenting member will not separate voluntarily, or when required, or otherwise demonstrates a lack of commitment to the Guidelines (that’s *commitment not compliance* – being human, we must always expect errors of compliance), he/she has Restricted himself/herself from the group. As difficult as that may be to accept, we must. We must also not interfere with the dissenting member experiencing the full weight and consequences of his/her decision to leave the group. So, we require the dissenting member to discontinue contact with the group and to give up all group privileges and resources (other than those necessary to meet our legal and ethical responsibilities).

The Guidelines have been adopted by the group as non-negotiable, so if one chooses not to practice with the group, the group has not only the right, but the duty to protect itself from the potentially negative influences of that dissenting member’s behavior.

Ex. (As calmly and lovingly as possible) “Regretfully, I must accept that the you’re not practicing with our group right now; that you’ve Restricted yourself from the group. Please go to your room and give me your phone, computer, books, etc. I hope you will decide our group is good to belong to and ask for an Reintegration Meeting soon.”

In a family, this is usually a child in his/her bedroom, without cell phone, computer, TV, music devices, or any other group resource. (Virtually all things are group resources. Even if some devices may have been gifted to, or bought with your child’s own money, it is highly unusual for a child to have paid for the electricity needed to run them.) Also, trust and (in the case of children) choice are group privileges, and the use of those devices may, in some cases, be rightly considered questionable, especially in light of the member’s dissent.

And, being housebound under the direct supervision of parents is only natural, seeing how parents have a legal and ethical obligation to ensure the safety and health of their children.

- **Remember, Restriction is not punishment! It is a display of the group’s respect for the autonomy of the dissenting member to reject the Guidelines, and simultaneously, a reassertion of the group’s non-negotiable commitment to the Guidelines. Because I do not seek control of others, I must allow members to leave the group. And because I love them, I must help ensure they experience all of the educational consequences of their decisions.**

Because we live in a “reward and punishment” based society, when accepting Restriction, it can be hard to avoid punishing. Red flags include choosing to deprive a Restricted member of one or several group resources or privileges. This would be an example of attempting to control by punishing in a way that may motivate the correct behavior.

- **Again, remember, punishment is antithetical to WED!**

We know, and are relying on the fact that loving Restriction will necessarily feel punishing – but it is nature that is applying the punishment – not us! (This “punishment by nature” is primarily due to the intolerable discomfort of Restriction deeply encoded in the human brain from hundreds of thousands of years of evolution as a gregarious animal. That is, humans are naturally selected to feel intolerant of Restriction due to the fact that in our evolutionary environment, restriction from the group nearly always meant death). Also, very simply, Restriction feels punishing due to the unpleasant nature of being deprived the group’s special, material provision (i.e. Kids want your stuff!).

By removing all, instead of some, group resources, I am providing the Restricted member the most complete and realistic experience of what it means to leave a group.

- I prove I am not punishing in part by readily accepting the Restricted member back into the group as immediately as practically possible upon his/her genuinely expressed recommitment to practicing the Guidelines. (This is the sole purpose of Reintegration – the fourth “R”).
- I must not impose a time frame on the Restriction – that would be punishing, and I am not punishing the restricted member!
- Teaming-up is my constant focus. Important discussions about the facts and meaning of any conflict can be addressed in due time.
- I must communicate that the separation is not punitive, is hopefully temporary, and that I look forward to the opportunity to Reintegrate the Restricted member back into the group as soon as possible. I may temporarily close a door on group members, but they need to know that even if they find it locked, they hold the key!

If the member refuses to move to a separate space, or is in other ways not cooperative with Restriction, he/she remains Restricted. Other members do their best to ignore him/her, and deny all group privileges and resources (as always, excepting where safety and health are concerned).

- **I must remember to avoid control and adversarial dynamic!**
- I must wait for the dissenting member to voluntarily seek Reintegration by earnestly asking for a Reintegration meeting.

Some group member (usually a parent) is charged with the task of making a judgment call about whether a Restricted member genuinely desires to rejoin the group.

- Does he/she seem legitimately committed to practicing the Guidelines? Should he/she be given a Reintegration meeting?

Ideally the meeting occurs with the entire group, but more often, for practical reasons, with just one appropriate leader (usually a parent). That leader must then make a more difficult judgment call:

- Is the Reintegration Meeting confirming or disconfirming the commitment of the Restricted member? Should the restricted member be Reintegrated or should the meeting be ended and the member remain Restricted?

If the person with whom you are in conflict is another adult, voluntarily separate (to whatever degree possible, while attending first to your responsibilities). If both of you desire Reintegration, and believe the other person may sufficiently practice, you may attempt to have a Reintegration Meeting. Otherwise, you may find it necessary to seek mediation/counseling from an appropriate source.

- **Remember, no one is perfect, so no relationship is perfect. I must seek only as much relationship as I can have healthfully.**

4. Reintegrate

To thine own-self be true; And it must follow, as the night the day. Thou can'st not then be false to any man.

~ Shakespeare (Hamlet.)

Upon the genuine request for a reintegration with the group, a Restricted member should be given a Reintegration Meeting. This should be done as early as is feasibly possible, to avoid any unnecessary punishment of the Restricted member.

- **Remember, Reintegration is every member's right. The Reintegration Meeting's sole function is to confirm the Restricted member's genuine commitment to practice of the Guidelines.**
- In preparation for the Reintegration Meeting, I think about how I could have shown greater leadership. I begin all meetings with a genuine apology. After all, my improved leadership may prevent any particular conflict.
- **Remember, strong leaders invite criticism!**

Ask the Restricted member to review the Guidelines first to explore and indicate any ways leaders and others may have violated the Guidelines. Go slowly and carefully! Help with the exploration.

- I must stress how important it is for leaders to understand their potential mistakes so they may be better leaders, and how group members rely on each other for their education, in part, through loving criticism. I must take as much time as necessary to fully exhaust all of the Restricted member's thoughts and feelings about how well others in the group are committed to the Guidelines.
- I must make a Wholeistic Apology for any possible wrongdoing.

After the restricted member has accepted your apology, ask him/her to review the Guidelines to explore his/her own potential violations. Gently ask for specific examples of violations of specific Guidelines.

- When the exploration is complete, I gently inquire about what the Restricted member feels and thinks about these violations and what he/she may like to do about those thoughts and feelings.
- I gently introduce and promote the idea of Wholeistic Apology, if the restricted member does not. As welcomed, I assist in the process of Wholeistic Apology. I focus especially on an effective plan of restitution.

Explore the possibility of better application of the Guidelines. Invite questions, comments, criticisms, and any other thoughts and feelings.

Finish by confirming mutual commitment to practicing the Guidelines, take any other appropriate course of action (e.g., assist with restitution), and welcome the member back into the group in the most appropriately complete, warm and loving way.

Implementing WED at Home

“The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”
- Chinese Proverb

We’ve covered quite a bit of Wholeistic Education’s theory and principles. It’s time to put this all in context so we can see how WED may be put into practice at home. We like to think of Direction as a kind of “oasis,” and we want everyone to be able to translate and transfer the principles of WED everywhere!

The Process of WED Implementation

The parents we see who are willing to try implementing WED in their families are invariably doing so for a reason: things aren’t going well at home. Relationships are strained, people are arguing, kids are acting out or shutting down. It would have been great to have implemented WED *before* things got to this point, but hindsight is 20/20.

For parents willing to take the leap, we are going to outline the procedure we recommend.

First and foremost, we, as parents, must start with a gut-check. Embarking on the implementation of WED means we are held to the same standards as our children. We need to commit ourselves to following the Guidelines ourselves. Are we ready to make changes to our own behavior, and improve our own habits? Are we ready to face our own shortcomings? Are we ready to apologize when we make mistakes? Are we ready to truly model healthy behavior?

If not, there is honestly no point in going further. Children will smell our hypocrisy a mile away, and hypocrisy will poison the family culture further. WED will not work in this situation.

For those of us willing to put in the effort, humble ourselves, and make these changes, we can proceed to the next step.

Like so many other aspects of WED, the next step involves doing something probably counterintuitive. We start with an apology from us, the parents, to the child (or children).

Why on earth would we start with an apology? We may be thinking at this point: *“My child’s the one who’s been a complete jerk recently – why should I apologize to him?”*

We start with an apology for a few reasons. The first is that we can usually look back on our own behavior and see at least *some* way we have contributed to the problem. This is an excellent time to begin “Modeling Healthy Relationship,” even if we don’t get an apology in return (which we probably won’t). The second is that, even if we cannot see how our behavior has contributed to the conflict, it is overwhelming likely it has in some fashion. After all, the “perfect parent” (or “perfect group leader”) would have either prevented the conflict entirely, or headed it off earlier.

Of course, none of us are perfect parents, and acknowledging this fact right at the start can be very helpful. It models humility. Moreover, as the implementation of WED proceeds, we often do discover ways that we have unknowingly conspired to create a negative family culture.

Here's what an apology might look like prior to implementing WED:

“John, I know things haven't been going well for us at home recently. I would like to apologize for the ways I may have made things worse. [Great time to insert something specific, like “yelling too much,” “being too controlling,” or “allowing too much to go.”] I think I can do a better job as a parent, and promise I'm going to do my best to change, so hopefully our relationship improves. I have some ideas I'd like to discuss with you. Can we discuss them?”

After the apology, we go about the business of implementing WED.

We gather all family members and review the Behavioral Guidelines and Wholeistic Apology. The family discusses anything that seems to be objectionable or omitted. There rarely is much discussion at this point, because there's not a whole lot to object to. Each member affirms commitment to the Guidelines, which will serve as the social code for the family from that point on. Note that parents, as group leaders, commit to the same set of expectations as everyone else.

This commitment to the Guidelines is the one non-negotiable element of Wholeistic Education.

That's it – WED is “implemented”. From here on out, the family commits to the practice of the Guidelines, principles of WED, and system of conflict resolution (The Four R's).

How WED Works in a Family: An Analogy

Though the Guidelines may be the heart of WED, they need to be put into context within the family structure.

For purposes of illustration, let's consider the implementation of WED to be analogous to a family's moving into a new house. Any house we would want to live in has a solid foundation, sturdy framing for the walls and roof, and a finished interior. Here's how these specific elements can be viewed through the lens of WED:

1. The Foundation: Basic Safety at Home

Walls and interior decorating don't mean much when your house is sliding into the swamp. Establishing your home as a safe place for all is of primary importance. A safe home serves as the foundation on which all else is built, and without which nothing else will work. This means no violence at home, and any serious threat to any family member must immediately addressed as it occurs. If our home is unsafe, making it so is our number one priority.

2. The Framing: The Behavioral Guidelines and Four R's

Framing holds up the walls and roof, and gives the house its structure. There is little point to thinking about the interior and wall decorations if the roof is leaking. The Guidelines address relationships *in the moment*, and guide us through social interactions *as they occur*. Family

problems and conflict inevitably arise, and at times strain relationships. The Guidelines and Four R's are how we work through these conflicts in real time.

3. Interior Design: Proactive Planning

Assuming a solid foundation, walls, and roof, we can start thinking about the inside of the house and making it our own. "Proactive planning" is the process in which family members make concrete plans as to how they are going to achieve certain goals, manage stresses and resources, and divide chores amongst family members. Proactive planning can also mean agreements between family members as to how to move forward in the face of differences of opinion.

Proactive planning is vital in creating "common projects" between group members. Teaming-up in this way encourages us to meet the Educator Objectives and Challenges - specifically helping us to use the 4Rs - "abandoning the content" of a conflict and focusing on our relationships. After proactive planning, instead of asking people to do things because *you* want them to choose what *you* want over what they want (generally, a frustrated desire) you may ask them why it's ok to ignore responsibilities related to your plans.

For example, instead of, "You said you'd empty the dishwasher, so please do it", which, at best, will only stimulate the other person to empty the dishwasher, you may ask a much more valuable question: "Hey, I noticed the dishwasher isn't emptied, is everything okay?" Instead of a mere tool for getting what you want in the short-term, a proactive agreement can be an excellent barometer of your relationship. The key word here is "proactive" -- as opposed to "reactive". An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, as they say.

Implementing WED is how we build the solid, livable house we want, literally and figuratively.

WED Summary

We've covered a lot of WED in the last few chapters. Congratulations if you've made it this far -- we are going to now try to piece things together to paint a coherent picture of how Wholeistic Education creates healthy groups.

Here's what we have so far:

1. A Social Code for the Group: The Behavioral Guidelines

The Guidelines are a black-and-white, minimalistic set of expectations that group members commit to which both allow the greatest degree of liberty possible to individuals while safeguarding the common good and integrity of the group, as well as the full educational value of each behavioral choice. You'll note that the Guidelines emphasize cooperation, humility, and respect for each other. They also represents great habits to develop in terms of getting along with others in any relationship.

2. A Set of Principles for Group Leaders

Model Healthy Relationship
Provide Clear Reflection
Encourage True Focus

Give Up Control to Gain Authority
Neither Punish nor Enable Imbalanced Behavior
Avoid Adversarial Dynamic
Embrace All Feelings, Guide All Behavior

These principles emphasize leadership by example and respect for autonomy.

3. A System of Conflict Resolution

The Four R's are our method of evaluating individual's commitment to our group social code, and how to proceed when commitment is not adequately demonstrated. They also serve the purpose of enhancing cooperation in the group.

There you have the basic ingredients to forming a healthy group that has a cooperative spirit, promotes growth and development, and encourages good habits.

Now how do we put this into practice at home?

We'll delve further into the different elements of WED in Parenting Group.

Selected Supporting Material

Aristotle: Politics	C.D.C. Reeves
Attachment	John Bowlby
Civilization and It's Discontents	Sigmund Freud
Darwin's Dangerous Idea	Daniel C. Dennett
Dumbing Us Down	John Taylor Gatto
Escape From Freedom	Eric Fromm
Everyman's Talmud	Abraham Cohen
Evolutionary Psychology	Christopher Badcock
Experience and Education	John Dewey
Good Natured	Frans de Waal
Hakomi Therapy	Ron Kurtz
Man's Search for Meaning	Viktor Frankl
Mind in Society	L. S. Vygotsky
On Becoming a Person	Carl Rogers
Plato: Five Dialogues	G.M.A. Grube
Rules of Civility	George Washington
Sexual Personae	Camille Paglia
Summerhill	A.S. Neill
The Art of Loving	Erich Fromm
The Bhagavad Gita: The Song of God	Swami Prabhavananda
The Confucian Analects	Confucious
The Culture of Education	Jerome Bruner
The Declaration of Independence	Washington et al
The Drama of the Gifted Child	Alice Miller
The Seven Princiles for Making Marriage Work	John Gottman
The Social Contract	Jean-Jacques Rousseau
The Tao of Pooh	Benjamin Hoff
The Tao Te Ching: The Definitive Edition Lao Tse	Johnathan Star
The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy	Irvin Yalom
The Upanishads	Max Muller
Thus Spoke Zarathustra	Friedrich Nietzsche
The Biopsychiatric research of Martin Teicher	