

WED
Wholeistic Education™

Welcome to WED-101

An Introduction to Wholeistic Education

Presented by Victoria Lee, MLADC

Welcome to Week Two...

Monday, 2/22/21, 4:30-6:00

Today we will cover:

- ▶ Quick Recap
- ▶ Intro to WED Videos
- ▶ Behavioral Imbalances- “Bad Habits”
- ▶ Healthy and Unhealthy Groups
- ▶ Personal Reflections on WED-101 Participation



Core Values

Following

Non-Violence

Dynamic Balance

Faith



Developmental Goals

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.”

The WED Proposition...

“First things first” - that saying summarizes the WED approach. To effectively apply WED, one must believe the WED proposition:

Education must first accomplish the habitualization of Respect, Dignity, Responsibility, Compassion and Perseverance (WED’s Developmental Goals). In the absence of this accomplishment, even the most “schooled” person will not be optimally healthy or content.

A great way to habitualize The Developmental Goals by practicing WED’s Behavioral Guidelines[©].

With this foundation, a person may then healthfully pursue any other interest, discovering his or her best self.

Intro to WED Videos...



Behavioral Imbalances...

Imbalances

Biological

- Psychiatric
- Pathological disturbances in the brain that lead to clinical depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar and other psychiatric disorders
- “chemical imbalances”
- i.e. Clinical depression
- Medical Intervention (aka Duncan)
- See Part II in The Art of Direction

Behavioral

- Developmental, psychological “Everything else”
- Immature responses to stress, arguing, miseducation
- i.e. Refusing to go to school, never apologizing, never admitting one’s wrong
- WED’S FOCUS
- See Part III in The Art of Direction

Simply put... “BAD HABITS”

“What is man but a collection of habits?”

-William James, The Father of American Psychology

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

-Will Durant, The Story of Philosophy

“Practice does not make perfect. Practice makes permanent.”

-Joe Walsh, WED Founder

- ▶ WED does not concern itself with “bad” in the sense of a moral context (although we hope one explores morals and values throughout one’s life)- bad in the sense that they get in the way of one’s optimal functioning
 - ▶ Can be in personal realm, social realm, etc.
- ▶ Healthy and unhealthy habits, balanced versus imbalanced behaviors

Immature Behaviors....

- ▶ Generally speaking, what we are calling bad habits/behavioral imbalances can be seen as immature behaviors or “behavioral patterns typically that favor short term rewards at the expense of long-term health.” (Duncan Gill, MD, The Art of Loving, pg. 51



The Marshmallow Experiment... and how it predicts success!



Humbling Self....

▶ Good News:

- ▶ Bad habits are essentially immature behaviors
- ▶ Its natural for kids to be immature and struggle with some developmental issues, some rockier than others.

▶ Not-so-good News:

- ▶ As parents, we need to grow up yesterday- if that's not possible- then now it is the time!
- ▶ “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish thing...” Corinthians 11
- ▶ Take with a grain of salt- humans develop across the life span and thus will be met with developmental challenges and tasks until we expire. However, as parents it is time to role model taking these tasks on with dignity and grace and not getting stuck in imabalces responses to them. Tall order? Yes! Practice the Guidelines!
- ▶ “Neither enable nor punish imbalanced behavior”- start with yourself!

Addressing Imbalanced Behaviors...

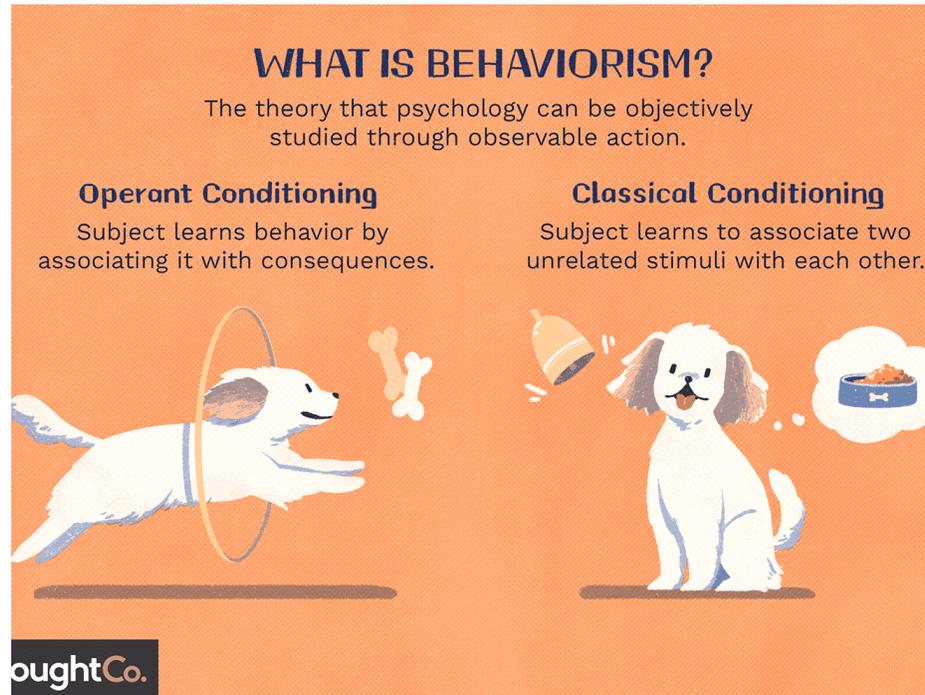
- ▶ “Good parenting maximizes the chances that kids overcome these imbalances and minimizes the amount of time it takes them to do so. On the other hand, ‘not-so-good parenting’ - putting it nicely- will be less effective and take longer. It may perpetuate imbalances or even cause them.”

-pg. 45, The Art of Direction

- We use WED’s concept of the Ideal Parent to help guide us to “good parenting”
- “Ideal Parent” embodies Core Values and Developmental Goals through their practice of the Behavioral Guidelines
- “Feeling lost? Pull out a wallet-sized copy of the Guidelines”- just like a road map
 - <https://www.aofdirection.com/post/feeling-lost-try-a-laminated-pocket-sized-road-map>

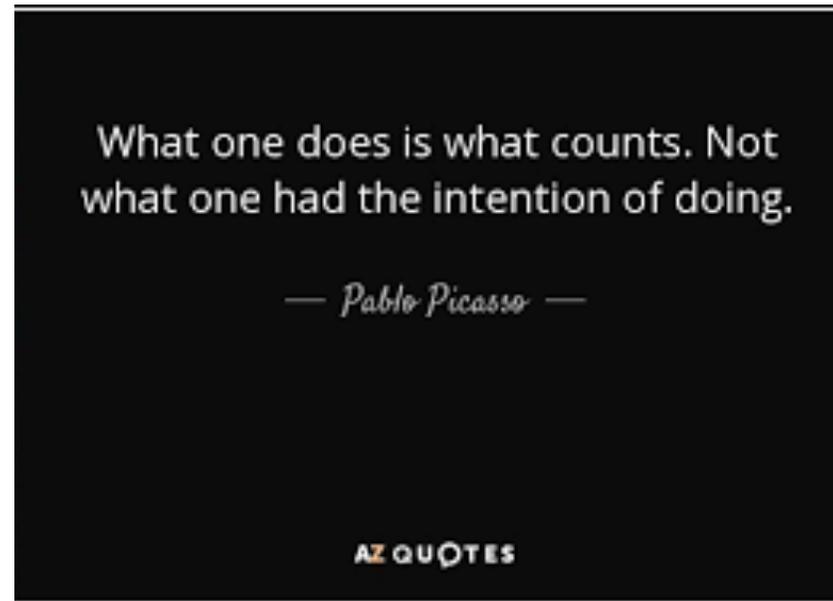
A Behavioral Approach

- ▶ Traditional Behavioral Psychology (not WED)
 - ▶ Pavlov, John Watson, B.F. Skinner, Classical/Operant Conditioning
 - ▶ “Trained”



- WED is not a strict behavioral approach but “concerns itself with modifying maladaptive behaviors” **FIRST** “not searching for the cause of the behavior of underlying motivation.”

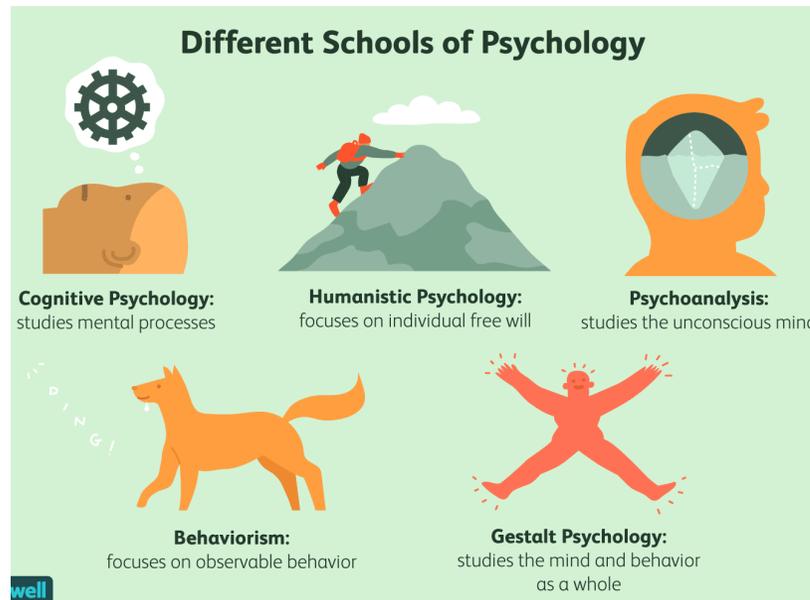
The BEHAVIORAL Guidelines....



Tough but true... and we can still hug it out! “Embrace all feelings, guide all behaviors.”

A Behavioral Approach...

- ▶ WED culture helps one habituate our Five Developmental Goals by focusing on behaviors rather than just intentions - “First things first!”, WED Proposition
- ▶ WED however, does not seek “trained humans.” Instead, WED seeks optimally developed humans who through their own voluntary pursuit of Optimal Wellness habituate pro-social adaptations while also attending to their own individual truths.



WED Pro's & Cons



Strengths

- ▶ Simple, easy to understand
- ▶ Everyone held to the same standards
- ▶ Behavioral approach, therefore we don't need to know why or causes of imbalances, we can get to work on addressing our own and our children's imbalances
- ▶ Solution-focused
- ▶ Can be used in wide-range of environments
- ▶ Balance between pro-social adaptation and maximum individualism

Weaknesses

- Not easy to Implement
- Typically counterintuitive and requires substantial shift in thinking
- It is concerned with relationships and long-term family solutions, rather than here and now quick fixes to immediate problems

"Because then your family can fix these problems yourself."

-Duncan Gill channeling Joe Walsh on making yourself obsolete (as a parent and therapist)

“I Sell pain...”

-Joe Walsh, Only half-joking to members of a parenting group

- ▶ Why pain? Because its hard to change bad habits! I.e. Detox
- ▶ Developmental Imbalances are “bad habits” that get in the way of one’s optimal functioning and thus overall Optimal Wellness
- ▶ WED and the Implementation of the Behavioral Guidelines help one to address unhealthy/bad habits/developmental imbalances (by helping us create a healthy group)
- ▶ However, it is NOT the quick fix for the moment- thus another level of pain- this very well could take a long time, it is front-loaded (like a mortgage), sometimes “glacial”
- ▶ WED does NOT “sacrifice long-term gains for short-term answers”

Understanding The Power of Human Groups

- ▶ Changing imbalances/bad behaviors is hard to do! “I sell pain...”
- ▶ Enter WED- group level intervention- “The MAGIC of the group” to help support individuals
- ▶ “Gregarious animals”, highly social animals that thrive in healthy groups
 - ▶ Peer pressure is real- it can be healthy pro-social pressure or not-so-healthy pressure
- ▶ Groups, like personal habits, can either be healthy or unhealthy though and thus can be enhance a person’s development or be a hinderance to their growth
- ▶ Most groups have characteristics of both unhealth and healthy groups- WED can help your and your groups increase positive influences and decrease negative influences

Characteristics of Unhealthy Groups

- ▶ Selfish; don't have interest of individual at heart
- ▶ Seeks control over group members
- ▶ Rigid, inflexible
- ▶ Imbalance between pro-social adaptation and support for maximum individual exploration and expression
- ▶ Inhibit growth and development on individual members, foster dependence
- ▶ Focus on dysfunction, revolve around dysfunctional group member

Characteristics of Healthy Groups

- ▶ Has best interest of individual's truly at heart
- ▶ Supportive of individual's efforts to change his or her habits and behavior (maximum support)
- ▶ Neither enables nor punishes imbalanced behaviors- "Drinking Buddies"
- ▶ As unobtrusive as possible in the individual's own exploration and creativity- hard to do as parents sometimes
- ▶ At the same time, it demands commitment to a basic code of conduct that takes into consideration the needs of other individuals in the group; non-negotiable group norms
- ▶ Inclusion is voluntary; does not seek control over its members
- ▶ Deals with conflict in healthy, balanced way
- ▶ Flexibility- dynamic leadership, embrace all feelings, guide all behaviors
- ▶ Positive, collaborative spirit

WED's Educational Culture

- ▶ Healthy groups create healthy cultures for group members to live in
- ▶ The magic of the group!
- ▶ WED calls its healthy culture, an “Educational Culture”, one in which humans are continuously provided a space that is enriching and ideally leads to self-awareness, self-actualization, maturity, optimal wellness, full-potential



Wholeistic Leadership

- ▶ Most groups have characteristics of both unhealthy and healthy groups- WED can help your and your groups increase positive influences and decrease negative influences
- ▶ Groups do not just “wake up healthy”- we have to guide behaviors and help establish/create an educational culture
- ▶ Generally speaking, someone or multiple “someones” need to decide to actively, attentively create a healthy group
- ▶ Anyone in the group can lead, regardless of age
- ▶ Ideally, leadership in WED group is “dynamic”- the person who is best embodying WED’s principles at any given point in time is the leader, we grant that person influence and follow

WED's Overarching Motto:



“Embrace all feelings, guide all behaviors.”

- ▶ WED has a lot of mottos/sayings that help Remind us of our goal of Optimal Wellness via creating and sustaining an educational culture
- ▶ We can't necessarily control our feelings, may or may not understand reasons why we feel a certain way, should or shouldn't feel a certain way
- ▶ “Feelings are like the weather- complex and not in our control.”- Joe Walsh
 - ▶ “Humans seem to benefit from the knowledge that nature is busy with important work and so couldn't care less about how they feel.”
 - ▶ We can control our behavior though! Or at least begin to shift it!

Common Mistakes to Avoid...

- ▶ Blaming ourselves for our feelings.
- ▶ Blaming others for his or her own feelings.
- ▶ Blaming others for how we feel.
- ▶ Dwelling unnecessarily on feelings.

- ▶ Believing feelings necessarily lead to behavior.
- ▶ Believing we cannot control our behavior.
- ▶ Believing others cannot control their behavior.

The Positive Group Cycle



The Positive Cycle

(1) Individuals voluntarily commit themselves to Love (*WED's* definition: Humble submission to embodying *WED's Parenting Ideal*, as a means of pursuing the education of all.), which reflects (2) *WED's Core Values* of *Following*, *Non-Violence*, *Dynamic Balance* and *Faith*, which promotes (3) Social groups that dynamically balance pro-social adaptation with individuality through mandatory conformance to *WED's Behavioral Guidelines* and abundant support for individual liberty and voluntary collaboration built on those guidelines, which leads to (4) *WED's Developmental Goals: Respect, Dignity, Responsibility, Compassion, and Perseverance*, which promotes the creation and maintenance of (5) Relatively small groups of likeminded people living in harmony with nature, and utilizing inclusion/exclusion as the limit of non-violent response to violation of *The Behavioral Guidelines* (this is called *Nature Neighborhood*). This cycle can be entered into at any point, and self-generates. It produces dynamically balanced individuals and groups, and so, social justice and liberty.

The Positive Group Cycle Con't

- ▶ We begin with “Love” to avoid the common tendency to favor either a “scientific” or “religious” paradigm (although it is uncertain if they fundamentally differ). In defining the ultimate goal as Love - a word that can be no more claimed by the priest than the physicist - we are proactively expanding the context of our thoughts beyond the clearly adversarial, either/or dialectics of western atomism as well as the more subtly adversarial, atomism-rejecting, eastern holism.
- ▶ We are recognizing a special kind of holism we call *True Holism*, for its paradoxical inclusion of all - including atomism.
- ▶ The most universal manifestation of Love is expressed in the unconditional Love of *WED's Ideal Parent*.

The Positive Group Cycle Cont'

- ▶ The foundation of unconditional Love is well defined in *WED's Core Values* of *Following*, *Non-Violence*, *Dynamic Balance*, and *Faith*.
- ▶
- ▶ It should be noted, these *Core Values* are not limited to pacifism, conscientious objection, passive-resistance, asceticism, altruism, selflessness, transcendentalism, or any other specifically defined rule-set other than this: the action which promotes the greatest, *Truly Holistic* degree of health and contentment (what we call *Optimal Wellness*). Ultimately, what we are describing is the *experience* of Love.
- ▶
- ▶ Nor are *The Core Values* limited in any religious way. Their practice demands a dynamic responsibility - one may not rely on some static, predetermined definition to relieve oneself of the consequences of one's actions.
- ▶
- ▶ In this way, they also allow for the mystery of the potentially unknowable past, present and future - with all of its threat and all of its promise.

The Positive Group Cycle Cont'

- ▶ This encourages the embracing of paradox, and allows for optimal flexibility - the foundation of health. For example, it may be, under certain circumstances, perfectly consistent with the *Core Values* to purposely injure or even kill (e.g. in self-defense). But any harm, any offense, however relatively minor, when a less harmful alternative is possible, is always inconsistent with *The Core Values*.
- ▶ Most tangibly, *WED's Core Values* are practiced in *WED's Behavioral Guidelines*. This is accomplished by defining the minimal norms of social interaction necessary to ensure the promotion of the *Developmental Goals*, and vigilantly demanding adherence to those norms in a non-hierarchical, non-violent way (see *Group Behavioral Guidelines* below).
- ▶ Practice of *The Guidelines* promotes *The Developmental Goals: Respect, Dignity, Responsibility, Compassion and Perseverance*.

The Positive Group Cycle Cont'

- ▶ Just as importantly, we dynamically balance this mandatory pro-social conformance with an equally vigilant demand for tolerance for any behavior that does not violate *The Guidelines*. This practice creates and maintains *The Educational Culture*.
- ▶ Such an educational culture encourages members to deepen and broaden voluntary connections and extend mutual support to all individuality consistent with practice of *The Guidelines*.
- ▶ (For further discussion of WED's "Ideal Parent", "Core Values", "The Behavioral Guidelines", "The Developmental Goals" and "Educational Culture", see the book *The Personal Balance Program for Optimal Wellness*® or *An Introduction to Wholeistic Education*

The Positive Group Cycle Cont'

- ▶ The like-mindedness that is essential to the durable maintenance of this kind of society is only possible in relatively small groups. It seems humans are genetically limited such that they can only healthfully manage a limited number of Primary Relationships. When a certain, variable limit is transgressed, it seems humans suffer some generalized, often unconscious anxiety, perhaps caused by the perception, if not the reality, of resource scarcity. This anxiety causes an over-reliance on the seemingly most promising human tool for problem-solving: abstract reasoning. This, in turn, causes the invention of imbalanced, atomistic solutions, eventually resulting in surplus and an insatiable greed for dominance. Such solutions may reduce the limited pain of the specific problem, but invariably result in the net increase of pain from a *Truly Holistic* perspective.
- ▶ However, even a sufficiently small group must guard against collectively violating *The Guidelines* by either punishing or enabling those who may violate *The Guidelines*. The only premeditated response to violation that is consistent with *The Core Values* is exclusion from the group (what we call *Restriction*).

The Positive Group Cycle Cont'

- ▶ In *Restricting* a violator from the group, we respect his or her autonomy, prove that we will not control them, punish them or fight with them, while fulfilling our duty to maintain a positive, loving group. Our humble, yet most powerful statement is: These are our *Behavioral Guidelines*, everyone who commits to practice these are welcome, anyone who will not commit is not welcome.
- ▶ Such groups also encourage abundant forgiveness of honest transgressions and facilitate the reintegration of restricted members as soon as they demonstrate a commitment to *The Guidelines*.

Reflections on your own Group and Purpose for Participating...

- ▶ Can you identify any behavioral imbalances you struggle with?
- ▶ Can you identify any behavioral imbalances that your child, spouse, or other loved ones struggle with?
- ▶ How about on a group level? How is the “culture” of your family?
- ▶ Do you feel inspired in any way to start to change these habits or the larger culture? If so, how?

- ▶ Share homework Reflections as well or Email me your homework assignment!

Next Week's Class...

Monday 3/1/21, 4:30-6:00

- ▶ Topic: The Behavioral Guidelines and the Three Educator Objectives and Three Educator Challenges
- ▶ Due:
 - ▶ Read pg. 61-75 in The Art of Direction
 - ▶ Write response to above readings, thoughts/feelings/questions

Thank you for being part of this class!
See you next week!

