The Role of Strategy Instruction in Fostering a Socially Just Mindset
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Disclosure
• My expenses for this talk are supported by Multi-Health Systems.
• I have developed tests marketed by Multi-Health Systems, Pro-Ed and Western Psychological Services.
• I am Editor in Chief of the Journal of Attention Disorders (Sage) and Co-Editor of the Encyclopedia of Child Development (Springer)

Goals
• To understand the concept of social justice as it applies to youth at risk.
• To understand the forces that shape social justice, including genetics, brain functioning, past and present experience.
• To understand the concept of fairness as a critical component of social justice.
• To apply Executive Functioning and Strategy Instruction as an effective component to enhance social justice, to honor and promote its value in learning and in life.
• To develop strategies to help students strengthen their social and emotional skills and to build connections with peers, family and other adults in their lives.
Part 1: What is the Mind?

- The mind is about mental processes, thought and consciousness.
- The mind is an abstract creation of the physical brain.
- The mind follows no rules of physics.
- Why do we have a mind?
- Why do we need a mind?

The Mind creates and maintains the link between the inner and outer world.

Qualities of the mind comprise many evolved traits.
Some of these traits are:

• intrinsic motivation
• instinctual optimism
• practical intelligence
• compassionate empathy
• virtuous responsibility
• genuine altruism
• measured fairness (social justice)

Part II: What is Social Justice?

Youth, Social Justice, and Communities: Toward a Theory of Urban Youth Policy
Shawn Ginwright, Julio Cammarota, and Pedro Noguera

Social Justice Vol. 32, No. 3 (2005)

The Many Faces of Justice

• Distributive justice (economic justice) is about fairness in what people receive from goods to the attention of others.
• Its roots are its social order and it is the roots of socialism where equality is considered a fundamental principle.
• People do not think they are getting their fair share of something they will seek first to gain what they believe they deserve. They may well also seek other forms of justice.
The Many Faces of Justice

• Procedural justice is based on the principle of fairness.
• It is also found in the idea of fair play as opposed to fair share or distributive justice.
• If people believe that a fair process was used in deciding what is to be distributed, then they may well accept an imbalance in what they receive in comparison to others.
• If they see both procedural and distributive injustice they will likely seek restorative and/or retributive justice.

The Many Faces of Justice

• Retributive justice is typically sought by people who believe they have been betrayed.
• Often what is sought is some form of restitution, putting things back as they should be.
• The simplest form of restitution is a straightforward apology.
• Restoration means putting things back as they were so it may include some act of contrition to demonstrate one is truly sorry. This may include action and even extra payment to the offended party. Restorative justice is also known as corrective justice.

The Many Faces of Justice

• Retributive justice is based on the principle of punishment. What constitutes fair and proportional punishment, however, is debated.
• While the intent may be to dissuade the perpetrator or others from future wrong doing, the reoffending rate of many criminals indicates the limited success of this approach.
• Punishment is more about the satisfaction of victims and those who care about them. This strays into the realm of revenge which can be many times more severe than reparation as the hurt party seeks to make the other person suffer in return.
• In such cases, justice is typically defined emotionally rather than with intent for fairness and prevention.
The Many Faces of Justice

• Social justice is a concept that arose in the early nineteenth century during the industrial revolution and subsequent civil revolutions throughout Europe.
• These were aimed to create more egalitarian societies and remedy capitalistic exploitation of human labor.
• Because of the stark stratifications between wealthy and the poor during this time, early social justice advocates focused primarily on capital, property and the distribution of wealth.

By the mid-twentieth century, social justice had expanded from being primarily concerned with economics to include other spheres of social life, including environment, race, gender and other causes and manifestations of inequality.

Concurrently, the measure of social justice expanded from being measured and enacted only by the nation state (or government) to include a universal human dimension.
Social Justice Evolves

- The term social justice was originally a Catholic term first used in the mid-1800s for a new kind of virtue or habit necessary for post-agrarian societies.
- Social justice can also be considered at the level of humanity as a whole.
- As the United Nations indicates, slaves, exploited workers, and oppressed women are above all victimized human beings whose location matters less than their circumstances.

Social Justice Evolves

- Social justice is about the capacity to organize with others to accomplish ends that benefit the entire community.
- If people are to live free of control, they must possess this new virtue of cooperation and association.
- Social justice is based on the concepts of human rights and equality.

Social Justice Evolves

- Social justice represents the manner in which human rights are manifested in everyday lives and of people at every level of society.
- The principles of social justice focus on measures aimed at decreasing or eliminating inequity, promoting inclusiveness of diversity, and establishing environments supportive of everyone.
- How does one go about teaching children to understand, appreciate, and apply the values and principles of social justice?
Five Common Usages of Social Justice

• Distribution. Most people’s sense of social justice is generic, amounting to little more than what we find in the dictionary under social justice, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages in society.

• Equality. The expression “advantages and disadvantages” presupposes there is a norm of equality by which to measure disadvantage. If everyone is going to be equal then in a sense everyone must be controlled. Equality, as in the Inca society, requires that people are assigned to social class and told when and where they can do nearly everything.

Five Common Usages of Social Justice

• Common good. Social justice is typically associated with some notion of the common good. This term goes back to Aristotle but in practice it often hinges on a key question, namely who decides what is the common good?

• The progressive agenda. The progressive agenda begins with lack of faith and the new discoveries and the new vitalities introduced by capitalism.

• Compassion. All these concerns fly increasingly under the flag of social justice. One more to note: There used to be a Tammany Hall saying: “Th’ fella’ w’at said that patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels, underestimated th’ possibilities of compassion.” In addition to “equality” and the “common good,” the third term that came to be used in association with social justice was “compassion.”

Part III: What is Fairness?

By honoring the power of a fair mindset we can help students practice and achieve social justice in the classroom and in life.
What is Fairness?

Species that cooperate with each other are more likely to survive than those who work on their own.

~ Bruce D. Perry, The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog

Us

- Who are we?
- Where did we come from?
- How did we get here?
- Where are we going?
“We analyze coevolution of strategies and payoffs and find that, as individuals maximize the benefits of cooperation, they often pave the way for its collapse.”

But It's Not So Simple!

Game Theory Calls Fairness and Cooperation Into Question

Both cooperators and defectors are often found at appreciable frequencies in nature. The predicted prevalence of these behaviors depends critically on the payoffs resulting from social interactions. Understanding the feedback between strategy evolution and payoff evolution is therefore critical for understanding social interactions in natural populations.

Our Evolution: The Great Leap Forward
The Evolution of Fairness

• Our brains were large one million years ago but we were not very smart.
• We lived in larger and larger family group.
• The group became greater than the sum of its parts.
• Survival was enhanced when members treated each other fairly.
• Than about 40,000 years ago a fortunate mutation in our brains gave us the capacity to think one thing and say something else! Fairness became a matter of convenience.
• Than specialization grew and fair treatment became forever intertwined with the differing value assigned to group members.

Why is fairness so important to us?

Kids, we only have one brownie left, so we'll give each of you exactly half of it.

No fair!

Why is fairness so important to us?

FREEDOM ISN'T AS IMPORTANT AS FAIRNESS.
WHO DECIDES WHAT'S FAIR?
ME!
Why is fairness so important to us?

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Why is fairness so important to us?

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Fair Versus Unfair

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Fairness is Personal

Why is fairness so important to all species?

Fairness Matters to Monkeys

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSryrJDeZo
Reina and Her Mother:
Trust Begins

The Mother Infant Dance:
Predictability Develops

Sam's Seatmate Adrian on a Recent Flight:
My World is Safe
Sam's Seatmate Adrian on a Recent Flight:
My World is Safe

Look at That!
We Share Experiences
So That's How You Do It: Cooperation Builds a Foundation of Fairness

Fairness Discussion:
What does fairness look like to your students?

• What are some of the comments from students around fairness?
• What are your responses to those comments?
• What are some of the behaviors you see as a result?

Questions to Consider

• What might be perceived as unfair to a student?
• If a student feels that you have been unfair, that is in grading, or in positive or negative reinforcement, what will the emotional response look like?
• When a teacher favors one or more students over others who try to win the teacher’s affection or live up to the teacher’s expectation but still never get called on, what do they feel like?
• Might issues of fairness lead to a student becoming hostile and resisting the teacher’s requests? Will the student then be labeled?
REJECTION HURTS!!

Rejection Hurts the Mind and the Brain

Fair Treatment on The Brain
Neurological development is not a simple process of gradual growth from simple to complex.

Compared with the brain of the child, representation of function in the adult brain is likely to be more focal, to make greater use of inhibitory processes, and to implicate non-cortical regions associated with the automatization of skills.
Caregivers are the architects of the way in which experience influences genetically preprogrammed but experience dependent brain development.

Daniel Siegel
The Developing Mind

Or, to put it in simple terms:

Caregivers create an environment in which instinctual optimism, resilience and self-discipline can flourish.

“Brain development requires social relationships, emotional experiences and cognitive opportunities.”

~ Immordino-Yang, et al. The Aspen Institute, 2018
We are Pro-social From Birth

In normal children, perceptual, affective and neuro-regulatory mechanisms predispose young infants to engage in social interaction from very early on in their lives. To seek out the company of others to help and be helped.

We're hard wired to socialize.

What Benefits Do We Derive From Socialization?

- Support
- Survival
- Affiliation
- Pleasure
- Procreation
- Knowledge
- Friendship
- Fairness
friend

Noun
A person whom one knows and with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, typically exclusive of sexual or family relations.

Verb
Add (someone) to a list of contacts associated with a social networking Web site.

Synonyms
pal - mate - chum - buddy - comrade - fellow - companion

friendship

noun
1. the state of being a friend; association as friends: to value a person's friendship.
2. a friendly relation or intimacy.
3. friendly feeling or disposition.

Go through your phone book, call people and ask them to drive you to the airport. The ones who will drive you are your true friends. The rest aren't bad people; they're just acquaintances.

Jay Leno (1950 - )
The Power of Connections and Care

Social Engagement
• What goes through a child’s mind when he/she thinks about other children?
• Does he/she understand their social relations?
• Does he/she search for rules that would allow classification of relationships?
• What does he/she attribute as far as motives and behaviors as a result?

Social Engagement
• Does he/she impute motives and beliefs to them in order to better predict their behavior?
• Does he/she impute motives to the self when planning a course of social engagement?
• In what ways are her/his social thoughts similar to others?
Social competence is an ability to take another’s perspective concerning a situation and to learn from past experience and to apply that learning to the ever changing social landscape.

“Margaret Semrud-Clikeman

Part IV: What do we mean by the term Executive Function(s)?

Executive Function(s)
• In 1966 Alexandr Luria first wrote and defined the concept of Executive Function (EF)
• He credited Bianchi (1895) and Bekhterev (1905) with the initial definition of the process
What is Executive Function(s)

There is no formal excepted definition of EF

- We typically find vague general statement of EF (e.g., goal-directed action, cognitive control, top-down inhibition, effortful processing, etc.).
- Or a listing of the constructs such as
  - Inhibition,
  - Working Memory,
  - Planning,
  - Problem-Solving,
  - Goal-Directed Activity,
  - Strategy Development and Execution,
  - Emotional Self-Regulation,
  - Self-Motivation

Goldstein, Naglieri, Princiotta, & Otero (2013)

- We found more than 30 definitions of EF(s).
- Executive function(s) has come to be an umbrella term used for many different abilities, including planning, working memory, attention, inhibition, self-monitoring, self-regulation and initiation carried out by pre-frontal areas of the frontal lobes.

What is Executive Function(s)

2. Dawson & Guare (2010): “Executive skills allow us to organize our behavior over time” (p. 1).
3. Delis (2012): “Executive functions reflect the ability to manage and regulate one’s behavior (p. 14).
What is Executive Function(s)

5. Gioia, Isquith, Guy, & Kenworthy (2000): "a collection of processes that are responsible for guiding, directing, and managing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral functions" (p. 1).

6. Pribram (1973): "executive programmes ...to maintain brain organization" (p. 301).
7. Roberts & Pennington (1996): EF "a collection of related but somewhat distinct abilities such as planning, set maintenance, impulse control, working memory, and attentional control" (p. 105).

6. Stuss & Benson (1986): "a variety of different capacities that enable purposeful, goal-directed behavior, including behavioral regulation, working memory, planning and organizational skills, and self-monitoring" (p. 272).
7. Welsh and Pennington (1988): "the ability to maintain an appropriate problem-solving set for attainment of a future goal" (p. 201).
What is Executive Function(s)

10. McCloskey (2006): “a diverse group of highly specific cognitive processes collected together to direct cognition, emotion, and motor activity, including the ability to engage in purposeful, organized, strategic, self-regulated, goal directed behavior” (p. 1).

“think of executive functions as a set of independent but coordinated processes rather than a single trait” (p. 2).

11. Lezak (1995): “a collection of interrelated cognitive and behavioral skills that are responsible for purposeful, goal-directed activity,” …how and whether a person goes about doing something” (p. 42).

12. Luria (1966): “ability to correctly evaluate their own behavior and the adequacy of their actions” (p. 227).

Executive Functions
What Neural Activities Require EF?

- Those that involve planning or decision making.
- Those that involve error correction or troubleshooting.
- Situations when responses are not well-rehearsed or contain novel sequences of actions.
- Dangerous or technically difficult situations.
- Situations that require the overcoming of a strong habitual response or resisting temptation.
Does Experience Shape EF?

• The Family Life Project has demonstrated that poverty is associated with elevated cortisol in infancy and early childhood.
• This association is mediated through characteristics of the household.
• Parenting sensitivity mediates the relationship between poverty and stress physiology.
• In combination parenting sensitivity and elevated cortisol mediate the association between poverty and poor EF in children.

Conditions and Disorders That Have Demonstrated EF Impairments

• Depression – sense of helplessness and hopelessness.
• Anxiety – lack of confidence in predicting outcome.
• ADHD – immaturity in developing effective self-discipline.
• Oppositional and Conduct Disorders – noncompliance and rule violation.
• Autism – social learning impairment.
• Learning Disability – delayed acquisition of academic knowledge despite good instruction.

If all of these conditions are statistically related to behaviors and abilities reflecting EF than a common denominator must exist.
Executive Function(s)

• Given all these definitions of EF(s) we wanted to address the question...
  Executive Functions ... or Executive Function?

Executive Function(s)

• One way to examine this issue is to research the factor structure of behaviors related to EF(s)
• To do so, we examined the factor structure of the behaviors thought to be associated with EF.
• We conducted a series of research studies to answer the following question:
  Is there is just one underlying factor called Executive Function), or do the behaviors group together into different constructs suggesting a multidimensional structure?

In statistics, dependence refers to any statistical relationship between two random variables or two sets of data.

Correlation refers to any of a broad class of statistical relationships involving dependence.
Familiar examples of dependent phenomena include the correlation between the physical statures of parents and their offspring, and the correlation between the demand for a product and its price.

Correlations are useful because they can indicate a predictive relationship that can be exploited.

SIX EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSES LED US TO CONCLUDE:

When using parent (N = 1,400), teacher (N = 1,400), or self-ratings (N = 700) based on behaviors observed and reported for a nationally representative sample (N = 3,500) aged 5 to 18 years Executive Function not functions is the best term to use.
Executive Function is how efficiently you decide to do what you decide to do.

One empirical factor (a governor) with multiple processes such as:
- Attention,
- Emotion Regulation,
- Flexibility,
- Inhibitory Control,
- Initiation,
- Organization,
- Planning,
- Self-Monitoring,
- Working Memory.

How does Executive Function contribute to:
- Classroom performance?
- Test performance?
- Achievement?
- Intelligence?
- Neuropsychological abilities?
- Interpersonal behavior?
EF and Test Performance

- Data from the Neurology, Learning and Behavior Center in Salt Lake City, UT
- Children given the Comprehensive Executive Function Inventory, Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-IV (N = 43), Cognitive Assessment System (N = 62), and the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement III (N = 58).

### CEFI & Achievement

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\*Note: LAI < .25 or > .75

### CEFI & WISC-IV

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Note: All correlations were corrected for range instability.
Can strategic, instructional interventions designed to enhance EF provide all children with better capacity to interact with others in a fair way?

Cognitive Strategy = EF Instruction

- A strategy is a procedure that the learner uses to perform academic, behavioral and social tasks.
- Using a strategy means the child thinks about 'how you do what you do'.
- Successful learners use many strategies.
- Some of these strategies include visualization, verbalization, making associations, chunking, questioning, scanning, using mnemonics, sounding out words, and self-checking and monitoring.
http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/e638.html

http://nichcy.org/research/ee/learning-strategies

http://www.ncld.org/at-school/especially-for-teachers/effective-teaching-practices/strategic-instruction-model-sim-how-to-teach-how-to-learn
**Study Skills**

- **Cognitive** study skills typically involve a task, such as notetaking or summarizing.
- **Metacognitive** study skills describe self-management such as planning and monitoring.
- **Affective** study skills involve motivation, agency and self-concept.

**Benefits of Strategy Instruction**

- Students trust their minds
- Students know there is more than one right way to do things
- They acknowledge their mistakes and try to rectify them
- They evaluate their products and behavior
- Memories are enhanced
- Learning increases
- Self-esteem increases
- Students feel a sense of power
- Students become more responsible
- Work completion and accuracy improve
- Students develop and use a personal study process
- They know how to “try”
- On-task time increases: students are more “engaged”
Part V: Developing Student Social Justice Through Strategy Instruction

The first step is creating a safe space....

Ask Yourself:
How do I create a safe space?

• What would my students say about my classroom?
• Who decides the rules and the consequences?
• What ways do I try to connect with my students, from their point of view?
Provide Feedback That Feels Fair

“I don’t have time to write performance reviews, so I’ll just criticize you in public from time to time.”

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

~Theodore Roosevelt

Feelings
Help Students Recognize and Label Them

• Use hand puppets, emojis, to help familiarize and label.
• Mirror the feelings you see them having.
• Validate the feelings so they recognize we all have them.
• Discuss the feelings that others have—in a book, in the news, locally.
• Play the Pyramid Game.
• Model a new emotion each day and talk about it.
Awareness
Help Students Develop Awareness

• How do people act when they feel happy?
• How do people act when they feel hurt, sad, anxious?
• How do those behaviors impact you?
• How might your behaviors impact others?
• Are moods contagious?

Involvement
Help Students Realize Their Innate Motivations to Be Social

• How can we help people to feel valued?
• How can we help people to feel included?
• Incorporate project-based learning and service learning.
• Discuss the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations—grade level

Recover
Help Students Recover from Unfairness

• Teach students the power of fairness and therefore, the impact an unfair event can cause. It’s painful and destructive to our social and emotional selves.
• But we can recover!
• We can teach others who are unfair that their unfairness has a greater impact than they think.
• We can rise above injustice and be better people ourselves.
• We can recognize that sometimes when other people are hurting, they lash out in unfair ways and one way to help them is to connect with them through compassion, communication, empathy and forgiveness.
Sam’s Seven Steps To Create a Fair and Socially Just Classroom

1. Know yourself and when you are having a bad day. Correct it right away, or let the students know what is happening, if appropriate.

2. Promote gender (and racial) equality in all subjects. Give equal praise and expectations in math and science for girls and reading and writing for boys.

3. Apologize when you make a mistake or have a misunderstanding. You will be a great role model.

4. Create well-developed lesson plans, an organized classroom and clear expectations for all students. Be prepared every day. Make sure that all of your materials are gathered ahead of time.

5. Collaborate with students on projects and let them help to make classroom decisions.

6. When selecting students to either participate in question and answer or to help out in the classroom, always do it by random draw, and keep track of whom you have called upon. Help a struggling student individually.

7. Keep accurate assessment records. In addition to telling parents, let students know their grades and where they need improvement.

Celebrate a Fair Mindset in Your Classroom Community

Create “Random Acts of Fairness” at school.
Let a person with 3 items go before you in your community.
Support your co-workers’ ideas during team meetings.
Teach coaches about the relevance of fairness on the playing field.
Equity Sticks

Equity sticks are a cheap and powerful way to check your biases at the door. Simply buy a box of popsicle sticks (or index cards, or bookmarks, or anything compact, really), use a Sharpie to write one student’s name per stick, and toss them all into a cup or jar next to a second, empty cup for the “used” sticks. Each time you facilitate a class discussion, pull out an equity stick at random and ask that student to share. Once they have participated, toss their stick in the other cup, and keep on doing this until you’ve cycled through the class.

Experiment With Discussion Structures

Think-Pair-Share
Think: Each student silently thinks about a prompt, text, or question. Students then put up their hand to indicate they are ready to share.

Pair: Students pair up. Each student must listen to their partner’s thinking in order to respond...

Share: Each student share what they thought with their partner.

Quote Mixer
Each student is given a different quote or other form of text (this could be an image or graph, for example). Students move around the room, pair up, share their text and response to it, then switch cards and partners for 1-2 additional rounds.

Talking Terrains: In groups of 3-5, students are given a question or set of questions to discuss. Each student receives an equal number of pennies. Each time a student responds, they must put two of their pennies into the middle of the table. A student who uses up all of their pennies does not get a turn, and a student’s pennies are given to an other student as a means of promoting equal participation.

Track Participation Data

It’s also really powerful to gather data on student participation. To do this, create a simple “equity tracker” with student names on the left side and a column for each day of the week. Each time you call on a student or someone volunteers to speak, jot down a tally mark. At the end of the week, add up your marks and use this data...

Who is participating the most?

Who is participating the least?

What patterns of participation do you see with respect to race, gender, language of origin, learning ability, location in the room, etc.?

Use this data to set a small participation goal for the following week. For example: “Next week, I aim to invite the students with special needs in my classroom to share at least once per day.”
“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.”

Neil Postman

May our philosophies keep pace with our technologies. May our compassion keep pace with our powers. And may love, not fear, be the engine of change.

Dan Brown

General Conclusions

- An early history of developing competence, along with supportive, consistent care, serves as a powerful and enduring buffer throughout childhood and increases probability of resilience.
- The pathways that lead to resilience are complex.
- There is a great need to map the interaction of personal and environmental factors.
General Conclusions

- Longitudinal research needs to be conducted on a large scale and gene–environment focused.
- We require a broader cross-cultural perspective.
- We need to know more about individual dispositions and temperament as well as sources of family support.

Only then will we begin to know what makes the young of our species survive and thrive despite life’s adversities.

Emmy Werner

Conclusions

- Social justice deserves a place in our design of educational environments.
- Fairness is a trait that evolved to foster our survival.
- Early, normal child development is in part dependent on children displaying and receiving fair treatment.
- EF strategies can be employed to teach, generalize and maintain social justice.
Through intelligent and ethical educational and therapeutic practices, we can foster self-discipline, mental health, resilience and build educational proficiency in all children without stealing away their dignity and hope.

Adopt a Learning-to-Swim Mindset!

It must never come to this!
Or this!

DEAR GOD,
I wish I could be better in school.
Can you help me.

Creating a Masterpiece!

Questions?

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TEDx: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=istw8LJ-eWM