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Reclaiming Youth E-Newsletter

www.reclaiming.com

March 2009 Newsletter

Saturday, March 14, 2009

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New Website Up and Running!

The Reclaiming Youth International website (www.Reclaiming.com) has undergone a huge renovation - just for you! The new bold design will improve our service and information-sharing capabilities. We are very excited about the new look and the ease with which you will be able to locate pertinent and timely information regarding our seminars, training programs, bookstore resources, and much, much more! Visit our website to see the fresh new face of the Reclaiming Youth website.

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Countdown to Spring Seminar in Victoria, BC

Spring is just around the corner, and so is our 2009 Spring Seminar in Victoria, British Columbia!

There are just a few spots left and the clock is ticking. Contact us right away for space availability if you are interested in participating in this event. We would love to have you join us at the beautiful Laurel Point Inn in Victoria, BC next month. [More information...](#)

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2009 Reclaiming Youth Seminars

Registrations are underway for the 2009 Reclaiming Youth Seminars. The Spring Seminar (Victoria, British Columbia) is nearly full with just a few spots still open. Interest is high and registrations are

flowing in for the Summer Seminar (Black Hills, South Dakota). Mark your calendars and make plans to join us at one of these events in 2009!

Spring Seminars ~ Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Enchanted With Chemicals - April 25-26
Response Ability Pathways - April 25-27
The Developmental Audit - April 25-27
PersonBrain Model Training - April 28-29

[More information...](#)



Summer Seminars ~ Black Hills, South Dakota, USA

Life Space Crisis Intervention - June 15-19
PersonBrain Model Training - June 18-19
Circle of Courage - June 20 (1/2 day)
Reclaiming Youth Conference - June 20-23
Response Ability Pathways - June 24-26
The Developmental Audit - June 24-26

[More information...](#)

Autumn Seminars ~ Nashville, Tennessee, USA

Plans are still being finalized for the Autumn Seminar (Nashville, Tennessee) and descriptions of those events will soon be posted on our website (www.reclaiming.com).

Reclaiming Youth Conference - October 10-12
PersonBrain Model Training - October 13-14
Response Ability Pathways - October 13-15
The Developmental Audit - October 13-15

[More information...](#)

The 2009 Reclaiming Youth Seminars, each in a unique and distinctive setting, will provide affirmation and introduce new skills for all adults who work with today's most challenging youth. The hands-on trainings and opportunities to visit with experts in the child and youth care industry will inspire and rejuvenate both new and experienced professionals in youth care and education.

Visit our website (www.Reclaiming.com) and click on "Seminars" for complete event descriptions, registration information, and additional updates on these highly-rated training opportunities. We hope to see you in 2009!

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Reclaiming Youth Seminar Event Descriptions

We sincerely hope you will be able to join us at one of our 2009 Reclaiming Youth Seminar locations. These innovative, strength-based trainings are specifically designed to equip adults for working with

today's youth. Many attendees say that our events provide the best staff development training they have ever experienced, and often return for inspiration and affirmation year after year. We thank our participants for recognizing the value and quality we craft into all our Reclaiming Youth training events. Below is a brief look at the events we are offering in 2009:

Reclaiming Youth Conference ~ Strength-Based Interventions, Education and Prevention
(Black Hills, Nashville)

The Reclaiming Youth Conference brings together outstanding keynote and breakout session presenters to explore a rich range of timely issues for adults engaged in the lives of at-risk youth. Educators, counselors, treatment and juvenile justice staff, family advocates, mentors, foster parents, and youth work professionals will benefit from this conference that offers leading-edge information, skills, and practice-based research. The three-day conference is grounded in the positive, resiliency-based model called the *Circle of Courage*, developed by Drs. Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern, authors of the bestselling book, *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*.

Circle of Courage Workshop
(Black Hills)

A half-day Circle of Courage workshop will be held prior to the Black Hills conference in June. Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern, authors of *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* and developers of the *Circle of Courage Model* are pleased to host this exciting event. The workshop includes a back-to-the-basics curriculum discussing Circle of Courage fundamentals, drawing on the work of early youth-work pioneers and Native tribal wisdom, coupled with youth development research with outlines of the four essential elements every child needs to thrive and flourish: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The workshop will include innovative approaches for building relationships with youth, fostering their self-esteem, and instilling positive values in classroom, residential treatment, counseling, and correctional settings. The informal and intimate setting of the Circle of Courage workshop will allow attendees a special opportunity to meet with the three founders of Reclaiming Youth International and discover how to incorporate the Circle of Courage philosophy into work and home settings.

Enchanted with Chemicals ~ A Family Approach to Addiction
(Victoria)

The focus of this two-day workshop will be to examine how strength-based techniques used in therapy with families can be applied to all who suffer from substance abuse. Reorganizing the substance-abusing family system can provide the hope needed to transform. To help families reorganize, generational and other assessments of the family structure need to take place, resistant family members need to be engaged, and multi-level intervention strategies need to be practiced. The workshop will emphasize the participant's skills and understanding of family dynamics related to substance abuse.

The PersonBrain Model ~ Using Neuroscience to Connect with Youth
(Victoria, Black Hills, Nashville)

The PersonBrain Model was designed to provide a high quality, multi-theoretical training approach that combines neuroscience with positive and practical mental health interventions. Drawing on social, emotional, ecological and neuro-relational sciences, this innovative two-day workshop incorporates promising approaches that will transform how adults work with children and youth. Professionals who

understand the brain and how ecological factors affect it are better equipped to design positive, dynamic and meaningful interventions for youth.

Response Ability Pathways (RAP) ~ Restoring Bonds of Respect for Positive Growth

(Victoria, Black Hills, Nashville)

RAP provides essential training for all who deal with young persons in family, school, community, and treatment settings. Young people need supportive adults who respond to their needs rather than react to their problems. RAP puts the Circle of Courage into action, building strengths and positive peer climates with challenging youth.

The Developmental Audit ~ Strength-Based Assessment Transformation with Challenging Youth

(Victoria, Black Hills, Nashville)

This strength-based alternative to traditional assessment is grounded in positive youth development, neuroscience, and the Circle of Courage resilience model. The Audit engages the young person in examining relationships, behavioral challenges, and personal strengths. The Audit clarifies the function or goals of behavior and offers a roadmap to responsibility.

Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) ~ Therapeutic Skills for Talking with Youth in Crisis Situations

(Black Hills)

LSCI is a therapeutic strategy for using crisis situations as opportunities to help young persons learn alternatives to patterns of aggressive, disrespectful, or self-demeaning behavior. Traditional crisis management relies on de-escalation, restraint, and exclusion to manage volatile behavior. Such methods may establish order, but do not correct chronic patterns of self-defeating behavior. Professionals who work in the "life space" of troubled children and youth at risk need effective ways to communicate in times of conflict. In this five-day training, LSCI blends psycho-dynamic, cognitive, behavioral and pro-social methods to provide powerful teaching and treatment interventions for our most challenging youth.

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Encouraging Children

by Steve Van Bockern

It is self evident that children are motivated to do what they want to do. If they think "I can do this" and "I want to do this" they will with little prompting or prodding engage in all sorts of activities - watching television, pounding nails, skate boarding, playing video games and talking to friends.

When it comes to getting them to do things that adults want them to do and they don't have the interest or the ability, it can turn into a struggle. Here is a list of ideas I have come across over the years that helps me think about how I can encourage a child.

if~ Punishment (physical, emotional or social pain) is not an encourager.

if~ When kids can, they generally do. Teach, try and think about it and then do it again until they get it.

if~ Stay away from "dog praise" or praise designed to control or manipulate.

if~ Expect kids to do well; don't try to "catch" them being good.



- if~ Acknowledge the positive for those to whom it would matter the most.
- if~ Focus on the deed, not the doer.
- if~ Turn the pride back to the child whenever possible.
- if~ Avoid comparisons.
- if~ Don't create praise junkies. Don't over do the praise.
- if~ Spontaneous rewards are better than planned rewards.
- if~ Invite success with your comments, physical environment, personal behaviors, and printed signs.
- if~ Look at homework through the eyes of the child. Would you want to do it?
- if~ Use cooperative learning.
- if~ Encourage kids to "unpack" their thinking.
- if~ Teach students to become tutors.
- if~ Get better at assessment. De-emphasize grades, give quick feedback, be specific, offer a solution, be present, and be sensitive.
- if~ Get beyond marking answers right or wrong.
- if~ Embrace errors; they are wonderful teachers.

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Morse Book Featured in Reclaiming Youth Bookstore

Connecting With Kids in Conflict: A Life Space Legacy

by William C. Morse

Edited by L. K. Brendtro and A. B. James

[Reclaiming Children and Youth and Starr Commonwealth, 2008]

Item #3080

Price: \$14.95

[Buy it Online!](#)



This book strikes a fine balance between theory and practical applications. Best of all, these pages reflect so well Bill Morse's legacy of warmth and caring."

- Ralph D. Rabinovitch, MD, Child Psychiatrist and Founder, Hawthorn Center

"With one foot in caring and the other in reality, Bill Morse showed how to really understand children, families, and professionals by living in their life space and sharing their struggles."

- Howard S. Muscott, EdD, President, CCBF Foundation

Book review by Steve Van Bockern

Larry Brendtro and Adrienne Brant James, the editors of this book, are two of the many who loved and learned from William C. Morse. This work is a testimony to Dr. Morse's wisdom, intellect, humanity and humor. For those of us who didn't have the chance to learn with him, this book, written simply and powerfully, is our chance to learn from him. The book is our window into Morse's thinking. "With one foot in caring and the other in reality", Dr. Morse blended practice and theory by living in the life space of hurting children and families.

A student of the early “action research” of Fritz Redl, Kurt Lewin, and colleagues, Morse taught through example how respectful relationships can transform individual and group behavior. Much of what he learned didn’t come from books but from his fifteen years directing The University of Michigan Fresh Air Camp outside of Detroit, Michigan. The camp helped prepare generations of professionals (including the editors of this book) to transform young lives.

I wish I could have met Morse. Things he said suggest to me that he was unpretentious, a breath of fresh air, and straight-forward:

“I was surprised to discover that the professors who taught psychology didn’t seem to live any more effective lives than the rest of us” (p. 4).

“If I’d have just thrown the books down and listened to them [the neighbor kids disturbing his study time], I think I might have had a better sense of childhood and what was going on in their minds.” (p.5)

“The Fresh Air Camp idea was first established to bring poor kids from the city into the country so that they could breathe fresh air and be “fattened” up. They weighed them in and out in those days, and if a kid gained weight, it was considered a success”. (p.9)

“Society once had a lot of free help for raising kids – it was called the family. Mothers donated their lives to raising children.” (p. 20)

“The deepest conversations we can have with youth are about values, which is why I don’t like canned programs.” (p. 29)

“Basically, to be a helper you have to engage in the exploration of life, and you begin by understanding your own life.” (p. 32)

The book is full of these nuggets and they are there to be mined by educators, psychologists, special education teachers, front-line youth workers and social workers.

For those interested in the history of emotional disturbance and special education you will find the book informative. The black and white pictures introduced me to those who had only been names before. The book is short but the bibliography and editorial notations suggest what is written is on solid ground. Brendtro, in an Epilogue section, links Morse’s philosophy and career with early pioneers in the positive, strength-based movement that is part of the reclaiming youth revolution.

[Buy it Online!](#)

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