

Purposeful Classroom Management

Read or review Section 1 of the book **Why We Learn**.

(www.fullcirclelearning.org/Educator/Education/Educationcourse/Text) The text draws on education, philosophy, science, religion and psychology to highlight peak experiences shaped by a common identity and the love-based aspects of our instinct to think, to imagine, to create. Write or discuss your reflections on the pedagogy as conveyed in the final paragraph of the chapter:

All these patterns in the physical reality suggest the intention of oneness—a pull to imprint one’s unique existence not as a lone member of the universe, but as a living being swaying in sync with others.

How do the examples in Chapter One—the plant moving toward the light, the “rhyming” waves pulling one another to shore, or the will to turn crop failure into peanut butter—all relate to such a pedagogy? Add examples from your own life experience in which you succeeded because your efforts and skills influenced or were influenced by another.



Practical implications of the theory, as they relate to lesson planning, may appear self-evident to you by now, but what about classroom management? How can thoughtful daily interactions with learners trigger social cohesion of the sort that complements your emerging pedagogy? How does systems theory reflect the design of your own classroom—a place where individual histories, cultures, and learning propensities enrich the potential but also the social complexity of the classroom? Will the group’s movements echo outward in concert, just as sound waves thrust their unseen reach? The transformative effect of your own thoughtful planning may have the ultimate impact on this process.

Research has shown the effectiveness of a self-perceived identity in shaping self-expectations, behaviors, and leadership—and also in inspiring the motivation to learn (Bryan, Grant, Masters, Platt). For example, in studies exploring the difference between calling a child a helper and thanking them for helping behaviors, the first group developed self-regulation and a stronger inner locus of control. Ideally, as the child passes through the stages of moral and cognitive development, the voice of the adult represents less impassive instruction and, rather, encouragement of intrinsic positive

desires. The child acts not out of fear, not because the teacher is in the room, but out of the euphoria that comes with providing talent, tools, or personal attributes as the salve any given situation requires.

Sometimes teachers develop a plan for academics without a parallel plan for spinning the five-spoked wheel of character, creativity, conflict resolution and community service. To establish order, an instructor may quickly resort to a system of demerits or individual rewards and punishments, only to find that this system has derailed the teacher's intentions, creating cliques or hierarchies and instituting only short-term order that dissipates whenever the teacher leaves the room. Human development and societal norms have then suddenly taken a back seat. What better alternative can teachers choose? How can a thoughtful, coherent plan cultivate a motivational learning environment that supports the a profound curriculum and purposeful pedagogy or theory of human motivation.

A classroom milieu that helps integrate all aspects of holistic development suggests the need for a coherent set of strategies that an effective teacher will *prepare*, will *plan out* and even *practice* at home before implementing it on the very first day of school.

To the extent that the classroom becomes a panacea for turning challenges into opportunities for growth, a teacher not only influences the mastery of positive habits but helps ground the learner's sense of purpose and a lifelong pattern of altruism. Motivation deepens with the thrill of seeing our life's work in relation to its impact on the wellbeing of someone in the next chair or around the globe. For altruistic learners young or old, the same truth applies. We have witnessed it again and again.

Abraham Maslow wrote about the universal need for a sense of belonging. Volumes have been written on human relationships. When we think about the essentials of *why we learn*, the desire not to only feel this belonging but to create it for others—to give love and create connection—expands the possibilities for a coherent classroom culture foundational to the purposeful curriculum the teacher has already designed.

To explore the opportunities for such a transformational impact on your own learners, integrate the strategies that follow into a system designed to reinforce your instructional plan and to foster a higher motivation to learn. Rehearse the strategies with a friend.

Make a checklist of the habits you practice and the support materials you create.

1. Bryan, C.J. Masters, A.L. Little helpers: Nouns motivate helping behavior more than verbs. Stanford University, 2010;
2. Grant, A. How to Raise a Moral Child, New York Times, p. 6, Sunday, April 13, 2014.
3. Platt, Jonah. Independent Research based on Full-Circle Learning annual reports, 2002-2021.
4. Maslow, Abraham. Toward a Psychology of Being. University of Michigan, 1968.

Strategies for a Cohesive Classroom

Designing a Plan Before School Begins

View the Habits-of-Heart Poster. Use it to guide your classroom management activities before the start of the school year in the following ways.

1. On the day of class, introduce to your learners the concept of responsibility to an ever-widening family of living things. **Draw a circle on the board** and ask them to do so in a journal, drawing stick figures to represent their family members or household. As the class widens its embrace, through projects that improve the lives of others, they will add stick figures to their family, both on the board and in their journals.
2. Help them understand the year-long identity they will strive to inherit as you **present to them the class name** (e.g., the Helpers, the Peacemakers, the Humanitarians, the Ambassadors, the Society Builders, the Change Agents, etc.) Ideally, your teachers will have pre-agreed to class names that do not change from year to year, so students can master the habits associated with each identity before moving on to the next grade level.
3. Use daily opportunities to encourage positive actions. For example:
 - a) Moving a student's **code of ethics emblem** to a desirable place on the class chart (an island, etc.) when you see them demonstrate a habit or positive action. (All will move there before the whole class celebrates.)
 - b) Help students recognize the good in others through daily **Server Nominations**. At this time, the floor is open for one student each day to describe the act of another who has demonstrated the habit-of-heart. The honoree then receives the privilege of service (distributing pencils, snacks, paper, etc.). Certain guidelines apply: a. one cannot nominate themselves; b. one cannot be unnominated if another student protests nor put to a vote, as this is the time of day to catch someone in a positive act; c. one can only be nominated once a week, to allow others the chance to serve; d. after the nomination, the teacher clarifies and repeats the action described, to help underscore actions associated with the habit-of-heart.
4. When challenging student behavior requires **teacher interventions**, start with the least invasive, such as a touch on the shoulder, a word, or a quiet talk during break. Your conversation might include one or more of the following strategies:
 - a. Call attention to their nobility and your confidence in their capacity to live by the **code of ethics** they helped create and committed to on the first day.

- b. Remind them of their **class name and identity**. Example, “I see that someone is hurt. Which of the Peacemakers will go see how they can help?”
- c. Remind a student that **challenges are opportunities** for growth, whether conducting an *instant replay* of a word misspoken or rethinking a social situation. Example: “This challenge is also an opportunity to show how you’ve mastered the habit-of-heart. You can rethink your words, walk into the room again, and speak new words to your brother waiting over there at the table.”
- d. If multiple students are creating disturbances, **call attention to the student modeling the most desirable behavior**. Name the code of ethic or habit-of-heart associated with the behavior and wait for others to model it before moving on. Example: “I like the way ____ is sitting, ready to listen, practice the habit of respect that we agreed to in our code of ethics.”
- e. If a student struggles with a bully, coach them to respond with “**love darts**,” giving authentic compliments that see the good in the other and turn an enemy into a friend. Monitor this situation closely so it does not become dangerous or abusive. Example: “She has insulted you, but let’s show an opposite example of how to be a friend. What is her best talent? Let’s tell her about it and see how she reacts.”
- f. If a conflict occurs between two students, use the **conflict bridge**, but only after classroom use. (Conflict resolution strategies will be presented in another session.)
- g. Teach accountability for actions. Deeds, beyond words alone, can help turn around our mistakes. This is easy when restoring justice means cleaning an area or returning a stolen item but trickier when it means restoring dignity. When two boys humiliated a group of girls, for example, they decided to give a month of lunch hours to tutoring girls in skills that would show they honored and respected them. Example: “What did the other student/s feel when you said or did that? What acts might restore their positive feelings?” This strategy is not used every day but is designed for intense or persistent personal misbehaviors that hurt others. Review the **Restorative Justice** and **Peace Page** classroom management tools in this document. Use the strategy privately between classes with a teacher, counselor, trained aid, or school leader.
- h. Specialized strategies for students with **special needs** appear in the course session Loving the Exceptional Learner. Work with partners at the school to make sure the need of every learner is recognized and met.

5. At year's end, help the class celebrate their progress and widen their embrace of the human family, using the **Mastery Ceremony Guidelines** at the end of this document. A planning guide incorporates input from the many schools that have seen transformative results from their mastery ceremonies.

Think about how you would convey these highlights in your learning community. Practice the strategies with your peers.

Creating Materials Before Class Begins

A vast difference often appears between the classroom where a teacher has introduced a classroom management plan from the first day, from midyear or not at all. The best route to influencing behavioral problems is through prevention. Prepare to nurture the altruistic identity by introducing your class name and behavior management chart before the academic learning begins.

From your chosen curriculum module, choose three predominant habits of heart that will guide your behavior management plan, such as Respect, Kindness, and Cooperation.

Create a poster or felt chart you can display throughout the year. Base its visual theme on something related to your science or social studies content, if possible (three islands in an ocean, planets in a solar system, clouds in a sky, mountains in a habitat, etc.). At the top of the chart, one object (a cloud, sun, etc.) represents self-mastery. Label it as such.

Create corresponding items (e.g., fish, stars, trees, etc.) to represent each student. Put Velcro on the back or use clothespins, tape, tacks, or other means to attach them to the bottom of the chart.

On the first day of class:

1. Briefly introduce the three themes. (Students will explore these in depth as each unit comes along, but they can gain a basic understanding of the definition initially.)
2. Divide students into multiple of three. Give each group a piece of butcher paper or poster board. Assign them to one of the three themes (habits-of-heart).
3. Challenge each group to show what it would look like if everyone practiced that habit on their island, star, mountain, etc. (Or if studying ancient civilization early in the year, use an early period in history.) They may discuss examples, then draw cartoons to show scenes that illustrate their ideas. They will write the theme at the top.
4. Each group will present their poster to the class and explain their ideas or act out the scenes. Hang the posters on the classroom walls.

5. You, the teacher, will extrapolate from the posters three common elements of a class code of ethics, positively expressed. For example, you might say, “Based on your input, it seems we all agree that to ensure happiness, *we speak with equal regard for everyone. We treat others’ belongings carefully. We listen when others speak.* You then write these three sentences on the board. These will become the code of Respect, and the students will take ownership because you somehow derived them from their own drawings. (Generate no more than three themes, to keep them memorable. Write one of the themes on each of the islands, mountains, or places on the class chart.)
6. Once the code is in place, remind the students that *they* have created this code of ethics and now have a chance to build a community based on it. They each pledge to support the code.
7. Give each student one of the items (a fish, tree, star, etc.) to personalize with their name. Place them all at the bottom of the chart. Explain that if you notice them practicing a positive habit, you will move their emblem there (i.e. to the Island of Respect or Cooperation, or Kindness, etc.)
8. Over the course of a week, your goal is for each student to notably practice each of the habits at least once, at which point you move each of them to the clouds of self-mastery. (Mark in your student charts who has achieved mastery at the end of each day.) When the whole class achieves this group goal, they will have a special time to sing, play a game or celebrate their group mastery in some way. Ask them to encourage one another toward group mastery and celebrate successes rather than competing with one another.

Regarding Punishment: The group mastery chart negates the need for corporate punishment, the charting of demerits and the need to foster competitive reward systems that do not cultivate intrinsic motivation. Students can even be taught to respond to insults with compliments or “Love Darts,” for example, turning bullies into friends. When conflicts do persist, use break time to help students on the conflict bridge or to ask a hurtful student to commit to the Restorative Justice Pledge (Peace Pledge for the youngest learners). Special instructions are also given for exceptional learners in another session of this course.

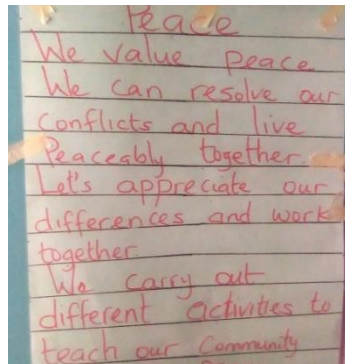
Replace severe punishment and suspension with prevention and positivity!



Classroom Examples of Systems-Based First-Day Activities

(Making ripples together)

1. Mr. NDow presents a poster made by Gambian students, with plenty of room for their emblems to bask on the island on a respectful day.
2. Nigerian students show their depictions of what unity looks like.
3. Another class posted a code-of-ethics charter based on peace, while a Liberian girl showed her version of a code-of-ethics based on Respect. (Photo by Daniel Johnson.)



Restorative Justice Reflection Sheet

Think briefly about how your choice affected others. How do you think they felt? Name some antonyms - words that describe the opposite feelings. Now picture yourself taking actions that create those opposite, positive feelings and effects.

To whom will you offer an apology? What actions will you apologize for? How can you restore what was lost to improve the situation?

In other words, what could you do to help those who feel hurt to feel comfort? To help someone feel respected instead of disrespected? Or to feel dignity instead of fear or humiliation? Or to feel peace instead of pain? If you have taken or destroyed something, how will you recreate it?

What words and action steps will you use? Describe or draw yourself taking these steps. Think about how everyone in the picture feels. Think about how you now feel.

Section 1. Picturing the steps to a better choice

Section 2. Picturing how everyone will feel in the end

Below, draw or describe your commitment to the class code of ethics. An adult will sign this paper once you have completed the actions you describe above and pledged to do better in the future.

Section 3. My pledge for the future

I will:

Student's signature: _____

Date: _____

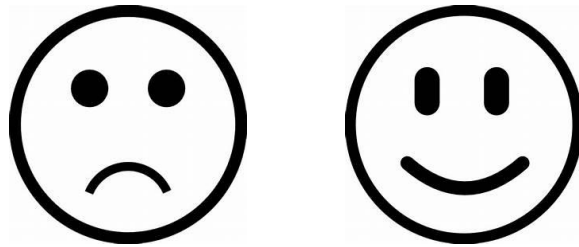
Adult's signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____ Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Peace Page

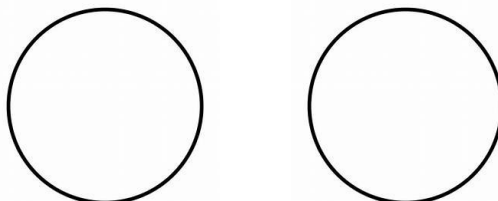
“Opposite” means “on the other side of” or “very different from.” *Up* is the opposite of *down*. *Walk forward* is the opposite of *step backward*. *Angry* is the opposite of *calm*. *Sad* is the opposite of *happy*. The faces below show opposite feelings. Which feeling would I rather bring to those around me? Which feeling would I rather feel inside?



I made a mistake. Someone felt sad. Because I am human, I can make a better choice and maybe erase their sad feelings. Saying “I’m sorry” is a start. I can also give back something I took. What else can I do? What actions can I take to make someone feel the opposite of the way they feel now? **I will draw the steps I will take next.**

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I promise to create more peace. I will draw my face and the face of someone who will feel differently after I bring peace back to their world.



Mastery Ceremony Guidelines

About the Framework:

1. Student emcees welcome guests, thank teachers, and announce agenda. They script this portion in advance.
2. Each class showcases its work. Each student has small speaking part about habit-of-hearts applied in the projects or in daily life, so all aspects of the year's work are covered.
3. Songs/dances are interspersed, giving the flavor of what was performed on service projects and field trips and of wisdom exchange partners' cultures, if applicable.
4. Awards at the end celebrate the mastery of a specific habit-of-heart. (Each student receives an award for the habit-of-heart they have best mastered. They have also prepared an award for the habit they admire in parents or a loved one and announce it after receiving their award.)

Guidelines for Student Participation at Mastery Ceremony:

This event may be best offered among three grade levels or even for a particular class, to avoid going over time and to encourage intimacy and ease of planning.

Each class's participation should consist not only of the awards portion at the end but of brief (one sentence to one paragraph) student speeches. 1) One student representative in each class will discuss the habits-of-heart they practiced throughout the year, for example, something their class did to practice the habit on a regular basis—or they can give an example of someone caught in the act of practicing these habits. They list the projects associated with the habits. 2) Another learner discusses a favorite local service project and the skills used to perform the service. 3) A third describes the process used for a global project or correspondence received from a global partner.

They all link the service and learning to the habit-of-heart. Any or all of the speakers might tell how their experience has influenced their learning, their career goals, their compassion, and especially how it has affected their community. The class then performs the music associated with their projects. The learners receive awards from teachers and finally present awards to families.

Countdown to a Successful Mastery Ceremony

(Photo by Baktash Aazami)



Week 5

Five weeks before the mastery ceremony, you should already have completed the local and global service projects and guest presenters that will inspire the projects presented at the ceremony. If not, this is the week to do so.

___ Work with your committee to understand or plan the timing and setup of the event. Identify the content of your grade-level presentation.

___ Review the songs you and the music teacher have jointly selected that related to the service learning field trips and have been performed for guest presenters, and that students will now present at the ceremony. These will come primarily from the Full-Circle Learning CDs that link habits-of-heart themes to service learning, but the repertoire may also include a dance or song from a global partner country, a song written by the class, etc.

Week 4-3

___ Continue to rehearse the songs. Give parents and guests a “Save the Date.” Show the program outline, etc. to your supervisor. Discuss any committee-related topics.

___ Write the speeches outlining the year’s activities and begin having students rehearse them.

___ Complete any artwork you will need for the program. Emphasize how these require dedication to complete. Have each student create handmade invitations for family members (including some for guest presenters, donors, guests and office staff). Discuss how to mail or give out the donor invitations. Give 3 weeks’ notice for special guests.

___ Assign any graduates speeches about what they have learned and what habits they will take into the future. Plan a special way to honor these graduates.

___ Discuss what committee will help the school administrators with programs, room set up, videography, microphone, coffee makers, etc. What role will parents play?

Week 2

___ Teach students the procedures for greeting and seating parents and guests, serving parents their food, etc.

___ Rehearse the whole program.

___ Have students distribute invitations to office staff and parents.

___ Prepare habit-of-heart certificates for each student. Set aside time in class for students to prepare certificates for parents. Collect these and keep them together, as each teacher will present these at the end of their portion of the program, first to the child and then the child will announce their award for their parent.

Week 1

___ Hold your dress rehearsal.

___ Discuss what to wear. Call parents to remind them of the event. Discuss whether children will go home before the event or stay on the playground.

___ Determine how artifacts and art or scrapbooks of photos from projects will be displayed.

On the Day of the Event

___ Come early.

___ Hold one last quick rehearsal. Include the microphone.

___ Review instructions for seating, greeting and serving.

___ Determine how students can help with set-up and what they will do while waiting for the program to begin--and who will give parents tours of art tables, etc.

Afterwards:

___ Thank those who have helped.

___ Turn in any receipts to the school.

Scroll down for sample text on a mastery certificate.

Certificate of Honor

School Name

Acknowledges

[Student]

For Striving to Master the Habit Of

[Habit-of-Heart Best Mastered]

Presented by

_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Administrator</i>	<i>Date</i>