

The Finishing Touch

There remains the third aspect of autism yet to be addressed: the adaptation and integration of the individual into society. There are additional concepts that can be facilitated and mastered which will allow the individual to make appropriate social responses to future life experiences.

Because our work had to begin with the identity of the individual, we didn't go beyond *self* and *self-centered* concepts. In the natural order and structure of human identity that is the way it had to be. However, we don't exist alone, nor can we effectively function completely self-centered.

The student would benefit enormously from mastering concepts that are beyond those that are self-centered. The concepts that establish relationships and behaviors with others are the most important.

We can follow a model that is similar to the model we used to create the parallel identity, and expand the function of the identity beyond *self*.

In going beyond self, we will begin to create a foundation for relationships and behaviors with others. Because we are considering concepts that can establish relationships and behaviors, we have to open the can of worms called *right* and *wrong*. The concepts of what would be right and wrong behaviors seem to be simple ideas that should fit on the second or third level of a pyramid construction, but they are not. What is right or wrong behavior can only be expressed as an opinion, and therefore must occupy a position above level five. They can only exist in the form of understanding.

We have to look for concepts on lower levels to find the pieces of what right and wrong are composed. From these we can build the understanding for right and wrong on the higher level. These would be the concepts that would be the foundations for forming an opinion of what would be right or wrong behavior.

In this regard, I find that there are four concepts that create a foundation for relationships and behaviors with and for others. Two of the concepts would establish one-to-one relationships, and the other two are relationships with more than one other. In other words, there are two concepts that each have two perspectives. It's like having two coins and each coin has two sides. This should become more evident as we explore the concepts. The way they are explored here should prepare you for exploring them with your student.

The first concept, **trust** will allow for a relationship and behaviors with one other. The concept of **belief** will allow for relationships and behaviors with one or more other(s). Both of these concepts are self-centered because they originate within *self*. The concept of **agree** allows for a relationship and behaviors with many others that doesn't originate in self. And the concept of **rules** that also doesn't originate in *self*, allows for relationships and behaviors with all others.

The general concept, of what **trust** is, would be composed of the idea of conduct (an act or action) with another person wherein the other person is being treated the same as or equal to self.

The general concept of **belief** is personal conduct (acts or actions) that is in keeping with what the individual feels is actual or real.

The general concept of **agree** is personal conduct within a group that is in keeping with what the individual thinks is actual or real.

The general concept of **rules** is personal conduct that is within the established boundaries of acceptable behavior in a group. Rules are established for the benefit of the majority of a group. For example, a rule (law) is enacted by a government body, with the purpose of limiting the acts of the individuals, for the protection of the rights of others.

Considering that the two sides of a coin are opposites, the two coins mentioned earlier, would be *trust* (where the individual has the widest range of rights and behaviors) / *rules* (where the individual has the narrowest range of rights and behaviors, and *belief* (behaviors based on *feelings*) / *agree* (behaviors based on *thought*).

In an ideal situation, these four concepts *trust*, *belief*, *agree*, and *rules* would be in harmony. However, there are many exceptions to the ideal situation.

To the self-centered identity, the sequence of importance would place *trust/belief* ahead of *agree/rules*. Society and groups would have it the other way round, with *agree/rules* ahead of *trust/belief*.

Our student must be able to adjust his self-centered identity to include the concept of the rights of others and have a foundation for determining *right* and *wrong* behaviors.

This will allow the identity of *self* to include conducts and behaviors which *agree* with or *rule* society. Without these, the parallel identity will not include the ability to formulate an acceptable opinion in regard to conduct within relationships.

We must also consider that what we wish to achieve is limited to an understanding. In other words, the certainty of knowledge and wisdom of a concept cannot be achieved at this point. Even so, there can be an advantage for us – we can now “teach” the student the understanding as opposed to facilitating knowledge and wisdom.

Teaching Understanding

The final touches for enabling full participation in life is to go through a variation of the Concept Mastery Procedure on the four concepts of *trust*, *belief*, *agree*, and *rules*. And then establish a basic understanding of right/wrong and good/bad. Because we will be teaching the student, we can instruct the student in the construction of the concepts in their simplest form.

However, before we can start, there are several things that must be done prior to addressing the concepts. Our intent is to make it possible for the student to have successful relationships with other people. Therefore, we must start by creating the idea that there are other people. As when the student made the model that represented “self”, when you instruct your student to make the model of *another* or *others*, your words must convey the idea that the model only represents a person, and isn’t a definition of a person.

The first concepts that must be created and explored are “another” and “others”.