

Guidelines for Psychoeducational Tutors

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Guidelines for Psychoeducational Tutors

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Chapter 1: Overview

1 Psychoeducational tutoring is:

A way of teaching psychological skills and improving mental health; that is different from psychotherapy or counseling; that is delivered not by therapists, but by nonprofessionals, especially college students; each of whom is paired with a child who needs help in reading or psychological skills or both. Tutoring takes place in half-hour educational sessions, 6 days a week; that keep going on for at least a year; that are conducted by telephone.

Psychoeducational tutoring is

- A. another name for psychotherapy or counseling,
- or
- B. something different from psychotherapy or counseling.

2 What goes on in the phone sessions? For children who don't need help in reading, who are working on psychological skills, there are three major activities:

1. "Alternate reading." This means that the tutor and the student take turns reading aloud to each other the sections of psychological skills-oriented instructional material that is formatted

like this set of guidelines. The child answers the comprehension question, and the tutor reinforces the child's correct answers.

2. Psychological skills exercises. These are ways of practicing psychological skills. For example, in the "brainstorming options" exercise the tutor and student take turns thinking of options for an imaginary choice point situation, and thus practice generating options.

3. Chatting. The student and tutor have an enjoyable conversation with each other, not aimed at solving the child's problems, but just aimed at having fun and getting to know each other better.

What's the main point of this section?

A. In a typical session, tutor and student take turns reading, do some psychological skills exercises, and chat some.

or

B. Some children are in the "learn to read" stage, and others are in the "read to learn" stage.

3 For children who need help in reading, getting very effective one-to-one tutoring in reading can have a major positive influence on psychological well-being. Time spent at school or doing homework is lots happier if one can read well. We have a reading curriculum that has been tested and refined for over two decades,

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that is designed for telephone tutoring. But even when the main emphasis is on reading, children practice their earliest text-reading with stories that model psychological skills. As soon as possible, students of reading start reading the regular psychological skills training materials. At that point, they are working on reading and psychological skills at the same time.

What is a summary of this section?

A. Reading is an important skill for mental health. In our reading curriculum, children practice with readings designed to help them learn about psychological skills.

or

B. Many children need more work on the “foundation skills” of reading than can be offered in school.

4 Why do we have the sessions over the phone? Because if parents and tutors are delivered of the burden of transporting themselves to one another, the logistics of holding a session are vastly easier. This means that many more sessions can be held, than, for example, with psychotherapy at a therapist's office. And why is that important? Because skills take lots of “time on task” or “deliberate practice” to learn. A child who practices piano 30 minutes a day, 6 days a week, will learn much faster than the child who practices 30 or 45 minutes once every couple of weeks. The same goes for math, dancing, typing, playing chess, or any other skill.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Math problems are analogous to psychological skills exercises: both provide practice in skills.

or

B. We do sessions over the phone because this lets us dedicate much more time to the mission, and skills learning takes time.

5 Should humanity be working very hard to deliver psychological skills training through computer programs or robots, so as to mass produce psychological health? I'm betting that humanity will be much wiser to rely on one-to-one sessions between real people. An important idea underlying our program is that certain learnings, especially psychological skills, are best taught in the context of a *positive relationship*. People – both adults and children – need to be more connected with other people. One of the most important parts of the tutoring job, and the hardest to teach if it doesn't come naturally, is the art of building a real friendship between tutor and student. Some students are especially poor at friendship-building in general, and the tutor may have to use lots of self-discipline to remain friendly and open to any opportunities to cultivate a positive emotional climate in the tutoring.

What's a summary of this section?

A. An important job of the tutor is to create a positive relationship with the

student; it's in such a context that growth occurs best.

or

B. If a tutor pushes too hard for social conversation, the student can quickly start resisting. It's important not to ask too many questions.

6 I am not aware of any other organization or individual providing Psychoeducational Tutoring in the same way that we do through our Organization for Psychoeducational Tutoring (OPT). I have seen many children benefit in ways that I don't think they could have through any other intervention. I believe that many tutors don't have enough experience to grasp fully the importance of *two* very important missions: one is helping a particular child, and the second is pioneering new methods for promoting mental health. The success of the second depends upon lots of successes in the first.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Tutors do important, sometimes life-changing work with a child; they are also helping to develop and refine a new method of promoting mental health.

or

B. The ideas for the manuals and exercises draw from many writings and teachings about psychotherapy, mental health, and ethics, some of which are ancient.

7 For the purposes of this project, how do we define "psychological health" or

"mental health?" By these phrases we mean the abilities that help someone to be happy oneself and to help others to be happy. Let's put these two goals in other words: we want our students to improve the condition of at least one other person, and to have fun doing it. We want them to care for themselves and care for others. (I include non-human animals as an important subset of the "others," whose happiness is worth being concerned about.)

What's a summary of this section?

A. Mental health is determined by biological factors, situational or environmental influences, and learning.

or

B. Mental health means promoting happiness and well-being in oneself and others.

8 There are lots of skills that help people to be happy and make others happy. We call these psychological skills.

Friendship-building, self-discipline, anger control and conflict-resolution, anxiety-reduction and courage skills are examples; later we'll talk about more.

Why do we call these skills? Because they can be taught and learned just as skills of driving, singing, acting, or cooking are. How do we learn skills?

One way is by seeing other people use them – seeing models and harnessing the power of imitation learning. Other ways include getting instructions, practicing, and getting feedback on our practice, especially positive feedback when we've

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done good practices. And there are other methods we'll get to later. The skills that it takes to be mentally healthy can be taught by the same methods used to teach other skills!

What's the main point of this section?

A. Positive feedback tends to create approach motivation, whereas criticism tends to create avoidance motivation. The first tends to be more desirable.

or

B. There are a bunch of skills that allow people to be mentally healthy, and these can be taught in the same ways as other skills.

9 Cognitive behavior therapy (or CBT) is a very effective form of psychotherapy that relies heavily upon teaching people psychological skills. Within the CBT tradition, there has been lots of use of psychoeducational manuals – books that teach people psychological skills. But books on psychological skills have been shown to be of great benefit sometimes, even when the person doesn't have a CBT therapist. For this project, I have written a bunch of manuals that teach psychological skills. I've tried to write them at a level that children can read and understand.

But if we were just to hand these manuals to children and say, "Please read these," very few children would actually read them. So the question becomes, how can we download this knowledge from the printed page to our students' brains!

What's a summary of this section?

A. Mental health comes from having psychological skills, which can be taught partly by reading books about these skills. A challenge is to help children to actually read the manuals.

or

B. It is widely stated that CBT is effective for various disorders, but that well-trained CBT therapists are not widely available.

10 Alternate reading injects two elements into manual-reading that are not present in the "Here, read this" method.

The first is turn-taking. People are built to like taking turns. We see this when preschoolers play on see-saws, when parents play catch with their children, and when people chat with each other. The tutor takes turns with the student reading numbered sections like the ones in these guidelines.

The second element is positive reinforcement of successes. The child answers the comprehension probe at the end of each section, and the tutor usually gets to reinforce this performance with enthusiasm and approval in the tone of voice.

While alternate reading goes on, reading aloud provides a wonderful way of improving reading skills. When reading aloud, the student gets auditory feedback on whether what is read makes sense, and is much more likely to self-correct misreads. The student also gets to practice speech, and this may improve regular spoken communication.

What's the major point of the section above?

A. While silent reading can be much faster than reading aloud, accuracy and comprehension are at the beginning more important than speed.

or

B. Alternate reading allows turn-taking, sets up lots of success experiences, and promotes progress in reading skill.

11 A big idea behind the psychological skills exercises is that of *fantasy rehearsal*. This refers to the fact that we can improve skills, or strengthen habits, by practicing in our imaginations, as well as from real life practice. Hundreds of studies have demonstrated this. Research has looked at sports skills, music skills, surgery techniques, getting over fears, and more. Most of the psychological skills exercises create an imaginary situation and allow the student to practice a skillful response to it. For example: the student with anger control problems may practice with lots of “provocation” situations. For each situation, the student practices coming up with rational, reasonable, nonviolent options and making the best choice possible. Such fantasy rehearsal can go a long way toward building up habits of good decision-making about provocations in real life.

What's a main idea of this section?

A. Psychological skills exercises usually draw upon the principle of fantasy rehearsal – we can gain skills by sending skillful patterns through our brains in fantasy.

or

B. A study found that almost all Olympic athletes in recent years have used fantasy rehearsal to improve their performances.

12 If you work with a child who needs to learn to read, there is a detailed manual on the techniques you will use. Let's very briefly mention the tasks of reading skill development. Much research has been done showing that we should help the child learn certain skills in order. First is oral language development. Tied for second are phonemic awareness and spatial awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to blend sounds together to make words, and to take words apart into their separate sounds. Spatial awareness is the ability to tell right from left and to tell images from their mirror images – particularly lower case b from lower case d. Next comes letter-sound correspondence: associating each of the 26 letters with a certain sound that the letter makes. Next is “word list work,” done with lists of words, ordered from simple to complex, with all the words in any given list using the same phonetic rule. Word list work consists of both “sounding and blending” these words, and reading off the words without “sounding” first. (Sounding and blending means saying the separate sounds and then saying the word, as in “buh aaah tuh bat.”) While the learner

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continues word list work, he or she starts with the stage of reading connected text, starting with very simple text and moving to more complex.

A major task of the reading teacher is to find the right places on this progression for the student to be working at, at any given time, and the right activities within each stage. The student should experience successes from start to finish, because the tutor picks challenges that are not too hard, not too easy, but just right. If the tutor does this expertly, the process can be quite enjoyable.

This best summary of this section is that

A. Alternate reading can greatly improve a child's reading skill, but only after the child has progressed to a certain point.
or

B. There are several stages in the process of learning to read, each of which has challenges and activities. Working at the right places on this progression can make the process both successful and pleasant.

13 In closing this overview chapter, let's list some ways that psychoeducational tutoring can help a child.

1. It can provide state-of-the-art reading instruction, which in turn helps the child achieve more and find school much more pleasant.

2. When reading instruction works, the child gets an experience in which hard work pays off greatly; this can have big effects on the child's work capacity.

3. When the tutor calls dependably and regularly, the child gets a powerful model of dependability and responsibility.

4. When the tutor speaks with enthusiasm and approval, the child is influenced by the model; this leads to more self-reinforcing self-talk, as well as more pleasant utterances to other people.

5. The contents of the instructional manuals give valuable information on how to be psychologically healthy, and many positive models of healthy patterns.

6. The psychological skills exercises let the child practice healthy patterns repeatedly.

7. If the child gets good at social conversation and comes to enjoy it, this can favorably affect the child's relationships for the rest of a lifetime.

8. By being there for the sessions day after day, the child practices appointment-keeping, a very important skill for success.

9. By doing a lot of reading, listening, and speaking, the child's language development is enhanced.

10. By turning the child's attention to his or her own positive examples of psychological skills, and trying to feel good about them, those positive examples can be reinforced, resulting in

more frequent positive examples and more happiness.

11. If the parent's attention also gets turned toward the child's positive examples, the child can be reinforced even more for them.

12. If the parent's attention gets turned toward the positive examples, the relationship between parent and child can be improved.

13. By answering many comprehension questions about much reading, the child prepares for tests of reading comprehension that will be on gatekeeping tests for many years to come.

This section makes the point that

A. There are many different mechanisms whereby psychoeducational tutoring can be helpful for a child – almost too many to remember.

or

B. Some approaches to mental health have put too much emphasis on the question of “What caused this problem,” and not enough on “How can we make things better?”

Chapter 2: The Mission

14 Human civilization has made staggering progress in science and technology. We have invented machines that make supplying the material needs of life infinitely easier for us than for our ancestors. We have inventions that can organize our information and knowledge unlike ever before. We can communicate at the speed of light with people all over the world. We know how to harness energy sources in the service of great production, as well as of great destruction.

But you have only to read a newspaper to see that great breakthroughs in creating a psychologically healthy society elude us. Senseless shooting rampages happen frequently. Almost one out of every hundred people in the U.S. population (about 2.3 million people) are incarcerated. Among our youth 15 to 19 years old, the three leading causes of death are accidents (including accidental drug overdoses), homicide, and suicide, almost all instances of which are potentially preventable.

What's the better summary of this section?

A. Society needs to come up with better alternatives than incarceration to

dealing with domestic violence; psychoeducation is the number 1 alternative.

or

B. Although humanity has made great technological progress, progress in creating psychological health lags far behind.

15 About 20% of adults in any given year are affected by a “mental illness,” not counting substance abuse. Somewhere between 10 to 20 percent of men, and 5 to 10 percent of women have “alcoholism” at some point in their lives. Excessive alcohol consumption causes about one in ten deaths among U.S. working age adults. In the U.S., more than two-thirds of adults are considered overweight or obese. About a fifth of adult U.S. males still smoke cigarettes, and about 15% of adult females smoke. Surveys find about half of U.S. residents report having had a mental disorder at some point in their lifetimes. My own guess is that almost all of the other 50% could still benefit in major ways from getting more “psychologically skilled.”

Much effort that human civilization could be putting into making life better goes toward attempting to protect ourselves from one another. As I write these words, the

U.S. has been at war for the last two decades. In recent years the U.S. has spent about 600 billion dollars per year on defense; all this could be spent in other ways if we lived in a world where people could get along and trust one another.

The great frontier for the human race is to help its members become more “psychologically skilled”: to get along with one another, to resolve conflicts, to make good decisions, to make kindness prevail and cruelty nearly nonexistent.

What’s the main point of this section?

A. The human race can communicate faster and more easily than ever before.
or

B. The great frontier for the human species is increasing the psychological skill of its members.

16 Psychological skills are the patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior that make things turn out well for oneself and others. They are being able to make good decisions, work productively toward worthy goals, enjoy helping others, form good relationships with others, use self-discipline, overcome fear, resolve conflict, control anger – the skills that tend to result in a “good life,” a life that one enjoys living and that helps other people enjoy their lives more. The psychoeducational curriculum goes into very great detail about what these skills are, and how to do them. The

skills that help people get over mental health problems are the *same* ones that help non-diagnosed people become happier and better people!

What goals do “psychologically skillful” behaviors tend to achieve according to this section?

A. Happiness for oneself, and increased happiness for the others that one affects.
or

B. Nonuse of chemical substances?

17 The word “skill” implies that the positive patterns can be taught and learned, and that they improve with practice, just as do skills of mathematics or of playing a musical instrument. There is an enormous body of evidence that psychological skills can be taught and learned. Countless scientific studies in the fields of “applied behavior analysis” and “cognitive behavior therapy” support the idea that people can learn skills that make them mentally healthier.

What’s the point of this section?

A. As the word “skill” implies, people can learn patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior that contribute to psychological health.
or

B. We use the word “skill” more broadly than most people are accustomed to using it.

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18 The most complete listing of psychological skills that I've written comprises 62 different abilities. But for this program, usually we think in terms of 16 groups of skills or principles. Here are the first 8:

1. Productivity (including concentration, work capacity or persistence, organization skills, skills of finding a good direction or purpose, and others)

2. Joyousness (including the ability to feel good about one's accomplishments, to feel good about one's own acts of kindness, to feel grateful for others' acts of kindness to you, the ability to appreciate the blessings of fate, the ability to play and enjoy humor, and others)

3. Kindness (caring about others' welfare, doing various acts that make others happier)

4. Honesty (telling the truth, not cheating or stealing, being dependable, keeping promises)

5. Fortitude (handling it when bad things happen, including handling separation and loss, handling frustration, handling criticism)

6a. Good individual decision-making (thinking before acting, listing options, predicting consequences, making good individual choices)

6b. Good joint-decision-making or conflict-resolution (resolving disagreements with others in rational ways, knowing how to be appropriately assertive as well as appropriately conciliatory)

7. Nonviolence (not hurting, not killing, working to produce a more nonviolent world)

8. Respectful talk (Maintaining the precedent of politeness, or at least civility, that disposes people to productive discourse)

Suppose someone breaks something that belongs to someone else. The person 1) feels bad, but does not get into an overly large state of negative emotion; 2) forthrightly tells the other person what happened, 3) continues to be polite when the other gets a little verbally abusive in response, and 4) works out with the other person a just way of making restitution. Which four skills would the person be able to celebrate, using the terms mentioned above?

A. fortitude, honesty, respectful talk, and good joint decision-making.

or

B. tolerating adversity, openness, diplomacy, and serenity?

19 Now we continue with the list of 16 skills and principles:

9. Friendship-building (Including social conversation, being a good listener, social graces, knowing how to play well)
10. Self-discipline (Foregoing pleasure or choosing to do something less pleasant than another choice, in order to achieve a long-term goal)
11. Loyalty (Keeping commitments to other people, honoring relationships and attachments, figuring out whom to be loyal to and whom not to)
12. Conservation (being thrifty, not wasting or spoiling the earth's resources)
13. Self-care (fostering one's own health and safety, being careful, and also being careful about one's effect on others)
14. Compliance (rule-following and obeying, when it is right to do so; deciding when to comply and when not to)
15. Positive fantasy-rehearsal (harnessing the power of imagination in a positive way, to practice doing good and wise things; avoiding rehearsing harmful actions through violent entertainment)
16. Courage (being brave enough to get help when needed, being brave enough to buck the crowd, overcoming anxiety

when necessary. Taking unwise risks is not part of courage skills.)

Someone hosts a party where lots of people already know each other, but one of the guests does not know many others. The host feels some fear of disapproval about breaking this closed circle. But out of consideration for the friend who is not part of the circle, the host assertively but politely introduces the friend to the larger circle of friends. The skills involved in this, according to the terms mentioned above, would include

- A. nonviolence, conservation, and positive fantasy rehearsal,
or
- B. loyalty, friendship-building, and courage?

20 A "big idea" is that mental health consists of a set of skills that can be taught and learned by *ordinary educational methods*. People can learn from reading or hearing straightforward instructions on how to do the skillful pattern well. Such instruction often includes models, or examples of how to do the skill expertly. They learn from practicing, using exercises that let them rehearse the skillful pattern. They learn from getting feedback on their practice, feedback that not only provides information about whether they are doing it right, but also provides motivation in the form of positive reinforcement for jobs well done.

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Students of math read the instructions in the textbook and/or hear the teacher's instructions. The instructions often include models demonstrating how to solve problems. They work practice exercises. They get feedback about their performance. Students of psychological skill can do exactly the same thing.

What's the point of this section?

A. It is good to have close to "errorless learning" so that the student doesn't practice the incorrect patterns.

or

B. People can learn psychological skills through ordinary educational methods: instruction, modeling, practice, and feedback.

21 Things aren't simple. Psychological skills education of the individual in need of help is not always the elegant cure for all behavioral problems. For example, sometimes the thing that would help someone's mental health the most is an improvement in *someone else's* psychological skills, or a change in the environment, as in the case of a child who is bullied.

It's also a fact that most mental disorders have a genetic contribution and many can be improved by drugs or other biological interventions.

What's the point of this section?

A. Biological factors and environmental circumstances, and not

just learning experiences, also influence people's mental health.

or

B. Predicting mental health is not simple, and this is why the prediction of violence is a problem that has not been solved and may never be.

22 But biological or genetic causation does *not* imply that biological treatment is the only thing that will work. For example, almost all scientists agree that autism is a brain disorder, caused by biologic factors, and is not caused, for example, by how parents speak to children. Yet the intervention for autism most supported by the evidence to date is intensive instruction in language skills and social skills.

As another example, there is a strong genetic contribution to anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders. But learning-based interventions for anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders are for many people considerably more effective than drug interventions.

What's the main point of this section?

A. A good number of studies have demonstrated a genetic contribution to anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders.

or

B. Even problems with clear biological causes may still be helped greatly by learning-based interventions.

23 Some hope that big breakthroughs in neuroscience and brain physiology will solve the conflicts and unhappiness of the world. There's not space here to debate this. However, there are already methods of teaching – including instruction, modeling, practice, and feedback – that we have found effective countless times. And we already have well-supported ideas that some patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior are more useful than others and should be taught. We needn't wait for some new way of tinkering with the physiology of the brain; we can already do much good by implementing what we already know about teaching psychological skills.

Let's imagine an alternate world in which expert piano-playing by just about every individual were a skill crucial to the survival of society. What would we do? Maybe it would be worthwhile to search for drugs and other ways to alter people's brains to produce better piano players – or maybe not. But meanwhile, we would certainly be wise to teach piano-playing to all children, using the same methods of instruction, modeling, practice, and feedback that have already proved highly effective. (I could have used ballroom dancing, mathematics, tennis, public speaking, or any other skill in this fanciful example.)

What proposition was the author arguing in this section?

A. We do not need to await breakthroughs in neuroscience that will solve the problems earlier described as humanity's great frontier. There is much that we know how to do, to promote psychological skills, right now.

or

B. Unlike many of the psychoeducational efforts of past centuries, we now have social science methods to actually measure the effectiveness of those methods.

24 The idea of psychoeducation, or training people in how to live well, may appear ancient or obvious. But if we actually started using this idea to its full potential, the results would be revolutionary. Our society largely deals with this idea by ignoring it.

I'm a psychiatrist; it is not rare that people are referred to me who have received drug treatment for anxiety or depression for *years*, but who have never once received *any* systematic training in how to overcome anxiety or depression.

People are punished, locked up, or executed for violent behaviors, without *ever* having received any systematic training in the skills of nonviolence and anger control.

Our school personnel are under tremendous pressure to teach mathematics well, lest we fall behind other countries in the achievement race, but skills of kindness, emotional regulation, relaxation skills, and so

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forth lose out in the competition for instructional time.

We seem to “get it” (in theory, if not in practice) that we all should exercise and eat a healthy diet and wear helmets while biking, and so forth, without waiting for a heart attack or serious brain injury before we start. But we don’t seem to get the same idea in mental health. It seems perfectly OK that people wait until mental health problems interfere with functioning before doing anything at all about mental health. Even when people seek help, they sometimes feel very alone, different, or ashamed as they work toward some improvement of psychological skills.

What’s the main point of this section?

A. Even though the idea of psychoeducation may be old, society largely acts as if it’s still undiscovered.
or

B. We can consider it a “skill” not only to know how to do something, but to know how to take pleasure from doing something. Thus a “motivation” can be considered a “skill.”

25 It is the exception, rather than the rule, that mental health treatment offers enough hours of systematic training to produce real mastery of the relevant skills. For children who come to a mental health clinic, the median number of visits (in the neighborhood of 5 visits, in some studies) is pitifully

fewer than the number necessary for real skill-learning.

One very widely cited research study (Walkup et al., 2008, *New England Journal of Medicine*) concluded that for adolescents with anxiety, the combination of drugs and cognitive behavior therapy worked better than either treatment alone. But people tend to think of “cognitive behavior therapy” as an entity rather than something like piano lessons or math class that has a variable quantity of practice hours associated with it. The therapy in the 2008 study took place in 14 hours of training sessions over 12 weeks. In a 2002 article I cited 3 meta-analyses of psychotherapy with children; the average total therapy times were 7, 10, and 7 hours in the studies cited in these three reviews.

Malcolm Gladwell’s book, *Outliers*, popularized research by Ericsson, which concluded that really high expertise in many skills is gained after a total of around 10,000 hours of practice. In a survey I read, various musicians thought that it would take students an average of about 1200 hours to learn to play the violin passably decently, and 50 hours to learn to play the harmonica. How likely is it that one can learn anger control or anxiety reduction or self-discipline well, in less time than it takes to learn the harmonica? Not likely, in my estimation.

If you’ve studied a foreign language, you may want to recall how fluent you were after 7 or 14 hours of

study. It is extremely beneficial and praiseworthy to study the effects of 14 hours of an intervention; my caution to the field is that we have almost no data on what could be done with 140 or 1400 hours. It could be that with such data, we would see much more clearly what may be the vast potential of psychoeducational interventions.

The number of training hours we can accumulate with phone tutoring may have a higher chance of really increasing skills than the number of hours offered in state-of-the-art research.

The point of this section is that

A. In phone tutoring, students get practice in reading and speaking at the same time that they practice psychological skills.

or

B. Skills take time to learn, and phone tutoring may be a feasible way to deliver enough hours of training to really make a difference.

26 By the way, a major exception to my point about the small investment of training time for most intervention studies is the landmark work of Ivar Lovaas and colleagues on autism. To quote from Lovaas, (1987): “Subjects were assigned to one of the two groups: an intensive-treatment experimental group... that received more than 40 hours of one-to-one treatment per week, or the minimal-treatment Control Group ... that received 10 hours or less

of one-to-one treatment per week. Both treatment groups received treatment for 2 or more years.” Lovaas’s intensive training group achieved almost unbelievably large effects from the intervention. The intensive training in these studies comprised about 4000 hours or more, and even the “minimal treatment” could have accumulated 1000 hours. Both of these totally dwarf the training times of almost all psychotherapy research. But even these times appear considerably lower than the total practice times most Olympic athletes have invested in their sports, or the total times most great mathematicians or musicians have spent educating themselves in their crafts.

What point is the author making in this section?

A. Once we start thinking of psychological health as a set of skills like math or piano playing, it becomes logical to allocate many hours to learning the craft, as exemplified by the Lovaas studies.

or

B. Simply talking about what is going on in one’s life is an important skill, but it may not constitute practice in the useful patterns the person needs to add to his or her repertoire.

27 Having made a comparison to therapy, I must interrupt the flow of thought briefly to mention a caution: we do not represent psychoeducational

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tutoring as therapy, or counseling, or in the same category as anything medical. Unlike a clinician, it's not the tutor's job to diagnose anything, or assess dangerousness, or to fully understand the reason for someone's problems, or to figure out how the student can overcome specific problems.

(Sometimes clinicians' doing all these things may actually crowd out time for skills training, but that's another story.)

There are licensure requirements for clinicians, and we want to make sure we don't present ourselves as clinicians practicing without a license! Please make sure our language is consistent with the fact that we are educators and not therapists. If a parent or child refers to your sessions as "counseling" sessions, please let them know very politely that this is tutoring and that counseling is something different.

What's the point of the above section?

A. Make it clear that what you are doing is not considered counseling, therapy, or clinical intervention.

or

B. Almost no studies have looked at what happens when people receive hundreds of hours of psychological skills training.

28 Suppose that our society really wanted to act on the "big idea" that psychological health, happiness and ethical behavior all are enhanced by skills teachable by instruction, modeling, practice, and feedback. What

would we be doing? We would fashion ways to deliver large quantities of instruction, modeling, practice, and feedback to almost all children, using well-thought-out psychoeducational curricula.

But it could be that the best way to do this is not through schools as they currently exist. Many psychological skills (as well as academic skills!) are best learned in the context of a positive, caring, one-to-one relationship. A tutor, not a classroom teacher, may have the best chance of teaching psychological skills effectively.

What does the author surmise in this section?

A. That even though psychological skills should be taught to everyone, schools, as they currently exist, may not be the best place to teach them.

or

B. That children with ADHD have been found to have far better behavior in one-to-one interactions than in classrooms.

29 Why is a one-to-one relationship so important? There are many reasons. For one: many children are consumed with the competition for attention, and have learned that they can get attention by unpleasant behaviors. In one-to-one tutoring, the struggle for attention is eliminated – the child has the tutor's undivided attention throughout the session.

Much research has taught us that positive, kind, friendly, supportive relationships are of crucial importance in children's development. The most important relationship a child has is with his or her parent or parents, and our project wishes to strengthen that relationship, and in no way compete with it. But if you, the tutor, are able to cultivate a very positive relationship with the child, one that you both enjoy thoroughly, everything in the written curriculum will be much more effective. Being a dependable, non-critical, warm, empathic, patient person in the child's life can be of enormous benefit. This is the part of tutoring that depends the most on your use of your own personality.

What's a summary of this section?

A. In many ways, your cultivating a very positive one-to-one relationship with the child is the most crucial part of the tutoring.

or

B. Evolution never really prepared human beings for functioning well in large classrooms – for almost all of human evolution, apprenticeships were how people learned what they needed to know.

30 Some people would say, "It is wasteful to devote so much time and effort to an individual child. We should discover methods that don't waste so much labor." I believe that this attitude is wrong.

Our society wastes so much labor that one-to-one efforts with children are among the least wasteful. We have huge industries for the production of alcohol, cigarettes, and illegal drugs, and then we have other industries (e.g. part of health care, part of law enforcement) attempting to cancel out the effects of the recreational drug industry. We have a huge industry producing violent entertainment, and other industries, including the prison industry, trying to combat the effects of a violent culture. We have a junk food industry, and a corresponding weight loss industry attempting to undo the effects of the junk food industry. Television and video games absorb billions of hours of people's time and effort per year. Training children in psychological skills, even if it is very labor-intensive, is among the least wasteful activities our society carries out!

I've experienced first hand that teaching psychological skills is good for the teacher. Every time I go over psychological skills exercises with a child, I do them in my own mind also, and the practice helps me. Every time I reread one of the sections of the manuals, I remind myself of something worth thinking about. I hope that you will find that psychoeducational tutoring is a good way to continue the unending efforts that we should all be carrying out, to improve our own functioning.

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What's the main idea of this section?

A. We *do* have the person-power for individual tutoring on a large scale, and it is one of the least wasteful activities anyone carries out.

or

B. A very large amount of evidence points to the conclusion that violent entertainment increases real-life violence.

31 Psychoeducational tutoring is best carried out by “spaced practice,” i.e. fairly short sessions carried out very frequently, rather than “massed practice,” i.e. longer sessions carried out less frequently. This is often a crucial factor. A child who can tolerate 10 minutes of a certain drill every day, and even enjoy it, may totally rebel and refuse if asked to continue the drill for 60 minutes once a week.

What's the better summary of this section?

A. Spaced practice is usually better than massed practice.

or

B. When doing “sounding and blending” drills, 10 minutes is about as much as many children can tolerate.

32 Some of our instruction consists of helping our students learn words for various ways of thinking, feeling, or behaving. When a student has certain concepts in the vocabulary, the student is able better to decide for himself or

herself how to respond to situations. In a possibly dangerous situation, a child may think: “Is this a time for skills of courage, or skills of self-care?” – but only if the words for those skills are in the working vocabulary. After the child has made a mistake, the child may think, “Should I continue to get down on myself, or should I move to goal-setting and listing options and choosing?” In a social conversation, the child may rapidly calculate, “Do I want to use a reflection or a follow-up question?” When a child is trying to get over a fear, the child may think, “Do I want to use muscle relaxation now, or fantasy rehearsal?” But in all these examples, these thoughts are possible only if the child has the concepts in the vocabulary. Fairly young children can learn the meanings of these words, if they are given enough concrete examples.

What's the point of this section?

A. What the best response is to a given situation depends partly on the culture that one is surrounded by.

or

B. Some of the most helpful instruction consists of teaching students words for concepts, so that they can think more clearly about what they want to do.

33 When we set out to improve one skill, we almost always find it necessary to teach others. For example, suppose we are trying to help an overly aggressive person learn nonviolence.

The skills of fortitude, good decisions, kindness, friendship-building, self-discipline, and respectful talk contribute centrally to the success of our mission. When we teach joyousness to a depressed person, productivity and friendship-building are central, because taking pleasure in one's accomplishments and in one's relationships are key to happiness. But we shouldn't leave out good decisions ... and so forth. For this reason, over the years I have become less a fan of making a "diagnosis" of the most important skills for a given person, and more of a fan of delivering broad-based, overall skills training.

What's the idea of this section?

A. We work most efficiently by spending lots of time figuring out the highest priority skills for each individual, and focusing on only those skills.

or

B. It may be most efficient simply to deliver training in all psychological skills, no matter which problems the person presents with, because the skills are so interdependent.

34 As this chapter comes to a close, could you please spend a few minutes envisioning the answer to the question: What would the world be like if there could be a very successful way of teaching psychological skills to every child, starting very early in life? For

your convenience in doing this, let's list the 16 groups of skills here:

1. productivity
2. joyousness
3. kindness
4. honesty
5. fortitude
6. good decisions (individual and joint)
7. nonviolence
8. respectful talk
9. friendship-building
10. self-discipline
11. loyalty
12. conservation
13. self-care
14. compliance
15. positive fantasy rehearsal
16. courage

Please imagine what life would be like if every person were patiently and kindly taught these skills from early in life onward.

Moving the world a tiny step closer to the world you envision, when you do this exercise, is the mission of this project.

Which statement below is most consistent with the mission of our project?

A. Winning isn't the main thing—it's the only thing, and with enough determination, we can dominate the competition.

or

B. A country, or a planet, is better or worse off in proportion to the

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psychological skills of the people; with enough determination, we can raise those skills.

Chapter 3: Three Stages of Growth Through Psychoeducation

35 In the previous chapter we listed psychological skills that are important for people to learn. This chapter will tell three stages, or three types of tasks, that you can help your student work through, in order to improve in these skills.

As in most “stage theories” of anything, there is not a rigid rule that you have to do them in order. You can work on all three of these at once. And you can be working on one of these tasks for a certain skill, while working on a different task for another skill. Nonetheless, there is a certain logical order to these: the first is generally easier than the second, which is easier than the third.

The author states that

- A. The order of the tasks in these stages is chosen at random,
- or
- B. The order of tasks is chosen according to level of difficulty.

36 The first stage, or task, is called classification and downloading models.

Classification means picking the words that correctly describe an example that someone presents to you.

In this task, someone (such as the author of one of our manuals) gives an example, and the student decides what it's an example of. (The example is more concrete, i.e. lower on the “abstraction

ladder,” and the classifying word is a little higher on the abstraction ladder.)

The question may be like this. Someone does a lot of work cleaning up their house. Is that person using the skill of productivity, or honesty?

Or like this: Someone thinks, "Hooray, I did a good job on that!" Is that type of thought called awfulizing, celebrating your own choice?

Or like this: Someone says to someone else, “If I understand you right, you'd like to get together with your friend, but you're worried you wouldn't have time to do your work – am I right?” Is this way of listening a reflection, or positive feedback?

The purpose of this section was to

- A. explain why the first stage is only the beginning,
- or
- B. to communicate what is meant by classifying and downloading models, and to give some simple examples of how this might be done in the manuals?

37 A student demonstrates beginning competence in this by getting the questions right in the programmed manuals. A useful step toward greater competence comes when the student can recite certain classification categories from memory (e.g. the 16 skills and principles, the 12 thoughts, the 4 ways of listening, the 7 criteria for joint-decision

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making (Dr. L.W. App), the 8 steps in decision-making (SOIL ADDLE), and when the child can spontaneously classify phenomena that are observed.

Every field of study has its own specialized vocabulary that lets people think and talk more clearly about that field. The terms that students learn by the classifying task help them to think more efficiently about psychological skills.

What's a point that is stated, and not just implied, in the above section?

A. Examples of summarizing complex phenomena in one word, in the service of skill-learning, include the “fork” in chess, or the “chasse” in dance, or the “price to earnings ratio” in investing.

or
B. It is useful for the student sooner or later to commit certain lists to memory, such as the 16 skills, the 12 thoughts, the 7 criteria for joint decision, and so forth.

38 By downloading models I refer to the process of getting a bunch of concrete examples of the concepts into the student's memory bank. The point of reading lots of stories about psychological skills and identifying which skill is exemplified is not just to practice classifying – it 's to store away lots of templates for positive patterns. When we make up our own hypothetical examples, we are aided by having lots of examples stored in memory. When we choose real-life behaviors, there is probably some largely unconscious

process of sifting through the templates stored in memory, to choose one appropriate for the situation. And also, the abstract concepts (e.g. skills, thoughts, ways of listening, etc.) are more meaningful and more permanently remembered, the more concrete examples we have taken in for each of them.

Thus if a student seems to have mastered classification of skills stories very quickly, that doesn't mean that the rest of them should be skipped. Downloading models should go on long after classification becomes easy.

A tutor says, “This student gets all the questions right for classifying examples of the 16 skills. I think we should skip the rest of the skills stories in the manual.” Would the author tend to agree?

A. No, because the stories serve the function of providing models for downloading as well as practice in classification.

or

B. Yes, because it is more efficient if you move on to the next step as soon as you have mastered the step you're on.

39 Stage 2 is generation, or making up your own examples.

The student and tutor usually make up examples together, taking turns.

The introductions to doing generation tasks together may sound like this:

"Let's do the 'skills stories' exercise. I'll make up an example of someone doing some productivity, and then it will be your turn for joyousness."

Or like this:

"Let's do the four thought exercise. The situation is that someone has lost a piece of paper that gives them permission to go on a school field trip. It's your turn; can you come up with an example of not awfulizing, goal setting, listing options and choosing, and celebrating your own choice, all about that situation?"

The student demonstrates competence in the generation task by making up skills stories, making up examples of the 12 thoughts or the 4 thoughts, making up reflections in the reflections exercise, making up options in the brainstorming options exercises, and by many of the other exercises.

Rather than being given a concrete example and telling the abstract concept, as in the classifying task, the child is given a more abstract concept and comes up with their own concrete examples in the generation task.

Which of the following is an example of the generation task?

A. The book gives you a story, and you tell what skill it's an example of.

or

B. You're given a skill, and you make up a story that exemplifies it.

40 What's the point of generation? It's using the principle of fantasy rehearsal. For example, each time you're given a provocation situation and you practice making up example of thoughts that are "not awfulizing, goal-setting, listing options and choosing, and celebrating your own choice," you are practicing using such thought patterns in response to provocations. Often it takes many, many fantasy rehearsals before the habit strength of the new pattern gets high enough to compete, in real-life situations, with the habit strength of an old pattern. If someone says, "He can make up examples, but he just doesn't do them in real life," part of the answer is to keep making up hundreds more examples, i.e. to keep on doing the generation task, to let the habit strength build up through fantasy rehearsal.

What does the author appear to mean by the principle of fantasy rehearsal?

A. That when you practice thoughts, feelings, or behaviors in your imagination, you increase their habit strength and make them more accessible for use in real life.

or

B. That a concept like "getting down on yourself" is more abstract than a particular thought like "I made a mistake when I put off doing my assignment"; the more abstract concept can refer to many more "referents" than the more concrete concept.

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41 Stage 3 is generalization, or doing good examples in real life. In this stage, you go out in life and use the things you've learned to do smart and good things.

Examples may sound like this:

“[In real life] My mom asked me to stop playing with a screen, and I got the urge to speak disrespectfully. But I resisted that urge and did what I was told and used a pleasant voice. I thought, 'This is a great celebration for me to report later on!’”

The student demonstrates competence in the generalization stage, partly through the real-life interactions with the tutor, for example having better and better social conversations, being more and more polite and cooperative, being more able to admit imperfection and seek to improve, etc. A second way is through the student's reported celebrations. In the celebrations exercise, the student reports the good examples they have done in real life (and the tutor does the same thing!) The celebrations exercise is a very important one, because it's meant to promote generalization. A third way to assess competence in the third stage is by what the parent reports: is the child getting better at psychological skills, in the parent's estimation? Is the parent seeing more and more celebration-worthy behaviors, and fewer and fewer undesirable behaviors? Does the parent rate the child's psychological skill levels more highly? Tutors can informally ask parents about how we are doing in these goals; we will formally assess parents'

opinions from time to time. A fourth is by what teachers report: is the child more successful and cooperative in schoolwork, and better at getting along with peers? For most children we will try to get periodic teacher feedback as well.

What is meant by the stage or task of generalization?

A. Taking the positive patterns learned about through classification and downloading models, and rehearsed through generation, and actually enacting those positive patterns in real life.

or

B. Hearing several concrete examples, and deducing the more general or abstract concept of which they are examples?

42 Success in the generalization task depends very strongly on whether the child gets reinforced or punished or “non-reinforced” for the positive examples he or she starts doing in real life. If parents and peers respond positively, the child is greatly helped to succeed in this stage.

If a tutor often asks a parent for the celebration-worthy examples the parent has seen, the tutor might, simply by asking, influence the parent to watch more carefully for these examples, and maybe even to reinforce the child more enthusiastically for them. If this happens, generalization to real life is much more likely to occur, because the positive examples bring a payoff to the student.

This section stated that the third stage is much more likely to be successful when

A. The child's positive examples get reinforced by the people the child is with.

or

B. The child does not see a lot of models on TV or video games that exemplify the opposite of the positive patterns.

Chapter 4: Commitment, Appointment-keeping, Positive Emotional Climate, and Authority

43 The purpose of this chapter is to go over with you the first four important characteristics of a good tutor:

1. Commitment and consistency over time.
2. Appointment-keeping
3. Promoting a positive emotional climate
4. Maintaining authority

What are the four characteristics of being a good tutor that this chapter discusses, using other terms?

A. Being steadfast through the months, keeping promises about session times, having a cheerful and celebratory feeling tone, and remaining in charge.

or

B. Speaking clearly, reading with expression, communicating well with supervisors, and doing the exercises with proficiency?

Commitment and Consistency Over Time

44 What is a psychoeducational tutor asked to commit to? You make appointments with the family and call the student on the phone for 30 minute sessions, 6 days a week. You learn lots of things about how to make these

sessions as worthwhile as possible. You use the curriculum that the program furnishes rather than making up your own; nonetheless there is lots of room for personal judgment and the expert use of your own personality. You keep records of what you've done, and you report them to the administration of the project once a month. You reply in a timely manner to communications from supervisory staff. And you manage to maintain as high morale in your student and yourself as is possible.

The standard length of time for a phone session is

A. 20 minutes,

Or

B. 30 minutes?

45 Donating "only" 30 minutes a day, day after day, may not sound like much, but it means that many spur of the moment things you might do will have to be interrupted by your session. The job of psychoeducational tutor is not easy. It requires lots of patience, steadfastness, organization skills, and being able to psyche yourself up into an upbeat mood regularly and on schedule.

The job of psychoeducational tutor is a chance to do lots of good for a child. It's also a chance to do harm. If

you form a close relationship with a child and the child comes to depend upon the regularity and dependability of the sessions for emotional support and psychological growth, and then you terminate your job prematurely, the child may have a hard time switching to a different tutor. Tutors are not interchangeable. Many children make strong attachments to individuals, not to a “program.” If you are not sure whether you want to stick with the program, one way that you can help out is to be a substitute for other tutors. You can also study the manuals and come to in-person or electronic meetings, and let the idea percolate. Please don’t start up with your own student until you have soul-searched enough to know you want to stick with it.

The sentiment expressed in this section is that

A. if you’re in doubt about whether psychoeducational tutoring is for you, give it a try and see,

or

B. if you’re in doubt about whether psychoeducational tutoring is for you, come to meetings, study manuals, and substitute for other tutors until you feel sure you want to commit.

46 Before starting up the job of psychoeducational tutoring, think carefully about what will happen in your life over the next year:

Is there a chance of your spending time abroad?

May you get a leading part in a play?

May you run for office?

May you take an extremely demanding course load?

May you take on a new job that is draining and difficult?

May you get into a relationship with someone who wouldn’t appreciate your taking out tutoring time?

Is there someone whom you may need to take care of, whose care would demand so much time that you couldn’t tutor?

Are you a “spontaneous” rather than “planned” type of person, who can’t predict exactly what will go on in your life very far ahead of time?

People can still tutor even when the answers to some of these have been “yes,” but it takes more dedication and sacrifice to do so. Consider carefully, because it is very important not to have to tell the student “good-bye” prematurely.

What’s a summary of this section?

A. There’s no need for punitive action on the part of the tutor in this project.

or
B. Take inventory of the things that could pull you away from this post prematurely, and when in doubt, don’t make a commitment you can’t keep.

47 When we have contacts with families, it is extremely disappointing

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for OPT administrators to ever hear that the sessions have not been going on for a while, without our knowledge. If something on your end, or on the student's end, is going to interrupt the regular schedule of the sessions, we need to hear from you as soon as possible. We need to do what we can to patch the interruption, perhaps by arranging a substitute tutor.

A tutor is going to take a vacation, and the child would like a little break. The tutor works out with the family to restart the sessions after vacation, without bothering the supervisor with this. This is

- A. Just fine,
- or
- B. Not OK?

48 If you need to miss one or more days of tutoring, please let your supervisor know as far ahead of time as possible. We want to find a substitute among the other tutors and plan it out with us and the other tutor as far ahead of time as possible. As the group of tutors becomes more of a close-knit club, working out substitutions will get easier and easier for us.

What does far ahead of time mean? Even though "I need a substitute tomorrow" or "today" is often a sentence that results from insufficient planning, it is still much better than no communication at all! The more time we have to plan, the less such a notification is disruptive and

unpleasant for a supervisor to deal with. With notification ahead of time, we can communicate by email and no one needs to change plans on the spur of the moment.

But to repeat, even a notification at the last minute is vastly preferred to none at all! Please do NOT just cancel sessions without letting us know.

The purpose of this section is to

- A. talk about the need to prepare the student for the tutor's leaving the job, or
- B. talk about the need to give the supervisor notice, as far ahead of time as possible, if you can't keep a session?

49 It's important to avoid a communication blackout. If we don't watch out, there will be times when, for example, the family's phone that the tutor has been calling will malfunction, and the tutor can't connect with the family. The family won't know the tutor's phone number or email address and can't connect with the tutor. So the child will go without the tutoring for several days or longer, and the continuity and dependability of the tutoring will be severely weakened.

There is a good way to prevent this. Get every available piece of contact information from the family: every phone number, parents' work phone numbers, every family member's email address, and the family's mailing address. If there are restrictions on the use of the parents'

work phone numbers, write these down. Likewise, give the family every phone number and email address with which to contact you. If the phone goes unanswered when you call at the appointed time, go straight to your contact information data and leave messages via all other methods of communication. If these don't get answered, we can "even" send a non-electronic letter to the family!

What is a summary of this section?

A. Make sure to communicate in a very clear and upbeat voice with family members as well as with the child.
or

B. To prevent communication blackouts, write down every existing piece of contact information for the family and give them each of yours, and use these when the phone is not answered.

50 In ideal circumstances, you would be able to keep working with your student as long as your student needs work. However, some students need psychoeducational tutoring for a matter of years, and you may not be available for that long. The key thing to do in order to quit well is to give plenty of advance notice. Let your supervisor know as soon as there is any possibility that you may be quitting. You should let us know at least a month ahead of time, so that you can help to train and prepare your successor, and you can have a time in which you and your

successor overlap with each other. Two months is much better. You can let your student have plenty of time to get used to the idea that you are leaving.

But if drastic life changes strike, and if you need to resign immediately, at least let us, the family, and the child know, in a final conversation with each. To simply stop calling without returning phone calls is highly unprofessional and unethical.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Give the child and the family as much time as you possibly can to adjust to your leaving the post, and communicate clearly with everyone about it.

or

B. If there are any postings on the Internet in your name that you think would not be good for a child student to read, take them down.

51 If you conduct a "good termination" with the child, with plenty of advance planning, it's good if you can build in the possibility of staying in touch once in a while over the long term. If it is possible for you to stay in touch with your student after you finish the tutoring, e.g. by calling once every three months, that is great. If you can offer to your student the option of calling you up and chatting with you when the student gets an urge to, this too softens the pain of separation for the student sometimes; I have yet to see a child abuse this privilege.

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What's the attitude toward contact between tutor and students after a well-conducted termination?

A. It's natural for friends to keep in touch, and if the tutor can do that, that is another way of helping the child.

or

B. Once separation has occurred, you shouldn't make it more difficult for the child by being back in touch.

Communication in the Virtual Workplace

52 If tutors and supervisors all came together in a building and worked in physical proximity of each other, we could just knock on office doors when there is an important issue on which to communicate. In the virtual workplace that we inhabit with this organization, we rely on electronic devices.

Sometimes a plethora of messages leave any one message lost in an overwhelmingly large set.

Despite this problem, please, when an administrator sends you an email or leaves a voice message or sends a text (or all three) asking one or more questions, please try to answer soon. If we send an important message in one of those ways, please reply so as to let us know the message was received. Being able to communicate is very important for an organization. An organization where employees do not

respond promptly to employers' questions or requests can't run well.

The "word to the wise" in this section is

A. Please reply in a timely way to your messages.

Or

B. Please let us know when a student needs a new book.

Appointment-Keeping

53 If you haven't yet been able to accomplish the habit of keeping appointments very dependably, you should deselect yourself from the tutoring before you begin. Because the development of a strong, stable relationship between the tutor and the student is so key to the tutoring, it is critical that you assess yourself in terms of your ability to "wear the ball and chain" of daily appointments before committing yourself.

What's a summary?

A. Psychoeducational tutoring is a wonderful opportunity for disorganized people to learn to keep appointments.
or

B. The job of Psychoeducational Tutor is for people who already know how to keep appointments dependably?

54 It has been said that "Eighty percent of life consists in showing up." The

basic unit of psychoeducational tutoring is the “session.” An appointment is made between tutor and student (or student’s parent) for a certain time. It’s good for the child to stop doing other things and wait for the call. Thus it’s best that the tutor calls at the exact minute of the appointed time. Second best is to be only one or two minutes off. That way the student or the parent answers, with the student ready for the session, rather than the student getting involved in something else while waiting for the tutor.

If one is to be a tutor, it is crucial to have excellent habits of “appointmentology.” Here are the rules of appointmentology.

1. Well over 95% of the time, simply keep appointments without changing them. Make the commitment to the time and keep it within a minute or two.
2. If you discover that you can’t keep an appointment, let your supervisor know, as far ahead of time as possible. Let the family know ahead of time of any change that will occur, and make sure the substitute, if there is one, knows what to do.
3. If you can’t keep the appointment or get a substitute, contact the family as soon as you discover that you can’t keep the appointment. See if you can reschedule for a different time that day (first choice) or reschedule for the next day (second choice). If you can’t get in

touch with the family, leave messages by every channel that you have: land line voice mail, cell phone voice mail, and email. Be proactive about getting all these numbers and addresses as soon as you start the tutoring – don’t passively wait for someone to give them to you. Be prepared so that you can make valiant efforts to contact the family before the time of the session.

What’s a summary of these first three rules?

- A. Use an appointment calendar, check your appointment calendar regularly, and do not fail to write down the appointment in your calendar, or
- B. keep the appointments, get a substitute if you can’t, and let the family know far ahead of time if you have to reschedule?

55 The list of appointmentology rules now continues.

4. Try never, never to be a “no show,” with no-showing defined as having the family expect you to call and your simply not calling. No-showing is the cardinal sin of appointmentology.
5. If you should ever do a no-show, contact the family as close as possible to the instant you have realized this. Apologize sincerely and reschedule. No-showing and then not being in contact is an even worse violation of good appointmentology than a simple

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no-show. Also please let your supervisor know what happened, being proactive in notifying the supervisor yourself rather than having the family notify the supervisor first.

6. In order to reduce further the chance of no-shows, give the family your phone number and email address, and encourage them to contact you if by some improbable set of circumstances you should ever no-show. If they contact you at the time of the session, apologize and hold the session. If they contact you after the appointment time, apologize greatly and reschedule for as soon as possible.

In this section the point was made that if you ever should no-show the priority is to

- A. contact the family immediately to apologize and reschedule,
- or
- B. remind yourself to keep better written track of your appointments?

56 The last appointmentology guideline is as follows:

7. Put a great priority upon your establishing and keeping a reputation as someone who can be counted on to call when you have committed yourself to call. If you know yourself well enough to know that you can't keep such commitments with very, very infrequent exceptions, please deselect

yourself from being a tutor before you even begin!

Here's a very important word to the wise: ***Use the alarm clock function of your cell phone!*** Phone appointments are easy to forget, because you don't have to get ready, transport yourself, etc. Use technology to help yourself remember. Use of an alarm is a great aid to appointment-keeping.

In the course of interviewing and training for the job of tutor, we will ask you to contact us by phone at appointed times. If you have trouble keeping 100% of these phone appointments, on time, this is probably a good reason for you to decide not to consider actually starting up with a child.

The author has the attitude that

- A. appointmentology is something that tutors learn to do throughout the course of the tutoring, just as they learn to do more and more psychological skills exercises,
- or
- B. appointmentology should be a very well-practiced skill before someone even begins telephone tutoring.

57 It is usually easier for you to follow these rules if you let the force of habit and routine work in your favor. If at all possible, see if you and the family can get into a set routine of appointment times rather than not knowing the time of the session until the day before.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Appointment-keeping is easier if the session occurs at a regular time.

or

B. If the child refuses to follow your directions in the session, politely end the session early and talk the situation over with your supervisor.

58 What if the problem is not your appointmentology skills, but those of the family? The standards for families are much less stringent than those for tutors; still, if families cannot keep appointments at least 80% of the time, in most cases we can't continue the tutoring. If this is the case, please keep careful records of what happened, and communicate with your supervisor about what to do. In most cases the supervisor will communicate with the family and see if a plan can be made to salvage the tutoring. If the family has too many "no-shows," the tutoring with that family must end.

What should the tutor do if the family no-shows often for appointments?

A. Keep careful records and be in touch with the supervisor, who will be in touch with the family,

or

B. wait to let the family contact the tutor?

59. If we're getting no-shows, here is a very important principle: *the family's responsibility for appointment-keeping lies with the parent, not the child.*

Many children have their own phones, and many parents will want to delegate to the child the responsibilities of answering the phone and making and keeping the appointments. Some parents will want to blame the child if there are no-shows. Your supervisor will be happy to communicate gently with the parent and explain that appointment-keeping for the tutoring is a parent responsibility.

If a child has their own phone number, you should also have the parent's phone number. If at the appointed time there is no answer, please try to call the parent's phone. If there is still no answer, please send a text to the parent's phone number, the parent's email, and to your supervisor's email saying that you called at the appointed time and there was no answer, and proposing a time for the next day.

If you ask to speak to the parent at the end of the session and the child says that the parent can't talk, and there is no adult in charge that you can speak with, please call the parent's phone number a couple of minutes after hanging up. If there is still no answer, send a text to the parent's phone, to the parent's email, and to your supervisor's email saying what happened.

What's the most important principle of this section?

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A. It's important for children gradually to learn the skills of appointment-keeping.

or

B. For our tutoring, appointment-keeping is the parent's responsibility, not the child's.

60 In your job as psychoeducational tutor, you don't want to "enable" the families you work with to get sloppy with appointment keeping skills by over-indulging requests to change the time. Suppose that you call at the appointed time, to be greeted with a request like, "Could you call back in half an hour?" Usually the response to this should be, "No, but we can reschedule for tomorrow." You have set aside your time and have planned, often at considerable sacrifice of your own convenience. You want your clients to appreciate this and not take it for granted. If necessary, explain this to the child and to the parents. Let them know that one way both tutor and student can affirm the importance of the activity is by sticking to the plan for the appointment time.

If the student wants you to call back in half an hour, usually the response should be

A. "Sure, I'm flexible," if you do have the time,

or

B. "No, the time we had scheduled is the time I have available today. But if

you can't do it, we can schedule another time."

61 What if the family is in the middle of something, and wants you to call back in ten minutes? Usually the response should be that this is fine, but the session will have to end at the usual time. In other words, don't feel the need to go over the end time because you acceded to a request to start a little late. If the family can't get going on time, the session will be shortened a little bit.

If you have an appointment from 7 to 7:30, and the family asks you to start the session ten minutes late, what time should you usually end the session?

A. 7:40,

or

B. 7:30?

62 It's a different situation when the family contacts you ahead of time to change the appointment time. Suppose the appointment time is at 5:30 pm today, and you get a text message at 10:00 am asking if it would be possible for you to change the time to 7:30 pm. Now you can reschedule if it's convenient for you, and not reschedule if it isn't. But you aren't reinforcing the child or family for bad appointment-keeping skills. What you don't want to reinforce is the behavior wherein you have kept the appointment, and you get a request to reschedule when you call at the appointed time. You don't mind

reinforcing a proactive rescheduling by the family.

This section is meant to draw a clear distinction between

A. reschedulings that the family initiates well prior to the session, and reschedulings that are initiated when you call at the appointed time, or

B. a rescheduling for an important reason, versus a rescheduling for a more frivolous reason?

63 It's important to negotiate postponements or reductions or reschedulings of appointments with the parent, not the child. You don't want to get a child into the habit of postponing an appointment because the child is in the middle of a video game! So if you call, and if the child asks you to call back in ten minutes, you should talk with the parent or guardian or caretaker about what's going on.

If you call and the child says, "We're in the middle of something now; could you call back in ten minutes?" Which of the following would be better?

A. Sure. I'll call back in ten minutes. or

B. Changes in appointment times are handled by the parent; could I speak with your mom or dad, please?

64 If the family is failing to show or needing to reschedule for a significant

fraction of appointments, please keep careful records of when those appointments are. Please let your supervisor know. You or your supervisor will very likely want to speak with the child's parent sooner, rather than later, and will want to go over with the parent the fact that the tutoring can't continue if over 20% of the appointments are not kept.

Which two things did this section recommend that the tutor do if the family is missing lots of appointments?

A. call at random times so as to get more sessions in, and have longer sessions,

or

B. keep careful records of when the appointments are and which were kept and not kept, and talk with your supervisor early?

Promoting a Positive Emotional Climate

65 What do we mean by "positive emotional climate?" We mean a relationship where lots of approval, and very little disapproval, are communicated; where people are kind to each other; where people listen to each other; where people enjoy making each other happy; where people are a source of enjoyment for each other.

The emotional climate of a relationship depends upon both people. Each person makes their separate

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contribution. As a tutor, you want your own contribution to the emotional climate with the child and family to be as positive as possible.

What's a summary of this section?

A. A "positive reinforcer" is defined as something that comes after a behavior, that increases the likelihood of that behavior's occurring again.

or

B. Tutors, please make your own contribution to the emotional climate with the child and family as positive as possible.

66 Lots of people have experienced relationships where people seem to communicate their caring about the other person by teasing, being sarcastic, or giving good-natured insults to the other person. We strongly recommend *not* doing this in tutoring sessions. We recommend avoiding irony, but just saying what you mean, and giving approval in straightforward ways. If you give gently teasing jabs at the student, you may find that the student responds to this precedent by insulting you in a very disrespectful way. I believe that it has happened that tutors have spurred disrespectful talk by the student without even realizing how they did it.

What's a main point of this section?

A. When you do the celebrations exercise with your student, use

discretion in deciding what parts of your life to talk about.

or

B. Please don't be sarcastic with your student, even if you have lots of fun being sarcastic with friends.

67 A very important job of a tutor is to project a spirit of optimism, enthusiasm, joyousness, and approval in the tone of voice. In face-to-face tutoring you can provide positive reinforcement and approval to a child by patting the child on the back, giving a thumbs-up gesture, nodding, smiling, and all sorts of other signals that are impossible to do over the phone. Over the phone, you must rely upon the auditory channel. Between the semantic content of what you say and the musical inflection of your voice, the latter is more important in helping the child feel approved of.

The main idea of this section is that

A. it is crucial for the telephone tutor to convey approval through the musical inflection of the voice,

or

B. positive reinforcement is defined as the stimuli that follow a behavior that tend to increase the probability that the behavior will be repeated.

68 We can rate the amount of approval conveyed in the musical tones of someone's voice (this is separate from the semantic meaning of the utterance).

We can use a rating system with three gradations:

neutral

small to moderate approval, or

large approval.

Neutral tones are monotone, not excited, rather robot-like. Small to moderate approval tones are cheerful, happy, peppy, and upbeat. Large approval tones convey a real feeling of great positive excitement about something the child did. Use a lot of small to moderate approval in your sessions, as a baseline way of being. Give larger approval the larger the child's accomplishment. Don't use neutral or disapproving tones for very long without a really good rationale for doing so.

The main idea of this section is that

- A. it has been found that raters can reliably distinguish between different degrees of approval in tones of voice, or
- B. tones of voice should be applied in a differential way, with small to moderate approval as a baseline, larger approval tied to larger accomplishments, and neutral to disapproving tones reserved for select circumstances.

69 If you're not in the habit of using lots of upbeat, cheerful, enthusiastic tones of voice, you will need to remind yourself every session of the desirability of doing this. But if you conscientiously and consistently apply these tones of voice enough, you will find that doing so will change your own life, and your interactions with people in general. You will find that people tend to be more enthusiastic and approving back to you.

In the psychoeducational tutoring enterprise, you may find that your enthusiastic excitement makes the difference between the child's being able to continue in the tutoring and to persevere in the process, versus the child's complaining and whining and eventually dropping out. Projecting joyousness in the tone of voice is one of the supreme characteristics of the expert tutor.

The main idea of this section is that

- A. because it is a skill that can so impact interactions with people, projecting joyousness in the tone of voice is one of the most important habits for tutors to have, or
- B. strongly disapproving tones among family members have been found to be associated with higher levels of family violence.

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Approval and Friendliness, But At the Same Time: Authority

70 Remember that the tutor calls the shots for the session. Don't slip into the pattern where the child feels that he or she has the power to arbitrarily refuse to do something if he doesn't feel like doing it. If you set this precedent, this interferes with the goals of the enterprise. You want to get the precedent going from the very beginning that you announce when each activity begins and ends, and what it will be. The student can have input by asking you to do a certain activity, not telling you.

In keeping with the need for the tutor to be in authority, please don't ask the child if he wants to do an activity. Don't say, "Would you like to sound and blend another list?" Don't say, "Would you like to read from the self-discipline manual next?" Instead, simply announce what is coming next. If a child obviously dislikes a certain activity, you can end it sooner than you otherwise would have.

This section recommends that

A. You give the child freedom of choice about every aspect of the program.

or

B. You announce what the next activity is, and expect the child to follow your directive.

71 Sometimes it's useful to explain to a student that if there's an activity that is tough, the student can build up his or her toughness by gradually increasing the ability to endure that activity.

Sometimes it's useful to explain that when people start an endurance activity like running or swimming or biking, or a strength activity like weight-lifting, at the beginning they get tired quickly or can't lift much. But as they get in better shape, they are capable of going for much longer than they would have thought possible at the beginning, and they get stronger and stronger. When you put demands on yourself, you gradually grow in your strength and endurance. If you can help the student see things from the point of view of "I'm getting stronger and stronger," versus "I have to work when I'd rather play video games," things will be a lot easier.

This section advocates

A. Helping the child to see certain activities as strength-building ones rather than just ones that require too much work.

or

B. Spending a little time chatting with the parent whenever you get the chance.

72 In keeping with the idea of maintaining authority, don't let the child dictate when the session is over. As a general rule, plan on a session of a certain length and stick with that. You

stop at the end of the time. And you are generally the one to point out that it's time to finish, not the child. Don't use the ending of the session as a reinforcer, for example by saying, "You did so well, we can stop now." You don't want to send the message that an early end to the session should be a reward – the session is considered to be a privilege for the student. If the student says, "When do we stop," you might say something like, "There are a few minutes left. Let's see if we can do x sections before we stop the alternate reading, and then do a quick exercise."

The person who announces the end of the session should be

- A. the tutor,
- or
- B. the student?

73 The above is not meant to imply that you have to be rigid. If the child is sick or has a big performance coming up right after the session, for example, you may choose to have a much shorter session. If the child says, "When can we stop," usually it's good to ask, "Are you wanting to stop sooner than usual?" and to find out why. This is best done at the beginning of the session, not in the middle or near the end.

Short sessions can be very useful in keeping up the precedent of having the session on time, when there are some demands from life that get in the way of a full session. If at the

beginning of the session you get what sounds like a reasonable request for a short session, you should feel empowered to accede to this request if you want to. I recommend touching base briefly with the parent most of the time when you do this. You want to teach the child and the parents to make such requests at the beginning of the session, or better still even farther ahead of time, not in what you consider the middle of the session.

A summary of this section is that

- A. you are empowered to have shortened sessions, but you want to train your clients to ask for these at least before the session begins.
- or
- B. you shouldn't pry into the child's personal life too much – you are an educator, not a therapist or participant in a confessional.

74 You don't want to end sessions contingent upon the child's complaining about feeling tired or bored. If the end of a session is a reinforcer to the child, you don't want to reinforce complaining of fatigue or generating fatigue. You want reinforcers to follow goal attainment or a certain amount of time working toward goals. Try to end after the allotted time.

However, the child's complaints, if they arise, should be taken into account. Talk with your supervisor about them. One option is to try to

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build more fun activities into the sessions. Perhaps some of the activities are too hard for the child and need to be made easier – or vice versa. Perhaps the expectation for the length of the session needs to be cut down. Or, perhaps tutoring is not for this child, and we need to terminate and deliver it to a child who does enjoy it.

One of the ideas in this section is that

A. the tutor should not neglect communication with the child's parents,

or

B. if the child finds the end of a session reinforcing, we should be careful not to reinforce the child's fatigue or complaining of fatigue by ending the session contingent upon such complaints.

75 You do want to know about whether the session demands are suitable to the child you are working with. Rather than waiting for complaints, you can simply ask the child, after several sessions, whether the child feels that the sessions are too long, too short, or of the right length. You can ask the child whether the amount of work the two of you are doing is too much, too little, or just right. If the child communicates to you that the work is too much, we should take that seriously. We may want to cut down on the amount of work temporarily, and try to build up the student's work capacity so that eventually the child is

capable of a session the same length as most other children his age. We may want to be very open with the child and the parent about this goal.

This section communicates the idea that

A. it's a good idea to find out from the child how the child feels about whether the length of the session and the amount of work done are too much, too little, or just right,

or

B. when you are talking about your own experience to model for the child, don't get too personal?

Chapter 5: Alternate Reading and Chatting with the Child

Alternate Reading

76 Alternate reading consists in taking turns reading from the programmed manuals. These manuals are divided into brief numbered sections (called text units) that are followed by a comprehension question (just as is this manual).

The tutor reads a section aloud and the student answers the comprehension question. Each time there's an A or B multiple choice question, one section, or text unit, ends and the next one then begins. When the student answers the question, the tutor reinforces the student's correct answer (by saying, "Yes!" or "I agree!" or some such) or very briefly explains why the other answer is correct. Then it's the student's turn to read the next section. The student again answers the question, and the tutor gives feedback. (Thus the student answers all the questions.) Then it's the tutor's turn to read again.

Why have the tutor read half the sections, instead of giving the student twice as much practice reading aloud by having the student read all sections? Your reading aloud lets you model for the student how to speak clearly and how to use appropriate intonation. If you can read as expressively as an actor does when recording an audiobook, you'll show the student

how to do this. Also, your reading time gives the student a chance to relax. For many of us, being read to gives something of a feeling of being nurtured. Plus, you set the precedent for turn-taking that is vital to all sorts of tutoring activities.

What sort of turn-taking did this section prescribe?

A. Tutor and student take turns reading sections aloud; student answers all the comprehension questions; tutor gives feedback on all the student's answers.
or

B. Tutor and student take turns reading sections aloud; whoever reads the section aloud answers the comprehension question at the end.

77 This alternate reading can be a very pleasant and relaxing routine. I find that the more I do it, the more it feels like a form of meditation. It's low-pressure, but it engages the mind and the attention. It's a rhythmic sort of activity, with the turn-taking routine, and that rhythm feels somewhat like the rhythm of repeating a mantra or focusing on one's breathing and so forth. Hopefully both student and tutor can eventually get into the relaxing meditation-like feeling involved in the alternate reading.

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The way in which we do alternate reading in this program illustrates a principle that runs through all of psychoeducational tutoring, which is that

A. things go much better if the tutor and the student set up the rhythm of taking turns on something,

or

B. it can be very useful to do speed drills in which the tutor repeatedly times the student on how fast the student can do a task.

78 Some tutors get the urge to quiz the student further, after a section of alternate reading, as if the child's answering the fairly easy comprehension question is letting the child get off too easily. Also sometimes tutors feel impelled to ask the student to explain why the answer he or she gave is correct. If you get either of these urges, please resist them! We want the alternate reading to be relaxing, and you don't need to make it more "rigorous." More questioning than is already built in runs the risk of slowing down the enterprise and making it less pleasant. It's also usually more relaxing for you if you just sit back and stick to the script and not feel that you have to improvise a lesson plan on the spot. If the child is reading the sections and answering at least 80% of the questions correctly, something is probably sinking in.

After the child correctly answers one of the comprehension probes, what response is preferred by the tutor?

A. To quiz the child a little more, and to find out the child's rationale for his response,

or

B. To reinforce the child's correct answer and move right along to the next section?

79 If the child is learning to read, we can start alternate reading by taking turns with the panels of the primer stories in the *Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading*. Then the child is often ready to take turns on the panels of *Illustrated Stories that Model Psychological Skills* and *The Letter Stories*. What do we mean by "panels?" The pages of these illustrated stories are divided into four quarters, each of which is a rectangular "panel." Each panel has a picture with a caption underneath it. By "alternating by panels," I mean for example the tutor reads the upper left, the student the upper right, the tutor the lower left, and the student the upper right.

Some children need some easy books intermediate in level between the primer stories and *Illustrated Stories*; the *Big Blue Book* and the *Big Red Book of Beginner Books* have served us well for bridging that gap. For those, we usually alternate by page: tutor reads one page, student reads the next.

The topic of this section was

A. Alternate reading with beginning readers.

or

B. How to divide time between word list work and reading stories, with beginning readers.

80 In reading illustrated stories, it's great to take turns on the panels – i.e. the pictures with captions in the upper left, upper right, lower left, and lower right. Usually each page has four panels. Some children get on a roll and would really like to read an entire illustrated story to you. If so, the custom of taking turns by panels is not worth fighting over. You can let the child read the whole story. Maybe you can “sort of” take turns by reading the child a story that the child is less familiar with, so as to help lay down some memory traces that will help the child read the story alone soon.

The author's attitude toward taking turns reading panels of illustrated stories is that

A. The tutor can be flexible. Unless the child has a strong preference, take turns by panels. If the child strongly wants to read you the whole thing, that's fine.

or

B. It's of grave importance to establish the turn-taking custom on panels of illustrated stories?

81 *Programmed Readings* is usually the first programmed manual to read,

because it contains such important concepts, and because the reading difficulty level is lowest of the programmed manuals. *Friendship Building* is the next easiest manual to read. The manuals on psychological skills exercises, anxiety reduction, and anger control are next higher in difficulty; the ones on self-discipline and successful student are perhaps a little higher. *Reading About Math* is at around the same reading level; the math level spans the range from about early elementary level to elementary algebra. It's good to read all these manuals with your student, and to read parts of them more than once. When you finish one, start the next one!

The purpose of this section was to

A. let you know the approximate order of difficulty of the programmed manuals,

or

B. explain why the programmed format is advantageous for telephone tutoring?

82 After the student has finished *Programmed Readings*, the student is ready to read some novels that we have made “skill questions” about, one question per page. So far we have skill questions on the *Boxcar Children*, numbers 1, 2, 3, and 7; *The Wheel on the School*, *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The One and Only Ivan*, *Hans Brinker (abridged)*, *The Secret Garden (abridged)*, two collections of Donald Duck and Uncle

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Scrooge comics, and *The Peace Seekers*. The skill questions help the student review the concepts covered in the manuals, particularly *Programmed Readings*. The novels may be more entertaining than some of the more expository skill writing. If so, you can let the more entertaining reading reinforce the more self-discipline-requiring reading, by having some skill-book reading followed immediately by some novel-reading.

In the novel-reading, you take turns reading by pages, and each page counts as a “text unit.”

The concepts that our skill questions cover for novels are explained in

A. *Programmed Readings*,
or

B. *Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading*?

83 What if the child, or the parents, want to read books that are not in the official curriculum? In general, we want the intervention to be standardized, so that there is only a finite set of curricular materials. If you and the family want to nominate a certain book to be incorporated into the standard set, please get in touch with supervisory staff. If the book is good enough, we may be able to dig up time to construct psychological skill questions on it and make it part of our “skill-ized” book set. But please don’t just go along with any request you get from the family or student. Talk it over

with supervisors and let us talk it over with the family.

A child’s parent says that the psychological skill stuff is boring to the child and that they would instead like the tutor to read books from the *Captain Underpants* series with the child. The tutor says, “OK, fine.” This is

A. what we want you to do,

Or

B. not what we want you to do?

On Programmed Instruction

84 The idea for “programmed” instruction came from B.F. Skinner, whose idea was that “teaching machines” would help learners to work through material at their own pace, asking for responses from the learner and giving reinforcement for correct answers. The idea included breaking the learning task into small pieces, and giving the learner something to do to demonstrate understanding of each piece, before going on to the next one. Skinner devised machines for programmed instruction. A few decades after he did this, the personal computer came into being and programmed instruction became very easy to carry out. But still, programmed instruction has not revolutionized education the way Skinner had hoped. Why? It could be because most young learners don’t find congratulations coming from a machine very reinforcing. There is, I

think, still something irreplaceable about human-to-human interaction.

Desirable features of programmed instruction include

- A. breaking learning tasks into small parts, testing the success of each section as you go along, and trying to reinforce each success,
- or
- B. animated characters who provide reinforcement?

85 The “programmed” manuals that I have written lack a feature of most other programmed manuals. Most other programmed manuals (not the ones written for this project) have some sort of way in which you can turn the page or uncover something you’ve covered up to see the right answer, after thinking of your own answer, thus being reinforced by the right answer. In the programmed manuals I wrote for this project, the correct answers aren’t even there! Where do they come from, and where does the reinforcement come from? The answer is: from you, the tutor. You figure out the right answer yourself, and celebrate if the student agrees with you. I think that your warmth and excitement and genuine pride in your student’s accomplishment is more reinforcing than anything a machine can deliver.

Does this work? So far, students have worked through hundreds of pages of the programmed manuals with tutors. Hardly any would have done

this without the social, human interaction part of the tutoring. A pleasant social climate and a norm of turn-taking and lots of models of cheerfulness and enthusiastic celebration from the tutor can help students read and understand material that would otherwise have been way too complex or dull.

Which of the following is true of the programmed manuals used in this project?

- A. They wait to show the correct answer until the next page so that the student has the opportunity to answer first,
- or
- B. they give the tutor the opportunity to check the student’s understanding and reinforce frequently?

Avoid Incorrect Inferences from Students’ Correct Answers!

86 Suppose that when you do alternate reading, you find that your student answers every question, or nearly every question, correctly. What should we infer from this? We infer that the writing is not over the student’s head (and that’s good) and that the writer has done a good job of making the answers unambiguous (and that’s good too!)

We should NOT infer that the writing is “not challenging enough” or “too easy for” the student. In the prevailing system of education,

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particularly for those who choose elite colleges, the idea often develops that if there is a task that most people can be very successful in most of the time, it is not “rigorous” enough. I have heard of college professors and teaching assistants lamenting the fact that the class got too high a fraction of test questions correct. If the goal of asking questions is to create a competition that will rank order the performance of learners, as in a foot race, this attitude makes sense. But if the goal is to help individuals to maximize learning, this attitude can be quite pernicious. The fact that wrong answers tend to create “false memories” is one reason that the writers of programmed instruction want to facilitate as close to “errorless performance” in the learner as possible. Also, if as an educator your goal is to get across a certain point, you have succeeded when the student demonstrates understanding it, and you have failed when the student is mixed up on it. Thus the ideal is 100% success.

What’s the main idea of this section?

A. If our students get all, or nearly all, of the questions right, that is not a problem – it means we’re doing what we set out to do!

Or

B. Making evaluative decisions about school teachers using the standardized test results of the students represents a succumbing to the “tyranny of the measurable.”

87 Some of the parents of our students have overheard their children getting the answers nearly all correct, and have inferred that the student already knows what we are teaching, and thus any problem in the child’s behavior must result from lack of motivation rather than from lack of knowledge and skill. Of course, this inference is totally incorrect, partly because with good programmed instruction you can get correct answers on material you had absolutely no knowledge of before. A better perspective can be gained from the three-stage model explained in Chapter 2 of this book.

On a more complex level, I believe that it is an error to make a hard and fast distinction between “motivation” and “skill.” If, for example, one improves in the *skill* of celebrating one’s own kind acts, one thereby increases the *motivation* to do kind acts. If one practices generating multiple options to the point of automaticity, one usually gets more urges, or has more motivation, to think before acting.

Any incorrect inferences that parents make about the negative meanings of correct answers of course do not represent a reason to blame or disparage parents, but represent an agenda item for the parent education component of the intervention.

What’s a summary of this section?

A. The words *dispositions, traits, virtues, habits, skills, motives,* and *personality* are all words that refer to the tendency of human beings to think, feel, or act in certain ways.

Or

B. When students get answers correct in alternate reading, that allows no inference at all about “skills versus motives” or about whether the student knew the answer previously.

88 There’s another inference we are tempted to make from the student’s correct answers to the end-of-section questions: that the student will necessarily remember the material and be able to apply it. Unfortunately, this inference is not correct either. Some older students have felt that *Programmed Readings* is “too easy” for them. Yet often those same students may draw a total blank when after reading this easy book, they are asked questions like, “How do you do the 12 thought exercise?” “What are the four ways of listening that the chapter on ways of listening discusses?” “What are the steps of conflict-resolution that are remembered by ‘Dr. L.W. Aap’?” or even, “Which of the 16 skills and principles do you remember?” And there is often even more of a blank look in response to the question, “How would you summarize the ideas in this book?”

The fact that people don’t automatically remember and apply concepts just from reading and understanding them once is one of the

main reasons for psychological skills exercises, where the student can repetitively practice using the concepts with hypothetical situations.

But it will also be good if you can communicate to your student that there is a lot more to “mastering” the content of a book than just getting the questions right. Remembering and applying the ideas constitute a much higher level of challenge.

What’s a summary of this section?

A. The major advantages of multiple-choice questions rather than open-ended questions are that they are quicker and easier to use and there is more clarity as to whether they are right or wrong.

Or

B. Getting the “A or B” questions right in the programmed readings is, unfortunately, only a first step in demonstrating true mastery of the ideas.

Chatting with your student

89 One of the three main parts of the psychological skills session is chatting. (The other two are alternate reading and exercises.) Remember that you are not a counselor (even if by training, you are a counselor!) The conversations you have with the student are not aimed at solving the problems in the student’s life. The tutor and student simply have fun getting to know each other better. If the

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student doesn't feel like social conversation, as many students will not, especially at the beginning, it's fine to skip this part of the session – it's optional. But it's often a source of pleasant interaction for both tutor and student, and if it can be such, it can reinforce each of them for the work they are doing together. Plus, social conversation is a very crucial psychological skill. It's great to get very much practice at doing it well.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Although you don't want to push a shy child too much at the beginning, sooner or later you want to help the child develop the crucial skill of social conversation, for fun and not solving the child's psychological problems.

Or

B. Thinking and talking about things that are not actually present is a skill linked to progress along Piaget's stages of development.

90 In attempting to promote social conversation, tutors often get the urge to ask the child a lot of questions. Usually this doesn't work. How have you been doing? OK. What have you been up to? Not much. How was school? OK. Did anything interesting happen at school? No. Did you learn anything interesting? No. This isn't what we mean by pleasant social conversation!

What should the tutor do to promote social conversation, as a substitute for grilling the student with questions? The answer is: model for the child how to volunteer information about your own experience. For example: "I did something fun since I talked with you last. There was an old friend of mine, whom I hadn't seen or talked with for years, and I just picked up the phone and called her up. She was surprised to hear from me!" Or for another example: "I saw a very interesting movie last night. It was a story about ..." Or for another example: "After our session tonight, guess what I'm going to do -- I'm going to write a paper, for a course I'm taking. The topic is ..."

A summary of this section is that

A. To promote social conversation, don't ask a bunch of questions, but model how to tell about your own experience.

or

B. Open-ended questions invite the other person to talk about any of a variety of things; direct or closed questions ask for a very specific piece of information.

91 Some tutors assume that all students will enjoy talking about their school days. With this assumption, they repeatedly ask the student about school. Tutors should keep in mind that some students hate school and attempt to block out from memory the

occurrences of the school day as soon as they get out of it. Whether this strategy is a good one for the student is debatable. But if your goal is just to get started into fun chats, don't keep asking about any subject matter that the child doesn't seem to want to talk about. To extend this principle, you don't want to ask a bunch of questions about the student's friends, without realizing that the student doesn't have any friends.

Which of the following attitudes was emphasized more in this section?

A. If you want to have fun talking, don't keep hammering away at a subject the student doesn't seem to want to talk about.

or

B. It is good to be able to talk about unpleasant emotions and to bring problematic situations to conscious awareness.

92 Sometimes one of the best ways to encourage social conversation with many children is just to go about your work of alternate reading and psychological skills exercises, interrupting this work every now and then by telling about your own experience, and just waiting (sometimes many sessions) for the child to interrupt the work by telling about his own experience. When the student does interrupt, you can listen carefully and enthusiastically, and thus

encourage the student's chatting further with you.

Which of the following ideas does the above section support?

A. The student's chatting should occur at a specific time in the last third of the session, known as chatting time, announced by the tutor; interruptions of the other activities are not tolerated.

or

B. The student's chatting can come sandwiched in between any of the other activities, and interruptions are to be tolerated or even encouraged. This is especially true if the student is making observations on the topic of the reading or exercises.

Listening Skills

93 One of the most important skills for tutors is good listening skills. When the student talks, try to use 1) reflections, 2) facilitations, 3) follow-up questions, and 4) positive feedback. These are four ways of listening that are explained to the student in *Programmed Readings, Friendship-Building, and A Programmed Course in Psychological Skills Exercises*. When you use these listening responses in conversation with your student, there are at least two positive effects: first, you help your student enjoy chatting with you more. Second, you teach the student how to be a good listener, by giving the student models. Here are some examples:

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Reflections:

Sounds like you felt really good about doing that.

So if I understand you correctly, even though you felt like yelling at your sister, you didn't do it, and you used self-discipline?

In other words, you're saying that you find yourself thinking about your celebrations several times during the day!

What I hear you saying is that you can't decide what to do about this kid, and you're still going back and forth between a few options, huh?

Facilitations:

Cool!

Oh?

Uh huh!

What do you know!

I see.

Humh!

OK.

I understand.

Awesome!

Yes...

Follow up questions:

What happened then?

Why do you think she did that?

Tell me more, please.

I'd like to hear more about that, please.

So what are your thoughts about that?

What kind of thing was it?

Positive feedback:

I'm glad you told me that.

Thanks for telling me about that.

That's an interesting point.

I'm really glad to hear that.

Good point!

That sounds like a smart idea.

The four classes of listening responses that the tutor models for the student are

A. politeness, listing options and choosing, honesty, and positive fantasy rehearsal,

or

B. reflections, facilitations, follow up questions, and positive feedback?

94 Every once in a while you will want to ask a "new topic question": unlike a follow-up question, this one isn't about the same topic the student just talked about, but introduces a new subject for the conversation. Conversations where people do this too often never seem to get into any topic in depth. Sometimes new topic questions can be annoying when the person hadn't finished with the old topic, or when the new topic is not of interest. But if you keep these things in mind and avoid these pitfalls, new topic questions can add to your conversation rather than subtract. The same goes for "new topic statements," where you tell about some of your own experience that had not previously been the topic. It can interrupt things, but it can also let you try out a new subject of

conversation and model for the student how to tell about things you find interesting and fun to talk about.

The author's attitude toward new topic questions and statements is that

A. You should avoid them pretty completely.

or

B. You should not overdo them, but they can be useful when not used to excess.

95 When chatting with your student, be conscious of the tone of voice and the context in which you use your student's name. It's good to use the student's name when you are excitedly reinforcing the student, as in "Good, Johnny!" Be careful about using the student's name in a sort of nagging voice when you are correcting the student, as in "Johnny, you skipped a line," or "No, Johnny. It's the other answer."

If you will use the student's name in the positive context and not the correcting or contradicting mode, the student's name will become a sound the student likes to hear, at least from you. Since this sound is one the student associates with his or her own identity, creating a positive emotional association with it seems good.

The point of this session is that

A. You want to speak in a cheerful and respectful way.

or

B. You want to speak the student's name in such a way that the name takes on positive emotional associations.

96 When the student speaks to you, you want to respond with a whole range of emotions – from "Oh, my gosh! That's hard to believe!" (astonishment) to "OK, no big deal." (cool aplomb) From "Why do people do things like that!?" (righteous indignation) to "What a great idea!" (admiration) From "Hmm. OK." (noncommittally taking it in) to "Wow! What a great celebration! Hearing you say you did that is music to my ears!" (joy) Some tutors tend to maintain the same bland level of emotion no matter what the child says. This makes it less fun for the student to talk with you.

A piece of advice given in this section is:

A. let your voice communicate a full range of emotion; don't keep talking in the same tone all the time.

or

B. Emotions are in a sense behaviors, and they are subject to reinforcement control.

97 As a general rule, you should assume that excitement is reinforcing. Sometimes even the excitement of negative emotion, for example exasperation or anger, is reinforcing to stimulus-seeking students. This implies (for tutors, and even much more so for

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parents) that you should try to get excited about good things and stay unexcited about bad things that people do, even the people you talk about. Thus the most excitement should usually come in expression of positive emotion.

What's an idea in this section?

A. Even negative emotion can sometimes be reinforcing for the student, because it is exciting and stimulating.

or

B. Excitement, both in music and in speech, tends to be communicated by faster tempo, higher pitch, and louder volume.

Avoiding the Role of the Advice-Giver

98 The role of the tutor is not one in which the student presents you with life situations and you tell the student what to do. Why not? First, most students don't even ask you for advice or give any indication that they want it. Even if they do, much of the time you won't know the situation well enough to know what's the best thing to do. Hearing a full explication of the situation from student and parent, and probing with the right questions, can be a delicate and time-consuming process that would take away time from delivering our curriculum. Even if the student talks about the situation a lot, the student may have distorted the

facts, or left out some important ones. Also, if the tutoring role becomes one primarily of counseling or advising, parents can legitimately get mad at us if you give advice which the student attempts to follow, but things work out badly. Also, the advice you would give may be in conflict with that given by a therapist or parent. We have a certain curriculum to teach, rather than being the student's advisor.

Which of the following two good reasons for avoiding the advice-giving role was mentioned above?

A. Some students get into the game of "Why don't you ... yes but," where they argue against any advice that is given, showing why it won't work.

or
B. Hearing enough about a situation to be a good advisor takes a lot of time, and this may detract from our educational mission.

99 If your student starts telling you about a problem situation in his or her life, using reflections and facilitations is a good way of helping the student feel understood, without falling into the trap of feeling that you have to give advice. Just using reflections to make sure you understand what the student is saying is a way of listening while following the rule, "First of all, do no harm."

What's the major point of this section?

A. Using nondirective reflections and facilitations is a kind yet safe way of responding if a child talks about a life problem.

or

B. If we order the four ways of listening from least directive to most directive, they may usually be facilitations, reflections, positive feedback, and follow-up questions, in that order, but it depends on how the response is worded.

Presenting Yourself as a Fellow Learner

100 If you've never read *Programmed Readings for Psychological Skills* or any of the other psychological skills manuals, it's fine to be candid with your student that part of your role will be to work through this with the student, and the two of you can learn together. You can then model for the student taking the role of an interested learner – by saying things like, “I see what this is getting at... it's _____. I can see how this would be useful.” Or, “That sounds like a useful model of a way of thinking about things. I'm going to give that a try.” You don't have to present yourself as an expert on the content of the material you are going over, if you aren't yet. What you have to do is to provide a really pleasant social climate in which to work through the sequences outlined in the manuals.

With both parents and students, you may find your work easier if you

emphasize the “fellow learner” role and avoid the “expert” role. You may save yourself some hassles by making it clear that you are not a candidate for a game that “experts” fall prey to, which goes: 1) let's ask the expert a very difficult problem, 2) let's listen to the expert's answer, and 3) let's then prove to the expert that the advice won't work.

The main idea of this section is that

A. tutors may be able to best succeed in creating a pleasant, supportive environment by presenting themselves as fellow learners,

or

B. realizations that tutors make about their own struggles with intimate relationships, etc. should not be shared with student.

Chapter 6: Psychological Skills Exercises

101 One of the three main parts of the psychological skills session is psychological skills exercises. (The other two parts are alternate reading and chatting. For many children, the reading curriculum is a crucial part also.) Just as push-ups and running are exercises to build up your physical strength or health, exercises such as the celebrations exercise, skills stories, the four-thought or 12-thought exercise, the brainstorming options exercise, the reflections exercise, listening with four responses, the conflict-resolution role-play, fantasy rehearsals, and others are meant to build up your psychological strength or health. Usually they present the opportunity to *practice* one or more psychological skills. Such practice counts toward the often large number of practice hours needed to become an “expert.”

What’s a summary of this section?

A. Psychological skills exercises may be written as well as spoken, and thus we can combine our curriculum with writing as well as with reading.

or

B. Psychological skills exercises are one of the three major parts of a session, and they provide practice in psychological skills.

102 We are proud of the work we’ve done in composing, testing, and

refining psychological skills exercises. Nonetheless, this will be a fairly short chapter. That’s because we’d like you to read at least one of the two full-length books on exercises that are part of our curriculum. Tutors and students should eventually read (in alternate reading) a book entitled *A Programmed Course in Psychological Skills Exercises*. Tutors may do well to read this book on their own, first. There’s another book on these exercises, entitled *Exercises for Psychological Skills*, which is meant for tutors and some advanced students to read.

The message of this section is that

A. much of what people need to know to be psychologically healthy can be written down and learned through reading,

or

B. We’re not going to try to cover all the psychological skills exercises here, because tutors should read, sooner or later, at least one full length book on them.

103 Let’s quickly describe each of the exercises I mentioned earlier, just to communicate what is meant by psychological skills exercises.

In the celebrations exercise, the tutor and student take turns telling real-life things they have done that are

positive examples of psychological skills, and they identify which skills these are examples of. These recountings represent both rehearsals and reinforcements of positive examples.

In the skills stories exercise, tutor and student take turns making up concrete positive examples of the psychological skills and principles in little stories like those at the beginning of *Programmed Readings*. The principle, again, is fantasy rehearsal: imagining positive patterns makes them more likely to be chosen in real life.

In the four-thought exercise, the student takes a hypothetical situation and generates the following types of thoughts about that situation: not awfulizing, goal-setting, listing options and choosing, and celebrating your own choice.

In the twelve-thought exercise, the tutor and student take turns making up twelve different types of thoughts about a given situation. (The twelve are: awfulizing, getting down on yourself, blaming someone else, not awfulizing, not getting down on yourself, not blaming someone else, goal-setting, listing options and choosing, learning from the experience, celebrating luck, celebrating someone else's choice, and celebrating your own choice.) By learning labels for types of thoughts, the student can more easily do metacognition, or thinking about thoughts. We're hoping to help the child achieve the liberation of being

able to choose which thoughts are most useful rather than being stuck in habits. The four-thought and twelve-thought exercises are educational approaches to much of what goes on in cognitive therapy.

What's one of the main ideas present in this section?

A. Many of the exercises are done with hypothetical "choice points," and if a tutor would like to help us add to our bank of them, we would be most grateful.

or

B. The four-thought and the twelve-thought exercise aim to help students gain more control over what they say to themselves, a.k.a. their self-talk, or cognitions.

104 To continue: In the brainstorming options exercise, the tutor and student take turns thinking of options for response to a hypothetical choice point.

In the reflections exercise, one person talks, pausing often, and the other listens, using reflections of the form, "So what I hear you saying is ____." Then it's the first person's turn to talk and the second person's turn to listen.

In listening with four responses, one person talks, and the other listens, using not only 1) reflections, but also: 2) facilitations such as "yes," "I see," "Uh huh," "Oh," and so forth, 3) follow-up questions, such as "What happened next?" and 4) positive

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feedback, such as “That’s an interesting idea!” Tutor and student alternate between talker and listener roles.

In the conflict resolution role-play, (a.k.a. joint decision role-play, a.k.a. Dr. L.W. Aap) tutor and student role-play a polite and rational conversation which resolves a hypothetical disagreement, attempting to meet seven criteria for conflict-resolution conversations. Dr. L.W. Aap is a mnemonic for **defining** the issue, **reflecting** the other person's point of view on the issue, **listing** options, **waiting** until the listing is done before critiquing the options; speaking about the **advantages** and disadvantages of the options; **agreeing** on something; and **politeness** throughout.)

Which of the following are mentioned as characteristics of the psychological skills exercises listed here?

- A. Grades assigned by the tutor, time trials, written quizzes on definitions of terms or principles, periodic multiple choice tests,
- or
- B. hypothetical situations, role-play, imagining positive responses, and taking turns?

105 Over time, you want your student to do more and more exercises. You also want your student to become *proficient* at a wider range of exercises. You can let us know which exercises you think your student has become

proficient at, to what degree (three levels for each are defined in the Programmed Course in Psychological Skills Exercises). The Ranks and Challenges part of our curriculum aims to teach students to demonstrate their proficiency in exercises and in understandings of principles.

One part of the Ranks and Challenges part of the curriculum involves

- A. seeing how the teacher rates the student's behavior,
- or
- B. seeing how proficient the student is at various psychological skills exercises.

106 One of the reasons we are excited about psychological skills exercises, and the Ranks and Challenges program, is the idea of “performance tests of psychological skills.” Which, for example, do you think would be a more valid test of the skill of generating options when making decisions: 1) hearing a bunch of choice points and being asked to think of options, or 2) rating, on a scale of 10, how much you agree with the statement, “I can think of lots of good options for solving problems?” We think there’s a reason why chemistry professors bother to make up final exams, rather than simply having their students rate themselves on the question, “On a scale of 0 to 10, how good are you in chemistry?” Most of measurement of psychological health has been stuck in

rating scales, and one of our research goals is to contribute to changing that.

What was the main idea of this section?

A. In the anxiety-reduction book, we try hard to persuade the student to pick out some anti-anxiety exercises to do nearly every single day, just as an athlete usually trains nearly daily.

or

B. The psychological skills exercises are an alternative to rating scales for measuring various aspects of psychological health.

Chapter 7: Hierarchy-ology: Picking the Right Level of Difficulty

107 What is one of the major advantages of one-on-one tutoring over larger group instruction? In classrooms, the tasks students are assigned are often too hard for some, too easy for others, and just at the right level of difficulty for perhaps only a few. In tutoring, by contrast, the tutor can continually adjust the level of difficulty to fit the learner's current (and continually changing) level of skill. In our tutoring, we should take advantage of our ability to fine-tune the level of task difficulty.

What's a summary of this section?

A. In classrooms, students often distract one another from tasks, unlike in one-on-one tutoring.

or

B. In our tutoring, we want to take advantage of our ability to adjust the level of difficulty of tasks to be just right for the learner.

108 Working at the right level of difficulty helps maximize the speed of learning, but it also does something else very important: it maximizes enjoyment. The book *Flow* by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi gives evidence that a level of challenge not so easy as to be boring, and not so difficult as to be frustrating, is key to the experience of happiness and fun.

The makers of video games understand this principle thoroughly. A

well-done video game will let you "level up" or "level down" so that the game's challenges are just right for the your skill. This is one of the reasons why video games can be so addictive, particularly, perhaps, for people for whom most of the other tasks of life are either too easy or too hard.

What's the main message of this section?

A. If the hours spent in video games could be spent more productively, great things could be accomplished.

or

B. Working at the correct level of task difficulty not only makes learning faster; it creates enjoyment.

109 When you think about the difficulty of tasks, you want to think multidimensionally. By this I mean that a given task can require several different skills, and thus it can occupy several different places on the various hierarchies for the learner. For example, consider alternate reading. This task involves at least the following: 1) decoding the words that are being read, 2) understanding the meaning of the words being read, 3) paying attention well enough to combine the meanings of the words and understand what is being read, 4) continue paying attention over time, versus being depleted of attentional

energy, 5) submitting to authority enough to follow the tutor's direction that alternate reading is the activity to be pursued, 6) making the speech apparatus say the words right, and 7) using good intonation, good acting skills, by putting expression into the reading performance. We could probably break the task down into even more components.

One corollary is that you can't infer that a task is easy overall because a certain part of it is easy. Maybe a student is good enough at decoding that they can read the words fluently, but they don't know what the words mean. Maybe a student can read well enough to do the activity, but the work capacity is so low that sustaining work over time is the limiting factor. Maybe the student can do the activity, but is not yet skilled enough at submitting to someone else's directives that the child can do it without aversion.

What's the point of this section?

A. In assessing the level of reading difficulty, the measurement of reading level included on most word processor programs is quite useful.

or

B. Tasks involve multiple skills, and a given task can be at different levels of difficulty for different skills, in the same learner.

110 A rough guideline to finding the right level of difficulty is the 80% rule. If the student isn't successful on at

least 80% of the challenges he or she takes on, we should consider lowering the level of difficulty. If they are missing more than 20% of the questions you ask, or misreading close to 20% of the words they are trying to read, or having trouble with 20% of the problems they are trying to solve, then the student is probably at too difficult a level. If what you're doing is too difficult, figure out a way to "go down the hierarchy" to tasks in which the student can be successful at least 80% of the time.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Even better than 80% correct is "errorless learning," or close to 100% correct, because then the learner does not practice incorrect responses.

or

B. If the student isn't succeeding in at least 80% of challenges, we should probably "go down the hierarchy" of difficulty.

111 The ways of going down the hierarchy of difficulty are very much spelled out within the reading curriculum. "Sound and blend after me" is easier than "sound and blend on your own." Sounding and blending words in lists is usually easier than reading words of equivalent difficulty in stories. Doing phonemic awareness and spatial awareness exercises is easier than sounding and blending word lists. Within the set of phonemic

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awareness exercises, some are very easy and some are much harder.

In alternate reading, some of the manuals and “skill-ized” novels are much easier reading than others. We shouldn’t be afraid to put a manual away if it’s too difficult. If the content is really important but the reading skills aren’t there yet, you can read selected sections to the student. You can vary the length of sessions to fit the attention span of the learner.

Some of the exercises can be made easier. For the example, you can make the one called “the guessing game” quite easy if that’s what your learner needs. For the brainstorming options exercise, we can pick very concrete situations with several obvious solutions to make it easier, and vice versa. The reflections exercise is lower on the hierarchy than the listening with four responses exercise. If the celebrations exercise is hard for the learner, you can do a “celebrations interview,” asking about specific good things the learner may have done. A student who has trouble submitting to authority can be officially allowed to pick between several activities. These are a few of the many ways that we can adjust the level of difficulty. Whenever we go down the hierarchy, the move isn’t permanent – we think about how to work our way back up, and sometimes can do so quickly.

What was the purpose of this section?

A. To persuade you of the importance of working at the correct level of difficulty.

or

B. To list several ways that we can adjust the level of difficulty in our tutoring.

112 Sometimes we take on older students whose reading level makes *Programmed Readings*, particularly the first stories, seem way too easy. But we want to get across the fundamental content that is present in this foundational book. Here’s one way of elevating the level of difficulty. You explain to the older student that the ideas in this book are very important, and thus it should be read, despite the fact that the reading level will be lower than the student’s grade level. You also explain that one way of increasing the level of challenge is for the student to focus on intonation and expressiveness. Reading this book aloud is no problem, but reading it with as good a performance as a great actor could muster is very difficult. Using such expressiveness is a very important skill.

What’s a summary of this section?

A. Reading is very much like singing, in that pitch, rhythm, tempo, volume, and timbre all play a crucial role.

or

B. To make *Programmed Readings* more challenging for the older reader, focus some on vocal expression.

Chapter 8: Preventing or Solving Some Problems

Lost Books

113 What if the student answers the phone, but has lost whatever book you are working on? Please don't give up on having a session if this is the case. Here are some options. You can ask to speak to the parent or caretaker, and ask that person to look for the book or to verify that it is lost. If it is lost permanently, we can send another or ask the family to buy another. If the family has internet capability, we can send an electronic copy of the book and the child can read it from the computer file. You can always read each section of the book to the child, and let the child answer the questions only. You can do "non-alternate" reading that way, and then you can do psychological skills exercises for the rest of the session. If there is any other book in our program that they can find, you can do some alternate reading with that book, even if you've already read it before.

The main point of this section is:

- A. if the child has lost the book you're working on, be resourceful and have a productive session anyway,
- or
- B. don't tell the child too personal things about your own life?

Reinforcing Goal Attainment Rather Than Expression of Fatigue

114 Especially for students who have problems with low work capacity, getting to finish a work task can be reinforcing. This is particularly true for the tasks the student experiences as tedious, such as sounding and blending word lists or practicing math facts or for some students, reading aloud. What happens if you wait until the student starts complaining and saying "I'm tired of this," or "I want to stop and do something else" before you finish up with the task? Then the student is getting reinforced for complaining of fatigue. This reinforcement contingency is not good for the student's work capacity.

On the other hand, suppose you have a pretty good intuitive feeling of how much work on a given task is not too much or too little, and you tell the student, "We'll do this until we get X points." Then, when the X points are accomplished, you say, "You did it! You have X points. Now let's go to the next activity!" If finishing up the activity is reinforcing for the student, the student in this case has been reinforced for attaining a goal, not for displaying fatigue. This is good for the student's work capacity.

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According to the information presented in this section, which of the following would be a better time to end an activity of sounding and blending word lists?

A. When the student has reached a point where he or she is obviously worn out and is making more mistakes than usual,

or

B. when you reach your goal of sounding and blending two lists?

115 Suppose you say to the student, “Do you want to keep on working, or are you ready to quit?” and the student replies, “I don't want to do any more work,” and you quit. The quitting (which is a reinforcer) appears to be contingent upon the student's voicing an unwillingness to work further. The student, as a result of this reinforcement trial, may be just a little bit more likely to notice and or express work fatigue, and the student's work capacity may be reduced just a little bit. This reasoning dictates that usually, rather than asking the child if he wants to quit a certain activity, it's better just to announce that you're finishing up after x more sections or y more points or whatever. When you do that, the quitting reinforces “goal attainment” rather than expression of fatigue.

The point of view expressed in this section is that

A. You want to let the child continually communicate to you the degree of fatigue he or she is feeling.

or

B. Quitting a certain laborious activity is often a reinforcer, and you want that reinforcer to follow goal attainment rather than expressions of fatigue.

116 Let's generalize. We just considered that your signaling that it's time to stop working may be reinforcing for your student. Let's think about the fact that *everything* you do that your student perceives is either reinforcing, punishing, or neither. And one of those three types of responses follows *every* behavior that your student does. See if you can become aware of this, and try to make your most reinforcing responses follow the most desirable behaviors of your student. Try to make non-reinforcing responses follow the undesirable behaviors of your student. When you reinforce the positive more than the negative, “differential reinforcement” works correctly. When you inadvertently reinforce the unwanted behavior more than the desired behavior, differential reinforcement works to the child's detriment. Working to make differential reinforcement exert its effects in the right direction for your student is a major task for the tutor, as it is for a parent, teacher, therapist, or anyone else who works with children.

The author uses the phrase “differential reinforcement” to refer to

A. rewarding or reinforcing some behaviors more than others.

or

B. rewarding or reinforcing in different ways so that the student won't get bored – for example, not just saying “Good job” all the time.

Maintaining the Subtext that the Sessions Are Pleasant and a Privilege

117 We've just spoken about the fact that finishing up working often is a reinforcer. But paradoxically, this doesn't imply that the work is unpleasant or undesirable. The end of a run, for a well conditioned runner, is often quite reinforcing – in fact there may be a “high” after the run is over. But the run itself is pleasant and rewarding enough that the runner chooses to do it, day after day.

Tutors should send the message, as a subtle subtext or explicitly, that it is a pleasure for them to do the session with the student. Tutors should avoid saying things that assume that the work is unpleasant for the student, lest you contribute to a “self fulfilling prophecy” and make the sessions less pleasant by the power of suggestion.

What's the message of this section?

A. Tutors should act as if the sessions are fun and highly valued by both of the individuals involved; this will probably help to bring this outcome about.

or

B. The author believes that most tutors can't have a perspective on how useful and valuable the sessions are, because they have not had a chance to see how inadequate or even destructive many of society's other interventions can be, and how often there is no intervention at all.

118 Think about the following utterances of tutors:

“So we get to have a holiday, a day off from tutoring tomorrow!” (Implication: it's more pleasant not to do it than to do it.)

“Is it sort of boring for you to do this?” (Implication: it's probably boring for both of us to do this.)

“Do you want to finish up now?” (Implication: we may be finishing up because you're getting bored with this rather than because we ran out of the allotted time.)

“It's time for the celebrations exercise! I get to go first. I've been looking forward to telling you about this one:...” (Implication: It's fun and pleasant to tell about the celebrations.)

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“I see lots of quotation marks in this next story. That means maybe I get to pretend I'm an actor, and act out the parts of the different characters! Let's see!” (Implication: I really like trying to act out different parts.)

“That section made a point that I think is really valuable. I'm going to try to remind myself of that and use it!” (Implication: There is something in this that is useful for life!)

“Thanks for doing this session with me! It was a real pleasure!” (Implication: Doing alternate reading, exercises and chatting is pleasant for the tutor, and potentially for the student!)

What point is the author trying to illustrate?

A. Lots of things you say can include messages about whether the sessions, and the activities therein, are pleasant and valuable. Be conscious of these, because you want your student to enjoy them and to value the learnings they contain.

or

B. If the student doesn't agree that the sessions are pleasant and valuable, it's best not to argue with the student to try to persuade him or her otherwise.

Fear of Failure and Conditioned Aversions

119 Each child is different, and you could work with a child who has had

nothing but solid success in every academic venture. But so far, this is the exception, and many of the children we tutor have had very negative experiences with school, and have acquired very negative conditioned associations with anything resembling an academic challenge. And of course, working on reading, taking turns reading aloud with you, and so forth are very academic activities. This, however, is one of the major ways that our tutoring can help, because if we can undo negative conditioning and replace it with positive associations, we can have a major positive effect on a child's life.

The message of this section is that

A. If a child has major negative associations with academic activities such as reading, it may be better for the child not to participate in our tutoring, but to do a less academic activity such as a sport.

or

B. One of the major ways our tutoring has helped children is by the undoing of conditioned fears and aversions to taking on academic challenges.

120 Every introductory psychology textbook speaks of Pavlov and studies on conditioned responses. Many children's experiences fit this paradigm closely. An unconditioned stimulus is disapproval from other people or “looking stupid” in front of others; the unconditioned response is the visceral

and emotional reactions of fear and shame and humiliation and defeat. The conditioned stimulus is being asked to try to read something or do some other academic task; when this is paired with the unconditioned stimulus enough, it comes to elicit the feelings of fear and shame. Thus very unpleasant emotions are now the conditioned response to academic challenges.

The solution to this is to start with challenges that the child can be successful with, to give lots of approval and celebration for those successes, and gradually to work up the hierarchy of difficulty, maintaining a high ratio of success to failure. Now the conditioned stimulus (academic challenges) is presented unpaired with the unconditioned stimulus (disapproval and social humiliation), so that “extinction” can occur. But beyond that, you are creating a new conditioned association: the stimulus of academic challenge is being paired with the unconditioned stimulus of your tones of enthusiasm and approval and friendliness and the feedback of success, so that you are creating a new conditioned association between academic challenge and the emotions of fun, confidence, and enjoyment, with the physiological responses to match!

What’s a summary of this section?

A. Part of the job of the tutor is to undo conditioning that has linked academic challenges to fear and shame, and to

create conditioning linking those challenges to confidence and enjoyment.

or

B. If Pavlov’s experiments were repeated today, there would have to be methods of measuring dogs’ salivation that are much more humane than the methods Pavlov used.

121 Likewise, some children have had negative conditioning with social interaction. Their conversations with people have been unpleasant enough, often enough, that fear and shame have become conditioned to the stimulus of, for example, someone’s saying, “How have you been?” For this reason, many children at the beginning of tutoring will answer that question by saying, “OK;” the question, “What have you been doing,” by saying, “Not much;” the question “How was school today,” by saying “All right;” and so forth. All these utterances sometimes really mean, “I don’t want to talk, and I’m trying to escape the aversiveness of your questions by giving you a one-word answer which won’t reinforce you for asking.”

One of the answers to this is to go lightly on the questions, and go more heavily on modeling telling the child about your own experience. Demonstrate through your own example how to really enjoy telling someone about something. Work yourself into the state of mind where you can’t wait to tell your student about the “celebration” you’ve been

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saving up ever since you did it. When you model social conversation, make sure to let a few seconds of silence go by every now and then to give the child a chance to speak. When the student does talk, respond very enthusiastically and in a reinforcing way. The four ways of listening we speak of elsewhere, combined with tones of approval, provide ways of reinforcing the student's social conversation.

What does the author recommend for the shy student?

A. Keep persisting with asking the child questions, and sooner or later the child will respond.

or

B. Model how to enjoy telling about your own experience, give the child a chance to talk, and if the child does talk, respond in a reinforcing way.

122 I will repeat, you are not your student's therapist or counselor. But if you start tutoring with a student who hates reading and other academic tasks, and/or who fears social conversation, and if after several months you now are working with a child who enjoys both reading and talking with you, your undoing of negative conditioning and instilling of positive associations may have had a life-changing effect on the student. Reading and conversing are two of the most important activities of modern life. The difference between enjoying these activities and hating them is a monumental one. You can

have sometimes have a huge effect on a child's emotional life without doing anything other than being a good tutor and a nice person to chat with!

The point of this section is that

A. Even without crossing into the role of therapist or counselor, you can have a very positive effect on your student's emotional life, by creating positive associations with reading and chatting.

or
B. The pairing of an conditioned stimulus and an unconditioned stimulus is called classical conditioning; the pairing of a behavior with a reinforcer that follows it is called operant conditioning.

123 Sometimes "therapy" with children, conducted in a misguided way, serves to make more negative the conditioned associations with conversation. If a therapist mostly "digs" for the child's negative feelings, the narration of the unwise behaviors the child has done, the reasons and motivations for the child's maladaptive behaviors, the difference between what the child did and what the child should have done, memories of negative events, and so forth, the child may be learning that the process of exchanging words with another person is painful, or may be strengthening such learnings that have already taken place. Sometimes when a therapist sees a parent and child together, the parent naturally expects that telling the

therapist about all the child's problem behaviors and emotions is a way of solving those problems. Meanwhile, the child, who is hearing a narration of everything maladaptive he/she has done lately, may be mainly learning that it's wise to avoid the situation where people talk with each other.

It takes a wise therapist to figure out how to discuss "problems" with a child who isn't at all sold on the value of "discussing" in general! It can take careful maneuvering by a therapist to get private time with the parent to hear about the child's problems in a setting where the child isn't embarrassed or humiliated by the narration.

Fortunately, you don't have to deal with these complexities. Your conversation with the child is not aimed at either discovering or learning more about, or solving the child's problems. Your conversation with the child is simply aimed at enjoyment and celebration of the positive. You get to chat with the child about whatever is most pleasant for the two of you to talk about, especially the good things you both have done. If the child spontaneously talks about problems, you listen nondirectively. But if, like most children, your student doesn't like to talk about "problems," you have no need whatsoever to oppose this tendency.

What's the main point of this section?

A. In tutoring, you don't have the expectation that you will explore and

solve the child's "problems." This gives you the freedom to talk about things that are enjoyable or celebration-worthy. In this way, hopefully, you strengthen the child's positive emotional associations with conversation.

or

B. If a child is reinforced for a negative behavior only intermittently, that behavior can stick around longer when the reinforcement is removed than it would have if the behavior were reinforced every time it happens.

Calling Things By Their Right Names

124 Words are important. As I've said earlier, when you call a student and have a session, it's a "tutoring session," not a "counseling session" or "therapy session." You don't have the burden of being expected to solve particular problems that the student has, that you may or may not learn about. Rather, you are trying to deliver a certain curriculum, that may help the child be better equipped to solve and prevent a wide variety of problems. If the child's parent refers to what you do as counseling or therapy, please very politely let the parent know that this is not the case. Please say something like, "Regarding the word counseling, I've been asked to let people know that the word counseling may come with expectations and legal implications that

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we're trying to avoid, so the word tutoring is what I use."

This section recommends that

A. You use the word "tutoring" rather than "counseling" or "therapy" to apply to what you're doing, but not go so far as to correct someone else's word usage.

or

B. You use the word "tutoring" rather than "counseling" or "therapy" to apply to what you're doing, and politely correct anyone who refers to the sessions by a term that refers to what licensed professionals do.

125 When you take turns with your student reading the numbered sections in a programmed manual, that is "alternate reading." When you do something like the reflections exercise, the celebrations exercise, the twelve thought exercise, brainstorming options, etc., that is an "exercise." In the research we have undertaken, variables we track are: how many numbered "text units" have been completed in alternate reading, which books the student has completed, and which levels the student has passed in the Ranks and Challenges. The levels for the Ranks and Challenges are our major method of assessing the student's proficiency in psychological skills exercises. For reading, we track foundation skills points and word list points as well as text units. Informally, you should keep a list of which

exercises the student can do well. In a sense, alternate reading is itself an exercise, but it's a special enough case that when we count exercises, we don't count it – we count it all by itself, and measure it by the unit of "text units."

What's our most official way of assessing the student's proficiency in psychological skills exercises?

A. your checking off which exercises the student has mastered,

or

B. which level the student has passed in the Ranks and Challenges?

How To Speak Clearly

126 One of the primary requirements of a good telephone tutor is a style of speaking that is easy to hear and understand. And sometimes it's a problem to understand the student, and the tutor will need to teach the student how to come across clearly. The following are some guidelines on speech clarity.

One obvious way to do this is to speak loudly enough. A second important guideline is to position your mouth in the best place relative to the microphone of the phone you're using. You may need to get your listener's feedback in order to figure this out. You should speak slowly enough, and even more importantly, have a little bit of silence between each word so that

the listener can tell when one word stops and the next one starts. In other words, you say each word separately! But the most important guideline is to make your consonant sounds forcefully. It's not hard for people to hear the vowel sounds in your words. But if they are to distinguish between lass and laugh, you need to make the s sound or the f sound forcefully. If they are to distinguish between mad and mat, you need to make the final consonant sound with vigor. As you read aloud to your student, and your student reads aloud to you, see if you can both spend some energy focusing on the single most important way to have your speech be understood: emphasize the consonants.

If you have a student who is very hard to understand, perhaps you can teach the student these guidelines and go over them often. Here they are:

1. Speak loudly enough.
2. Put your mouth close enough to, but not overly close to, the microphone.
3. Speak slowly enough.
4. Have a little silence between each pair of words.
5. Emphasize the consonants.

The most important way to help your listener understand you over the phone is to

- A. emphasize the consonants,
- or
- B. emphasize the vowels.

Keeping the parents informed

127 One of the important jobs of the tutor is to cultivate a positive relationship not only with the student, but with the student's parent or parents. For young children, you will usually need to speak with the parent after every session to give feedback on how the child did and to let the parent help in reinforcing the child for the child's accomplishments during the session. For some older children, and in circumstances where the routine of sessions is set to occur very regularly, you needn't speak with the parent each session; still, you should chat with the parent at least briefly about how things are going at least once a week. You should not be afraid to ask the parent if they are satisfied customers, or even to have them rate their satisfaction with what is going on, on a 0 to 10 scale (where 10 is highest).

The main idea of this section is that

- A. it's important that the work you give the student be at the correct level of difficulty,
- or

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B. the tutor's goal is to develop a positive relationship with the parent or parents as well as the student.

128 You want to keep in mind the principle that you must have some authority, in your dealings with parents as well as with the child. If you ask to speak to the parent and the parent is very busy at the moment and does not want to speak, you can accede to that request. But you don't want to let the parent set the precedent that you never speak with the parent but only the child. You want the parent to help us celebrate when the child passes a certain milestone of work. You want to get the parent's opinion as to whether the parent is seeing benefits from the tutoring. You want the parent to know if there are any problems with scheduling or appointment keeping. And ideally, you want the parent hanging on your words when you give a progress report at the end of each session, so that the parent can celebrate with the child the accomplishments the child made that day. So if the parent is preferring not ever to talk with you, probably your supervisor needs to talk with the parent. If the parent is so stressed or busy that we need to make an exception to our expectations about the parent's participation, so be it, but we don't want to slip into lowered expectations out of our own diffidence rather than out of a conscious choice.

The main topic of this section was

A. maintaining authoritative expectations of the parent as well as the child,

or

B. using tangible reinforcers to help the child feel an effort-payoff connection?

If You Get Criticized by the Parent

129 This section is fortunately relevant only on extremely rare occasions. But we are not perfect, and parents are not perfect, and it has been known to happen that a parent has unleashed hostile invective upon a tutor. It's good to prepare yourself for this – if it doesn't take place in the tutoring, it probably will at some other point in professional or personal life.

In the psychological skills training materials are various units on responding to criticism. There are units on this in *Programmed Readings, Anger Control, Exercises, and Instructions*. All of these mention that one option for a response to criticism is to make sure you understand the criticism, perhaps by using reflections or by asking for more specific criticism. I recommend speaking in a calm tone. If the criticism catches you off guard, let the parent know that you will think about this more and deal more with it later (which is called planning to ponder or problem-solve.) If there is some piece of information the critic is not aware of that is fueling some anger, let the critic know this

information in a calm tone. Don't hang up on the critic, unless you have said several times that you need to get off the phone now and the critic keeps talking. Keep in mind the option of saying "Thank you for bringing this to my attention." Let the parent know you'll talk this over with your supervisor. Don't raise your voice. Don't get too upset or worried or anxious – one good thing about this operation is that it's difficult to do very large amounts of harm; we have yet to remove the wrong kidney from someone or drop a bomb on the wrong people. As soon as possible, talk it over with your supervisor and we'll do some problem-solving about what option to enact.

Which of the following is a possible summary of this section?

- A. In the event that the tutor receives criticism from a parent, a good response is to stay cool and rational and civil, listen carefully, finish the conversation, and then contact the supervisor.
- or
- B. Getting frequent feedback from the parents and keeping them updated on the work being done and the progress being made can make it less likely that the tutor will be caught off guard by criticism from the parent.

If the Student Doesn't Like the Tutoring

130 We've been very gratified at how large a fraction of students seem to enjoy the tutoring process and voluntarily want to continue it, especially given how much work it entails. But occasionally we will hear that the child doesn't want to do it, that the parents have difficulty getting the child to come to the phone, or we will experience that the child seems to be an unwilling participant.

One of the good things about this intervention (as contrasted, say, to school) is that no one has to force it on anyone. If the child dislikes doing it, a really good option may be simply to stop it. There are literally millions of students out there who would love to have this opportunity, and we want to deploy our tutors to children who want it and not to those who hate it!

That having been said, there are options to consider other than terminating the tutoring.

What's a summary?

- A. Correct "hierarchy-ology" is a major key to helping the student enjoy the tutoring.
- or
- B. If the child doesn't like being tutored, we can always redeploy the tutor to another child who does like it. But we should consider other options first.

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131 When the student isn't enjoying the tutoring, here is a checklist of things for us to consider.

1) How are the tutor's tones of voice? Enthusiastic enough?

2) Can we make the activities the student is doing more fun, while still being beneficial? Do more of the fun exercises? Read more of the fun stories?

3) Is what the student being asked to do too hard or too easy? Can we shift the activities to land closer to the correct challenge zone?

4) Are we making adequate use of prizes, certificates, and extrinsic reinforcement? Have we dropped the ball in this arena? Are we giving prizes (or is the parent giving prizes) that are not reinforcing, where others exist that would be very reinforcing?

5) Are the sessions too long for the child's attention span? Would we actually accomplish more by shortening them for a while?

6) Is the pace of the sessions right? Does the tutor tend to move things along fast enough to be interesting to a child with a short attention span? Are there enough varied activities in the session? Should we be doing more activities, with a shorter time for each?

7) Is there a fundamental mismatch of personality between tutor and student? Would the student do better with another of us?

The things on our checklist so far have to do with

A. things the family can change, or

B. things we can change?

132 Let's continue with the checklist of things to think about if the student is not enjoying the sessions.

8) Is there someone, for example an older sibling, who perhaps out of envy, is making fun of the student for having the sessions? If so, do the parents or anyone else have the power to squelch this?

9) Is there a parent who is not on board with the tutoring, who sends subtle cues to the child that it shouldn't be going on? When parents are in conflict with each other about many things, they are often in conflict about the tutoring also.

10) Does the ringing phone for the session pull the child away from activities like video games, television watching, playing with friends, or sitting down to supper? If so, can we persuade parents to think ahead so as not to allow other highly reinforcing activities to compete against the tutoring?

11) Do the parents seem to care about the milestones the student reaches, and celebrate them greatly, or are they very distant from them?

12) Is there so much noise and distraction from siblings, electronics, pets, and other things that the student can't pay attention to the session?

13) Is it possible for the parents and the rest of the family to get into the content of the tutoring more thoroughly, and support it more, by for example learning the names of the skills, doing the celebrations exercise as a family, and so forth?

14) Is the child overburdened with so many demands on his/her time, from school, sports, lessons, etc., that the tutoring represents one more burden upon an overtaxed and chronically depleted child?

15) Is the child chronically restless from too high a ratio of sitting to physical activity? Could we arrange for the student to get more physical exercise before the session?

16) Is the child trying to do the session when medicine for ADHD is in the "rebound" period, where it is even more difficult for the child to focus and concentrate than if the child weren't receiving medication?

17) Are there very upsetting events going on in the student's life, and does it so happen that the tutoring is experienced as a burden during a difficult period rather than a support?

18) Are things so disorganized that the student can't keep up with the books, and/or the phone often doesn't work right?

19) Is the child often trying to have the sessions while in a car or in some other unfavorable environment?

20) Does the parent delegate to the student the responsibility of appointment-keeping, when the student doesn't have the requisite appointment-keeping skills?

21) Do the parents exert so little authority with the child that they can't tip the balance to help an undecided child get motivated to make the tutoring work?

You may not be able to change any of these things. If you can note them and talk with us about them, we may be able to do some problem-solving with the family about them.

The things on the checklist in this section have to do with

A. things we can directly control, or

B. things we may be able to help the family to influence?

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133 If, after examining all these things, the we can't do anything to help the child be anything other than an unwilling, grudging participant in the tutoring, and frank conversations with the child reveal that the child sincerely wants out, we want to give the child his or her freedom. We are a new enough intervention that not many people deem us essential. We have the luxury of restricting our services to children who at least acquiesce to them. We want to project the attitude that it is not a tragedy if a child or family rejects us. There are other, better established, systems in society (e.g. the health care system, the educational system) to deal with whatever problems may exist. We want to discuss the situation with parents, arrive at consensus, and part amicably when it doesn't work out.

What attitude does the author have toward our getting fired by students or families?

A. This is a tragedy that we should prevent at all costs.

or

B. Not every child or family is cut out for this type of work, and we want to project the message that nothing horrible has happened if this intervention doesn't happen to be right for this student.

Chapter 9: Risk Management

Meaning of Risk Management

134 An expediency-oriented way to look at "risk management" is that it is synonymous with "how not to get successfully sued." One can understand this mindset, because lawsuits have threatened the very existence of organizations that are meant to do good.

A broader way of looking at it is that it is the field of reducing risks of harm to anyone affected by the organization, and also providing a sense of security and safety to referral sources or donors or anyone who is wondering whether to trust us or not.

Risk managers raise the question, "How could anyone be harmed," and try to make sure that those harms don't take place. In a small organization such as OPT, there is no official risk management department; we all take on this function.

Risk management consists of

A. Focusing not on what could go wrong, but what wonderful benefits can be achieved.

or

B. Focusing on possible harms, reducing their likelihood as much as possible, and creating policies that provide maximal reassurance about those harms.

The Sexual Abuse Issue

135 In addition to the tremendous harm done to victims, sexual abusers and the failure to protect against them have dealt severe blows to organizations seeking to work with children and youth. The Boy Scouts organization was driven to bankruptcy, as were several Catholic dioceses. Sexual abuse scandals have plagued sports teams, university personnel, YMCAs, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and others. There must be harm prevention policies in place for any organization attempting to help children and youth.

The author regards policies regarding sexual abuse prevention as

A. not relevant to OPT,

or

B. important to OPT as well as any other organization working with children.

136 The following are the OPT policies meant both to reduce the risk of sexual abuse and to help those outside our organization to feel safe regarding this issue if they entrust a child to us.

1. Sessions with the child will be by phone, audio only, unless the tutor and

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the supervisor and the child's parent have planned together regarding video sessions.

2. In person meetings between a tutor and a student should occur only when planned ahead of time with the supervisor and the child's parent. These meetings will never leave the tutor alone with the child. Whether a parent, another staff member, or someone else will be present in addition to the tutor will be planned ahead of time.

3. We ask parents to listen in, unannounced, to phone sessions at random times at least once every couple of weeks, more often if possible.

4. It is possible to need to defend oneself against sex abuse charges when all that has taken place is verbal conversation. For that reason, our curriculum doesn't introduce sexual topics; tutors should not introduce the topic in social conversation. If the student introduces the topic, the tutor should be a listener, kindly receiving whatever messages the child sends, with an emphasis on reflections and facilitations. (Reflections are paraphrases and facilitations are utterances like uh huh, yes, I see, OK, etc.) Afterward the tutor should consult with the supervisor, who may consult with the parent. At the same time that we avoid introducing the subject of sexuality, we acknowledge how important it is for mental health.

5. Before hires, we will do a background check and get information from at least one reference to carry out due diligence. We also spend a relatively great deal of time in training before an offer to hire is extended, so that we have gotten to know tutor candidates fairly well.

What are the five strategies listed in this text unit?

A. Instructing children in protective techniques, training parents about children's dealing with strangers, helping parents monitor children's internet use, including sexual harrasment prevention training for administrators, psychological testing of tutor candidates.

or

B. Audio only unless preplanned; remote only unless preplanned and accompanied; parents asked to listen randomly; non-introduction of sexual topics; checking and training before hires.

137 All of these policies, in an ideal world where exploitation of children were nonexistent, would represent a waste of effort or unnecessary avoidance of potentially useful activities. In such an ideal world, ethics and decision-making with regard to sexuality would be part of our curriculum. But the one-to-one nature of our service delivery leads us to err on the side of caution and avoidance rather than proactively bringing up sexual situations that may

sooner or later be important for the child to deal with. The one-to-one situation provides little opportunity for verification of what exactly happened in case of someone's thinking something inappropriate took place.

What is the author's attitude toward psychoeducation that includes the topic of sexuality?

A. It is not necessary.

or

B. Unfortunately our one-to-one interactions provide insufficient backup verification of appropriate behavior.

Response to information about child abuse

138 There is contained, in section 413 of the New York Social Services Law, a list of the professionals who are mandated to report cases of suspected child abuse or maltreatment. Private tutors are not on that list. For those on the list, it is a crime not to report child abuse; for those not on the list, there is an ethical responsibility rather than a legal mandate to report.

The law speaks of "reasonable cause to suspect" child abuse or maltreatment. Exactly how high one's subjective probability has to be to constitute reasonable cause is not defined.

The law's wording on what constitutes abuse and maltreatment is also open to interpretation. How high or

low do we set the bar? The wordings in New York State Law appear to set the threshold fairly high. For example, one part refers to "substantial risk of death, serious or protracted disfigurement, protracted impairment of physical or emotional health, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ."

The author implies that

A. the decision to report suspected abuse or neglect is open and shut with no need for deliberation.

or

B. Both the threshold for considering behavior abusive, and the threshold for how likely it is to have occurred, are points where some judgment calls are necessary.

139 Tutors are not required by OPT to consult with a supervisor before making a report to Child Protective Services. However, such consultation is advisable. At the time of this writing, tutors' supervisor is Joseph Strayhorn, cell phone number 412 916 3791, email jstray@gmail.com.

If you become aware of a situation where there is grave immediate danger, in other words an emergency where life or limb are at stake, the first urgent contact one makes is not with Child Protective Services, but 911.

If information comes your way regarding child endangerment, please write down in verbatim notes whatever has given you that information. To get

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the exact data recorded will help in consultation and also in the event that one or more reports need to be made.

What are some things this section advises?

A. Don't interrogate the child, don't feel obligated to tell the parent a report will be made, don't delay too long before a decision.

or

B. Feel free to consult supervisor, keep in mind 911 for immediate danger, and take down verbatim notes.

Injuries while using the phone

140 Please keep in mind 3 ways in which talking on the phone could be harmful, for the sake of protecting yourself and anyone you speak to. Here are those three ways:

First, the phone can distract from activities that require attention to prevent accidents. Such activities might include driving, crossing a street, cutting something, etc.

Second, especially when ear buds or headphones are used, high volumes can damage hearing.

Third, the theory that some harm is done to the body by the waves that conduct cell phone information has not been proved, but most researchers are not ready to say that all possible harms have been definitively disproved. For that reason a land line, speakerphone, ear buds, or headphones are

recommended rather than holding a cell phone to the head each session.

This section is concerned with

A. the safety of our students,
or

B. the safety of our tutors as well as our students?

Confidentiality

141 In the ideal world, there would be no stigma attached to efforts to improve one's mental health, and people would perhaps advertise their affiliations with organizations like ours, just as people advertise their college affiliations with sweat shirts and car window stickers. However, it is very possible that some families and students would regard their participation with us as something they would like held private. Thus all information about our students, and even their names, are considered private information, and should be kept confidential. In communicating about them, use their initials or first names. Hold your sessions in private locations. Keep the records of what you've done in the sessions in a computer file that doesn't have the student's name on it. Don't speak with people outside our organization about personal or potentially embarrassing details concerning your student, even without referring to the student by name. You don't need to conceal from friends and family members the fact that you are doing this, and the progress your student

is making. Plus, you can feel free to talk with your supervisor and others within our group. To keep in practice, we should stick to the first names or initials only custom when speaking in group meetings. If you have any doubt about confidentiality guidelines, please ask a supervisor.

A tutor talks with friends about her tutoring experiences, referring to the student by the student's first name, and to the mother by Ms. plus the last name.

This is

- A. OK,
- or
- B. Not OK?

Knowing When to Leave Personal Matters Private

142 There are times when you'll disclose to your student some things about your personal life: for example, in the celebrations exercise, you think of something you're glad you did and tell the student about it. Or in the guess the feelings exercise, you may think of a real-life incident you experienced, and tell what you thought about it, and how you felt about it.

The thing to keep in mind when you are disclosing to your student is that you want to give the student positive models and not negative models of how to live well. You don't have to present yourself as a perfect person, and you can talk

about how to handle mistakes you've made. But you don't want to tell the student about anything you wouldn't want, say, a job interviewer or the student's parent to hear. You don't want to make the student your confidant. You don't want to get so chummy with the student that you use the student to talk about your own problems. Whenever there is self-disclosure, think in terms of positive models. (I find that anticipating the celebrations exercise gives me the motivation to go do more positive models!)

The main idea of this section is that

- A. the tutor must choose what he or she shares with the student with care, picking anecdotes that will interest the student and provide positive models but won't reveal anything too personal,
- or
- B. the student may share personal struggles or challenges, and the tutor's job is to listen empathically.

Personal Matters on the Internet

143 Part of the responsibility of being a tutor is being careful about making information about yourself publicly available on the Internet that would be harmful to the tutoring if your student, or his or her parents, see or read it. This means think twice before pouring your heart out in your status posting; please don't post pictures of yourself that you

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wouldn't want the child's parents to see; don't use language on the Internet that contains the common taboo words parents try to get their kids not to say; don't make posts that appear to promote the use of alcohol or drugs; think twice before ranting about religious or political issues in a disrespectful way that might be offensive to your student's family (although we would never want to curtail your right to make public your carefully reasoned and even impassioned views on the issues of the day).

These guidelines about posting things on the Internet are very similar to guidelines given to job-seekers.

The main idea of this section is that

A. a tutor must assess each personal item or statement put on the Internet in terms of whether it would be appropriate for the student or parents to see or read, or

B. in some cases, the Internet can be a good way to communicate with parents in addition to the regular phone conversations.

Chapter 10: Record Keeping and Monitoring

The Tutoring Record

144 When you start tutoring, create two text files. Please call the first “tutoring_records.” Please call the second “positive_examples_log.” As you continue to tutor, keep opening these files, going to the end of them, and appending more information to the end of the files.

The first file contains what you did each day in the tutoring sessions – what you read, what exercises you did, and the number of “text units” and “exercises” you have done.

The second file contains a log of celebrations that the student reports (student-reported celebrations), celebrations the parent reports, (parent reported celebrations) and stories the child makes up that are examples of psychological skills (skills stories).

What's a summary of this section?

A. Create two files that gradually grow: one for a record of what you did and when, and another for celebrations and skills stories.

Or

B. The record-keeping requirements for psychoeducational tutoring are much less onerous than for the health care professions.

145 Let's talk about how to keep the “tutoring records” file. At the end of each session, go to the end of that file, write down the date, and write down very briefly what you did. Record what alternate reading the two of you covered. A “text unit” is one illustrated story, one of the numbered sections in one of the programmed manuals, one page in one of the supplementary “skill-ized” novels, or one time alternately reading the 16 skills and principles. It's the tutor's turn to read a section and all the student does is to answer the question at the end, that's still a text unit. Write how many text units you did today, and how many you've done cumulatively. Write which exercises you did. With few exceptions, we'll keep track of the number of text units for every child we tutor.

Here's an example of what the record might look like for a given day.

5/28/2012

Sections 209-230 in Programmed Readings

Celebrations Exercise

12 Thought Exercise

22 text units today

Cumulative text units 349

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There are two other things tutors should keep track of, for all students. They are:

Which books have you and your student read?

Which exercises has your student mastered? (Mastering an exercise means that the student has learned to do it well. It does not mean that the student has no more need to ever do the exercise.)

What are three things to keep track of for students who are already reading well enough that you don't use the activities in the Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading?

A. text units, books read, exercises mastered.

Or

B. Mood the child is in, whether the parent reports improvement, whether you're enjoying the sessions?

The Ranks and Challenges Program

146 How should we monitor our students' progress in learning to do psychological skills exercises? In addition to your informal inventory of which exercises the student seems to have mastered, the Ranks and Challenges program gives us a very good way of monitoring the students' learning of psychological skills exercises. There are 8 ranks or "levels."

Each of them requires the student to pass several requirements. Most of the requirements consist of a psychological skills exercise for the student to perform. For all students, we start at Level 1. The student demonstrates more mastery by passing more levels as time goes on. This program is similar to Scout ranks, martial arts belts, and Red Cross swimming ranks.

Most of the ranks require the student to

- A. improve in ratings which the student's parent fills out,
- or
- B. perform psychological skills exercises?

147 The Ranks and Challenges program is an example of "mastery learning." In mastery learning, there are certain skills the learner is to acquire, and instruction continues until the learner masters them, and demonstrates that by some sort of test. Then the learner takes on another batch of skills. If the learner has not mastered the skills on a given test occasion, that's not a problem -- the tutor and the student just keep working until the student has mastered them.

In mastery learning, the degree of proficiency we are aiming at is held constant, and the time to attain that proficiency varies with the individual learner. This is in contrast to most school courses, where the time allotted to the course is fixed and the proficiency is what varies. In mastery

learning, there's not nearly as much reason for the learner to fear failure or to be nervous about the stakes of any one test. You don't have certain learners being bored by moving too slowly and others frustrated by moving too fast, because the rate of learning should be adjusted to fit the individual learner. Thus it is easier for the teacher to find the zone that is "not too hard, not too easy, but just right."

The author seems to imply that mastery learning makes it easier to carry out which task of education that was the subject of a chapter in this manual?

- A. Hierarchy-ology
- or
- B. Appointment-keeping?

148 *Programmed Readings for Psychological Skills* and *A Programmed Course in Psychological Skills Exercises* describe most of what's tested in the Ranks and Challenges program. In addition, you and your student should read the corresponding chapter in Ranks and Challenges for Psychological Skills: Student Manual while preparing for any level. This manual is the "test prep" book for the levels, and like most other tests, one shouldn't go into the test without studying a test prep book, if one's available.

The tutor and student do alternate reading in this manual. They also practice the various requirements, until the tutor is satisfied that the

student has mastered them. Then the tutor uses the Ranks and Challenges Tester Manual to give the student their test. The tutor sets up an audio only Zoom call and records the session. The tutor sends to the supervisor the audio file that results. The supervisor either listens to it or delegates it to someone else to listen to, and if the student passes, we celebrate with a certificate, a postcard, and a little prize sent to the student.

Who makes the decision whether the child has passed the level?

- A. The tutor decides for their own student.
- or
- B. The supervisor or someone to whom the supervisor delegates listens to the audio file and decides.

149 Tutors should err on the side of practicing with the child too much rather than too little. If the tutor sends in a file where the student does not demonstrate competence in one or more requirements, it's a little uncomfortable for the scorer to send them both back to work some more. Plus this wastes time for the scorer. If on the test occasion, the student can't do one of the requirements well enough, the tutor can just delete the audio file so far, (or delete only that part of the file if you can figure out how to do that) practice that requirement more, and start recording again.

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When carrying out a test for a certain level, the tutor should

A. Send in the results no matter how the student does, so as to "tell it like it is."

or

B. Keep working and practicing until the student has recorded a competent performance for every single requirement.

Monitoring for the Reading Curriculum

150 If you're teaching your student to read, and using our Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading, there are several other things to keep track of. One of the most productive activities to increase reading recognition is called "word list work." Near the end of our Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading there are a bunch of word lists, starting with very easy ones and moving up to hard ones. The three main activities that you and the student do with these lists are "sound and blend after me," where you say the separate sounds of a word, then say the word, and have the student do the same thing immediately after. The second is "sound and blend on your own," where the student says the sounds in the word and then the whole word, and the tutor just reinforces. The third is "read off the words without sounding first." Here the student simply reads the words in the list, one after another. As you do

word list work, record which lists you worked on, how many word list points the student got today, and how many word list points the student has gotten cumulatively. The student gets 2 word list points for each "sounding and blending" of a word, and 1 word list point for reading off a word in the word lists without sounding and blending. The student gets 2 points for "sound and blend after me" as well as for "sound and blend on your own."

Here's an example of what you would add to the daily record for a student who is doing word list work:

5/28/2012

List 95-97 sounded and blended after me, sounded and blended on own, read off, for a total of 260 word list points.

Cumulative word list points 15,292

When we speak of "cumulative" numbers of word list points or cumulative text units or cumulative anything else, do we mean

A. for the particular day for which you're recording,

or

B. the total from the very beginning of tutoring?

151 Two more activities that tutors sometimes work into word list are "tutor sounds and student blends" and "student sounds and tutor blends." These are what their names imply: for

the first one, the tutor says, for example, puh aah tuh and the student says pat. For the second one, the student says puh aah tuh and the tutor says pat. The student gets one point for each word done with either of these activities. These, like "sound and blend after the tutor," can help students with a "lower on the hierarchy" activity when the student isn't quite ready for "sound and blend on your own."

"Student sounds and tutor blends" is thought to be _____ on the hierarchy of difficulty than "sound and blend on your own."

- A. lower
- or
- B. higher?

152 When keeping track of word list points, you'll want to use a tally counter. This is a device that advances a display by one number each time you press something, so that you don't have to remember what number you're on. There are mechanical tally counters, but in recent times most tutors have used a free app for a cell phone, entitled "tally counter." There's a plus sign that you touch twice for each sound and blend, and once for each reading off of a word without segmenting the sounds.

When working on word lists, a child looks at the work "sage" and says "sss a juh sage." How many times does the tutor tap the tally counter?

- A. 1
- or
- B. 2

153 Some students who are working on reading are not ready for word list work. They need to do "foundation skills" work: work on phonemic awareness, spatial awareness, and letter-sound correspondence, in preparation for word list work. If the student needs work on these skills, your supervisor should tell you that at the beginning of tutoring and practice with you how to do the foundation skills activities. You'll also read how to do these in the Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading. The student gets one point for each question they answer, for example by blending a word that the tutor sounds, telling whether the ball is on the right or left of the stick for b, d, p, or q, telling whether two pictures are the same or mirror images. These are called "foundation skills points."

So for a student who is working on reading recognition skills through doing foundation skills work, you add lines to your daily record that look like this:

200 foundation skills points today
(blending words at the end of a sentence, which picture is not like the others)
12,400 foundation skills points
cumulatively

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When you are working with a student on reading foundation skills, you probably won't have to record

A. Text units, because a child working this early in the reading hierarchy isn't ready for alternate reading yet.

Or

B. Exercises, because you can't teach a child to do celebrations or brainstorm options or do the guessing game etc. until the child has learned to read?

154 If a student lacks certain foundation skills, how many foundation skills points does it take before the student acquires those crucial skills? If a student has the foundation skills but can read fairly few words, how many word list points are necessary for the child's reading recognition score on standard tests to increase by one grade level? The answers to these questions are of course not one number, but a statistical distribution. Would you like to know the answers to these question? So would I, and these are very important questions for educational science! This is partly why we want to keep track. A previous research project I did suggested that approximately 1 grade level of reading recognition progress came from each 10,000 word list points.

What's a point made in the above section?

A. An important question is: how much work of a certain type does it take to yield a certain amount of progress in reading skills.

Or

B. One of the big challenges is to make word list work and foundation skills work fun enough that the student will do it.

155 If you're teaching reading, you'll be curious about how much progress in reading recognition your student is making. There are four tests you can give that are in the Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading that measure the child's reading recognition. These are the Burt, the Schonell, the Phonetic Reading Test, and the Unfamiliar Word Test. Once the foundation skills are mastered, and you start teaching the student to read words, it's good to do at least one of these tests at the end of each month, and write down the results in your record. Please also send the results to your supervisor by email.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Reading recognition is defined as the ability to call out words upon seeing them in print, whereas reading comprehension is getting meaning from words strung together in sentences.

Or

B. There are four tests of reading recognition in the reading manual; it's recommended to give at least one of them at the end of each month.

156 So let's summarize the things to keep track of. Here's the list for children who are NOT working on reading recognition using our Manual for Tutors and Teachers of Reading (because they already have enough skill in reading recognition):

1. How many text units have been done in alternate reading.
2. Which books you and your student have read.
3. (Informally, keep in mind) which exercises your student has mastered.
4. Where the student is in the Ranks and Challenges program.

For students on the “Reading Track,” also keep track of

5. (If your student needs work on the foundation skills) the number of foundation skills points.
6. The number of word list points.
7. Which word lists you are working on, and which the student has mastered.

For students in the reading track, you will want to keep track of text units just as with all other students.

With everything you record, we're most interested in *cumulative* numbers – how many have been done since the first day of tutoring.

What's a summary of this section?

A. For students not in the “reading track,” keep track of text units, exercises, books read, and exercises mastered; for students on the reading

track, additionally keep track of foundation skills points, word list points, and which lists have been mastered.

Or

B. One of the major purposes of keeping track of units of work is to increase the child's effort-payoff connection.

157 At the end of each month, you will get an email from your supervisor prompting you to report some data for the month. (If you don't get the prompt, please send an email reminding the supervisor that it's "Happy first of the month time.")

Please, do not ignore the requests for the monthly reports, and please try to return them in a timely manner! They should not take you long. This information is crucial in our keeping our finger on the pulse of what is going on. You also supply us crucial research-relevant information on how much intervention, of what sort, the student is actually receiving. Please report: how many sessions for the month; how many hours for the month; and how many no-shows there were by the family. If the sessions or hours were fewer than expected, please tell why that happened. Please report the cumulative numbers that you are tracking. Please report whether there are any problems or issues we need to be proactive with, or major accomplishments to celebrate; and perhaps a rating from 1 to 10 of the satisfaction level of yourself, your

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student, and the parents with what is going on. (If you don't know how good the parents and the student feel about what is going on, please ask them.)

The main idea of this section is that

A. each month you email in a brief summary of what's happened during the month and what's been accomplished cumulatively,

or

B. for each milestone that the child reaches, we send the child a certificate to celebrate and to communicate that we are keeping track of each day's work.

The Positive Examples Log

158 At the beginning of this chapter we talked about keeping two files, one the tutoring records file, and the other the positive examples log. Everything we've spoken about so far in this chapter has concerned the tutoring records file. Let's talk about the positive examples log.

Remember our tripartite description of the psychological skills learning process? First there's classification and downloading, then generation of positive examples, and then generalization to real life. The narratives in *Illustrated Stories That Model Psychological Skills*, *Plays That Model Psychological Skills*, the *Skills and Principles* stories in the first long chapter of *Programmed Readings*, and

stories throughout all the other manuals are meant to supply positive models for downloading and vignettes for practice in classification. In the "skills stories" exercise and the "fantasy rehearsal" exercise, the student and tutor make up positive examples of psychological skills – they're in the generation stage. And when the student or the parent reports "celebrations" of positive examples carried out in real life, and we reinforce those examples, we're promoting the generalization stage.

This section

A. Reviewed the sixteen skills and principles that are the ways to be psychologically healthy.

Or

B. Reviewed the three stages of psychological skills learning that are basic to psychoeducation.

159 It's very useful for the student to make up positive examples of psychological skills, as in the skills stories exercise. The principle of positive fantasy rehearsal predicts that the more imaginings of positive examples the student does, the more positive behavior we will see. It's also very useful for us to do the celebrations exercise with the student – the more the student can learn self-reinforcement for positive examples, and also engage in some more positive fantasy rehearsal by running the positive example through the mind, the better. And it's very useful for parents to get in on

noticing the student's positive examples and reporting them to the tutor. The attention from the parent and the report hopefully reinforce the positive examples.

This section reviewed

A. Why skills stories, student celebrations, and parent celebrations are useful, in terms of positive fantasy rehearsal and reinforcement.

Or

B. Why the tutor needs to have an enthusiastic tone of voice during the sessions.

160 It's possible to get lots of benefit from the skills stories, student celebrations, and parent celebrations even if the tutor does not record any of these. But another dimension of benefit accrues when the tutor writes down these positive examples. The written record allows the tutor and the student to review the positive examples later on. It's usually quite reinforcing for the student to see that the positive examples are being remembered – they are “going down in history.” The student may become much more motivated to supply positive examples under such circumstances. The tutor and the student can use these positive examples for alternate reading, just as they used the skills stories presented in *Programmed Readings*. Each time they do that, they are using the principle of fantasy rehearsal.

This section explained

A. Why tutors should want to write down positive examples that get narrated during the tutoring process.

Or

B. Why it's great if the student can answer the question, “What have you learned from this,” with anything other than dumbfounded silence.

161 We are very interested in encouraging parents to report to you, at the beginning of sessions, the celebration-worthy behaviors they have noticed in their children. This helps the parent to notice and reinforce positive examples; the child's hearing positive examples communicated is almost always reinforcing. For parents to increase their noticing and reinforcing of their children's specific positive examples of psychological skills is one of the most momentous changes that can occur in a child's life. Not all parents will want to take part in the noticing and reporting of positive examples. At the time of this writing we are still in transition with respect to communicating to parents that this is a part of the whole program. But it is a part we are interested in trying out vigorously for those parents who can do it and want to do it.

What's an idea communicated in this section?

A. For some children the “social reinforcement” of hearing their positive

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examples talked about is not enough, and tangibles or edibles or activities must be used as reinforcers.

Or

B. For parents more frequently to notice and celebrate the child's positive examples of skills can greatly improve the child's life.

162 In collecting positive examples, either in parents' reports, the celebrations of the student, or the "skills stories" or fantasy rehearsals of the student, you want examples that are as *concrete* and *specific* as possible. "He played well with his brother" is not very concrete, but relatively high on the "abstraction ladder." Here's a report that is very concrete: "When his brother picked up one of his Lego characters, instead of grabbing it back, he picked up another character and said, 'Hey. I'm glad you are here. Do you want to help us out?'" The most useful reports create a mental image of exactly what happened.

If a parent or child gives you a very abstract celebration, you want to first join in celebrating, and reinforce the report. You certainly don't want the parent or child to feel that the report has been rejected because of being too abstract. But then usually you want to see if the narrator can pinpoint some specific, concrete event. For example: "I'm really glad to hear that! By any chance, can you remember any specific thing that he said or did that was an example of that kindness?"

What's the main point of this section?

A. In a polite way, you want to encourage examples that are concrete, low on the "abstraction ladder," that give a clear mental image of what happened.

Or

B. Concrete and specific images are central to fiction writing and other forms of literature, as well as to effective reinforcement and fantasy rehearsal.

163 Please create a file for your student's celebrations, and jot down the positive examples as you collect them. You might choose to label them as:

Parent reported celebration

Student reported celebration (either of own choice or someone else's choice)

Skills story the student narrates

When you record in writing these various positive examples, the result is an ever growing book of positive examples of skills, collected from your student and the student's family. It's good to treat each new addition to the file as a new treasure for the collection. The more delight you can take in adding to the collection, the more the parent and child will want to help you add more treasures to it.

You can periodically share this document with your student and the parent(s), and your supervisors. You and your student can read it together, and do lots of celebration about each of

the entries. The document can grow larger and larger as you continue tutoring.

The main recommendation of this section is

A. collect stories of positive skills from your student and the parent(s), and create an ever-growing document where you've written them down.

or

B. pick good celebrations of your own to tell the child, so that the child will be able to understand what sorts of behaviors to search for when celebrating.

164As you collect positive examples, you classify them according to the 16 categories.

As the collection of positive examples grows larger, your student gets more evidence of progress. You are not just logging in the time doing session after session; you are accumulating more and more positive examples. This accumulation nicely complements the accumulation of text units, exercises, exercises mastered, books read, points risen on the rating of functioning, grade levels of reading skill increased, and so forth. As I hope we've emphasized, the feeling of cumulative accomplishment, as well as the actual fact of cumulative accomplishment, is one of the highest priorities for your student's experience.

This section has two main ideas. They have to do with:

A. Classification, and a feeling of accumulating progress.

or

B. Not reinforcing the negative, and modeling positive tones through your own voice.

Monitoring Outcomes

165 There is a saying, "That which is measured gets improved." In this program we want to measure not just how much we are doing, for example text units and exercises, which are called process variables. We also want to measure the variables that the child enters the program in order to improve, which are called the outcome variables. We want to have a regular schedule of measurement of outcome variables, around the order of every six months.

One of the distinctions this section makes is that

A. process variables measure what we do with the students; outcome variables measure the results we hope those activities achieve,

or

B. Likert scales measure behavior by asking for the rater's opinion; performance measures elicit some behavior that is observed and/or recorded.

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166 How to measure the outcomes of this project is a crucial and somewhat complex question. Part of the reason for the complexity is that we take on students with widely varying degrees and types of behavioral problems. You can't just use an ADHD scale or an anxiety rating as the outcome measure. But for all of our students, the goal of improving "global psychological functioning" applies. Measuring "global functioning" is tricky.

One of the goals at the time of this writing is to standardize the measurement procedures so that these too can be done by our front line staff and not by a supervisor or two. To the extent that this goal is accomplished, there will be a separate manual on measurement procedures! Tutors who are interested in the research process may want to get involved in the measurement portion of the project.

What's a major point made in this section?

A. The measurement of outcomes in a project like this is complex, and warrants a separate manual on assessment procedures.

Or

B. The correlations between teacher ratings and parent ratings of children's behavior are low enough to make some question whether it's even meaningful to speak about "global functioning" of children.

The Research Goals of This Project

167 We believe that the telephone tutoring could be proven to be a very efficacious and safe intervention in mental health. We hope it has the potential to be much more widely used and to "make the world a better place." For this reason we are trying hard to figure out how to measure how much good we do, and how much each child's functioning changes during the course of the intervention, and after. Evidence we collect on the effectiveness can be very helpful to other people.

What is a conclusion from this section?

A. The parent-training component of our intervention is a very important one.

or

B. We have the goal not only of doing good, but also of measuring how much good we do.

168 We are very interested in ways of doing meaningful research on the effectiveness of our program without using deception, without sham treatment or placebo groups, and without even using random assignment. Negative attitudes toward research are sometimes conveyed by the statement, "I don't want my child to be a guinea pig." Such negative attitudes unfortunately have been justifiably

earned by some research studies that have been carried out. We believe, however, that it is possible to get valuable research information by 1) doing our best to help each student as much as possible, 2) carefully measuring how much (or little) the student is helped, and 3) finding something to compare those results to. Comparing the students' improvement to the time course before the intervention, to other children in accessible databases, or to that of students whose families do not choose the intervention, are example of "quasi-experimental" comparisons. If you're interested in these, there's a large literature on quasi-experimentation.

What's a summary of this?

A. "Quasi-experimental" research methods avoid randomly assigning anyone to less than the best we can give. We're wanting to use these research methods.

or

B. Random assignment is quite feasible for short term interventions, and particularly for short-term drug treatment.

Chapter 11: The Effort-Payoff Connection, and Milestones

169 One of the strongest antidotes to depression, and promoters of happiness, is the feeling, or the knowledge, that your efforts are paying off. Conversely, perhaps the most depressing situation is one in which nothing that you do can make any difference – no matter what you do, things will turn out the same. Another phrase for the effort-payoff connection is contingent reinforcement – the things you want are contingent upon what you do.

What's the main idea of this section?

A. Happiness versus depression depends largely not just on whether good things happen to us, but whether they are related to our efforts.

or

B. Maintaining steady sleep rhythms is an important strategy in preventing and overcoming depression.

170 In our tutoring program, we ask our students to invest effort. We want the students to see the results of their efforts – to get a payoff from them, and to be aware of that payoff. This can happen in several ways.

The most immediate payoff is your enthusiastic approval of the student's effort – this is sometimes called social reinforcement.

A second form of effort-payoff connection occurs when the student gets important outcomes measured, and sees that the outcomes have improved. For many students, our checking their reading ability serves this function. It can be very exciting to see the level of reading skill going up over time. Testing the ability to do various psychological skills exercises, and helping the student realize that she is becoming able to do more and more exercises, is evidence that efforts are paying off. Measuring parent and teacher behavior ratings over time and communicating the results to the student is another way of using outcome measurement to foster the effort-payoff connection.

What's a summary of this section?

A. "Process" means what you do in an intervention, and "outcome" means the result that the process produces.

or

B. Two ways of promoting the effort-payoff connection in our tutoring are 1) enthusiastic approval, and 2) feedback on outcome measurement.

171 A third very important way of promoting the effort-payoff connection is our keeping track of how much work the student has done – number of word list points, number of sections or

stories (“text units”) read, number of exercises done, levels passed in the Ranks and Challenges – and periodically celebrating certain milestone levels of work done. We celebrate the accomplishment of those milestones in 3 ways:

1. By your happily celebrating with your student as soon as the student reaches the milestone.
2. You get on the phone with the parent at the end of the sessions and tell the parent about the accomplishment, so the parent can celebrate with the child.
3. You send an email to your supervisor on the day the milestone was reached, so that the child can be mailed a little certificate and postcard, and usually a 2 dollar bill. Be sure to tell how much the child has done, so that information can go on the certificate. If you're monitoring two variables such as word list points and text units, please be sure to report both, so both can go on the certificate. Please do NOT report milestones in the monthly progress report, even if the milestone is accomplished on that very day, but instead send a separate email about the milestone.

What 3 things should you do when the child accumulates enough units of work to pass a milestone?

A. Write it in your records, send an email to the parent, and put it in the celebrations diary.

or

B. Rejoice with the child, tell the parent about the accomplishment, and email your supervisor telling the relevant numbers pertaining to the accomplishment.

172 The milestones are in terms of *cumulative* amounts of work done since the very first day of tutoring. In other words, you don't ever reset any numbers to zero. Put another way, don't report for the certificate the amount accomplished since the last certificate – report the amount since the very beginning of the tutoring. We do it this way so that the child realizes that none of the units of work are ever forgotten. Every bit of work that is done will be recorded and remembered.

A child did 500 text units for the first certificate that he got. Then he reaches a second milestone by covering 500 more text units. What is the number of text units that the tutor reports, and that goes on the certificate?

A. 1000

or

B. 500?

173 The previous chapter listed several variables that are possible to keep track of during the tutoring. At the beginning of tutoring, you and your supervisor should do some thinking about what variable the first milestones will depend on, and what other variables

will be reported on the certificates.
Here are options:

text units
word list points
foundation (reading) skills points
Ranks and Challenges levels passed

What is a summary of this section?

A. You and your supervisor decide, at the beginning of tutoring, which parameters are most important for the particular child you are working with.
or

B. Social reinforcement in your tone of voice is much more important than the things we send in the mail.

174 Alternate reading is an activity we hope to get to sooner or later with all children in the program. The measure of alternate reading productivity is “text units.” To review one more time:
A text unit is:

one primer story
one illustrated story
one of the numbered sections in any of the programmed manuals
one page in any of the skill-ized novels reading the 16 skills and principles such as on page 8 of Programmed Readings.

If the child is reading the “Beginner Book” series as a bridge between the primer stories and the Illustrated Stories, one text unit is about 20 pages, so that there are about 3 units per

anthologized book like “A Fly Went By” or “Go Dog Go.”

In alternate reading, what you read gets counted toward the student's total, just as what the child reads.

If you read things twice or more, they count just as they did the first time.

As a general rule, multiples of 500 text units are good milestones. We can do more for very fast readers and fewer for very slow readers.

Which is the better summary of this section?

A. One story or section is a text unit; celebrate a milestone when the cumulative number lands on a multiple of 500 or so.

or

B. It's useful to read important chapters several times, because nobody, including your student, remembers everything after one reading.

175 For children on the “reading track” who are doing word list work, a milestone should be celebrated at least every 10,000 word list points. For those who are doing foundation skills work, let's have milestones come at least every 5,000 points. We can alter the plan depending upon the student. The first couple of milestone celebrations might occur with smaller numbers.

Try to pick the number of points for a milestone so that about 3 to 4 months of work results in a milestone.

This section has to do with

A. How often you should use social reinforcement within a tutoring session.

Or

B. How often there should be a celebration of a milestone that is reported to an administrator of the program and to the parents so they can celebrate it too?

176 For some children the most important metric is the number of certain exercises that are done. For example, for a child with a compulsive disorder who is repetitively reading fantasy rehearsals of exposure and ritual prevention, the number of times the fantasy rehearsal exercise is done is crucial. For children with anger control problems, the numbers of 4 thought exercises with provocations, joint decision role plays with conflicts, and T PAARISEC exercises with criticisms are crucial. Count one exercise for each fantasy rehearsal, each pair of celebrations (one by tutor, one by child) each pair of skills stories, each 4 thought exercise, each 12 thought exercise, etc.

What's a point made by this text unit?

A. The more you can get the parent in on celebrating milestones, the better.
or

B. For some children, we want to focus the milestones on the number of repetitions they have done of exercises very relevant to the goals selected for them.

177 The notion that extrinsic rewards decrease intrinsic motivation, and thus should not be used, has been the subject of much research. Some introductory psychology textbooks present the “anti-extrinsic-reward” side of the question convincingly. My own conclusion is that to reject the use of extrinsic reinforcers (particularly small ones, like the ones we send) is mistaken and harmful. If you want to read more about the “pro-extrinsic-reward” side of the debate, please search the Internet for an article by Robert Eisenberger and Judy Cameron, 1996, “Detrimental Effects of Reward: Reality or Myth?” Also, Eisenberger, Pierce, and Cameron, 1999, “Effects of Reward on Intrinsic Motivation....” Also Phillip Strain and Gail Joseph, *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 2004, A response to Kohn 2001.

In addition to plowing through lots of psychological research, we can contemplate real-life observations relevant to this question. The widespread custom of paying people money for working in their jobs seems to increase productivity rather than decrease it!

The purpose of this section was to

A. help the reader locate some of the evidence that extrinsic rewards are useful and rarely harmful,

or

B. to clarify that “intrinsic” motivation means doing something purely because of interest or enjoyment, and not to achieve some payoff beyond the activity itself.

178 Please give your student feedback, at the end of each session, on at least one parameter, telling the number done today and the cumulative number.

At the end of the session, you don't just say, “We read 10 text units today. You say, “We read 10 text units today, for a grand total of 473 text units done since the start of tutoring! 27 more until we reach the next milestone of 500 text units!”

A tutor sets a goal with the student for each month, and sees if they can meet the goal for that month, starting over from zero each month. Is this way of counting

A. Exactly what is being asked for, or

B. Not what is being asked for – we want the milestones and celebrations to be in terms of cumulative units.

179 Some children enjoy the sessions so much that keeping counts and celebrating milestones is not necessary. But for others (and you don't know who they are ahead of time) keeping track of the student's cumulative

accomplishment and celebrating it can make all the difference in the student's attitude toward the tutoring. We want the student not to think, “Now I have my session, so I have to work for a certain length of time.” We want the student to think, “Here's a chance for me to add to what I've accomplished so far.”

This section has to do with

A. working toward some goal rather than just working,

or

B. making sure that the work sessions are the right length of time for the student's attention span?

180 If a student isn't enjoying the tutoring, it may be the case that the student is clueless about how many units of work he or she has done, what the next milestone is, and how the next milestone will be celebrated. And if this is the case, usually the tutor is not communicating this information to the student.

The ways of monitoring, recording, and celebrating accomplishment can vary from student to student. Talk with your supervisor about this if you are unclear on what's the best way to do it with your student. We can be flexible. For some students, we may forgo all certificates, prizes, and letters, but there should be a very good reason for this.

When in doubt, just do a little arithmetic and figure out a milestone

that will result in a celebration after about every 3 months. We don't want the milestones to come really often – this diminishes the importance for the child and makes a lot of unproductive work for the administrator.

Sending these little prizes is a way for us to keep track of what progress is taking place. If we never hear that a prize or certificate or letter should be sent, it should be a red flag for us that the effort-payoff connection isn't being fostered enough.

What's a message that comes through in this section?

A. The issue of the effects of rewards on motivation is only one example of many academic questions that are of great practical relevance in our tutoring.

or

B. The leadership of the psychoeducational tutoring program strongly wishes to keep up with milestones and to be involved in celebrations, as one more way of monitoring progress.

Chapter 12: Preview: What is There to Learn About Psychological Skills?

181 The purpose of this chapter is somewhat like that of a movie trailer – to give you a preview of the ideas in over half a million words of manuals on psychological skills that you may end up reading with your students, and to give you a feeling for what we think are the ideas that people can be educated in, that can really help them act healthier.

One thing we want to teach students is what we mean by "healthier" or "better functioning" or "what the big goals are." These are: 1) long-term happiness of the students themselves, and 2) their contributing to the long-term happiness of others. In other words:

1. caring for self, and
2. caring for others.

Or: kindness to self, and kindness to others. Helping other people and enjoying doing so. This is what the whole curriculum is about.

What are the two big goals?

- A. Long term happiness of self and others.
or
B. Academic and career success.

182 One idea that runs through all our psychoeducation is that learners are

empowered by having concepts in their vocabulary. Language is an amazing aid to thinking. This is why almost every field of study – chess, dancing, music, medicine, law, physics – has its own special vocabulary.

We teach students a language for skills, organized into the 16 groups that we have already mentioned earlier: productivity, joyousness, kindness, etc. We hope that this language itself is transformative, and that it induces what we call the “skills oriented life view”: that almost every situation we encounter in life presents an opportunity for us to come up with a positive example of one or more skills. Even the bad situations provide opportunities for fortitude and good decisions. And every positive example we enact is a reason for us to feel good – i.e., to celebrate.

What’s the better summary of this section?

A. Vocabulary is empowering, and the language of psychological skills, we hope, enables students to adopt the “skills oriented life view,” of endless opportunities for psychological skills triumphs and celebrations.

or

B. Our talk about “positive fantasy rehearsal” springs from dozens of

research studies on the effects of practice in imagination.

183 The notion of celebration and self-reinforcement, that every positive example of skills, no matter how mundane, is worth feeling good about, is an idea that many depressed adults need to be convinced of. “It’s something I should be expected to do routinely – therefore, it deserves no celebration,” goes this logic. The counter-logic is that the more we feel good about the things we “should” do or are “expected to” do, the easier it is to do them – this is the basic principle of reinforcement. We do things more readily, the more those things are followed by firings in the pleasure centers of our brains!

What’s the point of this section?

A. Contrary to what some people seem to believe, feeling good about the good things we do is not somehow immoral or unwarranted – it’s desirable, because it helps us do those things more often.
or

B. There are nonviolent and prosocial means of achieving interpersonal power, and working toward those types of power is very desirable.

184 The principles of modeling and positive fantasy rehearsal run through all our psychological skills education. There’s no need to reinvent the wheel: if we can read about positive models of psychological skills, and store them in

our memory banks, we make it more likely that we will use them. And, the more times we run positive patterns through our neuronal circuitry, the more strongly ingrained those patterns become. This is the principle of fantasy rehearsal. It has been affirmed in widely varying research studies. It is just the principle that our society inadvertently uses in just the wrong direction through various forms of violent entertainment – “shooter” videogames for example.

What’s a summary?

A. “Moving away from” someone you are very angry at is a crucial strategy for nonviolence and anger control – just the opposite of the idea that once a conflict has started, you are obligated to finish it somehow.

or

B. Our psychoeducation makes great use of the principles of modeling and fantasy rehearsal: seeing positive examples, and running them through your mind repeatedly, moves them into your repertoire.

185 We've said that “mentally healthy” actions are those which, all other things equal, tend to make ourselves happier, and/or make other people happier, in the long run. But sometimes what makes people happier in the long run is NOT what feels best in the short run. The concept of long run happiness versus short term pleasure introduces the idea of self-discipline: being able to

forgo the short term temptation (for example, the video game) in favor of the longer term goal (e.g. getting homework done and doing well in school). The ideas of the self-discipline choice point, where a temptation and a long-term goal are in competition with one another, and the self-discipline triumph, where we choose to advance progress toward our long-term goal, are concepts that help our students liberate themselves from being controlled by what is most immediately pleasurable.

What's a summary of this?

A. The principle of reinforcement is very useful in interpersonal relations – people like people roughly in proportion to how much they reinforce them.

or

B. By teaching our students the concepts of self-discipline and long-term goals versus short term temptations, we hope to liberate them from being controlled by immediate gratifications.

186 Another couple of “big ideas” of psychoeducation are lifted directly from cognitive therapy: first, our thoughts, or what we say to ourselves, are very powerful in influencing our feelings and behaviors; second, we can gradually acquire the skill of choosing the thoughts that will help us achieve our goals, rather than being stuck in habits of thinking certain thoughts even when they are self-defeating. The skill

of choosing our own thoughts is greatly assisted by having labels for those thoughts. We've earlier mentioned the 12-thought categorization we teach students. With these concepts, it becomes possible for a depressed person to think, “I've done enough getting down on myself. I want to move toward goal-setting, listing options and choosing, and celebrating my own choice.” It becomes possible for a student of anger control to think, “Continuing the thought of ‘blaming someone else’ is not helping me. What options will make things better?”

What's a summary of this?

A. A very big idea of psychoeducation is that we can choose our own thoughts so as to help ourselves achieve our goals.

or

B. When dealing with fears, one of the first steps is deciding whether the fear is realistic or unrealistic, useful to us or harmful to us.

187 People speak of rates of maturation of the prefrontal cortex, which is seen as a major performer of rational calculations about life situations, versus the amygdala and other parts of the limbic system, which are seen as performers of major emotional reactions such as anger and distress. But we see rational decision-making as a trainable skill. Students can learn to recognize choice points, generate options for responses to them, consider

the pros and cons of the options, and choose a set of options that they predict will produce the best outcomes. We can learn this skill through practice with many hypothetical choice points. Perhaps in doing this, we practice activating our prefrontal cortices and keeping our limbic systems quiet enough not to interfere. Or maybe not – the neurological mechanism is not as important as the observation that cool, rational decision-making is a skill that we can develop through practice.

What’s an idea embedded in this section?

A. Three maneuvers (out of several more) useful for good decision-making are recognition of being in a choice point, brainstorming options, and weighing the pros and cons of options.
or

B. There are nine basic methods that we teach, whereby one person can influence either someone else, or herself, to get either better or worse at a certain psychological skill. These include instruction, modeling, practice, reinforcement, and 5 others.

188 Working on the skill of rational decision-making is a very nonpharmacological way to improve ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) symptoms, particularly those of impulsivity. There’s another type of exercise that may turn out to help ADHD, although

research has not settled this question yet. The exercises are called “task switching” or “set shifting.”

In exercises of these sorts, you respond to the same sort of stimulus, but the directions about how you are to respond shift back and forth. A classic task-switching challenge is the Stroop test, where you see words like red, green, blue, pink, etc. printed in colors that do not correspond to the color the word names. So if the word red is printed in green ink, the directions can be, “read the word,” in which case you’d say “red,” or the directions can be “what color is the word,” in which case you’d say, “green.”

Because it’s unknown how much working out our prefrontal cortices in these ways generalizes in really useful ways, we have made up exercises that combine task-switching with an academic task useful in itself: practicing math facts. The directions change around from “just say the answer,” to “say the number of the question and then the answer,” to “say the question and then say the answer.” Our *Manual on Task-Switching or Set-Shifting* also contains task-switching exercises with word problem tasks and with some reading exercises.

What’s the current point of view of the author about task-switching exercises?

A. They are a proven strategy for ADHD and should be used for all children on the ADHD spectrum.
or

B. How much they improve ADHD is an open research question (and an important one); until the question is settled, we hedge our bets by combining task-switching with academic practice that is useful regardless of the task-switching element.

189 The rational decision-making process, of generating options, predicting consequences (which are called advantages or disadvantages or pros and cons) and trying hard to predict which options will produce the best outcomes, is ideally the same process that people should use in joint decision-making or conflict-resolution. Real life people very often set up the competition not among the options, but among the people. Who will dominate? Who will prove that the other is at fault? But if we can let the options compete rather than the people, things go better.

We teach a series of steps for joint decision or conflict-resolution that are meant to help people focus on what plan will work out best. These criteria for rational joint-decision conversations go by the mnemonic of Dr. L.W. Aap. To review what was mentioned in an earlier chapter, the criteria are: **D**efining the problem, **R**eflecting each other's point of view, **L**isting options, **W**aiting (until we finish listing, before evaluating the options), **A**dvantages and disadvantages, **A**greeing on something, and **P**oliteness.

What's the idea of this section?

A. When practicing dealing with scary situations, you want exposures that are long enough that you aren't just experiencing negative reinforcement for escaping the situation, that actually increases fear or aversion.

or

B. The idea of rational decision-making, weighing options based on their predicted outcomes, can be extended to the interpersonal situation, and used to foster nonviolent and effective conflict-resolution.

190 A useful concept in conflict situations is that of assertion – not yelling, staying cool, but calmly and persistently sticking up for what one wants, and communicating those wants in a clear and straightforward way. We can categorize assertive communications by how gentle they are, and often the most gentle assertions that are still sufficient to communicate our wishes effectively work the best in the long run. Assertion is often a great alternative to either overly aggressive interpersonal maneuvers, or overly passive and submissive ones.

What's the idea of this section?

A. In making rational decisions, information-seeking is often a very important step, which helps us predict outcomes.

or

B. Learning to calmly stick up for ourselves in the most gentle way that works is a very important psychological skill.

191 Fortunately, there is more to human relations than conflict-resolution and assertion. The more we can really enjoy social conversation, and help our comrades enjoy it also, the better life goes. There are several “chapter headings” for social skill: greeting and parting rituals (Hi! ... See you later!) ; using tones of voice well; having a system for generating ideas about what to talk about (places, activities, people, events, and reactions and ideas in the other person’s life, mnemonic PAPER); knowing how to be a good listener. We’ve mentioned previously the “four responses” we teach for listening skills: reflections, facilitations, follow-up questions, and positive feedback. If people can emphasize these, as well as not too much and not too little telling about their own experience, with good turn-taking, conversations tend to go better. Most people can benefit, not only from increasing these facilitative communications, but also from decreasing the obstructive ones: commands, criticisms, contradictions, and threats.

These techniques, plus the skill of somehow generating curiosity and interest in what the other person has to say, can, if cultivated, provide countless hours of pleasure and

satisfaction in life, and can promote great relationships. Social conversation skill and the pleasure it affords can be truly life-changing.

The ideas mentioned in this section have to do with

A. how people can make verbal interaction with each other more pleasant, useful, and fulfilling;
or

B. how people can get themselves to choose a less pleasurable option if they need to, to achieve a valued goal?

192 Two emotions would not have evolved if they were not often useful: these are anger and fear. Anger is meant to help us not to be victimized, to protect ourselves from others. Fear helps us know when to protect ourselves from danger in general. But too much anger and too great fear, in situations where such emotions are not useful, can be bad habits to alter. One of the first steps is recognizing that the anger or fear is excessive or unrealistic or undesirable. Another step is choosing to try to reduce the anger or fear, rather than just to avoid the scary situation or punish the person one is angry at. A third step is forming an image of what a calm, rational, desirable response to the situation that currently provokes anger or fear might be. And finally, repetitive, persistent rehearsal of those desirable, rational responses, taking into account

thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, is key to forming new and better habits.

An inference from this section is that

A. Sometimes, paradoxically, agreeing with at least part of criticism is very useful, partly because it sends the message that you don't need to argue for your own perfection.

or

B. Anger control and anxiety-reduction share several common methods.

193 One of the major *bad* ideas that some mental health practitioners still communicate, with respect to anger control, is the “catharsis hypothesis”: that it's important to get anger “out” of yourself – that anger, like urine or feces or the pus in an abscess, needs to be expelled and released and unclogged. A good deal of research confirms that attempting to get anger “out” often only increases anger and rehearses undesirable responses. We can often do a world of good by helping students realize that the central question in situations that make us angry (which I call “provocations”) is not, “How do I get this anger out,” but “How do I act in a way that brings about the most desirable results?”

What's a summary of this section?

A. Although many people define the chief anger-control question as “How do you get it out of your system,” it is much better to think in terms of

“What's the most useful and competent way of responding to the provocation?”
or

B. A great deal of violence takes place between people who know each other well, and many of the triggers are very trivial.

194 Another big idea of psychoeducation is that we can learn to directly alter our physiological levels of arousal or excitement. We can help ourselves turn down the activity of our sympathetic nervous systems – the part that tends to pump us up with adrenaline. Getting more relaxed, less excited, is very useful in both anger control and anxiety reduction. And at times the skill of psyching ourselves up, getting more excited, is very useful too. The skill of relaxation can be cultivated with practice. There are various techniques of relaxation, meditation, and/or biofeedback that we can use: getting our muscles looser, calmly observing our own thoughts, repeating a mantra to ourselves, imagining beautiful and relaxing scenes, imagining acts of kindness, playing with increasing our fingertip temperature, decreasing our fingertip sweat gland activity, or increasing the rhythmic variation of our heart rates with breathing, to name only a few. Relaxation training has been found useful in so many research studies that it should be a part of everyone's education.

But especially for children who are compelled to sit in school for long

hours, relaxation training is best carried out when a person has already had enough physical exercise.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Shifting from “awfulizing” to “not awfulizing” thoughts is key to reducing our physiological arousal.

or

B. The skill of relaxation can, and should, be taught; it can be practiced by a good number of different techniques.

195 Sometimes very simple ideas are also very powerful in increasing our psychological well-being. Some of these ideas fall into the category of “self-care” skills. Sometimes people are able to make a major improvement in their moods, simply by following the advice: “Get enough sleep.” For many children, “enough” is close to 10 hours, and “what they are getting now” is closer to 7 or 8 hours, or fewer. We can work on psychological skills for hours, but the brain needs sleep to carry them out. A related piece of advice is, “Make your sleep hours as regular as you can” – that is, try to have bedtime and wake-up time be similar from day to day. Regular exercise and regular nutritious, non-junky meals, are other important self-care habits, the violation of which can suppress the positive results of psychological skills training. Avoiding mind-altering “recreational” drugs is another self-care skill which I believe is best introduced early in life. One of the very easiest stories for the reading

curriculum is the positive model of someone who solves an anger control problem by stopping drinking alcohol.

This section deals with the simple ideas of

A. Setting worthy goals, and monitoring whether they are being achieved.

or

B. Sleeping, eating, exercising, and avoiding recreational drugs in ways that maximize health.

196 We mentioned earlier that self-discipline entails forsaking immediate gratification in the service of long-term goals. In order to do this, of course, one has to have long-term goals in the first place. Many students are at first not goal-oriented, and questions about long-term goals draw blank stares. They need to be taught about how to set goals, plan how to achieve them, devote regular effort toward them, and monitor progress toward them. The study of goals also involves differentiating more trivial goals (such as beating a certain video game or winning a pie-eating contest) from more meaningful and worthy goals (such as cultivating a very positive relationship with a sibling, or learning skills that will enable one to help people greatly). Goal-orientation versus aimlessness, and choosing worthy goals rather than those which waste time and energy, are two more of the big ideas of psychoeducation.

What's a summary of this section?

A. Many times people form goals for the distant future (such as becoming a doctor), but don't link those to present activities (such as doing one's homework).

or

B. Forming goals and being driven toward them, and picking worthy rather than wasteful ones, are ideas which ideally all our students can eventually get.

197 External reinforcement is important in fostering positive activity and effort. It's very useful in creating an effort-payoff connection. But often the world and other people are too involved in their own problems and pursuits to arrange payoffs for our efforts. It is difficult, but possible, for people to carry out self-management: to decide upon rewards that they will withhold from themselves until they have done a certain amount of work or have accomplished a certain amount of progress. They present to themselves these rewards contingent upon their achievement. Can someone voluntarily withhold screen time till homework is finished? Can someone give oneself a small bit of chocolate candy as a reward for an hour of organizing work, and withhold it until the work is done? This takes lots of self-discipline. But if someone can learn to withhold and deliver external rewards to oneself, contingent upon desirable behavior,

self-discipline can become more possible, and more fun.

This section deals with what very desirable accomplishment?

A. Learning self-management by withholding and delivering reinforcers like activities or food or other pleasurable things contingent on desirable behavior.

or

B. Learning to do less self-downing and more celebrating, by shifting the content of one's self-talk or thought.

198 Panic attacks are a common problem for people with anxiety. I've worked with a fair number of people who have been able to cure themselves of bad panic attacks by educational methods. It is logical that this same sort of education can prevent the development of bad panic attacks.

Here's the crucial piece of education. Most bad panic attacks involve the "vicious cycle of hyperventilation." That is: someone starts breathing fast (which is a normal physiological response to fear). Hyperventilation blows off carbon dioxide, and changes the chemistry of the blood (making it more alkalotic). The "normal" response of the body is to sense this change, (it's a somewhat unpleasant feeling) and automatically slow down the breathing to correct it. But in certain susceptible people, the body perceives this change as, "I'm not getting *enough* air," and the person

breathes even faster. This only makes the “weird feeling” worse, and in response the person breathes even faster. Hyperventilation can be extremely unpleasant, though usually not dangerous. But when the person understands this cycle, this crucial knowledge lets the person know that the cure is elegant: learn to recognize the “low CO₂” feeling, and cure it by breathing – not more deeply, but *more slowly*.

But knowing this doesn’t help in the heat of the moment unless one has practiced and overlearned the corrective response. Two practice exercises are part of the education. In the first, you hold your breath just long enough to feel the “high CO₂” feeling, and cure it by taking a couple of deeper and faster breaths. You notice what high CO₂ feels like. Then, you purposely hyperventilate for 5 to 15 breaths; you notice what slightly low CO₂ feels like, and how it’s different from high CO₂. You cure that weird feeling of low CO₂ by breathing very slowly for a while, and then resume breathing normally. With enough practice, people can learn to recognize when they are starting to hyperventilate, and nip a hyperventilation episode in the bud by purposely slowing down breathing. This sort of psychoeducation is contained in the anxiety reduction book.

Which of the following is an idea present in this section?

A. After we hyperventilate, we have lower CO₂ (carbon dioxide) than normal, and after we hold our breath, we have higher CO₂ than normal. To nip hyperventilation in the bud, breathe very slowly and allow CO₂ to accumulate some more.

or

B. Although some people assign a big importance to abdominal breathing versus chest breathing, and although abdominal breathing may convey some more control, the crucial physiological variable is not which muscles control breathing, but how fast air goes in and out of the lungs.

199 All the psychological skills that we talk about in any of the manuals are useful for people of any age. Most people should be working on psychological skills throughout the life span, rather than thinking that they should be mastered at a certain age with no future work.

The author's attitude is that

A. The material in our training manuals is aimed at what children need and not at what adults need to know.

or

B. The psychological skills taught in our manuals are useful for people of any age.

200 We’ll stop here, not because the storehouse of useful ideas for psychoeducation has been exhausted,

but because we have to stop somewhere. Our manuals go on for hundreds of pages, and in 10 pages or so we can only provide a few examples of the ideas we find helpful. But these ideas give you a taste of what we mean by psychoeducation – what can we teach and learn that helps people have better psychological functioning. If getting into all this much more thoroughly and with many more concrete examples is an attractive prospect for you, then psychoeducational tutoring will probably be lots of fun for you, and vice versa!

What's an idea expressed in this section?

A. This condensation represents a fairly complete outline of a psychological skills curriculum.

or

B. If this sort of subject matter attracts you, you will be more likely to enjoy psychoeducational tutoring; if it doesn't, you will be less likely to enjoy it.

Chapter 13: The Psychoeducational Tutor as Influencer

201 Nearly every time we turn on the television, open a newspaper or magazine, get on the internet, or turn on the radio, someone is trying to get us to do something. There's plenty to be cynical about in the world of advertising and salespersonship. A large part of what we're being sold is junk or even harmful, but the person selling doesn't care – they only care about the bucks. And the spokespersons for products are generating enthusiasm by acting a part, because their endorsement has been bought. The whole business of advertising assumes and condones a certain dishonesty.

But we can't escape persuasion and selling, and we wouldn't even want to. The world runs on buying and selling. If someone is to earn a living, whether it's provision of goods or services, somehow other people need to be persuaded to buy what that person is providing.

When what you are trying to sell is extremely good and useful for the recipient and for humanity as a whole, salespersonship becomes a very high and good calling!

What's a summary of this section?

A. Although salespersonship is sometimes dishonest and sometimes promotes worthless junk, it can be a great thing to do when what you're selling has great effects.

or

B. Although it's easy to be cynical about advertising, if you need models of enthusiastic tones of voice, you can almost always find them used by advertisers.

202 What are you trying to “sell” as a psychoeducational tutor? You want your student to “buy” the following things, not with money, but by investment of time, energy, and cooperation.

1. The ideas of caring for self and caring for others (being happy and helping others to be happy).
2. Each of the sixteen skills and principles.
3. The whole idea of self-improvement, and our capacity to improve ourselves.
4. Alternate reading, psychological skills exercises, and social conversation – that is, the activities of psychoeducation.
5. The idea that fantasy rehearsal can improve skills.
6. The notion that work is the way to make things better.
7. The way you and your student get to work together; an appreciation of the opportunity for both of you to do the tutoring together.

In addition, you want the parent to “buy” the idea that what the child is accomplishing both in the sessions and

by positive examples outside the sessions is worthy of attention and approval.

In this section, when the author speaks of the tutor selling something, he is referring to

- A. An actual financial transaction, or
- B. Helping people to adopt certain attitudes and ideas that will be very useful to them?

203 How do you go about selling these ideas and attitudes? A crucial part of the salesperson's task is to communicate enthusiasm through tone of voice, and we have spoken about this earlier. Another part is just to speak positively about the things you're trying to sell. One of the best ways to do this is as someone who is "buying" these things yourself, as someone who believes that self-improvement is for everybody and that you are in this for what you can get out of it, as well as to help your student. Suppose a tutor and student read the 16 skills and principles, and the tutor says, "Wow, in only about a minute and a half, we read some really important ideas on how to live life well! So now we get to go out and try to do as good examples of these as we can, in real life! I'm excited about this project! I'm going to try to do some good examples of these 16 skills, and you can too, and we can tell each other about what we do!"

What the tutor said in this section

A. Was saying, "You should do this to solve your problems."

or

B. Was saying, "I want to do this, to live really well myself."

204 If you think that you are already perfect at the psychological skills, or that fantasy rehearsal doesn't work, or that happiness of self and others are not worthy goals, or that social conversation is a waste of time, etc., then you'd have to put on an act to model an enthusiastic embrace of the self-help project for yourself. I don't want anyone to have to be dishonest. But if, when you peruse the psychoeducational materials and you think it is something you can honestly enthusiastically get into yourself, then that is probably the best selling technique. So before you start the tutoring, think about it: is the notion of trying to do lots of productivity, joyousness, kindness, honesty, fortitude, good decisions, etc. a project that you can honestly get turned on to, yourself? If you can, this will help your salespersonship! If not, please think twice about becoming a psychoeducational tutor!

What's a summary of this section?

A. Think about how whole-heartedly you can buy in to the idea of self-improvement; if you can, you'll find it easier to sell the idea to the student.

or

B. In selling weight loss products, it's more effective to show before and after

photos of people telling how the product helped them than to have some expert telling how it will help you.

205 Another way of selling is to think out loud about what the effect would be on the world if this or that skill were widely used well. For example, a tutor and a child read an example of a joint decision conversation using the Dr. L.W. Aap criteria (defining, reflecting, listing, waiting, etc.). The tutor remarks, "I have a wish. Want to know what it is?... I wish that someday the people who lead countries and decide whether to fight wars against each other could talk with each other like those people in that little example we read! How different the world would be, you know?"

Again, the tutor is giving a little advertisement for the ideas of peaceful and respectful joint decisions.

What's the point of this section?

A. Another selling technique is to think about how the world would be different if lots of people learned and applied what you are learning.

or

B. A useful meditative technique is to go through the 16 skills and to imagine a positive example of each.

206 I've mentioned selling techniques based on "I benefit from or intend to benefit from this," and "This would benefit the world if lots of people could do it." One that I've stayed away from is "You should learn to do this better, to

solve your problems." This can be a very important sales tactic IF the person acknowledges having any problems and feels a need and a motivation to solve them. But many people, children in particular, have already gotten a rebellious attitude toward people who say to them, "Here's how you need to improve yourself." So I would be careful about using this sales tactic – it can backfire. As a general rule, stay away from this unless you know you're not going to provoke defensiveness in your student.

A tutor reads about doing the four-thought exercise as a method of anger control. The tutor says to the student, "I think using this method will help you not to lose your temper so much. Don't you?" This type of selling tactic is

A. Just what the author is advocating, or

B. What the author is advising us to usually avoid, and to think carefully before using?

207 One of the most important assets of a salesperson is to believe in your own product. I think it that too often after tutors have done fine work with students, and students have experienced very impressive gains in functioning, the tutors, having little standard of comparison, take this for granted and move on without fully comprehending how remarkable their work has been.

What is a summary of this section?

A. The author is especially proud of how much tutors have been able to create a feeling of community with one another.

or

B. The author would like for tutors to share in feeling much more deeply a sense of how remarkable their work is.

208 When children improve greatly, even parents sometimes seem to forget how far the child has come. Sometimes they forget about the major problems that have gone away, and focus their attention on the minor problem that happened last night. A teacher can be quite upset with the minor problems still remaining, not even being aware of the major problems that have been solved. Unfortunately, the world does not have a huge celebration that automatically goes off when extremely good things happen. This is especially true in the preventive arena. People celebrate the neurosurgeon who saves someone after a gunshot wound to the head, but they don't even realize it when there is an educator who prevented several gunshot wounds from happening in the first place.

For these reasons, we should measure our outcomes vigorously, and support each other maximally.

What's the closest paraphrase of this section?

A. Since the world finds it hard to notice when lots of preventive help has

come to our students, we need to track outcomes assiduously and reinforce each other for them.

or

B. Most adults can benefit greatly from increased social support, and a tutoring organization could be a great alternative to social activities that revolve around alcohol intoxication.

209 I feel even more excited about psychoeducation, the more my eyes are opened to 1) just how badly our human race equips each upcoming generation with regard to psychological skills, and 2) just how inadequate existing institutions, including the mental health and educational systems, are to rectify this.

Reading any issue of the *New York Times* should be enough to convince us of the first proposition, if we have been lucky enough to escape much first-hand experience of how cruel and mean people can be, how painful and harmful education can be, how scary or depressing life can be, and so forth.

Perhaps those of us who have more intimate knowledge of the mental health and educational systems, as well as primary medical care, can help others of us realize just how overwhelmed these systems are with the sheer enormity of psychological skills needs of our population, and the ubiquitous problem of too many people with pressing needs and impossibly little time to deal with them. The specter of lawsuits, and the tremendous

time wasted in trying to protect against liability, is another aspect of current systems that most of you may not be familiar with.

Perhaps paradoxically, I find that these depressing realizations can be transmuted into exciting positive visions of how greatly society could be helped if educational methods of psychological skill training were fully harnessed. I'm not so grandiose as to expect that our organization is going to change society very much. (It can't help but change it at least a tiny bit.) But we can change the lives of some children, and perhaps we can contribute some methods that others will take, and perhaps improve upon, and use for the good of more human beings.

What's a point of this section?

A. Practice hours only cumulate to expertise if the patterns being practiced are highly competent ones.

or

B. The depressing realities of the overwhelming psychological skill needs of society, and the inadequacy of existing institutions, can be transmuted into positively exciting visions of fully harnessing of the possibilities of educational methods.