



Summer School 2010

April 23, 2010

July 12-16, 2010

PT510: Circle of Courage: Reclaiming Youth at Risk - Response Ability Pathways

Rev. Dr. Martin Brokenleg and Dr. Larry Brendtro

Circle of Courage

Martin Brokenleg

Mon, July 12, 9 -12 noon (1:30-4:30 – additional seminar for credit students)

Fri, July 16, 9 -12 noon (1:30-4:30 – additional seminar for credit students)

For thousands, of years, Aboriginal cultures nourished respectful and courageous children without employing punitive discipline. Now, recent youth development research is revealing the essential elements in raising confident and caring children. Drawing on his research with Dr. Larry Brendtro and Dr. Steve Van Bockern in their book *'Reclaiming Youth at Risk,'* Dr. Martin Brokenleg presents “**The Circle of Courage**” which offers concrete strategies for creating environments in which all young people can grow and flourish, and suggests ways in which we can assist children in meeting their needs for attachment, achievement, autonomy and altruism. Research demonstrates that these elements are crucial to the development of resilience and inner strengths in children, and Dr. Brokenleg discusses the important role of parents youth workers and advocates in fostering a youth-positive environment. This course is designed for Aboriginal works, youth workers, foster parents, social workers, therapist and those who work with young children.

Martin Brokenleg consults worldwide and serves as a Vice President of Reclaiming Youth International. He is an Emeritus Professor and was most recently Director of Native Ministries and Professor of First Nations Theology and Ministry at Vancouver School of Theology.

Response Ability Pathways

Larry Brendtro

Tues, July 13, Wed, July 14, Thurs, July 15: 9 am - 12 noon; 1:30 - 4:30 pm

Response Ability Pathways – or simply RAP – is an experiential workshop providing skills for working effectively with young persons and supporting them on pathways toward responsibility. RAP builds positive connections with and among youth and creates climates of mutual respect.

The Response Ability Pathways (RAP) course provides essential training for all who deal with young persons in family, school, community, and treatment settings. Young people need supportive adults who respond to their needs rather than react to their problems. RAP puts the Circle of Courage into action by building strengths and positive peer climates with challenging youth. RAP teaches adults how to provide children with opportunities to develop belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. RAP methods are grounded in research evidence on resilience, brain science, and positive youth development. The course format is lively, engaging, and creative for all students.

Larry Brendtro works worldwide in fields of education, mental health, juvenile justice, and faith-based youth programs. Reclaiming Youth Network Website: www.reclaiming.com

CLASS SCHEDULE

Circle of Courage and RAP Training

Morning	9am – 12 noon	Afternoon 1:30-4:30 pm
MON, July 12 Martin Brokenleg Introduction to The Circle of Courage		Free for reading Extra Seminar for Credit Students
TUES, July 13 Larry Brendtro RAP Training Pain Based Behavior		RAP Training Resilience Science
WED, July 14 Larry Brendtro RAP Training Disconnected Kids		RAP Training Connecting Strategies
THURS, July 15 Larry Brendtro RAP Training Clarifying Strategies		RAP Training Restoring Respect and Responsibility
FRI, July 16 Martin Brokenleg Creating a Youth Positive Environment		Free for ruminating Extra Seminar for Credit Students

Overview

In modern society, the bonds between generations have been tattered. Children who are not attached to adults fail to learn the values of respect for self and others. Hungry for attention, they become prisoners of peer approval. Unattached to others and unmotivated in school, they fail to develop their potentials. Struggling for power, they challenge authority. Many youth mask their spiritual emptiness by reckless pursuit of pleasure. Their disruptive behaviors are signals of distress. Beneath their defiance, indifference, or reckless bravado, many of our youth are swimming in rivers of pain. But when their behavior bothers others, they are likely to be dealt more pain by punishment or exclusion.

RAP is grounded in the value-based belief that all youth, even those presenting difficult behavior, have positive potential, and there are no disposable kids. Problems of children and youth are not unique to impoverished communities but are found in city, suburban, and rural settings. Family instability, substance abuse, delinquency, school problems, racism, and alienated youth are all symptoms of broken communities. RAP addresses such problems by restoring relationships and building positive peer climates.

To succeed in the face of risk and challenge, children need concerned adults and peers who respond to their needs rather than react to problem behavior. RAP provides these “response-abilities” to all who deal directly with young persons experiencing conflict in school, family, peer group, and community. This training can include key adult stakeholders as well as youth who exercise positive influence among their peers.

Learning Goals

RAP is a system for communicating with youth and providing positive behavior support. RAP uses a clear-cut problem-solving format: *Connect* ► *Clarify* ► *Restore*. This is the normal process for resilient coping found in all cultures. Thus, RAP taps the strengths and natural capacity kids already have to *connect* with others for support, *clarify* challenging problems, and *restore* respect. Each of these goals is described as follows:

1. *Connect with challenging children and youth.* A mentor's first challenge is to create positive social bonds. While "building relationships" with reluctant youth may appear to be a daunting task, many meaningful connections can be made in a short period of time, both with individuals and with groups. Positive connections are built upon small acts of respect and kindness. Once youth connect, they are able to use that person for positive support.
2. *Clarify challenges facing a young person.* By helping a youth understand "here-and-now" problem situations, mentors support the development of resilient coping strengths. This involves communicating with youth who may be guarded and adult-wary in order to understand the private logic beneath their problem behavior. Youth learn to use strengths and to overcome limitations to meet important life goals. Young persons need to learn to think clearly about their behavior in order to creatively solve problems, master difficult challenges, and meet their needs.
3. *Restore inner and interpersonal harmony.* This involves respect for self and others. A restorative plan mobilizes inner strengths and external supports to meet growth needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Though complicated problems may not be resolved immediately, a young person can take steps on the pathway toward responsibility.

RAP starts with problems but searches for strengths and solutions. RAP provides whatever support the "teaching moment" allows, whether literally a moment or an hour. Sometimes a few short RAP interventions distributed over time have more lasting impact than a long session.

RAP training grew from the Circle of Courage model based on Native American philosophies of child rearing as described in *Reclaiming Youth At Risk* by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern. RAP is also grounded in research on resilience and brain science.

RAP training has been rated as highly useful by staff in education, treatment, juvenile justice, youth care, foster care, family support, law enforcement, and community and faith-based organizations. RAP enables youth to join in an alliance with adults to solve problems and cultivate respectful environments.

Topical Outline

- I. Children and Youth in Pain**
Pain-Based Behavior
Fighting Pain with Pain
Circle of Courage and Resilience Science
- II. Connecting**
Disconnected Kids
Brain Science on Connecting
Strategies for Connecting
- III. Clarifying**
Private Logic and Thinking Errors
Brain Science on CLEAR Problem Solving
Strategies for Clarifying Challenges

IV. Restoring
Cultivating Responsibility
Building Strengths and Support
Strategies for Restoring Respect

Course Organization and Resources

RAP training follows principles of “universal design.” It is intuitive, jargon-free, and relevant across diverse cultural settings. Training is interactive and experiential and provides practical strategies for professional and lay persons as well as youth who are peer leaders. A RAP course is delivered over a minimum of three days of intensive learning activities. Outside readings support the formal training. Participants in RAP workshops can register to receive undergraduate or graduate credit.

RAP trainers use brief lectures, audio-visual resources, discussion, and extensive role-playing of problem-solving scenarios. This is a very interactive course and participation in role-playing is organized to be as non-threatening as possible. The skills for these interventions are developed in sequence, first concentrating on Connecting, later adding Clarifying, and by the last day putting together Connecting, Clarifying, and Restoring.

Participants in RAP training receive the text *Response Ability Pathways [RAP]*ⁱ co-authored by Larry Brendtro, PhD, president of Reclaiming Youth International and dean of the Starr Commonwealth Research Council, and Lesley du Toit, MA, executive director of CYCAD South Africa.

Participants also receive a RAP workbook and a copy of the journal *Reclaiming Children and Youth: The Journal of Strength-Based Interventions*.

Certificate in Theological Studies Credit

Students will complete a 5-7 page topic paper by 31 August 2010. *For more information on CTS Credit expectations, please refer to the “Certificate in Theological Studies Evaluation Information” form.*

The paper should adhere to all usual academic standards and demonstrate these five competencies:

- Integration of course content assigned reading and the student’s context
- Knowledge of the chosen subject and relevant primary and secondary literature
- Critical analysis of the chosen topic
- Originality and creativity regarding choice and approach to the topic
- Clarity and organization of the student’s writing style

Degree Credit

Students will complete a 20 page paper by 31 August 2010 as per Degree criteria. The paper will use at least 10 additional reference sources, adhere to all usual academic standards, and demonstrate the five competencies listed above. *For more information on degree credit expectations, please refer to the “Degree Evaluation Information” form.*