Teen: Breaking Up Is Hard To Do

Dear Addy...

Guest author is Linda Jessup

Dear Addy,

My 17-year-old son, Ben, (the younger of two, with an older sister away at college) is having his first experience with a broken heart. He can’t imagine how easy it is for his girlfriend of two years to get on with her life and how difficult it is for him. He is very anxious at the prospect of going back to school after Winter Break and seeing her. They don’t share classes but do have many common friends.

She continues to contact him just as he begins to move on, which of course makes it harder.

Ben has been willing to talk

continues on page 3
Dear Family Ed Section Members,

What a beautiful and busy time of year this is, with holiday (and early winter!) preparations. Composing this around Thanksgiving time, I am reminded to be grateful for the opportunity to represent our Section to COR (Council of Representatives). Thank you all.

This year the Fall COR meeting was again held in Ft. Wayne, Indiana with NASAP's new President, Jill Duba Sauerheber presiding. Beverley (our Co-Chair) was unable to make it to COR because of her “grandmother-in-waiting” status, so Doone (our Secretary/Treasurer) came to the rescue and was there in her stead. We were treated to a rich and interesting weekend filled with lively discussion. It’s such a privilege to be part of an inspiring, intelligent, caring group of like-minded people … not to mention there was a fun little side trip to the nearby DeBrand Chocolate company store.

We had a rich selection of conference proposals and we’re looking forward to an exciting 2015 NASAP Conference in Philadelphia celebrating the theme We the People (and Alfred Adler) Proclaim Liberty, Rights and Responsibilities for All. Look for session “teasers” in our next newsletter.

In addition to making conference selections at the meeting, there was also a lot of discussion around how to increase NASAP’s membership and Section memberships. Dr. Bill Premo conducted a 2-hour session for us on the Psychology of Marketing NASAP using FAB (Features/Advantages/Benefits) and helped give us a model to work with so each Section or Affiliate of the Board could construct their own “FAB.” Three different “FABs” were constructed for the Family Education Section. Please see the article on page 5. We’d love your feedback. Do these statements resonate? Are there other Features/Advantages/Benefits you can think of to promote and encourage new membership in our Section? We’ll be putting this up on our memberclicks (e-list) for comments.

Also, John Newbauer continues to enhance the features on the NASAP website. There is a new Tab called: Job Target. You can either post job opportunities or look for positions available in your field. We encourage you to check it out!

Enjoy the newsletter! As usual Bryna has packed it full of interesting articles. Thanks Bryna and, thanks also to everyone who has contributed.

May all your holidays be bright and the new year be full, rich and abundant.

Your Co-Chairs,

Marlene Goldstein along with Beverley Cathcart-Ross

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Adlerian Wisdom

Criticism is a destructive act that invites revenge. Correction is a helpful art that invites cooperation. There is no such thing as constructive criticism. Founded on the untrue belief that to make children do better we must first make them feel worse, criticism usually causes more problems than the original misbehavior.

-- from Correcting Without Criticizing: The encouraging way to talk to children about their misbehavior by John Taylor, PhD

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Dear Addy, continued from page 1

about the breakup—she dumped him for an older guy—with his dad and me (not so much with his friends—a guy thing perhaps?) and, with a history of serious depression, has been willing to go back to a psychiatrist he saw a couple of years ago when he was dropped from the basketball team.

Ben’s shown signs over the past few days of trying to help himself—got on a website of “best foods to eat when depressed”—and is requesting that he and I get up each morning to start the day with a run, as his dad prompted him to do earlier in the week. We try to cheer him up and have suggested that he get out and spend time with a couple of his oldest guy friends, which he has been doing more. Also, he has agreed to begin doing some work for a Wounded Warrior race his dad directs.

Ben has always struggled with disappointments. Any suggestions for us?

—Worried Parents

Dear Worried Parents,
The most important thing for Ben is to continue to develop courageous coping skills when big disappointments and losses, like this one, occur. Ben sounds as if he’s already well on his way and has managed to keep a fair amount of balance and connection with you, his dad and his guy friends, this time around. Starting the day by running together is a terrific plan that will help in three important ways: physical exercise, social companionship and the mental boost of getting up and out in the morning, instead of moping around.

The biggest mistake friends and family make when someone becomes depressed is to try to cheer them up, point out the bright side of their situation, “make them happy.” A kind of power-struggle can easily develop, where you try to prove to them that things aren’t so bleak, and they try to prove they are even worse than you can imagine!

The sadness and grief Ben is experiencing is normal, given the circumstances. From an Adlerian perspective, when someone becomes severely depressed and self-isolates, as Ben did before, they usually are focusing too much on themselves, becoming very self-centered and replaying over and over their pain. That reaction was much more worrisome.

While it takes time for a serious loss like Ben has just experienced to heal, the healthiest solution is for him to put his losses in perspective, by becoming aware of the kinds of enormous losses people all around him are experiencing or have experienced, without minimizing his own suffering.

See if you can find a documentary on the “Lost Boys of the Sudan” (incredible acts of courage), for example, or anything about the Holocaust. Man’s Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl might be good for him to read. The point Frankl makes is that those who find socially interested meaning in life are the people who survive and thrive. Don’t present these things as “something that would do him good,” however. Just something you’re interested in or impressed by, and he happens to be there, too.

Ben would also be helped right now by being genuinely needed. Resurrecting his compassion for others by working on the Wounded Warriors event seems like an ideal project for him. Asking him if he would be willing to make dinner for the three of you, a few times a week, while your work schedules are so demanding, doing some loads of laundry, washing your car and getting it serviced on the weekend, would help him to organize and fill some of these long days with useful contributions.

As for his ex-girlfriend, I’m sure you’ve had discussions about what purpose her actions serve (to toss him crumbs of hope, keep him feeling bad, and delay him from getting on with his life). Such actions are usually revenge (thus his feeling so hurt), or a power move, muscle-flexing to make it clear that she’s ambivalent but more likely that she’s the one in the “driver’s seat” right now. In any event, her toying with him is at best incon siderate, and at worst, cruel and self-serving. If the latter, it reveals her as someone not worthy of his affection, which may help him “get over” her.

Since Ben is into testing himself, this break-up can serve as an important test of his character and his manliness. If he recognizes he’s being “played,” he can always allow himself to be victimized OR he can break it off from his side too (which minimizes his getting jerked around and equalizes the situation) and let her know he will no longer take her calls, read her texts or tweets.

The very worst and least admirable thing he could do is to gossip, bad-mouth her or retaliate in other ways. He will do best if he keeps the situation civil, well defined and with as little toxic fall-out as possible.

He can appreciate (and even tell her) that she was his first real love and that the times they had together were special to him. He will probably always care about her and want her to have a good life. But he realizes that they’re both moving on, and he wishes her well. That’s a classy response!

My best to you all,

—Addy

Linda Jessup, the founder of PEP, is the co-author of Parenting With Courage and UNCommon Sense. She served as Membership Chair on the Board of NASAP for two terms, and is a past Co-Chair of our Family Education Section. Email: <lindajpepwest2@aol.com>.
What Do You Do When You Mess Up? (Or, Are Mistakes Really Opportunities to Learn?)

by Cheryl L. Erwin, MA, MFT

I’ve been doing a lot of teaching lately. I’ve taught parenting workshops, worked with teachers and early childhood educators, and given keynote presentations at conferences. Usually, people come up to me afterwards and they’re excited: Positive Discipline and Adlerian parenting tools are such helpful, practical ideas and parents are usually eager to try something new.

Occasionally, though, I see people sinking lower in their seats, doodling on notepads, and looking discouraged. And occasionally, someone will come up to me afterwards, hanging around until everyone else has asked their questions and filed out. These folks are likely to say something like, “I think I’ve really messed up my kids.” Or, “I feel so guilty: I’ve been doing it all wrong.”

I can remember feeling the same way. When my son was about six years old, I read an article saying that by the age of five, children have decided whether they’re loved or unloved, cute or homely, smart or dumb, wanted or unwanted. And I remember looking at my beloved (and rather challenging) six-year-old and thinking, “Oh my goodness – I’ve blown it. I missed the window.” Actually, that moment was partly why I was inspired to learn more about parenting – which led me to the work I’ve been doing for more than 25 years now. But it was a sobering moment, too, when I recognized that I had the power to shape what my son believed about himself and the world around him, and that I was far from perfect.

Most parents do the best they can with the skills they have in the moment. And most of them have had times when they understand their own power, and realize that they may not have done the right thing – whatever that is. Sometimes, hearing a speaker go on and on about the “right” (quote, unquote) way to parent is the exact opposite of inspiring and encouraging: instead, it just makes parents feel unskilled and discouraged. And like our kids, feeling that way rarely brings out the best in us.

So let me be clear: All parents have unskilled, less-than-lovely moments. My son would be happy to tell you about mine and, in fact, my mistakes and awkward moments have provided lots of great stories for the books I’ve written. My son seems to have survived pretty well, too, and is now awaiting the birth of his own first child. The truth is that I have yet to meet a parent who does not truly love his or her child. I also have yet to meet a parent who hasn’t lost his temper, made a mistake, or said something he regretted almost as soon as the words left his mouth. We’re all human, and that means we’re imperfect.

Rudolf Dreikurs, who helped invent the parenting class in the mid-20th century, often said that parenting requires the “courage to be imperfect.” Your children will make lots of mistakes as they grow to maturity – and you will make lots of mistakes as you raise them. The good news is that mistakes truly are opportunities to learn, if you’re willing to be honest with yourself – and with your children.

It’s also helpful to remember that research tells us that when there is a rupture in a relationship – a moment when you lose your temper, fail to follow through, do something hurtful, or just mess up – the relationship can actually become stronger if you do the repair work honestly and well.

Discouragement is part of parenting, but so is getting up and trying again. The best teaching tool I possess is my humility, my willingness to own up to my own failures, and my desire not to be the “expert.” Children are usually resilient and quick to forgive.

Be willing to learn everything you can, and never give up hope. The connection of love, trust, and respect you forge with your child will always be your greatest parenting asset.

Cheryl Erwin is a marriage and family therapist in private practice in Reno, Nevada. She is the author of several books in the Positive Discipline series, as well as the Everything Parent’s Guide to Raising Boys. Cheryl can be reached at <cheryl@cherylerwin.com> or at (775) 331-6723.

Brains & Discipline

Beverley Cathcart-Ross sent us an article (on Discipline That Teaches Without the Hurf) that began with this quote from Canadian press:

“Research shows that physical punishment of a child can actually change the brain’s neural pathways, setting him or her up to use similar force as a parent later in life. Ending the cycle of violence isn’t easy but it can be done.” –Globe and Mail, September 19, 2014

And in our Memberclicks e-list, this item was shared:

Discern the work of Bruce Perry! (Child Trauma Academy)
Here is a link to his important work on the relationship between inappropriate discipline and physical brain effects.
<http://www.childtraumaacademy.com/>

And one cited resource page on spanking
<http://www.online-psychology-degrees.org/psychology-of-spanking/>
(Finding: less gray matter, more issues as adults.)
Membership Matters

Co-Chair Position Opening in May
Beverley Cathcart-Ross of Toronto assumed responsibility as Co-Chair at the Chicago conference, continuing our tradition of maintaining leadership from both the USA and Canada. Congratulations and welcome, Beverley!

While that role has been happily filled, we now turn our attention to the vacancy that will be created when current Co-Chair Marlene Goldstein completes her term as of the next conference, in Philadelphia, in May.

So – please think about it and offer to serve. It’s a wonderful opportunity for any member, particularly those building a resume, and a much appreciated means of giving back to this wonderful organization.

Marlene cites as some of the benefits she personally has gained by assuming this role on our behalf: (1) networking with leaders in the Adlerian Community; (2) gaining greater insight into NASAP’s organizational structure and workings; (3) having the opportunity to have a voice in the governance and direction of NASAP; (5) being the representing voice for the direction Parenting Education takes in NASAP; (5) facilitating recognition and validation of the important work of Family Educators; and (5) enjoying general camaraderie with like-minded Adlerians.

Let us hear from you!

News from Members
Alyson Schafer has had her website completely redesigned. It’s inspiring and dynamic, and no doubt will give you some fresh ideas. She is still found at <http://alysonschafer.com>.

Dina Emser was in Chicago in November doing training for Positive Discipline. To be notified of her schedule, contact <dina@dinaemser.com>.

Bill Corbett has a degree in clinical psychology and is the author of the award winning book Love, Limits, & Lessons: A Parent’s Guide to Raising Cooperative Kids (in English and Spanish). He is married with grown children and grandchildren. For further information and parenting advice, visit his website <http://CooperativeKids.com>.

FABs for Family Education Section
Three different “FABs” (Features/Advantages/Benefits) were constructed for the Family Education Section at the Fall COR (Board) Meeting:

• The Family Education membership allows you to connect and have an interactive conversation with experts in the field, which provides the benefit of approaches and teachings in proven, reputable theory.

• For Adlerian parent educators, membership in NASAP means you have resources available for developing parent education programs that are consistent with your personal and professional values.

• The NASAP Conference PARENT TRACK provides presentations on parent education by experts in the field and will increase your confidence and competence to be a better parent educator.

We’d love your feedback. Do these statements resonate? Are there other Features/Advantages/Benefits you can think of to promote and encourage new membership in our Section? We’ll be putting this up on the memberclicks e-list for comments.

Kids Express Love....cont from page 1

the piece of yarn to one of the two holes in the envelope flap, creating somewhat of a handle.

Once everyone had a personally decorated envelope with a loop of colored yarn attached, she instructed us to use the slips of paper to write love notes to each person in the family and to place them into appropriate family member’s envelope. Near the end of the family meeting, she led us down the hall to hang our envelopes on our bedroom doorknobs, ready to accept more handwritten notes.

Later that night, I was amazed when all three kids willingly went to their rooms when bedtime arrived.... When my wife and I turned in for the night, we found our yarn-hung envelopes overflowing with notes written by the three children.

We too ended up staying awake later than usual that night, reading the cutest love notes written in their child-like handwriting, relating all of the things they loved about us or things they were happy about. It brings tears to my eyes now as I remember all the things my kids related to me in those precious little notes.

Somewhere in a box in my basement is a large manila envelope, holding some of those handwritten love notes that will be keepsakes for as long as I live. They contain the loving words of my precious children who today are trying to find their way in this world as adults. I pull those treasured notes out now and then to recall the words they wrote when they learned to express their love for their mother and me, and each other. ■

Bill Corbett has a degree in clinical psychology and is the author of the award winning book Love, Limits, & Lessons: A Parent’s Guide to Raising Cooperative Kids (in English and Spanish). He is married with grown children and grandchildren. For further information and parenting advice, visit his website <http://CooperativeKids.com>.
An Example from Rob Guttenberg’s

Funtastic Adlerian Techniques for Change

What Parenting Style Am I?
Source: Pam Mintz, Cabin John, MD

Brief Description:
This exercise uses scenarios to look at parenting styles. Each scenario has three choices for the parent to report how they would react to the situation. Each choice represents a parenting style: permissive, authoritarian or democratic. After the parents fill out the questionnaire on their own, the class discusses each scenario and decides which parenting style was demonstrated in their responses.

Materials Needed:
Question sheet, answer key and leader’s guide

Concept(s) Illustrated:
Parenting Styles: permissive, authoritarian, democratic

Give the Questionnaire to Parents
Give a quiz to parents before discussing parenting styles, but do not score. Discuss parenting styles in general and then take each question and ask parents whether they think it is authoritarian, permissive or democratic.

How to Front Load:
Encourage parents to give their first reaction without spending a lot of time filling in details. Circumstances will often color the response and justify the parenting reaction. Do this before describing the three parenting styles.

4 Examples of 8 scenarios posed to parents:
1. In the morning my child/teen gets up when I:
   a. come in and wake him/her. I am responsible for seeing that he/she gets up.
   b. his/her alarm goes off.
   c. come in the third trip and I’m loud and angry.
   1. KEY:
      a. Permissive  b. Democratic  c. Authoritarian

3. A big project is due tomorrow. It’s 10 PM and there are three more pages that need retyping. I:
   a. type while he/she finishes his poster.
   b. ground him/her for the weekend.
   c. go to bed.
   3. KEY:
      a. Permissive  b. Authoritarian  c. Democratic

4. If my child/teen does not like tonight’s dinner:
   a. He/she goes to bed hungry.
   b. He/she sits with us, getting and cleaning up own snack.
   c. I fix an alternative menu.
   4. KEY:
      a. Authoritarian  b. Democratic  c. Permissive

6. When my child/teen forgets to take out the garbage (or other chore):
   a. I usually give up and take it out myself.
   b. He/she does not get allowance for that week.
   c. I remind once and then imply a previously set consequence.
   6. KEY:
      a. Permissive  b. Authoritarian  c. Democratic

continues on back page 8
**JIP Issue Features**

**Family Education**

We hope it did not escape your attention that the Summer 2014 issue of our NASAP Journal of Individual Psychology/JIP (Vol. 70, Number 2) was devoted entirely to Adlerian family education.

The issue’s theme is – per the title of the introduction by its joint editors (Kern, Rasmussen and Curlette) – *Parenting from the Individual Psychology Perspective: Obstacles, Challenges, Culture, and Psychoeducational Programs.*

Articles explored cultural perspectives as diverse as African American (authors Moore and McDowell) and Israeli (author Oryan). One article surveyed modern popular programs (Lindquist and Watkins), while author/founder Michael Popkin discussed Active Parenting’s 30 year history of marrying technological innovation with classic Adlerian theory.

Paul R. Rasmussen, as guest editor, highlighted certain concepts in his opening essay, *The Tasks, Challenges and Obstacles of Parenting.* Below (reprinted with permission) are some excerpts from his article. We hope you will read the whole issue, and add some ideas of your own to future ones!

Topic headings from his article include a section on *The Necessity of Child Guidance; The Challenges Relative to the Tasks of Child Guidance* (which he further breaks down under Responsibility; Cooperation; and Respect); Parenting Challenges (with subheads Chores; Displays of fear and anxiety; Demand for attention; Bedtime routine; Disobeying; Sibling fights; Homework; Money and allowance; and Temper tantrums). Next topic heading:

*Courage and Encouragement*

“... One of the most basic concepts in Individual Psychology is the concept of encouragement, although it may be one of the most poorly understood. ... Many parents confuse encouragement with praise and reward, or think that pointing out a child’s errors or yelling directives from the sidelines is being encouraging. While these activities might increase some desirable behaviors and might be viewed as a form of positive investment, these actions are not encouragement. In fact, they may be oppressive, and the only courage that stems from oppression is the courage to rebel....”

*Natural Consequences*

“Natural consequences do not require the input of adults. In fact, when natural consequences occur, parents can be sympathetic and supportive....”

*Logical Consequences*

“Logical consequences are those that generally require the action of an external agent (e.g., a parent). The most critical aspect of logical consequences is that they make sense to the child....”

*Arbitrary Consequences*

“Arbitrary consequences are neither naturally nor logically related to the misdeed. These types of consequences are not connected in the mind of the child to the misdeed.... Arbitrary consequences are...”

continues on page 8

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**Conference in Philly May 28-31, 2015**

Planners, presenters and participants will have many reasons to mark their calendars for May 28-31, as NASAP marks its 63rd year with another terrific Adlerian meet-up.

The theme proclaimed by its sponsors:

*We the People (and Alfred Adler) Proclaim Liberty, Rights and Responsibilities for All*

Watch your email, check the NASAP website <www.alfredadler.org> and discover detailed information as the year unfolds.

Among speakers in the Family Education Track are presenters from whom we have not heard in many years, or who are presenting for the first time:

- *Siblings Get Along with Beverley Cathcart-Ross*
- *Handling Disruptive and Resistant Kids with Bill Corbett*
- *Strengthening the Bond with Your Teen with Doone Estey*
- *It Takes A Village to Raise A Child: Our Children’s Social Environment with Terry Lowe*
- *Increasing Family Resiliency Quotient – Integrating Adler and Resilience Research (Monica & Bill Nicoll)*

and...... more....... As a Section, we will also be approving Minutes of the last meeting from Chicago in 2014, electing a new Co-Chair, and having a Treasurer report from Secretary/Treasurer Doone Estey.
FAMILY! Fall 2014

The mission of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology is to promote growth and understanding of Adlerian (Individual) Psychology, the work of Alfred Adler, and effective approaches to living based on his philosophy. NASAP membership includes educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, parents, business people, community organizations and other interested people. The Family Education Section applies Adlerian principles to the home. Members are professionals and nonprofessionals dedicated to understanding and improving family relationships between children and adults, with couples, and among individuals.

Funtastic Example...cont. from page 6

Harvesting, Process & Questions
After they have finished the questionnaire, introduce the three parenting styles. Then go through each scenario and ask the class which parenting style is demonstrated by which answer. “Which one were you?”

Reveal the Key
Instruct them then to tally answers using the key (which is my idea of the type of parent most likely to behave in this way).

At the end, ask “What parenting style(s) most represent your own? Which parenting style would you most like to model? Why?”

The answers may not all be perfectly clear. So much of what we do is affected by our beliefs. Circumstances can change the style we select for a particular situation. Do not feel that any one category is iron-clad.

Often parents will find themselves in more than one style. They then discuss how we are likely to be sometimes in one category and sometimes in another. This is supposed to be thought-provoking, not definitive, in helping parents look at how they parent.

Adapted from Funtastic Adlerian Techniques for Change, compiled and edited by Rob Guttenberg, LCPC, M.A. Counseling Psychology, NASAP Diplomate.

Contact Rob to obtain the book and discover all its secrets (even the grid)!
<robjob2@verizon.net>

JIP Features Parenting...cont. from p 7
typically imposed when the parent is frustrated, and they are often expressed harshly...[They] are oppressive and disrespectful and lead to resentment and rebellion.”

Other headings Rasmussen uses and discusses include Cooperation and Democratic Ideals; The Role of Parents in Meeting the Task of Parenting; Overcoming Obstacles Created by Social Circumstances; Expectations Given Developmental Limitations.

The whole issue is really worthwhile, and for members, one of the perks of membership.

Who will contribute to the literature next? Maybe YOU!

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63rd Annual Conference
North American Society of Adlerian Psychology
PHILADELPHIA, PA
MAY 28-31, 2015
DOUBLE TREE HOTEL
Meet us in

Artwork by William Ressler