

Leading By Example: Creating
Motivation That Fosters Positive Change in Young People

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Table of Contents

TITLE PAGE 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS 3

ABSTRACT..... 6

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION 7

Guide to Harvest8

Statement of Problem 10

Purpose Statement..... 10

Research Question 10

Theoretical Rationale 11

Theory of Human Motivation 12

Assumptions..... 13

Background and Need..... 13

 Gandhi13

 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.13

 Jimmy Carter14

Summary 15

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE..... 16

Introduction 16

Review of the Previous Literature 16

 Academic Motivation and Effect on Achievement 16

 Motivating Black Males..... 16

 Motivation For Low Achievement 18

 The Educational Dilemma 18

 Teachers as Coaches 19

 Learning How to Learn 20

 Family Structure as an Influence on Attitude 20

 Motivation 21

 Developing Self Through Coaching 21

 Influence of Parents 22

 Between Chaos and Community..... 22

 Schooling and the Future..... 23

Summary 24

CHAPTER 3 METHOD..... 25

Introduction 25

Sample and Site 25

Access and Permissions 25

 Responses To Open-Ended Questions 26

Data Analysis 26

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS..... 27

Questions for School Administrator 27

Questions for High School Football Team 29

High School Football Team 31

Speaking Engagements..... 33

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION /ANALYSIS 34

Summary of Major Findings..... 34

Comparison of Findings to Previous Research..... 34

Limitations/Gaps in the Study 34

Implications for Future Research 35

Overall Significance of the Research..... 35

About the Author 35

Abstract

It is not what one has in life; rather, what is left as the legacy. Personally I have received many awards. However, I feel so much better when I help people receive their own awards. Now, I want to use positive language and positive action to help motivate young people, encouraging them to achieve their own success, as well as foster success in others.

Oftentimes people get wrapped up in personal issues and forget about others. The purpose of this paper is twofold. One is to shed light on the issue of self-motivation or lack of self-motivation in young people. The second, and primary purpose of this work, is to understand and to create a framework for others who struggle with being successful on a daily basis, and to discover methods of teaching self-motivation.

The literature reveals that this type of work is possible. Others have this idea and are trying to put it into practice. Young people want to be motivated. While there is much work done in this area, there is no cohesiveness to bringing this information together and applying it, operationalizing this information in practice.

The present study is qualitative in design, using three settings to gather data. Participants included a group of high school football players who agreed to engage in a focus group following a practice and several games. The second source of information came from discourse on the issue of motivation. The third source came from snapshot data following lectures on motivation in selected school sites in Florida and Kentucky. Information was recorded and analyzed for common themes. Results indicated that the act of purposely motivating others had a positive effect on increasing individual motivation.

Chapter 1 Introduction

I learned to read at age 26. Since becoming literate I have earned my undergraduate degree, helped create the Food Network, have completed my master's degree. If I can do this, anyone can do this.

The following message to me indicates that what I believed years ago, the focus on being a positive role model has an effect on others.

Personal communication Jill N.K. January 24, 2013

Hello stranger! I think that on your birthday, I feel the need to tell you how important you were to my spiritual growth. It's taken me a long time to get here but, in reflection, when I was young and careless and in need of validation, you believed in me. I know now that your faith made me strong and believe in myself. No one, in my entire life, had ever believed in me. And that's the honest truth. You gave me confidence that I carry with me to this day. I have been flighty and incoherent to the things that go on around me all these years but I can say, without reservation, that your kindness, generosity and faith made me who I am today. I'm so thankful that you came into my life although we've lost touch. I will always carry through in my life the messages that you brought me to have faith in myself. In my darkest places, your kind words have always been a light.

From: Scott W. Louisville Public School, Kentucky (personal communication
January 30, 2013)

Teacher - 10th graders

Message Body:

Curtis,

I teach English as a Second Language in Louisville. My students just finished reading your story "Curtis Aikens and the American Dream" in the Hampton Brown Edge series. They would be even more inspired to meet you. Can we arrange a Skype interview? My students are from Kenya, Jordan, Israel, China and Columbia. It would take about 30 minutes. Interested?

Author: Amanda (personal communication, February 12, 2013)

Comment:

Your story is an inspiration to a lot of our students here at Liberty High School.

Looking forward to your visit.

Thank you!

Guide to Harvest

I remember years ago having lunch with Libby Staples, the publisher of the Rockdale Citizen, my hometown newspaper, which is where I had my first chance to write. We were talking about how people can make you feel good, bad, happy or sad. I said to Libby that if I had one wish, I would wish to spend five minutes with every person on earth, not just saying hello but spending five deep minutes, really letting the one soul share something with me, and I hope my soul would have something to pass on. I know that is a wish I will never be granted, so writing is the next best thing. I'd like to spend few minutes with you right now, telling you about my background in the produce business, describing this book, and, most importantly, explaining why writing this book is so important to my

being.

I sold Peachtree Publishers on the idea of this book because, in my opinion, there is little in the way of straightforward information for consumers when it comes to selecting, storing, and using fresh fruits and vegetables. Do you know that the produce section is one of the most marked-up departments in the grocery store? It makes me mad to see shoppers getting ripped off every day! So one reason I've written this book is to give you the straight scoop on how to get the most for your produce dollar.

My second reason for writing this book is that I wanted to share with you some great recipes. I don't claim to be a world-class chef by any means. However, I do know my way around the kitchen, and I'm proud to say that there are some recipes in this book that I have prepared for some pretty famous people. So you may pick up a new trick or two if you read carefully.

When I was growing up, my dad said to me, "if information dies with you, it was never learned." I think that must be one of those old African-American sayings, because many of my ancestors couldn't read, so they passed on information verbally. This brings me to my final reason for writing this book, my hidden agenda for writing: there are more than 30 million adults in this great nation who cannot read, and until seven years ago I was one of them (Soroptimist International of Novato & Aikens, 2011; Aikens, 1993, p. vii).

Statement of Problem

I notice there is a lack of motivation in many young students. This appears to cross all boundaries, social, economic, gender, and race. In my travels through Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, throughout Canada, the United States and Mexico, I notice that people have gotten caught up in “grabbing for me.” The message I hear is one that reflects the “I.” It is all about what I want, I need. As a parent it is hard for me to see that. As a caring person we have to, as a society, think about the whole world.

Purpose Statement

My purpose is to be a good steward, one that gives back. I have the most joy when I am doing work for others, when I am helping others. My purpose is to be a catalyst for positive growth in my interactions with others, in my daily walk; I want to be positive for myself. This is important because we are in a time that needs positive movement. It is about reaching individuals. By reaching individuals, we reach communities and by reaching communities, we reach society. If we reach society, we change the world. This work is an effort to reach out to young people and help them take charge of their learning, by being able to self-motivate.

Research Question

What are effective ways of teaching self-motivation to students and young adults? The term effective refers to practices that can be replicated, and then used by others. Self-motivation refers to the ability to push oneself, without the need for outside influences to achieve one's

goals. Students and young adults may not know how to self-motivate. Therefore effective practices are important to these groups.

Theoretical Rationale

The framework for this research reflects the work of Albert Bandura (McLeod, 2011). People learn by observing others and behaving as they see others behave. This framework provides a lens for my work in articulating elements of positive motivation by leaders in their interactions with young people.

Until reading about satyagraha (Gandhi, 2001), loosely translated, soul force, which is the teaching that Gandhi brought forth that inspired others, also inspires me to tap into my *true force*. **Satyagraha** loosely translated as soul force or truth force is a particular philosophy and practice within the broader overall category generally known as nonviolent resistance or civil resistance. The term satyagraha was conceived and developed by Gandhi (2001). He deployed satyagraha in the Indian independence movement and also during his earlier struggles in South Africa. Satyagraha theory influenced Nelson Mandela's struggle in South Africa under apartheid, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s campaigns during the civil rights movement in the United States, and many other social justice and similar movements

Satyagraha, my soul force, something I never knew about, much less that I was tapping into during my 26 years of illiteracy, until undertaking this research. I want high school students to be aware of their own soul-force.

The obvious is that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr is an African American man from Georgia that made a positive difference, not only in his personal world, his local community, his national surroundings, but also the world we all live in. He, along with many others, not only faced

racism in the South, but also helped break down the walls, and shine the light on that whole public ugliness of segregation (King, King, & Harding, 2010).

Theory of Human Motivation

In the paper, *A Theory of Human Motivation*, Maslow (2000) begins with a review of a previous paper that includes 13 propositions, which would have to be included in any human motivation theory. They are in order; integrated wholeness, human drive, conscious goals, unconscious goals, basic needs, humans are motivated or motivating, needs are set in priority, humans are motivated to satisfy those needs, lists are of no use, types of motivations should be set based on goals, not drives or behavior, motivation theory should be human centered rather than animal, surroundings should be taken into account, however field theory cannot take the place of motivation theory. How humans act or react with others and alone must be considered. Human motivation and behavior are determined by our basic needs.

Maslow's message is clear that we learn from modeling. He also makes it clear that behavior theory and motivation theory are not the same. Motivation is only one of the factors in setting behavior, where as behavior is most likely always motivated (Maslow, 2000). He concludes his review by saying there has not been enough research on motivation theory, and his findings should be use as the framework for research to come. The intent of this work is to add to Maslow's framework.

Maslow has determined there are no fewer than five types of goals that can be called basic needs. Safety, physiological, esteem, love and self-actualization are the five and humans are motivated by these goals. The individual goals are related to one another, however every person determines the order of importance of these goals. During this work Maslow feels if a person is kept from her or his basic needs, or the chance of being kept from their basic needs, with very few expectations, all psychopathology may be partly treated as a threat. A person refrained from basic needs may, if he or she wishes, be defined as a sick person.

Assumptions

My assumptions are that everyone wants to help others. Everyone wants to have a good education. I am assuming that no one wants to, for lack of a better term, hate. Through this work I can create a framework for others to follow.

Background and Need

Gandhi

Gandhi was extremely peaceful, humble, but very determined. The fact is that he was soft-spoken, but purpose-driven. He was totally selfless (Gandhi, 2001).

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr (King, King, & Harding, 2010) advocated for non-violent change.

The situation in the South was so hard, so overbearing to African Americans. Segregation was violently enforced. People of color were abused, killed, hung for association with white people of the opposite sex. If a Black man was associated with a white woman, or seen alone with her, he became the focal point of violence. He could be publically lynched. If a Black woman was

raped by a white man, there was no punishment to the white man. The child born from that rape had no claims on his or her white heritage.

Dr. King took the approach that one cannot defeat violence with violence. It was brilliant to not combat violence with violence. We are going to combat violence with non-violence. I remember images from the Ku Klux Klan when I was a child. When I think about my feelings as I recall these times, the little boy Curtis recalls the fear.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. serves as my role model about positive change. Collaboration: white, Black, Caribbean, Jewish – he took everyone’s teachings, he learned from everyone. He is my role model for what I am trying to do. He collaborated; I want to collaborate with others. When the US made Dr. King’s birthday a holiday, that marked a shift in institutional thinking. Today we have a twice-elected African American president.

In reflecting on the past since Gandhi’s work, considering the efforts of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we are no longer a racist society, however racism still exists. Dr. King’s seven principles of non-violence serve as a framework for continued action.

Jimmy Carter

Jimmy Carter serves as another role model for me. Jimmy Carter did not say, Do what I say. He led by example. He always led by example. He received degrees from the Georgia State University and Georgia Tech. He became governor of the state, and decided to run for president. No one in the country on the national political scene gave him a chance to win the Democratic nomination, much less the general election. Carter’s strategy was to work hard, meet people, share himself, and allow the body of work speak for itself. He became president, however, did not win a second term. He has used the platform of former president to go on and build a worldwide presence and support for peace and institutions such as Habitat for Humanity (Jimmy

Carter Library & Museum, 2013). His work serves as the framework for the work I have undertaken in operationalizing methods of teaching self-motivation to young people.

Summary

What may seem as very complex, at the heart of it is simple. We all have that force our true self, in side of us, that when we tap into it, it provides not only motivation for positive change in ourselves but also in other. Ghandi, Dr King Jr. and, Jimmy Carter were three individuals, that adding onto the framework of others , to tap into self, to motivate self, and create positive change personally, in community, nationwide and worldwide. Everyone's research ends with a framework for others to extend.

Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter addresses motivation as a concept in teaching and learning. The Review of the Previous Literature describes influences on student motivation, with a focus on the high school student in academics and sports.

Review of the Previous Literature

Academic Motivation and Effect on Achievement

Green, Nelson, Martin, and Marsh (2006) point out that a key to achievement is being self-aware. As we go from adolescence to adulthood it is not what mom and dad want, it is what the individual wants. This study is currently underway in Australia. Eight high schools are participating in the study. The measurement tools used to gather information from the students include questionnaires and tests of basic skills collected over 4-year period. Preliminary information from the authors' review of the literature indicate that the topic of self-concept and motivation is complex. The research literature indicates that increased self-confidence does not necessarily increase academic success.

Motivating Black Males

The Hoop Dreams

Sailes (2009) is more than a story about African American male athletes playing basketball. The book is a living testimonial and graphic illustration of the harsh and often gruesome realities that African American athletes from America's inner

city ghettos encounter on a daily basis. This is a book about relationships, survival, and broken promises; real life in America. It tells the story of the hopes, dreams, fantasies and aspirations of a moderately talented inner city high school basketball team and the struggles they inherit as a consequence of being born black, male, and poor. It is a must read for scholars and teachers interested in race, sport or basketball.

Who Am I? Who Are We?

Kafele (2009) page 58 An African proverb states, “I am, because we are; and because we are, I am” (p. 58). In the African tradition, there is more of an emphasis on the collective than the individual. In an African-centered context, then, the questions listed above can just as easily be restated to reflect the entire black community: Who are we? What are we? Why are we? What is our purpose? What is our vision?

The author’s statement about how the African-centered context or culture, is very strong, he goes on to state how angry he became at the educational system, for not teaching him about his past or should I say his cultural ties to African, his roots. Black history is just glazed over in twelve years of lower education, as a black man I can attest to this myself, and find I share similar feeling of anger. African American Students find very little to identify with in the present system leaving them (us) with no role models and a lack of adult motivations.

If the student cannot connect what he is taught to his personal experiences as a black male, his motivation and desire to learn diminishes greatly. In all subject areas teachers, must ensure that the black male can see himself at the heart of each lesson. That is true for all students’ male, female, Hispanic, poor White and African American. We must find ways of helping children identify with what they are being taught; if we can we can motivate them.

Motivation For Low Achievement

Reiss (2009) described factors that motivate children to achieve at a low level. Low achievement may be motivated by fear of failure (high need for acceptance), incuriosity (low need for cognition), lack of ambition (low need for power), spontaneity (low need for order), lack of responsibility (low need for honor), and combativeness (high need for vengeance). For junior and senior high school students, the Reiss School Motivation Profile provides a standardized assessment of the six motivational forces. Each motive for low achievement has different implications for intervention.

The Educational Dilemma

The educational discourse chronicling the experiences of African American educators (Gause, 2005) continues to be limited, while the anthropological and sociological literature appears to be more inclusive. Educational literature in regards to African American educators since 1966 continues to focus on how African American educators maintain the status quo and how the dominant middle class values of society are reproduced through dominant pedagogy. This is the duality in which African Americans must struggle. African-Americans have embraced not only by European Americans, but the stigmatization of African-American males also as well. The dominant culture continues to perpetuate negative imagery of African American males through media, film, and music.

A national broadcast of African-American males being apprehended by law enforcement locally and regionally is a daily ritual. This imagery further perpetuates the demise of the African-American male. Damen (1987) says that culture is learned, and shared human patterns are models for life. Models and patterns govern all aspects of human social interaction. Culture is how human beings adapt to ever-changing times.

Media's faults representation of black masculinity causes an inaccurate definition of the culture in which Black males represent. This figure of black masculinity marks the racial and cultural boundaries of a counter-hegemonic blackness, which stands for the black nation, the black family, and the authentic black (male) self. This author suggests that educators must eradicate negative presentations of black males with antistereotypical images that showcase the positive role models and individuals that are present in the African-American community.

Teachers as Coaches

Stix and Hrbek (2006) describe the stance of the golfer, picture perfect: arms back, shoulders straight, head down. The concentration is intense. The whack of the club is like the crack of a whip, and the follow-through is a wonder of precision as the ball shoots endlessly down the fairway. Tiger Woods has wowed them again. As the golfer takes his first confident strides toward his second shot, somewhere, unnoticed among the onlookers, his coach smiles with satisfaction. His pupil has mastered his lessons.

Everyone sees Tiger hit the wonderful shot, and love doing so, however it took hours of training and help from others for Tiger to reach his potential. To be Tiger or to be successful we need help!

A good coach always pushes his or her star athletes and franchise players to reach their full potential and maximize performance. Great coaches achieve superb results by building a trusting relationship and by creating an environment in which the athletes' stress decrease as the success rate increase. Coaches inspire by actively daring the athlete to take risks and face challenges. This method should be able to work in and with academic achievement. The writer saying the coaching approach can be the model for improvement in the classroom. I totally concur

Why does the coaching system work so well in sports? The coaches themselves are an important factor, of course, but most significant is the fact that the athletes are thrust rapidly into real-life experiences. The efforts of coaches, such as encouraging continuous practice or researching the opposition's techniques, are all focused on furthering the players' endeavors and sharpening their skills. These are athletes who perform for their peers and fans. Coaches help players use their time according to a clearly defined purpose and with a specific goal in mind.

Coaching is widely known in the business world, as well. It is not uncommon today for CEOs, high-level administrators, and managers to have personal executive or life coaches.

Learning How to Learn

Turnbull (2009) describes coaching for learning. In today's environment it is about personalizing, learning training and motivation. What I am trying to learn is to teach people, individuals to self-motivate. "The only person who is educated is the person who has learned how to learn; the person who has learned how to adapt and change; the person who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security (Rogers, 2004, p.152).

Family Structure as an Influence on Attitude

Waite, Goldschneider and Witsberger (1986), researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams

cited below shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of nonfamily living.

Motivation

Ryska and Vestal (2004) examine motivation and attitude in high school student athletes. It was hypothesized that athletes that were task motivated and could be successful on the field; they could also transfer that to the academic arena. In some cases this worked and in some cases it did not. The researchers studied 323 students, 160 males and 163 female athletes, ranging in age from 14 to 18 years old. Students came from Anglo American, African, Middle Eastern backgrounds. Males played football, baseball. Females played volleyball and basketball. Students completed surveys using Task and Ego Orientation in Sports Questionnaire (Duda & Nucholls as cited in Ryska & Vestal, 2004). Several other surveys were used. Results indicated that in terms of task orientation, under the overall title of Academic Strategy Use the following indicated statistically significant results; informational processing, time management, self-testing, conceptualizing. Under self-perceptions high school socio economic status, college-student SE and college-student athlete. Under ego orientation there were no significant differences indicated for academic strategy use and self. "Ego the biggest item is time management" (Ryska & Vestal, 2004,p. 110).

Developing Self Through Coaching

The authors point out that a key to achievement is being self-aware. As we go from adolescence to adulthood it is not what mom and dad want it is what the individual wants. This is a proposed study currently under way in Australia. Eight high schools are participating in the study. The measurement tools used to gather information from the students include questionnaires and tests of basic skills collected over 4-year period. Preliminary information from the authors' review of

the literature indicate that the topic of self-concept and motivation is complex. The research literature indicates that increased self-confidence does not necessarily increase academic success.

Influence of Parents

Kim, Schaller and Kim (2010) identify how students' perceptions of their parents shape the kind and degree of motivational goal orientations that they adopt in their mathematics classroom, broadening the application of achievement goal orientation theory and self-determination theory to students in Korea. Two groups of students participated, one from a middle school located in a large metropolitan area and the other from a small city high school. Multisample path analysis of data from both groups revealed that Korean students' different goal orientations were predicted by their perceptions of parental goals and motivating styles and by their perceptions of classroom goal structures, mediated by different types of self-regulated motivations. Particularly interesting was the finding that Korean students' degree of mastery goal adoption was associated mostly with identified regulation, not with intrinsic motivation, and predicted by their perceptions of their parents' motivating styles, both autonomy supportive and controlling, in addition to perceptions of parents' mastery goals. Perceptions of classroom goals were stronger predictors of students' own goals than were perceptions of parents' goals and motivating styles. We offer an integration of self-determination theory and achievement goal theory.

Between Chaos and Community

King, King, and Harding (2010) describe how one leader created a way to verbalize his worldview. In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., isolated himself from the demands of the civil rights movement, rented a house in Jamaica with no telephone, and labored over his final manuscript. In this important work, which has been unavailable for more than ten years, we find King's acute analysis of American race relations and the state of the movement after a decade of

civil rights efforts. King lays out his thoughts, plans, and dreams for America's future, including the need for better jobs, higher wages, decent housing, and quality education. Today, as African American communities stand to lose more wealth than any other demographic during this economic crisis, King's call for economic equality and sustainability is especially pertinent. With a universal message of hope that continues to resonate, King demanded an end to global suffering, asserting that humankind-for the first time-has the resources and technology to eradicate poverty.

Coretta Scott King, the wife of Martin Luther King, Jr., was an American author and human rights activist. She helped lead the civil rights movement after King's assassination, carrying the message of nonviolence and the dream of a beloved community to many countries, and spearheading coalitions and foundations.

Schooling and the Future

Kover and Worrell (2010) articulate that for many students, school is a forward-looking endeavor, with implications for future educational opportunity, job prospects, and financial success. How does believing that school is linked to a desired future outcome--known as an instrumentality belief--influence motivation? A number of studies have indicated that rewards, or other concerns that are external to the task at hand, can diminish the intrinsic motivation to engage in that task, a fact that would call into question the adaptive nature of these instrumentality beliefs. A recent study indicated that instrumentality beliefs about school not only increase extrinsic motivation, but also increase intrinsic motivation. Miller et al. examined college students; the current study replicated their study in a population of high-achieving high school students. In the current study, the positive influence of instrumentality beliefs on intrinsic

motivation was not found. Given these findings, we discuss the ways in which the future goals of high-achieving high school students may differ from those of students in a college population and offer directions for further research in this area that might elucidate these differences.

Research of this sort may ultimately have important implications for how educators frame for students the relationship between schooling and their future goals.

Summary

To summarize all the research, we are connected regardless of how independent any one person feels. When comes to motivation one can use the eyes of another to reflect or mirror the desires and goals one has set. When we see ourselves in the eyes of others, we are able to tap into self and motivate self.

Chapter 3 Method

Introduction

This non-experimental design research project involves collecting qualitative data through interviews, personal journals, and narrative records.

Sample and Site

There were three sources of information for this study. An administrator at a suburban high school agreed to an interview. The second group of participants formed a sample of convenience. Members of a high school football team were asked to engage in a discuss linking the motivational style of the coach to their shifting perspectives of themselves and their actions on the field during a game. The third group of people was part of a high school audience who attended a large group presentation I put together at the request of local school officials who had read my work. One high school student group consisted of English Language Learners and students who were reading and performing academically at a low level. I also gave a similar motivational speech at a second high school.

Access and Permissions

The assistant principal and the high school football team had direct contact with the researcher. They were solicited, told the nature of the study, and asked if they would consent to an interview.

The third group, high school students who attended my motivational speeches in Florida and Kentucky, March of 2013 provided snapshot data. I documented audience and individual responses.

Data Gathering Strategies

Responses To Open-Ended Questions

I am involved using a hands on, inquiry approach to generate responses from experts and from high school students in order to assess the impact of selected motivational strategies. The expert, an administrator engaged in a conversation about the importance of adult professionals consciously using strategies to encourage success in others. The way I am doing this with high school students is by being involved as their coach, using select strategies and then by asking the team members specific questions where they describe the impact of motivational strategies on their performance.

Data Analysis

The exact nature of motivation within the context of high school setting formed the approach used in this study. Data is qualitative, typically text, narratives, stories, and observation notes. Information was identified and organized into major and minor findings. Creating a circle of motivation served as the goal of this work and took the following forms:

Individual as Motivating Agent

Choice of Words/Language

Modeling Behavior

Repeating Key Motivational Language

Working with Others to Use Self Motivational Language

Chapter 4 Findings

Questions for School Administrator

If I may, I would like to ask you questions about motivation.

1. Please tell me what motivates you, or in other words what do you do to get yourself going?

His motivation was a love of music that he wanted to share. Someone in his life helped him when he was younger. This is his way of paying back to others. This is the common thread.

2. When you are working with young people and you see the ability in them to be outstanding, but for whatever reason they are unaware of their strengths, what do you do? He responded that he tries to take that he individualizes. He is an assistant principal and founder of the school within a school for the arts. Therefore he uses music has his link to students. When he sees ability in a child, and the child is unaware, he reminds the child of what he/or she does as an individual to make the group as a whole richer. Without that individual the group will not be as rich.

3. What are the methods or strategies you apply to help these young people bring out their best?

It is a layered effect, such as building blocks. The foundation is first before the second, third, and fourth floors. In his words, "...that is an oversimplification of a more complex process."

4. Now those methods have worked in the past. However I have noticed many changes in students from the way they communicate, dress, and travel to and from school. What do you do or how do you stay current in your ways of connecting with these students?

He stays in tune with the students' music, the art that is happening, and the way they communicate – text, Facebook, and other new media.

5. My dad said if information ,his words were “if what you know don't go no farther you really didn't know it” he was about passing on knowledge. So this is a two-part question: What advice do you have for the new teacher about reaching his or her students with regard to self-motivation?

The teacher has got to care about the student. The teacher needs to remind the student often. Many times no one cares for that child, or at least the child feels no one cares for him or her. If the new teacher shows caring, that builds blocks for the child to start caring for self.

6. If you had to address a large group of students at the high school or college level, and the topic is motivating self, what would you say to them?

He talked about his past. It was hard for him. Someone believed in him to mentor him so that he could find his path. He encourages students to be open to that person who comes into your life to help you find your true path.

7. First thank you for giving me some of your time today. I do greatly appreciate it. In closing, thinking back over the questions, and I would be happy to repeat any of them, please elaborate on any subject that you feel is important for me to know about when it comes motivating students at the high school or college level.

The fact is that we, as we mentor, guide, coach young people, if we want to help create true sustainability in self-motivation, we have to keep laying down the foundation. It may not pay off immediately. The light bulb may not go off right away. But, somewhere down the line, where that student truly understands it, will he or she find their true path. That is when true sustainability takes place. The fact is that I was taught; now I am the teacher.

My student becomes the teacher, and so on, and so on.

Questions for High School Football Team

In reflecting on past performance (football game)

1. What did you do right?
2. What did you do that did not work?
3. What can you improve on?
4. Describe how you are going to improve. If you do not know how to improve, I can help you with that.

I observed the football team, and worked with them for a month. My goal was to help them feel like a "team within a team," a specialized unit. I identified leaders within the group. Within the groups there are times when some kids are "natural" leaders. They help motivate the group. When those people are not there, my goal is to develop within each student a personal ability to self-motivate.

Twelve high school freshmen football players met on October 27, 2011 with me, their line coach, to discuss their reflections on my approach to working with them. I provided them with background on my research study. We also discussed that my conversation with them was a normal part of my coaching approach. Their comments were part of my efforts to obtain feedback on my motivational style in a focus group setting.

My Statement

“Men as you know I am working towards my master’s degree in education. My focus is motivation, specifically motivating young people to take charge of the education or life or what they are doing you all to be better linemen. With this understanding I would like to you all to respond to my questions as you talk I will take notes. My motivation strategy is being a model of how one speaks and acts to motivate you as members of the football team.”

Questions

1. Describe in your own words how you see this strategy as it applies in my work with you in coaching football.
2. What are the strengths of this approach?
3. What are the weaknesses?
4. What would you change?
5. What would you keep?
6. In closing, thinking of the comments made during the conversation what things would you emphasize?

Snapshot Data from Audience

In Louisville March 6th 2013 I met some incredible people, teachers, students, administrators and business leaders. In Kentucky about 10 years ago there was an influx of new blood in teaching. Chefs got credentials, reporters, business people, as well as individuals from the corporate world also became teachers. In conversations with various groups during my speaking engagements, I observed a struggle between what I refer to as the old blood and new blood in education. This new blood is used to collaborating, motivating, problem solving, engaging self, one another, and community. The old blood leaves when the last bell rings. The new blood stays until 6, 7 later if

need be. They are enjoying teaching, their passionate in working with young people, in the whole idea of creating sustainability through motivation. This new blood is about building a system that continues.

English as a Second Language Group

These high school students read well below grade level or achieved below grade level. the second high school group consisted of low achievers, ESL, Cooking Club, and Future Farmers. The adults included administrators, teachers, and custodial staff who were also in attendance. There is a fight between the new blood and the old blood.

Overall Findings, Themes

High School Football Team

My motivation strategy is modeling how one speaks and acts to motivate members of the football team.

Comment to team

Describe in your own words how you see this strategy as it applies in my work with you in coaching football.

Response

We like the way you connect with us.

Analysis

There were some comments about the way I work life into practice asking about their day at school, did they eat and drink water? When it's hot my big line was HI-Drate and talk about my day, and what I was working on. What are the strengths of this approach?

Response

You seem to understand us coach, even though you are older than some of our parents. We like that! Coach, you are very approachable, we communicate; we feel we can talk with you about other things.

Commit team

What are the weaknesses?

Response

They wanted me to spend more time with them. They also wanted more time in small groups.

Comment to team

What would you change?

Response

Less running, they said that more tongue in cheek.

Commit to team

What would you keep?

Response

I am happy to say the players said, *Coach don't change.*

Commit to team

In closing, thinking of the comments made during the conversation what things would you emphasize?

Response

The players feel that the motivational approach is “...*right on the money.*”

Speaking Engagements

People want to connect; young, old, male, or female people want to connect, to be part of something bigger than self. In speaking with these groups I feel it is vital to be myself, not the celebrity they have read about or seen on television. My audience must connect I need them to understand I struggled to find motivation, to learn to self-motivate, and most importantly if I can overcome my struggles and achieve each person that I address can.

Chapter 5 Discussion /Analysis

Summary of Major Findings

The findings show that young people are actively seeking ways of achieving their goals. They want methods of motivating self. Young people respond and thrive when exposed to positive language, acts, people and role models. The attitude of “its all about me” still prevails. However, there is a need to counter this attitude by adding a measure of hope through actively modeling strategies that foster motivation. Bandura’s theory rings true.

Comparison of Findings to Previous Research

There is much literature on the positive effect of motivation. Modeling awareness and demonstrating practices in motivating others as wells as self, have a place in how leaders influence young people. There are defined elements in place in the research literature and in daily life that can serve as a model for others to implement.

Limitations/Gaps in the Study

Although there is much research on the topic of motivation, I found little on self-motivation. Thus, this research is important in forming a framework for self-motivation strategies targeted towards young people. There is no age that is considered too young to start practicing motivation and encouraging self-motivation.

Another limitation is the number of participants in this study. This was a purposive sample, with educational professionals and high school students that were part of my professional work world.

While the results from the conversations were informative, they represent only a small segment of the population and cannot be generalized on a larger scale.

Implications for Future Research

Further research is needed at the middle school level, students at-risk for failure, among other populations to develop and document motivational strategies with particular attention at encouraging self-motivation.

Overall Significance of the Research

All of the work of those discussed in this paper, as well as the experiences and practices of the author, corroborate the theoretical lens established by Bandura. We are social beings who learn from watching and imitating others. Each adult in working with young people must take into account that one's actions translate to the behavioral practices and interpersonal relationships of others.

About the Author

At this moment, Curtis Aikens feels as if he is the true son of the South, not in the sense of the Confederate rebel, but that Southern son that is a true gentleman, loves family, community, being of service. Yet, I am a rebel. I am trying to find new ways of helping self, which gives me a chance to help others.

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