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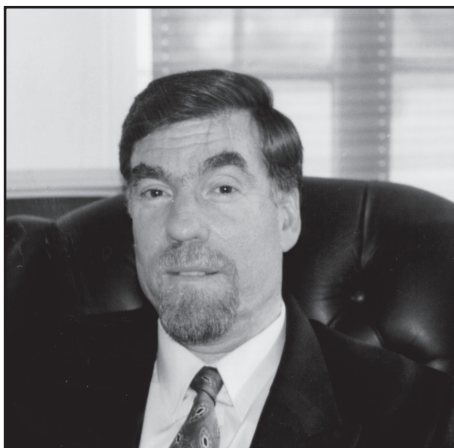
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From Tourists to Citizens in the Classroom: An Interview with H. Jerome Freiberg

Mary R. Sudzina
The University of Dayton



H. Jerome Freiberg is Professor of Education, College of Education, University of Houston, and Director of the Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline Project, Houston, Texas. Dr. Freiberg has published over 100 scholarly works including the books *Freedom To Learn* (with Carl Rogers), and *Universal Teaching Strategies* (with Amy Driscoll), and is editor of the book *School Climate: Measuring, Improving, and Sustaining Healthy Learning Environments* (in press). He is also editor of the *Journal of Classroom Interaction*. Dr. Freiberg received the 1988-89 University of Houston's Teaching Excellence Award, and the College of Education's 1996 Research Excellence Research Award. Dr. Freiberg was recently named a John and Rebecca Moores University Scholar.

Q: Dr. Freiberg, you've successfully applied Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline (CMCD) with students in some urban schools. How does CMCD differ from other approaches to dealing with inner-city students?

A: CMCD challenges a number of assumptions about children and youth who live and go to school in the inner-cities. There are too many controls and not enough opportunities for students to build self-discipline.

The goal of most teachers is to encourage self-discipline, but the path many teachers take to this goal is misdirected. Too often the cooperation teachers seek from students to create order does not allow for real engagement in the learning process. Teachers find themselves imposing their requirements for order without relating to the student need to become members of a learning community. Discipline becomes mandated rather than developed. The differences between building self-discipline and imposing discipline is the balance point between the traditional classroom and a person-centered learning environment. A person-centered classroom benefits both teacher and student.

Too often classrooms are teacher-centered. When classrooms are teacher-centered, students lose out on opportunities to have meaningful participation. I liken this to being "tourists" in the classroom. Students become tourists, passing through schools and classrooms without engaging in or positively influencing their learning environments. The CMCD program encourages students to become "citizens" of their classrooms and school, taking responsibility for each other and the place of learning that they enter each day. The schools that foster academic and social citizenship have these qualities of active learning environments, and students become stakeholders in their own learning.

Q: What would that look like?

A: The following figure, which appeared in *Freedom to Learn*, shows the distinctions between the two types of learning environments (See Figure 1). A person-centered environment in the Rogerian sense is one that includes and benefits both teacher and students.

ronments (See Figure 1). A person-centered environment in the Rogerian sense is one that includes and benefits both teacher and students.

Teacher-Centered	Person-Centered
Teacher is the sole leader	Leadership is shared
Management is a form of guidance	Management is a form of oversight
Teacher takes responsibility for all paperwork and organization	Students facilitate operations of the classroom
More students are "tourists" than "citizens"	More students are "citizens" than "tourists"
Discipline comes mostly from the teacher	Discipline comes mostly from the self
A few students are the teacher's helpers	All students can become an integral part of classroom management
Teacher posts the rules	Teacher and students develop rules in the form of a classroom constitution or Magna Carta
Consequences are fixed for all students	Consequences reflect individual differences
Rewards are mostly extrinsic	Rewards are mostly intrinsic
Students are allowed limited responsibilities	Students share in classroom responsibilities
Students see only people who are paid to be in school	Schools recruit business and community members to enrich opportunities for students and present positive role models for students

Adapted from *Freedom to Learn* (3rd ed.) by C. Rogers and H. J. Freiberg (1994, p. 240) Used with permission of H. J. Freiberg (1997).

Figure 1. Teacher-centered classrooms vs. person centered classrooms.

Self-discipline is built over time and encompasses multiple sources of experiences. There is no one path, model, or program that will lead to self-discipline in all students. Self-discipline requires a learning environment that nurtures opportunities to learn from one's experiences, including mistakes, and to reflect on these experiences.

When students are engaged and involved and teachers and students see each other as partners, the instructional climate improves for both teachers and students. When students become more self-disciplined and teachers have greater management and discipline repertoires, referring students to the office becomes unnecessary or the last resort. The CMCD program changes the learning environment by asking students and teachers to collectively establish the climate in which they will teach and learn. We provide the organizational and instructional tools to help create this environment; it is up to the teachers and administrators to adapt and adjust to their own local needs.

Q: You've spent the last decade looking at learning environments in school and achievement with "at risk" youth. What are your conclusions? What works?

A: From my experiences working with urban schools, teachers, and students, I would suggest the following:

- Create smaller classes to better support children who have increasing social needs. Most secondary schools have 100-200:1 student/teacher ratio's which can lead to increased discipline and management problems.
- Implement much higher standards for the preparation, recruitment, and hiring of teachers. Most states have higher standards and training requirements for hairdressers and animal doctors. According to the 1996 National Commission Report on Teaching and America's Future, more than 12% of newly hired "teachers" enter the classroom without any preparation and 15% enter without having fully met state standards. Thirty percent of secondary mathematics teachers do not have a college minor let alone a major in their fields.
- Create safer and more caring learning and teaching environments. According to the 1996 U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Study juvenile homicide rates (12-17 year olds) have increased 95 percent from 1980 to 1994. In 1994, law enforcement agencies arrested 2.7 million youth under the age of 18. The study reports twelve percent of students in grades 6-12 reported being victims of bullying, physical attack or robbery and 56 percent of the students surveyed reported witnessing such acts. Democracy cannot grow or flourish when youth live in fear. A climate of violence, intolerance, apathy, isolation and dissolving families leads many youths to have a blank vision of the future.
- Refurbish school building infrastructures throughout the nation. Schools are literally collapsing. In Houston, it was the roof an elementary school which collapsed onto the cafeteria one week before school opened. In West Virginia, the exterior brick wall of a high school in Preston County

collapsed one month prior to the start of the new school year forcing the school to be permanently closed.

- Encourage greater parental support in providing children that are self-disciplined and able to learn with other children. Babies don't come with a parents' guide. In Arkansas, new mothers who receive state aid also receive extensive support in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed for raising a healthy child. Child abuse has soared in the last decade. We have learned that early intervention is the key. There is a need for all parents to have the opportunity to receive education on raising healthy children.
- Balance reform so it is not always additive. Nothing is taken away from the impacted school curriculum — only added. Teachers by necessity either ignore the new reforms or begin reducing parts of the curriculum in a haphazard fashion. Changes in the curriculum need to be comprehensive rather than piecemeal.
- Reform efforts need time to occur. We tend to plant "trees of innovation," but not allow them time to take root. We keep pulling up the trees and are puzzled when they haven't taken. Veteran teachers quickly learn that they can outlast the latest "changes" because next year brings another program to reform schools.
- Most importantly, we must listen to the students; they have a keen sense of the problems and many of the solutions. In one inner-city middle school, students representing a wide range of views were asked about solving the graffiti problem in bathrooms. The students suggested that each wall be given to a different grade level to paint a mural. They also suggested a large panel be painted and placed over the wall, enabling new students entering each year to have their own wall to paint.
- Build reform on replicable research. Too often one study with limited generalizability or faulty design is used to support educational policy. Walberg (1986) cites the impact of a flawed study showing open education did not improve learning compared to traditional education. The study was reported in the *New York Times* and other media sources. The study findings were retracted, but only after significant damage had occurred and new policies were developed.
- Reduce the half-life factors of improving schools. A study we conducted of an improving inner-city elementary school that moved from the lowest 5 percent in the state in academic achievement to receiving the Governor's excellence award four years later lost its Chapter I Federal funds due to higher achievement scores. It also lost extra district funds for the same reason. Improvement for this school became a disincentive.

Q: AACTE recently targeted five promising practices in teacher education for 1996 and the CMCD program was one of them. A CMCD project was also highlighted

in the front page of the *Houston Chronicle* in December, 1996. Can you tell me more about this?

A: Both the AACTE recognition and the article which appeared in the front page of the December 1, 1996, *Houston Chronicle* (“Sparing the Rod: Student self-discipline shifts burden for classroom order”) indicate a growing awareness of the importance of new ways to approach the realm of classroom environments. I received a request from AACTE to present an overview of the Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline Program at the Education Commission of the States’ 1996 National Forum and Annual Meeting July 2, 1996. I was to be at an international conference in Israel at the time and Dr. Alma Allen, an elected member of the Texas State Board of Education, presented on our program. She has been a strong advocate for the CMCD program.

The newspaper article reflects the realization of many in the city that before any reading and mathematics programs can be introduced a climate for active and productive learning must be in place. Most of the newer more constructivist curriculums emphasize an active interface between the students and the curriculum. However, the management system used in most classrooms reflects a teacher-centered model of order.

Q: Could you give me an example?

A: Yes, the following figure also appeared in *Freedom to Learn* and shows how classroom management must change to reflect changes in instructional models (See Figure 2).

Teacher-focused	
<p><i>Teacher dimension:</i> Teacher directs and externally controls student behavior.</p> <p>Teacher role is directive.</p>	<p>Lecture</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Drill and practice</p> <p>Demonstration</p>
<p><i>Cooperative dimension:</i> Teacher/students cooperate in designing a positive classroom learning environment.</p> <p>Teacher role is semi-directive/facilitative.</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Cooperative groups</p> <p>Guided discovery</p> <p>Contracts</p> <p>Role play</p>
<p><i>Self-dimension:</i> Students are internally self-disciplined and need minimal direct adult supervision.</p> <p>Teacher role is non-directive/facilitative.</p>	<p>Projects</p> <p>Inquiry</p> <p>Self-assessment</p>
Student-focused	

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Figure 2. Classroom management reflecting instructional models.

Q: How did you come to work on the book *Freedom To Learn* with the humanitarian and psychologist Carl Rogers? Why is the message of this book, first published over two decades ago, still contemporary today?

A: I worked with Carl Rogers on the second edition of *Freedom to Learn* in the early 1980’s. I was asked to update his original 1969 edition with additional cases and current research. When he died in 1987 I was asked by the publisher and his daughter, Natalie Rogers, to revise *Freedom to Learn* into a third edition. The project took nearly three years. I visited secondary schools in Chicago, Philadelphia, Houston, and New Orleans, and I included a colleague’s work in San Diego to form the first chapter: “Why Kids Love School”. It is very evident that schools can build resilience in inner-city children. Many of Rogers’ frameworks are evident in what learners in the inner cities need to be productive citizens in a democratic society.

Q: *Freedom to Learn* was translated into Spanish in 1996 and the Soros Foundation is providing resources for it to be translated into Russian and placed in 15,000 libraries. Why do you think there is an international interest in your and Rogers’ work?

A: Many of the principles presented in *Freedom to Learn* are universal. Children across the world and their teachers have similar needs to enable them to work and learn in healthy learning environments.

Q: This past summer you were invited to speak in Israel with David Berliner, Lee and Judy Shulman, Martin Haberman and Eliot Eisner. Are other countries that you’ve visited confronting similar educational and social issues?

A: I have worked with educators in Italy, Spain, England Netherlands and Israel. These countries are beginning to see a deterioration of the family structure and subsequent problems with children. England, for example, has a higher child poverty rate than the United States. France has a similar child poverty problem as the U.S. Italian secondary teachers in small towns and rural schools cited student motivation and parent involvement as the their greatest concerns. I have also found a common thread of lowered expectations in inner-city schools throughout the world. Believing that children of poverty can learn is a prerequisite to learning. We have been asked to start our CMCD program in several European countries to help schools become resilient, rather than another risk factor in the lives of children.

Q: What is your educational prognosis for the future?

A: I actually have more hope now that we can improve learning for our youth as I see real change and improvement in some of our inner-city schools. What I know after spending much time in urban schools is that we need to think differently about students and their learning. We can’t change for the better continuing to think in the old ways.

Teachers need to be given better tools for meeting the needs of children and youth and meet their own needs. Educational reforms must begin at the classroom or micro levels and work toward the broader meso and macro levels. Too much of what has occurred to date has had minimal impact on the classroom. If we refocus our efforts to make schools and classrooms a place for citizens, not tourists, then we will begin to see real and sustainable improvement.

Research Results

Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline Program

H. Jerome Freiberg
University of Houston

We've conducted a series of longitudinal studies to determine outcomes of the Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline program. The findings are very promising. For example, students of teachers using the program in low-performing inner-city elementary schools earned scores that are statistically significantly higher on national standardized tests and state-criterion reference tests than comparison students. Three years after their schools began the program, students with CMCD teachers gained on average three-quarters of a year's achievement over comparison students.

Four years after the program had been in use, we found statistically significant differences in how students viewed their learning environments. Based on survey data, students in the program perceived their environments to be more positive than comparison students. In addition, the following were all significantly higher for program students than for comparison students: student involvement, task orientation, class order and class rules, instructional learning environment, teacher expectations, and achievement motivation and academic self-concept.

Program schools also document significantly fewer classroom problems and discipline referrals to the principal's office. Before beginning the program, an inner-city elementary school with only 276 students had 109 student referrals to the office during the school year. A year after the program, there were 19 discipline referrals, 9 of which were from substitute teachers. Further, the rate of suspensions five years later of non-program students was double that of students whose teachers used the program.

A similar pattern is evident in two intermediate rural schools. Over three years, discipline referrals were down 40-60 percent, and students made statistically significant gains in achievement. Both schools won awards for academic excellence.

When implemented school wide and throughout a feeder pattern of schools (K-12), Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline becomes a collaborative enterprise in which teachers and administrators help students move toward self-discipline as they progress through their school years. The program is currently being replicated with nine additional inner-city schools, including elementary, middle and high school. Two elementary schools have had the program since 1993-94. In these schools, student discipline referrals to the office are down 78 and 72 percent respectively. The middle school to which the elementary schools send their students also had the CMCD program. An external evaluation showed that skipping class, fighting, disruptions, defiance and disrespect and assaults dropped from 76 percent to 24 percent. The greatest drop was in assaults of students and teachers by students, which was reduced by 76 percent in one year.