

Taking Control of the Classroom

Jim Fay & David Funk

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Acknowledgments

Teaching a classroom of difficult students is the easiest thing I do nowadays. I am reminded of this every time I have a chance to do demonstration teaching. I didn't always have this ability. Earlier in my teaching career there were days where the students took over control of the classroom I went home frustrated and angry, wondering why I should go back to the next day.

The difference now is that I have a set of effective skills that I acquired over a very long period of time. I was exposed to these new skills as a result of having the opportunity to work with some very special people who possessed these skills. These people also shared and demonstrated valuable beliefs and attitudes about people, which became valuable to me in my work with students.

I was fortunate to meet these people at times in my life when I was highly motivated. These were times in which I was desperate, making the types of mistakes that virtually shouted to me that there must be a better way.

Dr. Gus Profit, principal of Asbury School, in Denver, Colorado believed in me. He was gentle with me, and constantly urged me to try new teaching approaches. Gus had a strong belief in the value of people and modeled the importance of treating others with respect. He was the first of my mentors who demonstrated the value of sharing control.

Gene Cosby, Mountain Area Superintendent of Schools in Jefferson County, Colorado, hired me to be a principal in a school that was to undergo a difficult transition. Gene believed in me and he believed that people are important and that they should be treated with dignity. He ranks high on my list of mentors and models. I grew under his guidance, as he gave me the freedom to develop and act as a fine example to follow.

Foster W. Cline, M.D. came into my life at a perfect time. He was a psychiatrist in Evergreen, Colorado. He generously donated time to help the teachers at my elementary school. He was always available to help me learn about many innovative child management techniques. Foster has a well of knowledge that is so deep that it has no limits. This combined with his creativity has helped him become one of the most effective psychiatrists in America.

Foster later became my best friend, partner and co-founder of the Cline/Fay Institute, inc. There has never been an end to his mentoring. Love and Logic is a combination of his expertise in psychology, my adapting these concepts and experimenting with school children, and my years of experience in the schools.

An acknowledgement for *Teaching With Love and Logic* would not be complete without thanking Nancy Henry and Carol Core. Nancy is my wonderful daughter who is the Executive Vice President of the Love and Logic Companies. Carol Core is Vice President of Marketing. This book would not be in print had it not been for their belief in my ability to write it, their constant encouragement and Nancy Henry's editorial skills.

I didn't learn Love and Logic on my own and I did not produce this book on my own. My sincere thanks go to all of you who contributed to my growth as an educator over the last 42 years of working with children. I can't begin to name you all or there would be no space for the text of this book.

Other Titles From Love and Logic

- *Meeting the Challenge*
- *Hope for Underachieving Kids: Opening the Door to Success with Love and Logic*
- *Pearls of Love and Logic for Parents and Teachers*
- *Quick and Easy Classroom Interventions: 23 Proven Tools for Increasing Student Cooperation*
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- *Parenting With Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility*
- *Parenting Teens With Love and Logic: Preparing Adolescents for Responsible Adulthood*
- *Grandparenting With Love and Logic: Practical Solutions to Today's Grandparenting Challenges*
- *Love and Logic Solutions for Kids with Special Needs*

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Dedication

*To my wife, Diane,
our children, Aleshia and Jaben,
and grandson, Edrik,
who have taught me
about life's highest values.*

David Funk

Preface

Are you looking for practical solutions to the day-to-day frustrations and challenges common in today's classroom? Are you seeking tried and true techniques that reduce the time and energy you spend maintaining discipline in your classroom?

Are you searching for ways to relate to students that increase the level of student cooperation so that you can enjoy teaching? Have you been hoping to find ideas and strategies that put some fun into teaching?

Love and Logic is an approach to working with students that:

Puts teachers in control

Teaches kids to think for themselves

Raises the level of student responsibility

Prepares kids to function effectively in a society filled with temptations, decisions, and consequences

The techniques offered in this book were born out of practical application. Many of these strategies were developed over a period of 31 years of teaching and school administration. For the past 17 years, I have been teaching these techniques to teachers and administrators who have found them effective. Over a period of time, this collection of techniques and the philosophy that guides it have become known as "The Love and Logic Approach to Discipline."

The Love and Logic Institute was first created during the early 1980s and since then has taken a unique approach to research in the area of discipline and behavior management. At the Institute, we have observed many proficient teachers in action, and identified their most effective strategies. We then analyzed these strategies to verify that they were consistent with the findings of research and literature of psychology.

At the end of this book, you will find supportive research and readings that will help you continue your study of discipline. This collection of research was compiled by Charles Fay, at the University of South Carolina. While Charles was working on his Ph.D. in psychology, he spent considerable time working with me in the analysis of Love and Logic and was instrumental in verifying the concepts taught in this book.

Many educators have applied Love and Logic effectively in their schools and classrooms and have been instrumental in bringing about system change resulting in exemplary teaching and learning environments. Several of them have been chosen as examples of practical application for this book.

David Funk applied Love and Logic in his work in the New Berlin Public Schools (New Berlin, Wisconsin) first as a teacher and later as an administrator. He then applied his new strategies at the university level and developed an outstanding teacher-training facility. You will read his analysis of the principles of Love and Logic as well as his suggestions for practicing these principles, all born out of his day-to-day use and experience, in Part Two: The Four Key Principles of Love and Logic.

Dr. Betsy Geddes used the principles of Love and Logic to turn around an inner-city school in Portland, Oregon. She was so successful that she later became a highly effective and popular educational consultant and public speaker. Among her strengths is her ability to provide practical techniques. She addresses the challenge of implementing a school-wide discipline plan based upon Love and Logic in [Chapter 14: Implementing School Discipline: Systems vs. Principles](#).

Jim McKee is a counselor at Walled Lake High School in Walled Lake, Michigan. His contribution to this book is an outstanding example of systems change, which he describes in [Chapter 15: Walled Lake Central High School: One School's Approach To Love and Logic](#). He and his committee implemented The Four Key Principles of Love and Logic to move an entire staff to develop a Love and Logic school.

This book is truly based on practical experience. The total years of school experience represented by the authors and contributors is in excess of 105. We hope you enjoy our book and find that the application of Love and Logic increases your ability to have fun and feel satisfaction in the classroom. We also invite you to become acquainted with the Love and Logic Institute and some of our other books, training programs, and materials, such as *9 Essential Skills for the Love and Logic Classroom* curriculum, *Becoming a Love and Logic Parent* curriculum, and the books *Parenting With Love and Logic*, *Parenting Teens With Love and Logic*, and *Grandparenting With Love and Logic*. We value your feedback and hope you will let us know how this book helps you.

Please enjoy ...

Jim Fay

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The Purpose of Love and Logic

A Master Makes It Look Easy

Isn't it great to watch a master at work? The masters always make things look so easy. They stay calm. They avoid taking on ownership of another person's problem. They set firm limits without waging war. Able to maintain their dignity in rough situations, they can help others and, at the same time, maintain their self-respect. Masters get the job done.

I watched Parley Jacobs, a wise middle-school principal and master of Love and Logic, handle a very difficult situation. He not only made it look easy but, even better, the student involved solved the problem and left with his dignity intact.

I saw an angry teacher coming down the hall with a student in tow. She delivered him to Parley with, "Here, do something with him! I'm not having him back in class. He stole the bobbin out of the sewing machine." She left, and the master principal went to work.

PARLEY: Have a seat, pal.

STUDENT: I didn't do it! I hate her!

PARLEY: Bummer.

Parley walked away with me to visit classrooms. We returned in about ten minutes. The boy looked up at Parley. He still appeared to be angry.

STUDENT: What!

PARLEY: What do you think?

STUDENT: I didn't do it!

PARLEY: Bummer.

Parley walked away again, but returned in about five minutes.

PARLEY: What do you think?

STUDENT: She doesn't have any right to throw me out. I didn't do it!

PARLEY: Bummer.

Parley walked away, but returned again in about five minutes.

PARLEY: What do you think?

STUDENT: I told you, I didn't do it. She hates me. She's always blaming me for everything that happens!

PARLEY: ~~Bummer.~~

Parley left and returned fifteen minutes later.

PARLEY: What do you think?

STUDENT: I told you. I didn't steal it ... but I know where it is!

PARLEY: WOW.

Parley walked away and returned in about ten minutes.

PARLEY: What do you think?

STUDENT: What if I get it back for her?

PARLEY: I don't know.

Parley walked away again and returned in another ten minutes.

PARLEY: What do you think?

STUDENT: What if I get it back and apologize?

PARLEY: I don't know.

Parley walked off again.

By now, I could see that Parley was “milking” this situation for all he could get out of it. The next time he walked past the student, he didn't even stop. The next thing I heard was the student yelling at Parley to get his attention.

STUDENT: Well, can I?

PARLEY: Can you what?

STUDENT: Can I go get it for her and try to apologize?

PARLEY: It sounds like a good idea to me.
Do you want to give it a try?

STUDENT: Yeah. Can I go now?

PARLEY: I'll give you a pass. Hope it works out for you. Good luck, pal.

At last report, this student worked things out with his teacher and they got on with their lives.

Creating A Higher Standard of Behavior

I asked Parley if he had always handled discipline problems this way. “No,” he laughed. “This is new way of working with students. My life used to be filled with angry students and stressful situations. I used to make all of these problems my own. I used traditional methods of lecturing and punishing with limited success. Now that I’ve discovered the Love and Logic methods of discipline, I’m having more fun on the job. We’re able to hold students to a higher standard of behavior.

“I used to work with kids immediately,” he continued, “while they were still upset, angry, emotional. Now I give them time to cool down. I used to stop whatever I was doing to work on the problem. Now they have to wait for me so I can work with them on *my* terms. I used to do most of the talking, letting them know what they had done wrong and telling them what I was going to do about it. Now I use a lot of questions.

“Questions force the youngsters to do the thinking and to come up with their own solutions,” Parley added. “I used to own the problems. Now the kids own the problems. I used to go home angry and tired from doing all the thinking. Now the kids are the ones who go home tired from thinking. I used to take on all of the responsibility. Now the kids learn to take responsibility. I used to be the bad guy. Now it’s their problems and consequences that are the bad guys and I’m the good guy. Life is good again!”

“The Love and Logic approach has also given me new understanding,” Parley Jacobs said. “Love and Logic concepts help me develop better relationships with kids. And the great thing about improved relationships is that they lead to improved cooperation. Now, that is what school is all about.”

“The bottom line is: students at our school are more responsible now. Love and Logic enables us to hold kids to higher standards of behavior.”

Great Educators Are Experimenters

The purpose of this book is not to motivate you to care more for kids. Nobody would do the job teachers do for the little appreciation received if they didn’t already care a lot about children. Nor is the purpose of this book to ask you to change. Our research indicates that demands for change tend to raise anxiety and increase resistance to change.

LOVE AND LOGIC TIP #1:

Dealing with Power Struggles

Power is a major issue between children and adults. While still very young, some kids realize they don’t have much control over anything. A toddler unconsciously thinks, “I’m the smallest. They tell me what to do, and I don’t get to make decisions. I need to find a way to get some control.” Then, winning the power struggle becomes all-important—more important than making good decisions.

When we offer kids a choice instead of making a demand, no power struggle ever begins. When we make a demand, we own the wise choice, leaving the child with only one way to win the power struggle—by making a foolish choice. Given a range of choices, a child has endless opportunities

to choose wisely.

I am, however, going to ask you to do what great educators do. Great educators are experimenters. They read and attend workshops looking for special techniques to experiment with in their schools. When they identify a potentially helpful technique, they play with the concept. They begin to visualize experimenting with it on one of the students: “I could use that on Larry in my fourth-hour class.”

Pretty soon, they relish the idea of this student giving them a hard time, just so they can experiment. They think, “Come on, Larry. Give me trouble! Make my day! I can’t wait to try my new techniques on you!” If the experiment is successful, it was a good experiment. If not, the technique is set aside. The self-worth of the teacher is never in question, only the value of the technique.

Are you a teacher who looks for distinct ways to create growth and new dimensions in the classroom? If so, this book will be valuable. It is loaded with specific techniques. Before the specific are presented, however, we want to talk about some of the roadblocks that can prevent working effectively with students—such as existing myths about teaching and discipline.

PEARL

*You want your students to know
that making it through a tough situation
is always an option.*

Confronting the Myths About Discipline

To Warn or Not to Warn

Do you have a rules list in your classroom? This seems to be standard in American classrooms. In fact, most of the district discipline plans I have seen are built around identification of all the possible infractions kids can think of. Do you also have a list of consequences? This, too, is standard. Usually this second list includes consequences for the first offense, second offense, and third offense, if not more.

Myth:

Students must be warned in advance of the consequences for violating rules.

I have asked thousands of teachers, those who are in the trenches every day with students, the following question: “Is it effective to warn kids in advance of consequences? Does this act as a deterrent?”

The answer is a resounding “No.” Advance warning of consequences has never had a positive effect on school discipline. Yet, we continue each year to refine these strict discipline plans even though the results do not change.

I also ask teachers these questions:

1. Have you ever known a child to think, “Teacher says that if I break the rule, he is going to ... I wonder if he really will do it. Well, I guess there’s only way to find out.”?
2. Have you ever known a child who thinks, “Teacher says that if I break the rule, she is going to ... I wonder if it’s worth it. Yeah, I think it is!”?
3. Have you ever known a child so polite that he/she breaks the school rules exactly the way they are supposed to be broken so that the prescribed consequence fits the crime? Does that *ever* happen? No! Kids are great “loophole” artists. Their job is to break the rule slightly off-center so that the consequence doesn’t fit and the teacher either overreacts or underreacts. This provides the opportunity for the child to complain, “Not fair!” And in many cases, this brings parents racing to school to help fight for the child’s rights.
4. Do you need the aggravation of these kinds of problems?

I wonder if we hold on to the concept of warning children of consequences in advance because we have heard parents complain so often, “You didn’t warn my child that he would face these consequences. It’s not fair.”

To respond to this, I must say that all school districts have some ironclad rules, laid down by the Board of Education, that have prescribed consequences. These have to do with issues such as violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and weapons. The consequences for these major violations should be spelled out clearly and levied in a consistent manner.

Many classroom infractions, however, can be handled in a much simpler manner. One of the most effective teachers I have ever known started out each school year with the following discussion:

TEACHER: Class, here is a list of the rules I use in my classroom. Please look them over and tell me if there is anything that seems unreasonable.

STUDENT: Where does it tell what's going to happen if we break the rules?

TEACHER: I don't expect you to break the rules. But if that does happen, I'll do something.

STUDENT: Something? What is something?

TEACHER: I don't know. It will depend on how you break the rules. I treat everyone in this room as a unique individual and each situation as a unique case. So, I will think of something based on the situation. I'll try to be fair. In fact, if I come up with something you believe is not fair, I want you to tell me why it's not fair. If you present a good case, I'll change the consequence to something fair.

STUDENT: Oh, right. I bet!

TEACHER: To show you that I mean it, I'll even teach you the words I want you to say if you think I've done something that isn't fair. Repeat after me: "I'm not sure that's fair." Let's practice this until you're sure you have it.

Now, kids, if you don't think you are getting a fair deal, what are you going to say to me?

CLASS: I'm not sure that's fair.

TEACHER: Great. Won't it be fun to find out how this works for you?

In the event that this teacher is confronted by a parent who complains about the fact that kids are not warned about consequences in advance, the teacher can inform the parent in a three-point discussion:

1. "I've taught all the kids in my class the words to say if they feel that my consequences are not fair. I'm surprised that your youngster goes to you to complain instead of expressing his feelings of unfairness to me."

LOVE AND LOGIC TIP #2:

How to Destroy the Teaching Value Of a Logical Consequence

- Say, "This will teach you a good lesson"
- Display anger or disgust
- Explain the value of the consequence
- Moralize or threaten

- Talk too much
- Feel sorry and “give in”
- Contrive a consequence for the purpose of “getting even”

2. “I’ve even told them that if they can present a good case, I’ll change the consequences. I do this because every student and every situation is unique, and in this class I treat them as such.”

3. “I’d be glad to meet with both of you so that you can hear your youngster present his particular case to me.”

Immediate Consequences vs. Delayed Consequences

The preceding example usually encourages the reaction: “How can you individualize consequences? This takes time. If we cannot deliver an immediate consequence, we’ll lose the teaching moment. We were taught in college that consequences must be immediate to be effective.”

Myth:
***When students break the rules,
consequences must follow immediately.***

The teacher in the preceding example would indeed have difficulty with individualizing her discipline program had she not learned the concepts demonstrated in the story about Parley Jacobs and the stolen bobbin.

During my days as a teacher, I spent considerable time worrying about the possibility that students would cause some kind of new problem for which I didn’t have an immediate consequence. This constant, low-level anxiety kept me on edge about discipline and, as a result, I was often frustrated and angry when a student acted out. Once I learned that student/teacher problems did not have to be solved on the spot, a tremendous load was lifted from my shoulders.

Delaying the Consequence

A Missouri teacher experimented with this approach. One of his sixth grade students “talked back” to him. His immediate response was, “That kind of talk is not acceptable in this classroom. I’m going to have to do something about that. I don’t know what it will be because I’m busy teaching right now. I’ll let you know what I decide in the morning. Don’t worry about it tonight.”

As you can imagine, the student worried about it overnight and returned to class the next morning and said, “What about yesterday?” His teacher was now having so much fun with this approach that he couldn’t stop. Turning to the student, he replied, “I’ll tell you about it after lunch. Don’t worry about it this morning.”

After going to the teachers’ lounge during his planning period, meeting with some other teachers, and getting some advice, he returned to talk with the student, to whom he said, “You and I have a relationship problem. I don’t know what I did to upset you, but it has to be worked out.”

The student refused to come in after school because of basketball practice. His teacher said, “I talked with your mom, and she suggests you stay so that we can work this out to our mutual——satisfaction. You can call her afterward and she will come to drive you to basketball practice. She also told me to tell you not to feel guilty about it. She has some chores for you to do to make up for her inconvenience.

When they met after school, the following conversation took place:

TEACHER: What have I done to make you so upset?

STUDENT: You’re always trying to make me look bad.

TEACHER: No, I don’t.

STUDENT: Oh yes, you do! You just wait until I don’t know the answer and then you call on me so I’ll look bad.

TEACHER: Wait! I don’t know when you don’t know the answer. And, I don’t want you to look bad. I have an idea. How would it work if when I call on you, and you don’t know the answer, you just look away, and I call on someone else right away?

STUDENT: Yeah. I guess that would help.

TEACHER: Good. Have we got a deal? If so, let’s get on with the important things we both have to do. See you tomorrow, pal.

I later asked this teacher about his thoughts concerning this interaction.

“You know, Jim,” he replied, “what surprised me the most was that when I told him I *would* do something about his smart mouth, but not until *tomorrow*, that was the first time this year he didn’t argue with me. He couldn’t argue with me, because he couldn’t figure out what to argue about.

***“I realized that in the past I have always given the kids plenty to argue about when they’re upset.*”**

“I also discovered that this kid was reasonable with me after school—the first time he has ever been reasonable.

***“My mistake in the past was trying to solve problems with kids while they were upset, instead of waiting until they were calm.”*”**

Experienced teachers know that there are times when students can calm down and stay in the classroom while doing so. There are also some children who are so volatile that they must be removed until they are calm. This is an individual, professional decision that is made at the time of the

incident.

Do Students Need to Like Their Teachers?

Kids work harder for some teachers than they do for others. Our research indicates that some teachers bring out the best in kids, and others bring out the worst.

Myth:

It is not necessary for students to like their teachers. However, they should respect them.

Have you ever gone camping? Do you remember that first time being the worst time of your life? You couldn't sleep. The ground was hard. You were cold. The mosquitoes chewed on you, and you were still awake at 2:14 a.m. At 3:01 a.m., you discovered that sleeping bags were designed for people who weigh 85 pounds. At precisely 3:09 a.m., you rolled over and said to yourself, "Never again. Not for anyone on the face of the earth will I ever do this!" You returned home, held a garage sale, sold all of the camping gear, sat back and said, "That's the end of camping."

Then a wonderful thing happened. You fell in love. That wonderful person you've always dreamed of entered your world. Life was great. The sky was bluer. The grass, greener. You were filled with that warm feeling called love. Then your loved one called you one day and said, "Let's go camping next week."

What did you do? You went out and bought new camping gear—of course. And as you signed the credit card slip, you said to yourself, "Not for anyone else would I do this!"

Many kids feel the same way about their teachers. They say, "I'll do it for that teacher, but not for anyone else!" Great teachers know that you cannot overpower students, but you can get them to behave, or do their assignments, because they want to please their teacher.

A great salesperson said to me once:

"You can't make people angry and sell them something at the same time."

"The only people who think you can," he said, "are highly educated people, like teachers, who think you can get into an adversarial position with students and then sell 'em on the idea of doing what you want."

Great teachers have discovered that a large part of their success is due to their ability to establish positive relationships with children. These teachers are not afraid to say to students, "Will you do that just for me? Thank you." Many teachers are uncomfortable with asking kids to do something for them for a variety of reasons. One is that many university programs taught us that we should get students to do their studying, assignments, and hard work solely for themselves.

One of the rules of the psychology of self-concept states:

***"Human beings will perform for the person they love."
If a person loves himself, he will do it for himself.
If he does not have that high self-esteem or belief***

*in self, he will have to do it for someone else
until the time comes that he does love himself.*

This psychology also teaches us that it takes *years* to remediate a damaged self-concept. In the meantime, a student with such a self-concept will most likely do school assignments when doing them for someone he or she loves.

Relationship-Building Experiment

Experiment with one of your most uncooperative students. Go to that student six times over the next three school weeks and use a “one-sentence intervention.” This should take a few seconds each time.

Each intervention should consist of only one sentence, and that sentence should start with the words, “I noticed ...” Then, you fill in the blank with something personal about the student—something positive and true. It is important that your statement *not* focus upon school activities. This is strictly about the student’s personal life.

An example might be, “I noticed that you are interested in dinosaurs.” That is the sum total of the intervention. If the student wants to visit with this interest, do so. However, do not praise or judge. If you feel compelled to say something, you might add, “Well, I noticed that.”

Your next intervention might be, “I noticed that you really stand up for yourself.” Be cautious. Don’t use the phrase, “I like.” Kids who have low self-esteem often feel manipulated when the teacher says, “I like.” They may turn off from the adult. Remember to spread these interventions over a three-week period.

After experimenting with this type of intervention, check to determine if the student is more cooperative than before you started by going to the student at an appropriate time and asking, “Will you try that just for me?” Or, “Will you stop doing that just for me?”

The one-sentence intervention was developed and researched to provide specific help to teachers who are dedicated to building better relationships with children. This intervention is based upon research that shows that a student’s improved behavior or cooperation can be traced and linked to the personal connection he/she developed with a special adult.

As you read on, you will become more and more aware of how Love and Logic techniques are designed to enhance relationships between students and teachers. The structural setup of these techniques is based on three basic “rules.”

PEARL

Saying the following to a student gives you the opportunity to model a good response to any critique you might get as a result of the question: “We’ve been around each other a lot, and I’m wondering if anything I do gets on your nerves. If so, I’d really like to know.”



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