

# Dreikurus theory

Profession, Teacher



Dreikurs Theory First posting: Thursday, 23 May 2002 5: 46: 28 PM Adib Allam Rudolph Dreikurs in his theory discusses four goals of student's misbehavior, which include: (1) attention seeking, (2) power seeking, (3) revenge seeking and (4) displaying inadequacy. Dreikurs in describing the reasons why these goals occur are due to the fact that students have a mistaken belief which will give them the recognition/attention that they want. I like Dreikurs theory because it provides an insight into the psychology or the thinking of a student at times of misbehavior. In understanding the students mentality, Dreikurs then gives an evolution of how to combat the certain types of behavior accordingly. I feel that this is a great opportunity to analyze student behaviors and develop a better understanding into the misbehavior of students. Dreikurs' work i guess, lets us use our intuition and personal knowledge of a student as a guide to better manage inappropriate behaviors and to produce a better learning environment within a classroom. Classroom Management Main Page - EDEL 414 - EDSE 415 Example Abstract for Dreikers: (use only as a reference)

Rudolf Dreikurs (1897-1972) believed that discipline is based on mutual respect, which motivates students to behave constructively because of their high sense of social interest. Dreikurs believed that all humans have a primary need to belong and feel part of a group. Dreikurs also believed that all students desire to feel they have value and to feel they can contribute to the classroom. Dreikurs called this need to belong the genuine goal of human social behavior. Dreikurs believed that when students are not able to gain their genuine goal of belonging they turn to a series of mistaken goals. Mistaken goals are defined as attention, power, revenge and inadequacy.

This is when students misbehave. The mistaken goals are listed in order of difficulty to treat. If the student fails to achieve the amount of recognition they desire, then, they travel into the next stage. Students, whom do not have a sense of belonging, attempt to gain attention from peers and the teacher. When students are not satisfied with their attempt at gaining attention, they often seek power by refusing to do what a teacher asks. When student's attempts at seeking power fail, they may seek revenge through behaviors such as defacing property, cheating or spreading lies. When all else fails students may display inadequacy by withdrawing and refusing to participate in classroom activities. Dreikurs mentioned several methods for dealing with mistaken goals. Firstly, teachers must identify the mistaken goal. Teachers can do this by noting their own response to the misbehavior. Another way is to observe the students reactions. Secondly a teacher should confront the mistaken goal. The teacher can do this by providing an explanation of it together with a discussion of the faulty logic involved. By doing so, students usually examine and change their behavior. Thirdly, Dreikurs emphasized the importance of avoiding power struggles with students. Teachers can avoid power struggles simply by withdrawing as an authority figure. Teachers can also redirect students' ambitions for power by having them participate in making decisions or giving directions. Dreikurs recommended taking positive 4 steps against revenge seeking behavior. The teacher must set up situations where the students can exhibit talents and strengths and ultimately acceptance. Lastly, teachers should encourage students who display inadequacy. Teachers must offer these students encouragement and support for even minimal efforts. Dreikurs defined three

types of teachers: autocratic, permissive and democratic. Autocratic teachers are teachers who exhibit the following traits: they are bossy, use a sharp tone of voice, command, exercise power, dominate, exert pressure, demand cooperation, tell you what you should do, impose ideas, dominate, criticize, find fault, punish and unilaterally establish all procedures, rules and consequences. Permissive teachers place few if any limits on student's behavior, nor do they invoke logical consequences when misbehavior disrupts the class. Their demeanor is wishy washy and they tend to make excuses for students who misbehave. Democratic teachers stand in marked contrast to the following traits of democratic teaching: leadership, friendliness, inviting nature, stimulation of ideas, cooperation, guidance, encouragement, acknowledgement, helpfulness and shared responsibilities. Dreikurs believed that democratic teachers in contrast to autocratic and permissive teachers are more likely to help students become self-disciplined. Dreikurs believed teachers could have acceptable classroom behavior by helping students reach their genuine goal of belonging by involving students in decisions that affect their school lives. He called this technique democratic teaching because it involved both the teacher and student in the decision making process. Dreikurs believed that students and teachers should jointly set limits on behavior until they are able to set limits for themselves. He believed that students should take part in deciding what consequences should be given when behavior agreements are broken. This way it gives them a sense of understanding for the reasons behind rules and consequences. Democratic teachers could avoid misbehavior in a classroom by using words of encouragement, which convey respect for student's

abilities. Encouragement is different from praise because praise only given when a task is well done. Encouragement on the other hand, can be given regardless of the outcome. For example, “ Nice try I can tell you are working hard” is an encouraging phrase. On the contrary, “ What a great job you did on your homework! ” is praise. Dreikurs described two types of consequences: logical and natural. Logical consequences referred to “ reasonable results that follow behavior either desirable or non-desirable. ” They usually require students to make right of what they have done wrong. For instance, if Marisa does not complete her work during class, she is required to do it for homework. In a democratic classroom, Marissa would know in advance the consequences of her misbehavior because as part of the classroom she helped formulate the consequences. Natural consequences differ from logical consequences in the sense that the results following the behavior occur naturally. For instance, if Jonathan tips his chair backward and as a he result falls, leaving him hurt or embarrassed this would be a natural consequence because the hurt and embarrassment alone is sufficient consequence for his misbehavior. Dreikurs did not consider punishment as an effective method of discipline. He viewed punishment as an action taken by the teacher to get back at students and show them whose boss. He believed that punishment was humiliating and offensive to students. Dreikurs central focus was on constructive behavior rather than coercive discipline. He believed that teachers should have a democratic classroom and teaching style, for helping students gain a sense of belonging (genuine goal). He believed that in this manner students would have a social interest: a condition in which students come to see that it is to their

advantage to contribute to the welfare of a group. In this case, group refers to their classmates. Rudolf Dreikurs main focus is on establishing a classroom which is democratic in nature and gives students a sense of belonging. This is put in place when students have some voice as to the functions of the classroom. Mutual trust between the teacher is created in various ways, including common group discussions about class concerns. Dreikurs maintains that " discipline makes no use of punishment." He further believes that students have different levels of misbehavior. These misbehaviors occur in a progressive manner. The child first tries to get attention. If this does not work, the child will misbehave further in an effort to achieve power over the teacher or others. When attention or power do not gain the student sufficient status, they seek revenge. They believe they can only feel significant if they hurt others. After all else fails, the student then displays inadequacy. This is also called " learned helplessness." The student sees themselves as a complete failure. They feel others will leave them alone if others see them as inadequate. Dreikurs model is an ideal one for enhancing student empowerment. The climate of the classroom is often conducive to learning. However, a lot of time is needed to gain student trust. Likewise, much time is spent talking about beliefs, decision making, and consequences which then project the teacher into a counseling role. In addition, Dreikurs does not give supplies to handle a lot of misbehavior