



Punishment Versus Discipline

Punishment

- Expresses power of an authority; causes pain to the recipient; based on retribution or revenge; concerned with actions in the past.
- Arbitrary -- probably applied inconsistently and unconditionally; does not accept or acknowledge exceptions or mitigating circumstances.
- Imposed by an authority with responsibility assumed by the one administering the punishment and responsibility avoided by the one receiving the punishment.
- Closes options for the punished individual, who must pay for a behavior that has already occurred.
- As a teaching strategy, usually reinforces a failure identity. Essentially negative and short-term, without sustained personal involvement of either teacher or learner.
- Characterized by open or concealed anger; easy and expedient; a poor model of expectations.
- Focuses on strategies intended to control behavior of learner; rarely results in positive changes in behavior; may increase subversiveness or result in temporary suppression of behavior; at best, produces compliance.

Discipline

- Based on logical or natural consequences that embody the reality of a social order (rules that one must learn and accept to function productively in society); concerned with actions in the present.
- Consistent; accepts that the behaving individual is doing the best he or she can do for now.
- Comes from within, with responsibility assumed by the disciplined individual who desires that responsibility; presumes that conscience is internal.
- Opens options for the individual, who can choose new behavior.
- As a teaching strategy, is active and involves close, sustained, personal involvement of both teacher and learner; emphasizes the development of more successful behavior.
- Friendly and supportive; provides a model of quality behavior.
- Usually results in a change in behavior that is more successful, acceptable, and responsible; develops the capacity for self-evaluation of behavior.

Crawford, D., and R. Bodine. 1996. *Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, and Juvenile Justice Settings*. Program Report of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, US Department of Justice and Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program US Department of Education. p. 42