

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

www.ChooseHappiness.net

Children are Self-Created

By

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During the twentieth century, there were many popular strands of psychology that claimed that unhappiness arose from early childhood experience. There are two ways to investigate this claim: empirically (is there evidence of this?), and logically (is the proposition at least not self-contradictory?).

Empirically, if children could be taught values, then there would not be the universal experience of parents that children do not behave as they would like them to. In both children and adults, offerings of values are made by so-called “teachers”. The “student” decides what to accept and reject, based on which values they find sympathetic resonance with. The role of teacher can, at best, be an offering of opportunities for the student to learn. But teaching, as somehow making a student change via the methods or techniques of the teacher, is fictional.

Behavioral compliance is not a sign that a child has learned values. As with adults, compliance is the behavior of acting differently than one would behave if there wasn't a carrot to reward or stick to punish. Compliance is “I value what I value, and I find it useful to act as if I value something else in order to gain a reward or avoid punishment.”

Logically, the idea that unhappiness arises from early childhood experience is merely a special case of the existentially false claim that events “make” people unhappy.

Nothing has ever been proved that one value is better than another to anybody. Rather, some *decide* to be convinced. If proofs were possible, then all would be convinced. Instead, we find that those who choose to be convinced by an argument to change their values are convinced by the argument as long as they choose to be, and no longer.

Specifically, a parent cannot “teach a child to be unhappy” by any action. If the child finds it useful to behave in an angry, sad, or fearful manner, they may do so.

If later on, the child believes that they are angry, sad, or fearful against their will, they are simply mistaken. They are choosing to believe that they didn't create their own beliefs because they find it useful in some way.

Children are entirely self-created. They have been and can never have been taught values.