

AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY

Response Ability Pathways®

Psychology or Special Education 381RY or 581RY
Undergraduate or Graduate, **3 semester hours of credit**
Instructor of Record: Dr. Steve Van Bockern

Response Ability Pathways® – or simply RAP – is an experiential course providing skills for working effectively with young persons and supporting them on pathways toward responsibility. RAP builds positive connections with and among youth and creates climates of mutual respect. The course meets two days (approximately 16 hours) with supplemental reading, writing and activities required.

Overview

In modern society, the bonds between generations have been tattered. Children who are not attached to adults fail to learn the values of respect for self and others. Hungry for attention, they become prisoners of peer approval. Unattached to others and unmotivated in school, they fail to develop their potentials. Struggling for power, they challenge authority. Many youth mask their spiritual emptiness by reckless pursuit of pleasure. Their disruptive behaviors are signals of distress. Beneath their defiance, indifference, or reckless bravado, many of our youth are swimming in rivers of pain. But when their behavior bothers others, they are likely to be dealt more pain by punishment or exclusion.

RAP is grounded in the value-based belief that all youth, even those presenting difficult behavior, have positive potential, and there are no disposable kids. Problems of children and youth are not unique to impoverished communities but are found in city, suburban, and rural settings. Family instability, substance abuse, delinquency, school problems, racism, and alienated youth are all symptoms of broken communities. RAP addresses such problems by restoring relationships and building positive peer climates.

To succeed in the face of risk and challenge, children need concerned adults and peers who respond to their needs rather than react to problem behavior. RAP provides these “response-abilities” to all who deal directly with young people experiencing conflict in school, family, peer group, and community.

Student Learning Outcomes

RAP is an approach for communicating with youth and providing positive behavior support. RAP uses a problem-solving format: *Connect* ► *Clarify* ► *Restore*. This is the normal process for resilient coping found in all cultures. Thus, RAP taps the strengths and natural capacity kids already have to *connect* with others for support, *clarify* challenging problems, and *restore* respect. Each of these goals is described below:

1. Students will learn how to *connect with challenging children and youth*. A mentor’s first challenge is to create positive social bonds. While “building relationships” with reluctant youth may appear to be a daunting task, many meaningful connections can be made in a short period of time, both with individuals and with groups. Positive connections are built upon small acts of respect and kindness. Once youth connect, they are able to use that person for positive support.

2. Students will learn how to *clarify challenges facing a young person*. By helping a youth understand “here-and-now” problem situations, mentors support the development of resilient coping strengths. This involves communicating with youth who may be guarded and adult-wary in order to understand the private logic beneath their problem behavior. Youth learn to use strengths and to overcome limitations to meet important life goals. Young persons need to learn to think clearly about their behavior in order to creatively solve problems, master difficult challenges, and meet their needs.

3. Students will learn how to *restore inner and interpersonal harmony*. This involves respect for self and others. A restorative plan mobilizes inner strengths and external supports to meet growth needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Though complicated problems may not be resolved immediately, a young person can take steps on the pathway toward responsibility.

Topical Outline

I. Children and Youth in Pain

Pain-Based Behavior

Fighting Pain with Pain

Circle of Courage and Resilience Science

II. Connecting

Disconnected Kids

Brain Science on Connecting

Strategies for Connecting

III. Clarifying

Private Logic and Thinking Errors

Brain Science on CLEAR Problem Solving

Strategies for Clarifying Challenges

IV. Restoring

Cultivating Responsibility

Building Strengths and Support

Strategies for Restoring Respect

Required Text and recommended text

Brendtro, L.K., duToit, L. Response Ability Pathways: Restoring Bonds of Respect. (2005). Pretext: Cape Town. Participants also receive a RAP workbook and a year’s subscription of the journal *Reclaiming Children and Youth*.

The recommended text: *Brendtro, L.K., Brokenleg, M. & Van Bockern, S. (2002). Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree

Knowledge Base

To access the knowledge base, please download at: *The Response Ability Pathways Curriculum: Biography of Research Foundations* and/or *The Circle of Courage and RAP Training: The Evidence Base*. Both supplements can be found at www.cflerning.org under “college credit”.

Course Credit Requirements

Participants in RAP can register to receive undergraduate or graduate credit. Those who register for credit must complete additional assignments outside the two day course.

Undergraduate 3 semester hours

1. **Class participation:** fully participate in all sessions.
2. **Examination over the required book:** complete & submit to your instructor a multiple choice exam on key concepts and competencies (download at www.cflearning.org under “college credit”).
3. **Practicum project:** conduct a “RAP” with a youth. The 3-5 page write-up should include:
 - Background information:** describe the youth, the incident, and the circumstances that led to the RAP.
 - Connecting:** identify specific techniques used to attempt to *connect* to the youth.
 - Clarifying:** chronicle the “conversation” in either a dialogue or a narrative format.
 - Restore:** identify the Circle of Courage need and the specific *restorative* plan.
 - Outcome:** what was the effect for the youth? What did you learn from this RAP?
4. **Literature review:** Write evaluative essays on two articles from the journal, *Reclaiming Children and Youth* or other scholarly publications on youth development. The summaries should be a minimum of two pages each. The articles should connect to the context of this course.

Graduate 3 semester hours

1. **Class participation:** fully participate in all sessions
2. **Examination over the required book:** complete & submit to your instructor a multiple choice exam on key concepts and competencies. (download at www.cflearning.org under “college credit”).
3. **Practicum project:** conduct a “RAP” with a youth. The 5-8 page write-up should include:
 - Background information:** describe the youth, the incident, and the circumstances that led to the RAP.
 - Connecting:** identify specific techniques used to attempt to *connect* to the youth.
 - Clarifying:** chronicle the “conversation” in either a dialogue or a narrative format.
 - Restore:** identify the Circle of Courage need and the specific *restorative* plan.
 - Outcome:** what was the effect for the youth? What did you learn from this RAP?
4. **Literature review:** Write evaluative essays on five articles from the journal, *Reclaiming Children and Youth* or other scholarly publications on youth development. The summaries should be a minimum of two pages each and should connect to the context of this course.

Please see www.cflearning.org under “college credit” for example practicum project and literature reviews.

Grading (see grading rubrics for the practicum project and the evaluative essays)

Class participation (required but not graded)
Examination (25% of grade)
Practicum project (50% of grade)
Literature review (25% of grade)

Participants who successfully complete these requirements earn three (3) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate workshop credit, graded with an A-F letter grade. All requirements are to be submitted within 30 days of the last day of the course to your instructor. Your instructor will let you know if they prefer a hard copy or an electronic copy.

Requesting a grading extension: If additional time is needed to complete the work a one-time extension may be requested. Contact your instructor to get permission for an extension. Work will be due no later than the middle of the next semester (March 15, July 15 or October 15). If the work is not submitted by the due date, a grade of F is automatically given.

Registration

Registration happens at the time of the course. Students will complete a registration form indicating a desire for graduate or undergraduate credit; one or three hours of credit and whether the course will be taken for psychology or special education credit. Payment is due at the time of registration. Please submit your completed registration form and payment to your instructor.

Cost

Payment is due at the time of registration. Three hours of credit, graduate or undergraduate is \$300.00 (US dollars). Cash is not accepted. Checks, USD bank drafts or money orders payable to **CF Learning** in US Dollars, or Visa, MasterCard or Discover credit cards are accepted.

Transcripts

After final grades are submitted, the students receive a grade report from Augustana. If a student wishes an official transcript please visit www.augie.edu for instructions on requesting a transcript.

Contact Information:

For questions or concerns about registration or transcripts please contact:

CF Learning, PO Box 650, Lennox, SD 57039

Email to wendybeukelman@calfarley.org

Call 605-744-0116 or Fax to 605-836-7101

Evaluative Essays

Rating Indicator → ↓	10	8-9	6-7	Score
Number of Responses	2 undergraduate 5 graduate		1 undergraduate 3 graduate	
Summary	The summary clearly articulates the content of the articles in one or two paragraphs.	The summary indicates a moderate understanding of the content of the article(s).	The summary indicates a lack of understanding of the content of the article(s)	
Connection to RAP	There is a clear connection made between the content of the articles and the RAP course.	There is a moderate connection made between the content of the articles and the RAP course.	There is a limited connection made between the content of the articles and the RAP course.	
Mechanics	The mechanics of the course work are completed at an acceptable level. (spelling, grammar, etc.)		The mechanics of the course work are not at an acceptable level.	

RAP Practicum Rubric

Rating Indicator → ↓	10	8-9	6-7	Score
Background information: describe the youth, the incident, and the circumstances that led to the RAP.	Clearly articulated	Moderately articulated	Limited articulation	
Connecting: identify specific techniques used to attempt to <i>connect</i> to the youth.	A clear connection was created as explained by one or more specific examples	A moderate connection was created as explained by one or more specific examples	A limited connection was created	
Clarifying: chronicle the “conversation” in either a dialogue or a narrative format.	A timeline was clearly articulated with reference to the challenge, logic, emotions, actions and response	A timeline was moderately articulated with reference to the challenge, logic, emotions, actions and response.	A timeline was not clearly articulated with reference to the challenge, logic, emotions, actions and response.	
Restore: identify the Circle of Courage need and the specific <i>restorative</i> plan.	Needs were clearly identified and at least one internal strength and one external help were suggested as part of the restoration plan.	Needs were moderately identified and at least one internal strength and one external help were suggested as part of the restoration plan.	Needs were not clearly identified and/or one internal strength and one external help were not suggested as part of the restoration plan.	
Outcome: what was the effect for the youth? What did you learn from this RAP?	Well-articulated response to the questions.	Moderate response to the questions.	Limited response to the questions.	
Mechanics	The mechanics of the course work are completed at an acceptable level.		The mechanics of the course work are not at an acceptable level.	