

Attunement, Trust & Classroom Relationship



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The 3 R's (Riley, 2011)



- “...traditionally conceived foundations of education, the 3 R's (Reading, wRiting, and Rithmetic), are not foundations at all. In fact they can only be built on an even more fundamental set of 3R's: relationships
 - Relationship from the student's perspective
 - Relationship from the teacher's perspective
 - And the priority given to Relationship formation and maintenance from school leadership.”
- These 3R's are what we refer to when discussing the classroom relationship

Social Skills and Relationships



- **Just as there are 3R's that are foundational to the traditional 3R's that we discuss, there are also two skills that are foundational to social skills:**
 - **Attunement**
 - **Trust**

Definitions



- **Attunement is defined as the state of being or bringing into harmony; a feeling of being “at one” with another being**
 - It is the capacity of caregivers and children to accurately read each other’s cues and respond appropriately
- **Trust is the assured reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone or something (this is contingent upon a prediction that the future is filled with confidence because the person you are in a relationship with is committed to that relationship or cause)**

What is the connection between Attunement and Relationship?



- We can attune to one another cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally, and physiologically
 - Attunement includes:
 1. Context
 2. Body cues
 3. Facial cues
 4. Prosody
 5. Language
- All of these combined form the basis for relationship.



One of the outcomes of attunement with others is the development of interpersonal trust.

Three Bases of Trust (Rotenberg, 2010)



- **Reliability**, which refers to a person fulfilling his or her word and promise
- **Emotional trust**, which refers to a person refraining from causing emotional harm, such as being receptive to disclosures,
- **Honesty**, which refers to a person telling the truth and engaging in behaviors that are guided by benign rather than malicious intent, and by genuine rather than manipulative strategies

Interpersonal Trust (Rotenberg, 2010)



- **Interpersonal trust is linked to:**
 - Physical health
 - Cognitive functioning
 - Social functioning
 - Development and maintenance of close relationships

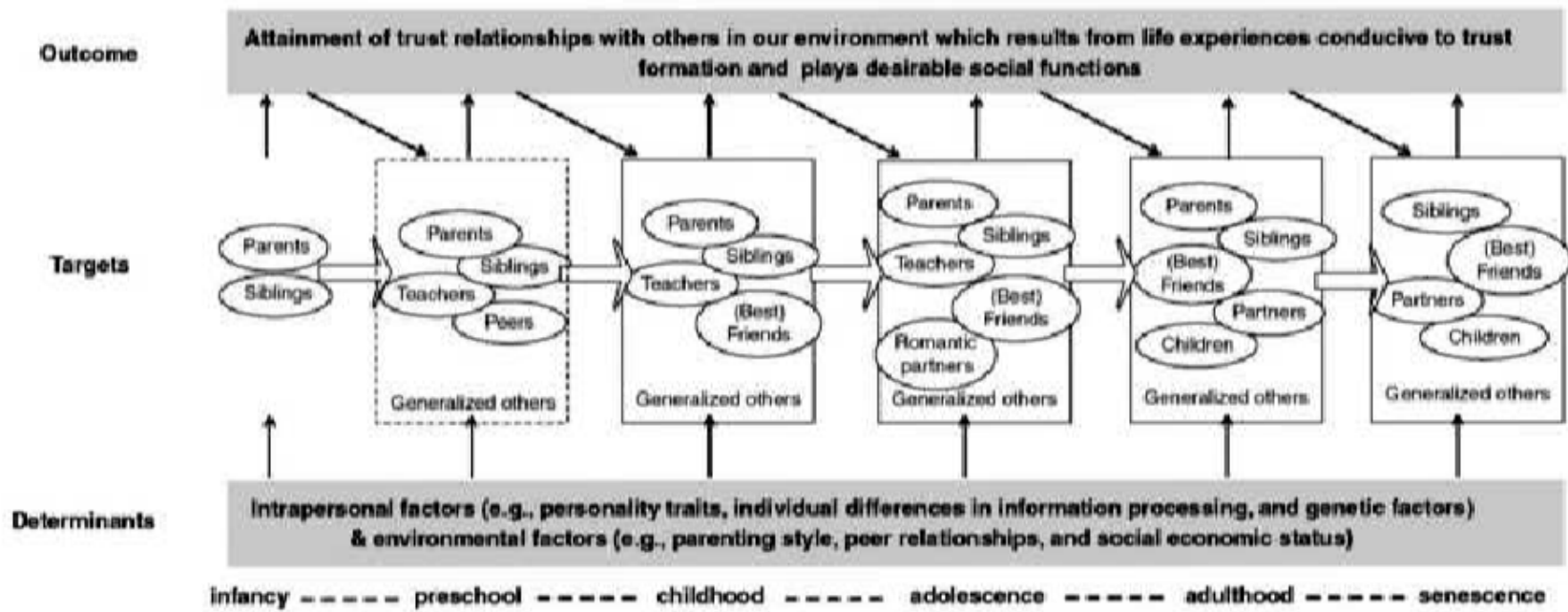


Figure 4.1 Hypothesized model of developmental process of interpersonal trust

Common Errors



- **There are two primary errors that adults make in reading children's cues:**
 - We miss the cues altogether
 - We react to overt behaviors, rather than “reading” the emotional message underlying the behavior
- **Children with ASD, ADHD, Depression, etc., may have difficulty expressing social cues in a way that are easy to interpret. They may also express through overt behaviors underlying emotional messages that require significant interpretation.**

Examples from Parents



- How does it feel when a parent is out of synch with their child?

Questions for reflection and discussion



- List ways, or things you do, to attune and develop trust with students
- How do you feel when you are out of synch with students?
- What are contributing factors to being out of synch?
- What are things you can do when you struggle attuning with students, and/or when students demonstrate difficulty developing trust with you?

Not sure what to do with this--Attunement



- **“Contact is the means by which the need for relationship is met. When contact is disrupted, needs are not satisfied. If the experience of need arousal is not satisfied or closed naturally, it must find an artificial closure that distracts from the discomfort of unmet needs. These artificial closures are the substance of survival reactions that become fixated defensive patterns, or habitual behaviors that result from rigidly held beliefs about self, others or the quality of life.”**

Erskine, R.

Published in International Journal of Psychotherapy, Vol. 3 No. 3, 1998

Not sure what to do with this-- Attunement



- **Attunement is beyond empathy. It is a process of communion and unity of interpersonal contact. It is a two part process that begins with empathy-being sensitive to and identifying with the other person's sensations, needs or feelings; and includes the communication of that sensitivity to the other person. Attunement is a kinesthetic and emotional sensing of others knowing their rhythm, affect and experience by metaphorically being in their skin.**

Not sure what to do with this-- Attunement



- **Attunement creates a two person experience of unbroken feeling connectedness by providing a reciprocal affect and resonating response. Affective attunement begins with valuing the other person's affect as an extremely important form of communication, being willing to be affectively aroused by the other person and responding with the reciprocal affect.**