



T=Teacher
C=Consultant

Role Play Situation #3

Being the Expert

C: What seems to be the trouble, May?

T: Well, what isn't the trouble? I have this kid named Sonny and ever since September, he has been a problem. He doesn't do anything, and he just wanders around getting into other people's things: no matter how much time I've spent with him he's always the same the next day.

C: It's his age. According to Erickson's stages of development – Industry vs. Inferiority, Sonny doesn't want to do the work because he feels bad about himself. What have you tried so far?

T: Just as I've said, I've talked with him after school, I've talked with his parents, and I've warned him that he would not pass to the fifth grade if he didn't get started working. I told him that his wandering makes me angry. I've tried just about everything.

C: Well May, according to research published in the Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis, retaining a child will not help his habit of wandering. When you talked to Sonny directly, what exactly what did you say?

T: Well, I told him that he was getting further and further behind in his work and that he'd better get started working.

C: May, did you read that article in People Magazine in December? It stated that telling a child to do something, like working, will not make him do so. He needs a more clinical approach. What was his reaction to you telling him that he was way behind in his work?

T: He was just sort of quiet. He sat there and didn't say anything. He just looked like he was going to cry.

- C: I did a double-blind study once and the results clearly favored ignoring children when they cry. They are just looking for attention. What did you do when you saw he was getting ready to cry?
- T: Well, I felt real bad that I made him so upset, so I reassured him that all he had to do was to show me that he was trying and I would be glad to help him all I could.
- C: That's great – according to Carl Rogers, using an empathetic response will certainly get him to do feel better about himself.
- T: What do you think I should have done? I wanted to let him know how poorly he was doing. I thought that he might not be aware of how far behind he was getting and that he might change his ways if he knew that.
- C: According to my research, 78.5% of the students feel better when you reassure them and help them feel better.
- T: I'm really at a loss to know what to do with Sonny. What do you think is his problem? And what can I do about it?