

An Introduction to the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Approach

By JT (Jerry) Fest

The starting point is the belief that every youth has innate resilience ~ Bonnie Benard

What is Youth Development

Youth Development¹ is the name given to an approach to working with young people that focuses on psychological, emotional, and social development rather than problems or deficits. Based on research into human resilience, the principles and practices of the Youth Development approach have become a recognized best practice for youth programs and an approach required by many public and private funding sources.

The Youth Development approach (hereafter referred to as PYD) is still in its own infancy in terms of universally agreed upon structures and definitions and the **InterNetwork for Youth** has borrowed from a range of perspectives in presenting this version of PYD. However, the term “youth development” refers not only to a youth work practice, it is also used to describe a process of growth in which all young people are seeking ways to meet their physical and social needs and build competencies. PYD as a *practice* is grounded in the belief that all choices and decisions made by young people are a result of this *process* of youth development, and that by supporting young people’s developmental process we have greater positive impact than we do by focusing on their problems or deficits.

Resilience and Protective Factors

PYD is grounded in decades of research into human resilience. Just as human beings are ‘hard wired’ with a will to survive, it is also our nature to overcome and grow from the challenges we face. Yet research has found that there are *environmental* factors that tend to inhibit our ability to face and surmount challenges. These inhibiting environmental factors are called *Risk Factors*, and refer to such things as neglect, poverty, domestic violence, physical/sexual abuse, family separation and conflict, alcohol and drug use/abuse, school performance problems, etc.

But another category of environmental factors tends to have the opposite effect, fostering and supporting innate resilience and enabling people to be more successful when dealing with their personal challenges. These fostering environmental factors are called *Protective Factors* and, where they exist, they are able to compensate for Risk Factors in a person’s environment and foster the innate resilience within each individual.

Protective Factors is an area of PYD that may be presented in different ways depending on the source, but the lack of uniform presentation does not represent a lack of consistency between the sources. Regardless of how Protective Factors are presented, the presentations tend to be saying the same things in slightly different ways. The **InterNetwork for Youth** identifies 3 specific Protective Factors:

- ❖ Caring, Supportive Relationships
- ❖ High Expectations
- ❖ Meaningful Participation (sometimes referred to as “opportunities for” participation)



These Protective Factors are detailed in [Appendix A: Handout -- Resilience and Protective Factors](#).

DO's: Developmental Outcomes

You may be wondering why you’re looking at the Ace of Hearts. In Youth Development: A Winning Hand, the live training from which this information is drawn, playing cards are

¹ AKA: Positive Youth Development (PYD), or the Youth Development approach

used as “anchors” to help participants remember key concepts (thus the “winning hand” reference). This is the first card in the winning hand because the Ace reminds us that outcomes must be a priority, and Hearts represents something about *you* and the line of work you have chosen. Your profession may be teacher, counselor, administrator, social worker, therapist, outreach worker, juvenile corrections worker, substance abuse professional, or one of dozens of other occupations within the broad category of the “youth work” field, but the fact that you have chosen youth work as a profession demonstrates that you care about -- have a *heart* for -- young people. The Ace of Hearts reminds us that because we care about young people, we have to care about *outcomes*.

The “bottom line” of all youth work is the outcomes that are produced. Outcomes are generally measured in terms of an increase in observable accomplishments (called *achievement* outcomes, such as jobs, diploma's, housing, etc.) or a decrease in future undesirable choices (called *prevention* outcomes, such as pregnancy, drug use/abuse, recidivist behaviors, etc.). PYD differs from other youth work disciplines in that achievement and prevention outcomes are *not* the primary focus. Instead, PYD focuses on *Developmental Outcomes* (referred to as ‘DO’s’ as a reminder that this is what we are trying to ‘do’). DO’s are beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, and skills that result in a healthy and accomplished adolescence and adulthood.

PYD is not saying that achievement and prevention outcomes are unimportant². It simply represents the belief that the best way to obtain achievement and prevention outcomes in a meaningful and lasting way is to focus on DO’s, for if a young person successfully develops positive beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, and skills, the result will be that they begin to accomplish achievement and prevention outcomes as a natural consequence of healthy development.

DO’s are also presented differently by different sources. One of the first presentations was created by Dr. Maria Montessori in the early part of the 20th century. Montessori defined outcomes in 4 ‘dimensions’ (emotional, moral, cognitive, and social) across 4 ‘planes’ of development (birth-6, 6-puberty, puberty-18, and 18-24). As PYD came into practice as a recognized approach, many researchers described DO’s as “The 5 C’s” (Competence [academic, social, and vocational]; Confidence [positive self-concept]; Connections [to community, family, and peers]; Character [positive values, integrity and moral values]; and Contributions [active, meaningful roles in decision-making, and facilitating change]). Some researchers substitute *Caring* (positive regard for others) for *Contributions*, while others add it to the list as a 6th “C.” One of the better known presentations is the [Search Institute's](#) 40 Developmental Assets. As with Protective Factors, different sources are not contradictory, but are simply different presentations of similar concepts. Regardless of the way DO’s are described, the idea is to focus on *who a young person is becoming*, as opposed to *what a young person is doing*.

The **InterNetwork for Youth** presents DO’s as 2 categories, each including 6 outcomes, based on Developmental Outcomes as presented in the Advancing Youth Development curriculum³. These are detailed in [Appendix B: Handout -- DO’s/Developmental Outcomes](#).



(s)OS: A Framework for Youth Development

The second card in the PYD “winning hand” is the Eight of Spades. Idiomatically, to do something *in spades* means to do it *to a considerable degree*. In other words, you are doing it *a lot*. The number 8 when viewed on its side is the recognized sign for *infinity*, a concept that means *without end*. A key to successful PYD implementation is to focus on (s)OS *to a considerable degree endlessly ... do it in spades for infinity*.

PYD is focusing on DO’s while building an environment of Protective Factors. As such, PYD is not so much *what* you do as it is *how* you do it. Different programs can all be PYD programs based not on similarity of program *model*, but rather on similarity of program *framework*. That framework is called (s)OS, or (services), Opportunities & Supports.

(s)OS is 2 (not 3) different frames. The first is (services), which is set in parentheses’ and not capitalized to indicate that it is often an *important foundation for*, but is *not*, PYD. Services are things that we do *to* or *for* young people, such as providing them with shelter and meeting other basic needs.

² The reader may wish to visit the Online Library at the [InterNetwork for Youth](#) and read [An Outlook on Outcomes](#) for a more in-depth presentation of this issue.

³ See [Credits](#) at the end of this article

When we do *to* or *for*, we do not assist with someone's development, we simply provide for their needs. PYD *minimizes* (services) and *maximizes* the second frame; Opportunities & Supports.

Opportunities and Supports should be considered a single concept as they are two sides of the same coin and successful implementation requires that they depend on each other. An Opportunity is anything that is done *by* youth; that is, they are in the driver's seat and have a direct link to the responsibility for the action. The other side of the coin is the Support, or things that we do *with* youth. While they are in the driver's seat we are on the passenger side providing encouragement, knowledge, and resources. An Opportunity without a Support is a set up for failure, and a Support without an Opportunity is simply adult-directed activity.

The idea behind PYD is to turn as many (services) into *Opportunities & Supports* as feasible -- thus addressing the Protective Factor of offering youth opportunities for Meaningful Participation. This is where PYD's emphasis on youth participation comes from and why the creation of successful youth/adult partnerships is so critical to the successful implementation of the PYD approach.

Most traditional youth programs are structured to provide *services* that target *achievement and/or prevention* outcomes. A PYD program will create *opportunities* and provide *supports* that assist young people with their *growth and development*.



Youth Participation

Anchor #3 is from the suit of diamonds. You've heard of a *diamond in the rough*. When used idiomatically like this, *diamond in the rough* means *having exceptionally good qualities or the potential for greatness, but lacking polish or refinement*. This is an excellent description of young people when they are first given opportunities for participation. They may lack "polish or refinement" as such things come with experience, but they all possess exceptionally good qualities and the potential for greatness if we are patient enough to allow them to *gain* experience. We will see both the "diamond" and the "rough," but it is the diamond upon which we must focus.

We will get out of young people what we *see* in them, so it is critical that we *maximize* our attention to their strengths and abilities and *minimize* our attention to their deficits and challenges. This is why the Jack of Diamonds is our anchor, as the jack is often used to represent a *minimum standard* (you poker players know that you must have at least *jacks or better* to open). The *minimum standard* we must adhere to when creating meaningful opportunities for young people to participate is to focus on their *exceptionally good qualities and their potential for greatness*.

However, even if we focus on good qualities and potential, PYD implementation is often weakened by a misunderstanding of the role played by youth participation. The **InterNetwork for Youth** has identified 3 specific misunderstandings that programs tend to struggle with:

1. Youth participation is PYD

No. Youth participation is a *component* of the PYD approach as it represents 1 of the 3 primary Protective Factors. But the other 2 Protective Factors are equally important. Youth participation in the absence of Caring, Supportive Relationships and High Expectations will not be as effective at promoting Developmental Outcomes.

2. Youth participation is important because it improves programs by considering youth input and perspectives

Well, yes -- but that's missing the point. It's true that programs will benefit by including youth as partners, so strategies such as youth advisory boards and youth seats on Boards of Directors are highly recommended. But improving your program is not the reason why you implement strategies for youth participation -- that's just a fortunate additional result. The reason to implement participation is that Meaningful Participation is one of the Protective Factors necessary to promote a young person's development. Therefore, youth advisory boards and youth on your Board of Directors are excellent opportunities for the *small number of youth* serving on those boards; but what about everyone else? Planning for youth participation requires strategies that provide opportunities for *all* young people to participate at some level, at least in the decisions and actions that directly affect them.

3. Youth participation means giving the power for decisions to young people

No. To think this way is to create Opportunities without corresponding Supports. Youth participation is about sharing power *with*, not giving power *to*. Adults maintain a legitimate and relevant role in youth participation strategies, but young people also have a legitimate and relevant role. Youth participation does not refer to youth *acting in the absence* of adults, but rather to youth and adults *working in partnership*.

Specific strategies related to youth participation are another area of varied perspectives within the PYD community. The **InterNetwork for Youth's** perspective is presented in [Appendix C: Handout -- Strategies for Youth Participation](#).



Core Competencies and Basic Skills

Our final anchor is from the suit of clubs. The reason has to do with a specific definition of the term. In one meaning, to “club” means to *unite, combine, to join together*. This fits well with one of the foundational assumptions of the PYD approach; that we are working *with* young people instead of *to* or *for* them. The definition also describes the relationship we want with our colleagues and other adults; that we are joining together to create Protective Factor environments for young people. The Queen was selected based on female relational qualities, as opposed to male analytical qualities. The message of the Queen of Clubs is to unite through *relationship* as a means for creating Protective Factor environments, and the development of core competencies is the way that this is accomplished.

Supporting this unity of effort requires self-examination; what are the core competencies demanded by a PYD approach and to what degree do I possess these competencies? The success of any effort or discipline will be directly affected by your mastery of between 5 and 7 core competencies related to that discipline. PYD is not an exception to this rule, and there have been many efforts to identify the core competencies required by PYD. The **InterNetwork for Youth** believes that the problem with these efforts is that PYD is an *approach*, not a *model*. The core competencies I need to be a PYD vocational education teacher will be different from the core competencies I need to be a PYD street outreach worker.

While the **InterNetwork for Youth** supports identification of the core competencies needed within whatever model you are implementing, we discuss PYD core competencies as 4 specific ‘basic’ skills.

- ❖ **Active Listening:** the ability to listen and respond in a way that improves understanding
- ❖ **Information Sharing:** the ability to provide complete and relevant data
- ❖ Negotiation, specifically, **Win/Win Negotiation:** the ability to negotiate for mutually beneficial outcomes
- ❖ **Delegation:** the ability to entrust authority

These basic skills are critical to relationship development, the demonstration of high expectations, and the implementation of strategies for youth participation as presented by the **InterNetwork for Youth**. More information about these skills is available in [Appendix D: Handout -- PYD Basic Skills](#).

Summary

Outcomes are the “Bottom Line” of youth work, and because you know in your heart what young people need to develop into healthy and successful adolescents and adults, PYD focuses on DO’s, or Developmental Outcomes (Ace of Hearts). The framework for implementing the PYD approach is to *minimize* services (*to* or *for*) and to *maximize* Opportunities & Supports (*by* and *with*), and to do that to a considerable degree endlessly (Eight of Spades) using specific strategies for participation that tap into each young person’s exceptionally good qualities and potential for greatness (Jack of Diamonds). Finally, we unite through relationship to create Protective Factor environments, supporting those efforts by developing our own skills and competencies (Queen of Clubs). Playing these cards is truly a winning hand for youth programs, and for the young people who need them.

Credits

While there is no universally accepted 'template' for implementation, all PYD literature tends to share common themes. The information contained in this introduction is a composite of those themes, with much influence from the [Advancing Youth Development curriculum](#) created by the [Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research](#), in collaboration with the [National Network for Youth](#), which was the product of a 3-year project funded by the [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention](#) (OJJDP) at the [U.S. Department of Justice](#). Information from that curriculum has been significantly modified and merged with other resources and original work by JT (Jerry) Fest and is presented here with grateful acknowledgement to everyone who has contributed to the PYD body of knowledge.

Appendixes

The handouts in the appendixes contain additional information on the concepts discussed in this article and are provided compliments of [JTFest Consulting](#) and the [InterNetwork for Youth](#). Permission is granted to use these handouts for non-commercial use provided that the content is not altered.

More?

Did you enjoy this brief introduction to PYD? Do you have staff needing training in the PYD approach? Do you want to know what the 5th card in the full PYD "winning hand" is? Visit the [InterNetwork for Youth](#) and consider purchasing PYD: A Winning Hand -- a Positive youth Development workbook based on JT (Jerry) Fest's "Winning Hand" PYD presentation.

Permission Guidelines

This article is copyrighted by JT (Jerry) Fest. Permission is granted to download and/or print out for personal use. Brief quotations (500 words) may be made from the material in this article in accordance with the "fair use" provisions of copyright law without prior permission, provided that proper attribution of author and source is made. If you find this article helpful, please consider a donation at the [InterNetwork for Youth](#).

Appendix A: Handout -- Resilience and Protective Factors

❖ This page intentionally blank

Resilience & Protective Factors

Handout courtesy of JTFest Consulting & the InterNetwork for Youth
jtfest@in4y.com ▪ 800.315.4922 ▪ www.in4y.com ▪ copyright 2009 JT Fest



☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
**The starting point is the belief
that every youth has innate resilience**

~ Bonnie Benard ~

Resilience | An innate human quality conveyed through thought and behavior that facilitates the ability to overcome adversity

- Resilience may be inhibited or fostered
- Risk Factors* ***inhibit*** resilience

* e.g., neglect, poverty, domestic violence, physical/sexual abuse, family separation/conflict, drug/alcohol use/abuse, school performance problems

Protective Factors | Environmental influences that foster and support a young person's innate resilience

1. Caring & Supportive Relationships

- *Caring* in the sense of being concerned or interested

From the *youth's* point of view, and the interest must be in as they are *now*, not solely in what they may become

- *Supportive* in the sense of willingness to act as a resource

Again, from the *youth's* point of view the relationship is a person they trust and feel will 'be there' for them

- *Relationship* in the sense of a defined association

Can be any type of relationship, provided that both parties have the same understanding of the relationship (e.g., problems occur if one party sees a counseling relationship, while the other party sees a friendship); boundaries must be clear and appropriate to the type of relationship; this refers both to relationships with *people* and relationships with *communities, programs*, etc.

2. High Expectations

- *Expectations* in the sense of a belief in a young person's potential and ability

This is not a reference to goal accomplishment or 'hoops' to jump through, but a description of the *beliefs* that a young person experiences; every message a young person receives should communicate a positive belief in their competence, worth, and ability; this include messages from *people* as well as *environmental* messages

3. Meaningful Participation

- *Participation* in the sense of taking an active role

Participation is not acting alone, it is youth/adult partnership; *every* young person needs opportunities to participate, and participation is not about the benefits we receive from youth, which are considerable, but rather about the benefits youth receive from participation

Background:

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach is grounded in decades of research into human resilience. Just as humans are 'hard wired' with a will to survive, it is also our nature to overcome and grow in the face of challenges. However, there are environmental factors that *inhibit* our ability to face and surmount challenges. These inhibiting environmental factors are called Risk Factors.

Research has identified another category of factors in the environment that *foster* and *support* innate resilience and enable people to be more successful when dealing with their personal difficulties. These fostering environmental factors are called Protective Factors and, where they exist, they are able to negate the effects of environmental Risk Factors by fostering innate resilience.

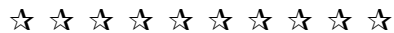
NOTES:

Appendix B: Handout -- DO's/Developmental Outcomes

❖ This page intentionally blank

DO's: Developmental Outcomes

Handout courtesy of JTFest Consulting & the InterNetwork for Youth
 jtfest@in4y.com ▪ 800.315.4922 ▪ www.in4y.com ▪ copyright 2009 JT Fest



We inevitably doom our children to failure and frustration when we try to set their goals for them

~ Dr. Jess Lair ~

Outcomes that are beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, and skills that result in a healthy and accomplished adolescence and adulthood

Aspects of Identity

Beliefs and behaviors that demonstrate a sense of personal well-being and a connection and commitment to others

Areas of Ability

Knowledge and skills that provide the ability and motivation for current and future success

Self-Worth

I am "good" and I contribute to others and myself

Mastery and Future

I am "making it" and will succeed

Safety and Structure

I am safe in the world and daily events are somewhat predictable

Belonging and Membership

I value and am valued by others in my family and in the community

Responsibility and Autonomy

I have some control over daily events and am accountable for my actions and their consequences

Self-Awareness and Spirituality

I am unique while attached to families, communities, & higher beliefs or principles

Employability

I have the ability and motivation... to gain the skills necessary for employment

Mental Health

I have the ability and motivation... to cope with situations and to engage in leisure and fun

Cultural Ability

I have the ability and motivation... to respect differences among groups and individuals

Physical Health

I have the ability and motivation... to ensure current and future physical health

Intellectual Ability

I have the ability and motivation... to learn, think, problem-solve, and study independently

Civic and Social Ability

I have the ability and motivation... to work collaboratively and to sustain relationships

Note that 'Areas of Ability' refers to *capabilities* and *skills*, not *accomplishments*. Getting a job is an *Achievement Outcome*; having the *ability and motivation* to get a job is a *Developmental Outcome*.

'Developmental Outcomes' has been modified by JT Fest from its original source:
 Advancing Youth Development; A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers
 AED/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
 in collaboration with the National Network for Youth

Background:

Outcomes are the bottom line of youth work and are generally measured as increases in accomplishments (*achievement* outcomes; such as jobs, diploma's, etc.) or decreases in future undesirable effects (*prevention* outcomes; such as pregnancy, drug use/abuse, recidivist behaviors, etc.).

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach promotes DO's (e.g., this is what to 'do'), or Developmental Outcomes, based on a belief that if a young person develops beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, and skills, they will begin to accomplish goals and will succeed in the future.

Other DO's Approaches:

The Montessori approach:

Outcomes are defined as 4 'dimensions' (emotional, moral, cognitive, and social) across 4 'planes' of development (birth-6, 6-puberty, puberty-18, and 18-24).

The Search Institute approach:

40 Developmental Assets – <http://www.search-institute.org>

The 5 (or 6) "C's":

Competence (academic, social, and vocational); Confidence (positive self-concept); Connections (to community, family, and peers); Character (positive values, integrity and moral values); and Contributions (active, meaningful roles in decision-making, and facilitating change). Some researchers substitute Caring (positive regard for others) for Contributions, while others add it to the list as a 6th "C".

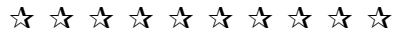
NOTES:

Appendix C: Handout -- Strategies for Youth Participation

❖ This page intentionally blank

Strategies for Youth Participation

Handout courtesy of JTFest Consulting & the InterNetwork for Youth
 jtfest@in4y.com ▪ 800.315.4922 ▪ www.in4y.com ▪ copyright 2005 JT Fest



☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Too often we give our children answers to remember rather than problems to solve

~ Roger Lewin ~

Strategy 1: Ad-Hoc (spontaneous) Input	
#'s Involved: Maximum	Time Commitment: Minimal
Impact on DO's: Minimal	Participation Level: Minimal
The views/concerns of young people are heard and considered in decisions; implies that young people's views/concerns are valued and considered seriously	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A larger number of young people can participate Enables participation from marginalized youth or children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input is indirect and interpreted by adults Sense of ownership is extremely limited

Strategy 2: Consultation	
#'s Involved: High	Time Commitment: Low
Impact on DO's: Low	Participation Level: Low
Deliberate strategies are implemented to seek young people's opinions about needs, issues or how best to respond; implies a two-way flow of information/ideas	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables direct input by young people Exploration of issues in depth is possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not guarantee any decision-making power Not meeting expectations for rapid follow-up can create disillusionment

Strategy 3: Influence	
#'s Involved: Low	Time Commitment: High
Impact on DO's: High	Participation Level: High
Formal, structured processes are implemented to ensure a direct link to, and at least a minimal level of, youth impact on decisions; implies young people have some level of <i>real</i> bargaining power	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people have a direct link with decision-making Provides significant developmental benefits for youth involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May involve adapting structures to facilitate youth involvement May require young people to fit into adult structures

Strategy 4: Partnership	
#'s Involved: Minimal	Time Commitment: Maximum
Impact on DO's: Maximum	Participation Level: Maximum
Young people have real and defined responsibility for undertaking specific tasks or functions; implies inclusion in implementation of and responsibility for many or all of the decisions in defined areas	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people have clear and real responsibility Young people develop ownership of the processes and solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusion over expectations can cause conflicts Involves risks & trusting youth to succeed, fail, learn and grow

Developed by JT Fest based on Strategies for Youth Participation by Gill Westhorp, the Youth Sector Training Council, Australia; the Australian Youth Foundation; Advancing Youth Development by the AED/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research in collaboration with the National Network for Youth, Inc.; and original work.

Background:

Strategies for Participation are the means by which the framework for a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach is implemented. That framework is to create *Opportunities* and provide *Supports*.

An Opportunity is anything done *by* youth; that is, they are in the driver's seat and have a direct link to the responsibility for the action. A Support is what we do *with* youth. While they are in the driver's seat, we are the passenger encouraging and providing knowledge and resources.

Having strategies suggests that the creation of successful youth participation is an evolutionary process. The success of each strategy is related to success with the preceding strategy, and such success will naturally tend to evolve to the next level. A strategy of *Influence* will be more successful if *Consultation* has been implemented, and successful *Influence* will naturally evolve to *Partnership*. Ideally, a variety of strategies will be employed to ensure *all young people* have the opportunity to be involved as appropriate to their developmental level and their level of interest.

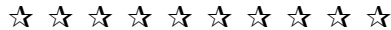
NOTES:

Appendix D: Handout -- PYD Basic Skills

❖ This page intentionally blank

PYD Basic Skills

Handout courtesy of JTFest Consulting & the InterNetwork for Youth
 jtfest@in4y.com ▪ 800.315.4922 ▪ www.in4y.com ▪ copyright 2005 JT Fest



**We don't know who we are
 until we see what we can do.**

~ Martha Grimes ~

Active Listening	the ability to listen and respond in a way that improves understanding
-------------------------	--

The basic skill for the strategy of **Ad-Hoc** (spontaneous) **Input**. Active Listening skills should be current and practiced. Below are 10 ideas:

1. Listen patiently, even if you believe it to be wrong or irrelevant. Indicate acceptance if not agreement, by nodding or using minimal encouragers (such as 'mm-hmm' or 'I see'). Remember that acknowledging is not condoning.
2. Avoid emotional involvement. Try simply to understand first and defer evaluation until later.
3. Listen for feelings behind content. People, particularly young people, have difficulty expressing feelings clearly, making it important to pay attention to the emotional context of what is said.
4. Listen for what is *not* said. What a person chooses to leave out can be just as informative.
5. Restate feelings briefly, but accurately. You are trying to be a "mirror." Encourage continued talk. Occasionally make summary responses such as, "You think math is too hard" or "You feel the school is not meeting your needs." Keep a neutral tone and avoid "leading" the person to *your* conclusions.
6. When you wish to know more, repeat the statement as a question. For example, you hear, "Nobody cares about our ideas." You can probe further by replying: "Nobody cares about your ideas?"
7. Avoid questioning or arguing facts. Refrain from statements such as "Can you prove that," "That's not true," or "Wait a minute, let's look at what really happened."
8. If you hear "I don't know" you can encourage further comment by asking: "If you did know..." For example, while trying to express what bothers them about a class a frustrated youth says: "Oh, I don't know." You reply: "Well, if you did know what was bothering you, what might it be?"
9. If you are pressed with a genuine interest in your viewpoint, be honest in your reply, but be brief and quickly get back to the other person's views. In the listening stage, your views may be inhibiting.
10. **Last, but not least**, BE QUIET! Actively listening means taking a *real* interest in the other person.

Information Sharing	the ability to provide complete and relevant data
----------------------------	---

The basic skill for the strategy of **Consultation**. Information shared creates partnership, information withheld creates distrust. Where information *can't* be shared (e.g., confidentiality), share the reason why.

Negotiation (Win/Win)	the ability to negotiate for mutually beneficial outcomes
------------------------------	---

The basic skill for the strategy of **Influence**. Win/Win focuses on *interests* not *positions*. *What* is wanted is less important than *why* it is wanted.

Delegation	the ability to entrust authority
-------------------	----------------------------------

The basic skill for the strategy of **Partnership**. It is not dumping work or responsibility; it is *entrusting authority*, including the *authority to react*. Delegation depends on clearly communicating outcomes, the parameters and extent of discretionary authority, and appropriate sources of support.

Active Listening ideas adapted by JT Fest from a document by Donald Sharp

Background:

The success of any effort or discipline will be directly affected by your mastery of between 5 and 7 core competencies. There have been many efforts to identify the core competencies of Positive Youth Development (PYD). The problem with these efforts is that PYD is an *approach*, not a model. The core competencies needed for a PYD vocational education teacher are different from the core competencies needed by a PYD street outreach worker. While it is important to identify core competencies needed within whatever model you practice, this handout focuses on four specific 'basic' skills.

These basic skills are critical to relationship development, the demonstration of high expectations, and strategies of participation.

NOTES:

End

❖ **This page intentionally blank**