Predatory Aggression - The Roots of Bullying
MY FRAME OF REFERENCE

- Trauma Survivor
- Leader
- Educator
- Social Change Agent
- Coach
- Deep Root Analysis of Familial Patterns
Meyer Francis Nimkoff

“Science has established two facts meaningful for human welfare: First, the foundation of the structure of human personality is laid down in early childhood; and second the chief engineer in charge of this construction is the family.”
Terms of Engagement

- Identify whether your listening is reactive or reflective
- Decide not to respond from a defensive place
- Be willing to say “I may be wrong”
- Use responsible and respectful words
- Be willing to negotiate to find a middle ground
- Be open to learning
- Resist the urge to immediately disagree, sit with the discomfort
- Engage with your fear.
Root Activity

Think of the stories you heard from your grandparents, parents, caregivers, parents, siblings, friends about being bullied or shamed. What messages did you get, by word or by deed?

Now think about how those stories influenced your behavior, thoughts and actions?

Those messages are rooted in how you address conflict and shame and how you address bullying.
Video-Middle School

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6tJSpULPTw
In a culture where shame and shaming are a norm rather than the exception, we may have kept our distance when we witnessed someone being bullied. Who wants to step into the line of fire when the expectation is that we will be included in the bully’s assault? Yet, the more we duck a bystander’s opportunity to stand up against that assault, the more we passively encourage it.”

*Life Beyond Shame: Rewriting The Rules—Connie Dawson Ph.D.*
TRAUMA DEFINED Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-5)

- A traumatic event that is defined by the individual rather than a committee
- Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury or sexual violence in one or more of four ways:
  A. directly experiencing the event;
  B. witnessing, in person, the event occurring
  C. to learning others;
  that such an event happened to
  a close family member or friend; and
  D. experiencing repeated or extreme exposure
  to aversive details of such events, such as with first responders.

American Psychiatric Association, (2019)
Stats

- 60% of adults experienced abuse or other difficult situation in childhood (Mental Health Connection, n.d.)
- 26% of children experience or witness traumatic event before the age of 4
- 59% of women and 47% of men reported the prevalence of direct sexual or physical assault (Kilpatrick et al., 2013).
- 1,400,000 suicide attempts (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 2019)
- 47,173 complete /with 69.7% White male deaths
Living In a War Zone

Mental: low self-esteem, PTSD, depression, poor school performance, addiction, anger

Physical: isolating, bulimia, anorexia, self-mutilation, chronic pain, hyperalertness

Spiritual: loss of identity, grief, guilt, loneliness, hopeless, helpless,

Somatic: stress, anxiety, sleep disorder, headaches, suicide
Parental Response to Bullying

- Passive - as long as it is not my kid being bullied “boys will be boy’s
- Bored with the topic - normalizing abuse/aggression
- Alarmed about school violence, shootings, youth suicide #’s (desensitized)
- Adults who do not acknowledge they are bullying in the home
- Adults who do not address their personal attachment to bullying, bullied, witnessing as children (not addressing the impact)
- Parents who bully at home: normalizing shame
- Rationalizes as part of childhood, Victim blaming
4-Main Types of Bullying

- **Physical**: involves the use of *physical force*. This bullying technique may involve the spitting, shoving, kicking or even punching.
- **Verbal**: *taunting and teasing*. The verbal assault might focus on an individual’s appearance, lifestyle choices, intellect, skin color and even ethnicity.
- **Emotional**: spreading of rumors, excluding an individual, refusing to talk to someone and even making statement with an intention of hurting a person’s feelings.
- **Parental**: parents may displace their insecurities or anger on their children. This type of bullying might be physical or emotional in nature.
Sub-Types of Bullying

1. Social Exclusion-teasing, name calling, social media
2. Verbal aggression-teasing
3. Indirect physical aggression.
4. Direct physical aggression.
5. Threats-extortion
6. Sexual harassment
7. Cyberbullying-snapchat
Vantage Points

**Bully:** physically aggressive, Sense of Entitlement, Sense of pleasure from others pain

**Bullied:** Blames self, Feels powerless, Feeling helpless and hopeless

**Bystander/Witness:** desensitized/depersonalization, Not seeing anyone else intervening, Join in the taunt to avoid being a target, Feel guilty for not helping, Blame the Target
Mass shooters typically have four things in common:

- Early childhood trauma and/or exposure to violence at a young age
- An identifiable grievance and/or crisis point
- Validation for their belief system, have studied past shootings to find inspiration
- The means to carry out an attack (access to people, places, and firearms)

This new framework acknowledges the complexity of this vexing social problem but gives all of us things we can do to prevent the next tragedy. Each one of the four themes represents an inflection point—an opportunity for intervention.

Peterson & Densley, 2019, Aug. 4
Long-Term Impact of Not Addressing Bullying

- Teachers, students, staff, organization complicit in their silence
- Fear/Anxiety-mental wellbeing jeopardized (fear of conflict)
- Suicide (bullycide)
- Feeling Powerless, Unheard, Ignored, Snitch, Liar
- Aggressive/Anger/Frustration
- Drop Out
- Alienated/Isolated
How It all Shows Up in workplace as adults

Shunning

Gossip/Rumors

Cliques

Avoidance: Conflict, Direct Speak, Personal fears,

Unexamined imbedded culture norms that promote “othering”

Herd Mentality/Group Consensus/Group Norms
Response to Bullying

- Everyone in organization responsible for provide a safe and secure environment
- Clear consistent policies and procedures: 0 tolerance
- Address personal feelings/experiences with bullying (normalize speaking to it)
- Is organization unconsciously creating a hierarchy of importance: ex: gender, race.
- Unconscious culture of some people being disposable (race, sexual orientation)
- Is your policy disproportionately enforced?
- Who is exempt from adhering to the “No Bully Policy”
- Address organizational culture around bullying

“We must be careful about what we pretend to be” - Kurt Vonnegut
Activity

Write a letter to the person who bullied/shamed you outlining the offense and how it impacts you today.

Now write a letter saying the words you longed to hear from the person who bullied/shamed you.
MLK Jr.

The ultimate measure of a (person) is not where (they) stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where (they) stand at times of challenge and controversy.
An Inside Process

- This is an inside process which focuses on “self”. It is important because it directly impacts how these issues are addressed
- Determine your comfort level (cultural variations that need considering)
- If you do not have an equitable frame of reference, get one (examine current detrimental ways of thinking)
- It is hard to build capacity in an organization if the institution is imbedded in NOT addressing the issue on a systemic level
G.R.O.W.

GOAL
What do you hope to gain? What is the motivation behind your goal?

REALITY
Is your reality rooted in the past?

OPTIONS
Are you limited by your judgments and/or biases?

WILLINGNESS
How invested are you in transforming the system? (yourself and the organization)
Resources

Pettis Perry PhD

Connie Dawson, PhD: Life Beyond Shame: Rewriting The Rules

Iyanla Vanzant: Get Over It!