

Fragile World On The Spectrum

*Tools for Helping Your Child Feel
“Safe, Accepted, & Competent”*



Bill Nason, MS, LLP
Behavior Specialist
Limited License Psychologist
billnason@yahoo.com

Learning Through Relating

Using “We-Do” Activities To Maximize Learning

Effective Training Tools:

Tool #26 Basic Principles

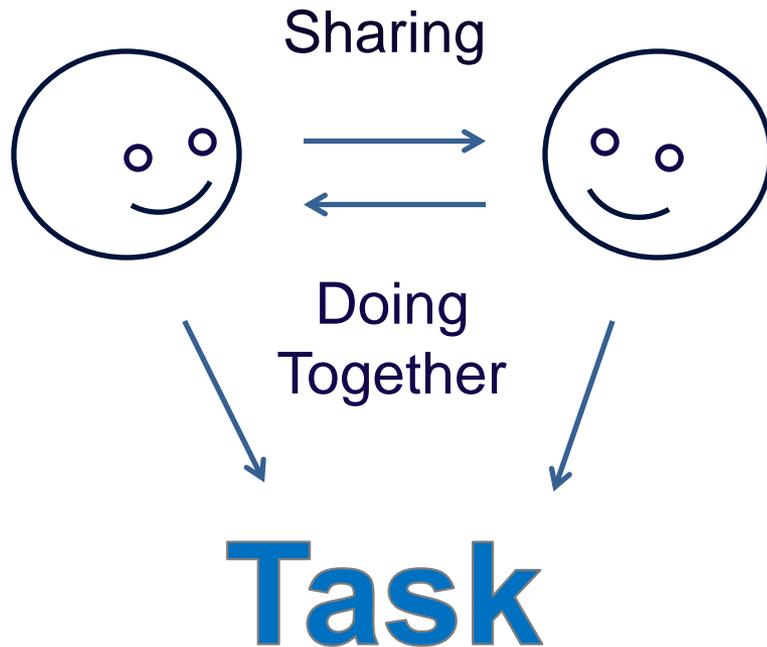
Tool #27 Framing

Tool #28 Guided Participation

Tool #29 Stretching & Fading

Tool #30 Instilling Motivation

The Apprenticeship Model



Learning Through Relating

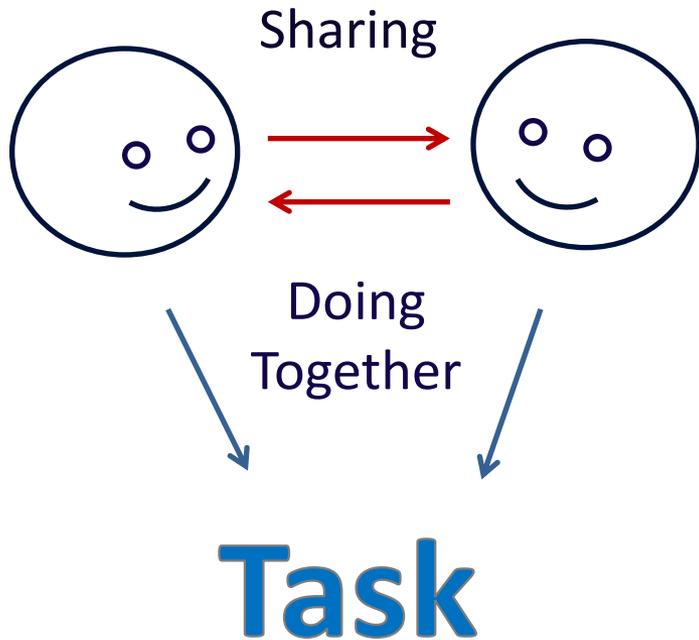
- Learning through “doing with”, working alongside a mentor (parent, teacher, etc.)
- “Doing it together”, while mentor models, guides and supports active participation.
- Learning occurs through “sharing the experience” with the mentor.
- Mentor scaffolds the experience to maximize “relating” and learning.
- Through guided participation, the mentor transfers his skills to the learner.

Implementing “We-Do” Activities

Implementing “We-Do” Activities

- Start with simple activities that (1) the child already know how to do, and (2) enjoys doing.
- Do task together, both taking active roles.
- When possible work face to face, at eye level, to maximize facial gazing.
- Use less words, and more non-verbal communication (animated facial expressions, exaggerated gestures).
- .Use your words to “share” (thoughts, feelings, perspectives, etc.), not direct.
- Focus on reciprocal interaction, helping each other out, succeeding together.
- Frequently celebrate “doing it together.” High fives, thumbs up, etc.

Step 1: First Establish Social Connection



- Start with the “relating”, before teaching
- First objectives are:
 - A. Engagement
 - B. Reciprocal interaction
(circles of communication)
 - C. Emotion sharing
 - D. Celebrate
- Tools:
 1. Less words, more nonverbal
 2. Focus on relating, not performance.
 3. Use your face, touch, and gestures to share emotion.
 - 4 . Celebrate “doing it together”.

A. Establishing Engagement



- First step is to start with simple activities that the child (1) enjoys and (2) already can do with ease.
- The activity is not important, only a vehicle to great engagement around.
- If the child will not follow your lead, then follow the child's lead; playfully include yourself in whatever he is doing.
- Become a shared partner in the activity creating opportunities to engage around.
- The objective is simply to create engagement of any kind, sharing the experience of doing it together.



B. Reciprocal Interaction

- Once engagement is established, invited back and forth, reciprocal interaction.
- Open and close as many “circles of communication” as possible. Take any response from your child, comment and expand on it, inviting a return response.
- Relating is about “sharing an experience.”
- Interpret all reactions as an opening for reciprocal communication.
- Slowly turn these circles into turn taking, coordinating actions together.
- Celebrate (emotion sharing) frequently within the interaction.
- When engaging in a back and forth, turn taking activity, celebrate after every 3-4 circles.

C. Emotion Sharing



- Solidify the interaction defined as “facial gazing to share pleasurable moments.”
- Emotion sharing is the “glue” to bond relating with learning.
- Must be reciprocal; invite and let child reciprocate.
- Stay in immediate field of vision; face to face, eye level.
- Three step, reciprocal reward:
 - Physical: Give ten!
 - Gesture: Thumbs up
 - Declarative: “We rock!” ,
- Solidifies companionship; social connection.

D. Celebrate Doing It Together!



Give Five!
Thumbs Up!
“We Rock!”

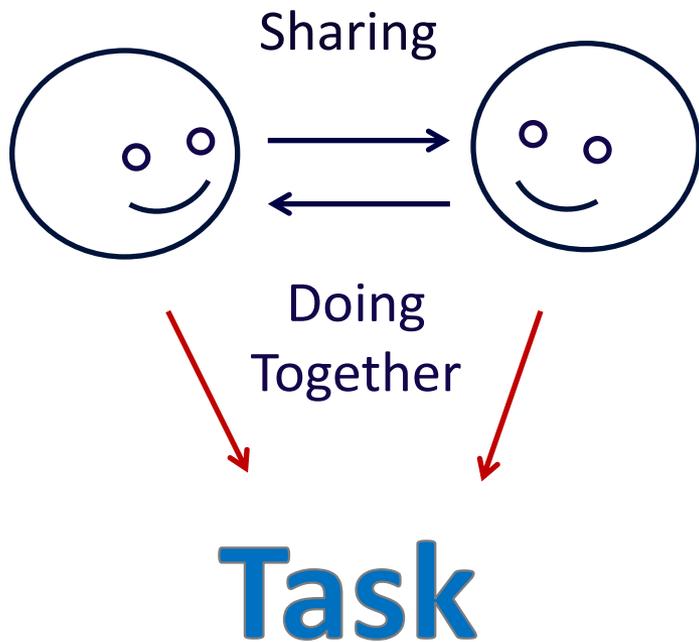
- Celebrate “doing it together”, sharing the experience; not task performance.
- Celebrate engagement with three step social reward.
 1. Physical (hugs, give five, etc.)
 2. Gesture (thumbs up, fist, etc.)
 3. Verbal (“fantastic!”, “awesome”)
- Reciprocal social reward. Encourage child to be active participant in reward process; to return the reward (slap your hand, return thumbs up, etc.).
- To increase feelings of acceptance take emphasis off task performance; how well he did. Celebrate companionship, doing it together.

In Simple Terms!

1. Get engagement going!
2. Encourage back and forth. reciprocal interaction.
3. Build in frequent face to face, emotion sharing!
4. Celebrate frequently with “give fives”, thumbs up, and declarative statements.

Do it together! Have fun! Share the experience!

Step 2 From Relating to Teaching



Objectives:

1. Reference you for information
2. Follow your lead
3. Synchronize actions
4. Coordinate roles

Tools:

- A. Keep it simple; maximize success.
- B. Framing
- C. Guided participation
- D. Stretching and fading

A. Basic Teaching Principles

- Start where the child is at.
- Break it down, build gradually.
- Keep it simple, maximize success.
- Do it together, scaffolding the learning.
- Keep it fun! Mastery is motivating; builds confidence!

Child should be succeeding approximately 80% of the time.

B. Framing For Success



*Set the stage
for success*

Tool #27

- Define your objective.
- Frame the activity to focus on that objective.
- Anticipate possible problems and frame activity to minimize them.
- Position self, child, and materials to maximize success.
- Use least amount of assistance needed to maximize success.
- Start with very tight framing (support) until child understands the boundaries.
- Gradually fade support as child becomes competent.

Framing

Framing Activity For Success

Type of Activity

Start with simple activities that will be the easiest to implement.

Length of Activity

Keep it brief as not to frustrate the child; gradually lengthening with time.

Type of Materials

Use items that are safe and will not break, substituting plastic for glass.

Position of Learner, Teacher & Materials

Position yourself, the child, and the materials to maximize participation & minimize problem behavior.

Guided Participation



- Parent scaffolds the participation, assisting as needed to ensure success for the child.
- Parent guides the child's active participation, using least amount of assistance need to maximize success.
- As child becomes more competent, parent fades assistance.
- It is important that children feel themselves mastering the activity. Assist them, don't do for them.
- Start simple and build gradually. Give them little roles to play and gradually build competency.

Tool #28

How Much Is Too Much



- Guide as needed, but ensure the child “experiences the challenge” to “feel the mastery.”
- Provide just enough challenge to grow, but not so much to overwhelm.
- Continually stretch the challenge, developing greater independence.
- Once child learns his role, work on coordinating actions together, helping each other out, playing equal roles.

Stretching & Fading

Stretching The Challenge

- Start simple and gradually build degree of difficulty.
- If needed, break task down into simple steps.
- Learning is continually stretching as new information is learned.
- Do it together, framing and scaffolding the new learning to be successful.

Fading The Assistance

- You may need to start out doing most of the work.
- Always expect child to actively participate, gradually carrying a greater role.
- Gradually fade framing & assistance, as participation increases.
- If child stumbles, return to previous level of assistance and fade slower.

Tool #29

Instilling Motivation



- Let the child “feel the mastery”
- Mastery is motivating
- Build’s confidence to take on new learning
- Intrinsic reward, not artificial



- Celebrate “doing it together”
- Helping each other out, learning together.
- Feeling competent together
- Three step social reward (physical , gestural, verbal)

Tool #30

Coaching Tips

- Know your child's strengths and interests. Try and build we-dos around them.
- Understand the learning style your child responds best to (visual, tactile, auditory, etc.).
- Use the interaction style that works best for your child (animated, gentle, slow or fast pace, loud/quiet, etc.).
- Understand your child's comfort zones. How long can he engage, what overwhelms him, what type of support does he respond well too? How much and how fast can I stretch him?
- Start in child's comfort zone and stretch slowly.