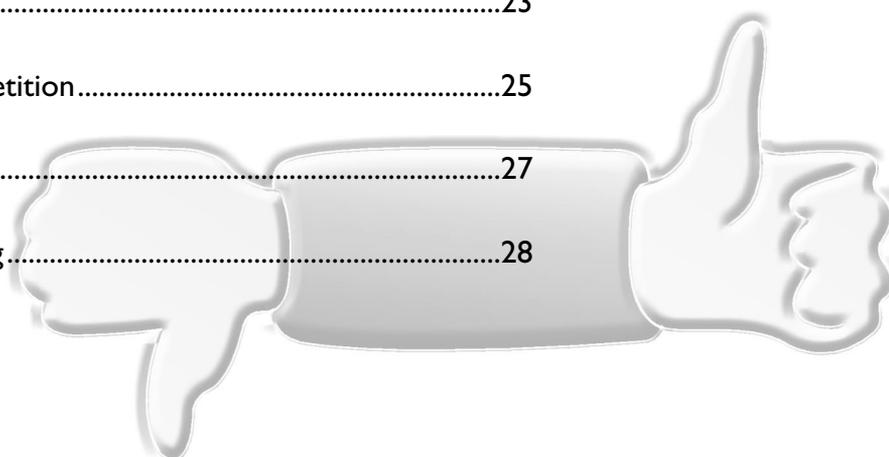




Contents

Foreword.....	4
A central dilemma.....	5
Discipline and motivation.....	6
The old discipline	8
Why punishment does not build strong motivation.....	9
Bring on the ‘new disciplines’.....	10
Are they the answer?.....	12
Punished by rewards	14
What are the alternatives?	15
Beyond discipline.....	18
Being assertive rather than passive or aggressive.....	21
Using rewards in a way that encourages everyone to succeed.....	22
Using praise effectively	23
Avoiding the dangers of competition.....	25
Reconciling opposites	27
References and further reading.....	28





A central dilemma

'There is a central dilemma for all those who teach the young. There is a compelling case for control on the one hand. The young child is not capable of deciding for himself what he should learn: he is quite simply too ignorant. And he needs help to sustain him through the actual process of learning. On the other hand we should never forget the negative effects of exercising control, either by a system of rewards or punishments. WE do not like being controlled, we like controlling ourselves.'

Margaret Donaldson, *Children's Minds*

The dilemma that Margaret Donaldson refers to, between control and freedom, will concern us in this paper as we look at the tension between discipline and motivation. What follows may seem to be simply an academic discussion but the dilemma is one that exercises teachers every day as the extracts below taken from *Hearts and Minds*, a television drama series written by Jimmy McGovern and broadcast on the BBC in 1996 and repeated in 1997:

Extract one:

Drew, the main character, played by Christopher Eccleston, is a beginner teacher. A conversation takes place after his class, which has been running riot, is brought to order by a more experienced colleague:

'How do you do that?'

'Sorry?'

'You can shut them up just like that!'

*'I don't know Drew, but I can tell you how to get through your teaching practice. Don't smile, don't crack a joke, sit on every class you get, and jump on the first b***** that steps out of line.'*

Extract two:

Drew, depressed, talking to his wife in bed that night:

'Get them interested and you don't need discipline!'

Discipline and motivation

Despite the title this paper does not argue that schools don't need discipline. It is not mainly a paper about discipline either, although it will refer in some detail to the current help and advice being offered to teachers on that subject.

The main purpose is to help teachers to discuss the relationship between discipline and motivation and reflect on a fundamental question:

How can schools create order and discipline while at the same time helping young people to develop self-motivation?

It's not a new question but an increasingly important one. The previous paper in this series equated self-motivation with strong motivation and argued that the qualities and characteristics associated with people who are self-motivated are increasingly in demand in the modern world.

Behind the question also lies a belief that, in the past, schools and teachers like Drew's colleague have too often achieved discipline and control in ways that have made it difficult for young people to develop the qualities and characteristics needed to motivate themselves and indeed have often undermined them.

Most parents and teachers agree that one of the main things we want for young people is for them to develop self-restraint and self-control and to be self-reliant and take responsibility for their own lives. The question is how do you help them to do this?

There is a basic tension between those who emphasise the need for adults to set limits and to teach young people how to choose responsible behaviour and those who emphasise the need for young people themselves to have freedom to make choices and to exercise responsibility if they are ever going to develop the ability to do so for themselves.

Behind these views are very different, even competing, beliefs and values. Discipline is a hot topic not only because it is an educational issue, but also because it is a moral, a philosophical and even a political issue.

Many people see obedience and respect for externally imposed authority as moral values, as ends in themselves – indeed as measures of a strong and healthy society. In their view we have no innate sense of right and wrong and this needs to be taught.

