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## Aggression Replacement Training

### The Legacy

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## FROM THE EDITOR

### Remembering

*Sheldon Braaten*

Arnold Goldstein began his formal training at New York's City College. Although he nearly flunked out by his own admission, he was encouraged by a sensitive professor and found confidence in himself, receiving a BA. in 1954 and an M.S. in 1956. He went on to Penn State University and earned a Ph.D. in clinical psychology in 1959.

Arnie, as he preferred to be called, began his career as an instructor at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School in 1959. From 1961 to 1963, he worked as a psychologist at the Veteran's Administration Outpatient Research Laboratory in Washington, DC. In 1963, he moved to Syracuse University, where he served as professor of psychology until 1985. Dr. Goldstein then transferred to special education, where he taught until his retirement in 1997. He continued his work as Professor Emeritus in education and psychology until 2002. At Syracuse, he also served as the director of the Counseling and Psychotherapy Center from 1963 to 1983 and director of the Center for Research on Aggression from 1981 until his death. Throughout this time he received and completed 10 funded grants.

During his career Dr. Goldstein became one of the nation's most productive and tireless authors. Arnie wrote or coauthored over 50 books and more than 90 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals and became one of the world's leading experts on violence and aggression. In 1979, he and colleagues published *Skill streaming the Adolescent*, which was one of the first curricula for teaching prosocial skills to adolescents, and it remains the leading seller for the publisher in 2003. Arnie wrote one novel, a diary of a holocaust victim, *The Shoes of Maidanek*, which was inspired by his visit to a concentration camp in Poland. In addition to writing, Arnie was a very active professional. He was an editor or a consulting editor for 10 journals and a member of 12 different professional organizations, including past president of Section for the Advancement of Clinical Psychology as an Experimental-Behavioral Science (Section 3, Division 12 of APA). He delivered over 200 invited presentations to universities and organizations around the world and conducted more than 200 workshops for school districts and other agencies.

He constructed and refined some of the most sophisticated yet easily taught programs of prevention and treatment of aggressive and violent behavior in children, youth, and adults. Dr Goldstein researched, taught, and wrote on the development of pro-social alternatives to aggression, and his work has touched and transformed the lives of tens of thousands of individuals, families, and schools across the world.

In New York, Dr. Goldstein directed a state-wide task force on violent gangs. In addition, he provided teachers, social workers, and creators of public policy with eminently practical and effective programs for the prevention and treatment of violence among children, youth, and parents. Through training police and prison officers, he has given direction in how to respond to familial and youth violence without escalating the problem.

Arnold Goldstein's works, especially *The Prepare Curriculum* and *Aggression Replacement Training*, provide pupils and teachers, prisoners and wardens, children, parents, and, in reality, all concerned members of the human family with the skills to live peacefully with one another. They provide individuals, groups, and societies with the tools to critically evaluate their own and others' actions and effective strategies for providing young citizens with the building blocks necessary for mastering the task of fulfilling their individual and social potential. Most important, they enable us to withstand the barrage of incitements to use force to achieve goals and to avoid our common human responsibilities.

Arnold Goldstein demonstrated repeatedly that aggression can indeed be effectively replaced by learning and using prosocial skill alternatives. His work has effectively and consistently exposed the fallacy that aggression is an unavoidable and innate trait in humans. His approach is based upon solid scientific and empirical knowledge gained through systematic research and practice throughout the world. His message was simple: *Aggressive behavior is learned behavior*. It is learned in the same manner as other social behavior. It is acquired in the home, on the street, and in the school through modeling and imitation. It is learned in the contexts of coercive interactions between parents and children, between peers, between groups, and between nations. Aggression is constantly being demonstrated in all forms of media—books, comics, television, cinema, video, computer games, and the like. Use of aggression is consistently being maintained by membership in street gangs, anti-social networks, and political affiliation to extremist organizations. Ultimately, aggression is maintained by its consequences for the user.

Dr. Goldstein tirelessly challenged the militarization of our children's minds by the media in his lectures, speeches, articles, and books. He has consistently championed the need for effective collaboration between school, home, and the wider community in building robust repertoires of cognitive, emotional, and social skills that are required to cope with the challenges of daily life without resorting to violence. He has provided national educational agencies in America, Asia, Europe, and Oceania with an ecological approach that addresses both the physical environmental and social environmental causes and influences of aggressive behavior. His emphasis upon whole school, community, and systemic approaches to removing and replacing the conditions that foment aggressive behavior has inspired countless projects and programs in the above-named countries.

Countries employing Dr. Goldstein's work include Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Sweden, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Work is underway to spread knowledge and the use of the above programs to other countries, especially to the Baltic and eastern European countries. His programs of treatment are being used by parents, teachers, social workers, and psychologists of all creeds and ethnicity and represent a major and lasting achievement. His "Aggression Replacement" intervention program has been adopted as first choice treatment and prevention measures in the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Poland, and the United States.

In his final year, he formed the International Center for Aggression Replacement Training (ICART). An international association for the dissemination of Aggression Replacement Training, ICART sponsors a biannual international conference in Malmö, Sweden. Dr. Goldstein led the first event, after being diagnosed with cancer and during the week of the September 11 tragedy in the United States. At noon on Friday of that week, at the conclusion of a workshop on anger control training, all of Europe was silent for two minutes. Shortly after, Dr. Goldstein was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. He knew of his nomination, but died on February 17, 2002, before the recipient was chosen. In June 2002, he was honored posthumously by Reclaiming Youth International with the Spirit of Crazy Horse Award, which was received by his wife, Susan.

The potential implications of Arnold Goldstein's work for the provision of concrete, pedagogical strategies to further the goal of peaceful multiethnic and multicultural integration are enormous. His approaches inspire creativity in the development of basic social skills, anger reduction, and moral reasoning that are open for national, cultural, local, and individual variation.

NOTE:

Portions of this biography are adapted from his Nobel Peace Prize nomination written by Luke Moynahan, Glenne Atitimescenter, Horton, Norway

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