
Preface

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Disclaimer: A Cautionary Note to the Reader

You are holding a revised, expanded, and even more powerful version of our first controversial work. Please note that the unorthodox methods presented in this handbook are offered for instructional and educational purposes only. Each chapter unveils a different group of classroom strategies—and these are frequently illustrated by some of our mostly true war stories. Outrageous behavior modification (OBM) interventions have been developed by eccentric school psychology practitioners and should be applied only after due consideration—and at your own risk! Please be aware that the actual use of these nonstandard techniques may result in temporary confusion and disorientation for your oppositional-defiant students. Also be aware that Benjamin Spock, Carl Rogers, and Oprah would probably not approve of OBM (even though they might grin privately). Some PC educators have even expressed tactful concern that OBM methods may cause stubborn disruptive students to act civil and complete assignments *against their will*. It is you, the reader, who must ultimately decide whether to apply any particular strategy. OBM users must therefore assume full responsibility for their successes. Welcome aboard! Please find your seat. Buckle yourself in securely, and hold on tight.

How To Actually Use This Handbook

Strategic interventions are more difficult to teach and apply than concrete methods. Even though our research suggests that very bright and highly verbal individuals (that's you) will be attracted to the *OBM Handbook*, there is still the challenge of making the ideas approximate reality. You will notice that we have bolstered each chapter with manic but believable application stories. If you aren't quite ready to read a particular chapter, no problem . . . we offer a low-carb summary box at

the end, which should provide the basics of that particular strategy. Some of the high-functioning folks at PRO-ED, the publisher, have even helped to make the chapter text material more user friendly by inserting thumbnail-size images of the various support materials. All you need to do when you see one of those is leaf back to Appendix G, and there you will find all the full-size reproducible forms, coupons, cards, and protocols. Is that convenient or what? Now you can practically design a little something for Oppositional Eddy while you're strolling down the hall to the copy machine. Enjoy.

The Revised OBM Handbook: *More Blame Throwing*

Basically, this revision is offered as a repackaged and manically expanded “best of the best.” Of course, with a revision comes some new acknowledgment comments and a nostalgic or even tearful look back at the literary birthing process. These acknowledgment quips are those few defining moments at the awards banquet where we lean in to the microphone, thank “*all those who helped make it possible*” and then tack on an impassioned plea for the rain forest or beached whales.

Just like those rambling podium gratitudes, the *revised OBM Handbook* requires quite a large stack of thank-you notes. Many of the expanded techniques were spawned from the incredible *X-File* experiences of seemingly healthy educators who actually attempted the interventions. These revisions certainly bear the imprint of many classroom practitioners, shocked and baffled administrators, and a cadre of indulgent “related service” personnel. The dubious spotlight of appreciation is also focused on our tireless staff at the OBM Institute, including many contracted liability attorneys, spin doctors, and riot control specialists.

Most educators are mildly amused by OBM strategies. Some readers simply don't get it. A few hardy souls actually understand *and* try out the strategies. This last group includes dozens of folks in the Silver Consolidated Schools (that's in beautiful Silver City, New Mexico); and they are represented by the likes of Debbie Upton, Rudy Quinonez, Kim Hopwood, Barb Stewart, Dolores Maese, Rosella Escobedo, and fearless rooky Luis Alvarado. It's hard to believe that these lucky educators get to live in a story-book western town—and also get paid for working with neat kids. Go figure. Some astute readers are bound to question what kind of school administrators would actually tolerate our nonlinear interventions. Well, we're here to thank our progressive SPED directors, Corrine Weyrich, Pam Gibson, and Pam Fenstamaker. We want to encourage them to keep doing those deep-breathing exercises.

Another, even smaller frontier settlement and a designated OBM field testing site is Reserve, New Mexico. This is a one-street, F-150 town nestled in the mountains of the expansive Gila National Forest. It's my favorite hundred-mile drive to work, on which I sometimes negotiate with obstinate herds of elk crossing the highway and pass under the scrutiny of stoic bald eagles perched in the ponderosas. Yes, it's a rough life peddling these newfangled behavior interventions. But it's worth that bumpy stage ride to consult with pioneer types like Courtenay Schwandner, Barb Pendleton, Jolene Delgado, and Vicki Shriver.

A schedule of OBM training workshops has continued around the Southwest—despite threats and disparaging remarks from those traditional behavior modification guys. From wilderness places with no cell service all the way to teeming urban areas with airport security checks and eight-lane toll booths, the OBM workshops have

presented ideas and received valuable feedback from genuine live teachers. Speaking of urban workshops, special thanks goes to Ivan Vance, a senior consultant with the nearly world famous Region X Educational Service Center deep in the heart of Texas. Mr. Vance is a school psychology veteran who has been there, done that, and escaped many consequences of his own strategic interventions.

During the revision process, there was much talk in the hallways of the OBM Institute about doing a worldwide talent search for a top-notch professional illustrator. The response to our job-opening announcement on *Jay Leno* was phenomenal, with literally hundreds of enthusiastic applicants seeking to work on the handbook. Scores of talented cartoonists camped (in orderly lines) at the front entrance to the institute, each hoping for a chance at graphic arts immortality. Eventually, our search committee discovered Jenny Loehr, and you will understand why her spirited illustrations were selected for the revised handbook.

One special drawing (page 9) was saved from the first edition of the book. This was done a few years ago by a fourth-grade student who managed to capture in a single sketch the defiant attitude of our oppositional student customers. Special thanks to Erika Jayne Christian, who somehow grew up Ritalin free in our mostly normal family.

Finally, there's my confidential list of strong-willed, factory-wired oppositional students, who could fill an auditorium (or an IEP circus tent). You kids have definitely added some salsa to my career. This expanded edition of the *OBM Handbook* is dedicated to you ... and we all trust that you will not read any of these strategies until long after your graduation!

Fractured Acknowledgments from the First Edition, 1997

The present handbook represents a small step in the post-behavior modification journey. The author has been a compiler and systematizer of methods, but many outstanding school psychologists and classroom instructors should share recognition and reasonable blame for their contributions. From the early days of experimentation in the field, Phyllis Crawford, MA; Cliff Jones, PhD; Barbara Fishgrab, MA (and a smiling newbie PsyD); and Frank Amadeo, MA (no-needa PhD) have critiqued and shaped the actual strategies presented in this book.

This intrepid (now historic) team of counselors has provided effective psychological services to the Gallup-McKinley County Schools (in New Mexico), one of the largest geographic school districts in North America. Our fearless counseling staff could pull together like a MASH team for crisis intervention or work independently as unseen Lone Rangers in far-flung desert schools. These professionals have taught me more in our "outrageous" Friday staff meetings and through their counseling successes than I have ever imparted to them. Hey, it doesn't matter what anyone thinks, you all deserve to keep your counseling licenses. Thanks, guys!

Finally, the author is personally indebted to hundreds of teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors who have attended his in-service training workshops across New Mexico and Arizona. These classroom practitioners have helped to refine the various wacky interventions and keep them almost grounded in reality. For the behavior management work you do every day in our schools, this *OBM Handbook* is really dedicated to you!