“TALK TO ME”:

EDUCATION MEETS HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION

By

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ABSTRACT

This study brought together the diverse perspectives of hostage negotiators, educators, and students in response to the question: Will training educators in the relational, communication-based strategies used by hostage negotiators help them to de-escalate disruptive students? The findings showed that some educators already have some of the needed skills and use them profitably to defuse difficult situations. However, these skills are not widely held or trained for within the field. In addition, results suggested that simply learning and applying rote skills outside the context of a broader systems change within education would not likely yield desired results and may even be counter-productive. To be effective, these skills must be rooted in a philosophy of partnership between students and teachers. This approach does not fit within an authoritarian paradigm. The study concluded by suggesting that these skills may prove useful as education evolves from a teacher-led to a student-directed enterprise.

DEDICATION

This is for my family, but especially for my mother, who taught me to hold the dignity of all living things as inviolable.

Most of all, this is dedicated to you, Norm, my soul mate and partner in all things. So many more cliffs to jump off together . . . so many more rabbit holes to go down . . . (so many metaphors to mix) . . . so little time! I don’t think there is a word coined that describes the synergy we share. Thank you—for everything.

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There is no copyright on titles. For this I am grateful, since I stole the title for my project from the New York City Hostage Negotiation Team; “Talk to Me” is their motto. I hope they will forgive my flagrant thievery. Imitation, as they say, is the sincerest form of flattery.

It turns out that qualitative research is the perfect medium for someone who loves stories. My thanks to the brilliant, perceptive, and deeply humane negotiators, administrators, and students who shared their amazing stories with me. Thanks especially to Ron Garrison, who planted the seeds for this inquiry so many years ago. And to the following:

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"A riot is the language of the unheard"

(Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., as cited in Rucker & Upton, 2007, p. 107).

Introduction

There are two reasons why I chose to look at what the field of hostage negotiation might offer educators who struggle to support disruptive students. First, I strongly believe in the value of "cross-pollination" between various fields of study. Applying the lenses of one field to the issues faced by another can generate unexpected insights and open new ways to think and act. The second reason is personal, and ties directly back to my experience as a student in the public school system.

It is an understatement to say that I was not a model student. Throughout my rocky career at school my report cards were filled with that familiar litany of teacher frustration: "could do better," "needs to pay attention," and "must try harder." When I quit school at age 15 nobody tried very hard to keep me. Luckily, although I did not like school, I did like learning. So I took Mark Twain's advice, and did not let school interfere with my education. I read voraciously and eventually cobbled together an adequate education. I was one of the lucky ones, but I carried with me a visceral memory of what it felt like to be labelled one of "those" students—the so-called losers and drop-outs.

We know what the statistics are for students who leave school prematurely. Research makes unequivocal links between drop-out rates and unemployment, poverty, and even incarceration (Adair, 2001; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2003; Barton, 2005; Harlow, 2003; Mayer, 2001). We also know that students with learning difficulties and behavioural issues are the students most likely to drop out of school (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009).

However, what is less known is that teachers drop out of school too. Statistics on teacher retention show that approximately one in four teachers quit teaching within the first 2 years because they feel inadequately prepared to deal with disruptive student behaviour (Greene, 2008). There is an ironic circularity to this problem. Both students and teachers feel unable to manage the classroom experience, and it is student behaviour that most often catapults each out of the system.

For the educators who remain, behavioural issues at school take up an enormous amount of time, energy, and financial resources. Confrontations between students and educators can result in conflicts that involve families and the larger community. For example, school personnel may be held legally responsible when incidents erupt and behavioural interventions are questioned. Ron Garrison (personal communication, October 20, 2009), a trained hostage negotiator, international consultant, and a frequent expert witness on issues of school safety, noted that every year in North America students and teachers are injured and even killed during confrontations, as a result of retaliation, and during episodes of restraint.

For 20 years, I have been studying and teaching conflict management processes. Several years ago, I was introduced to a “parallel universe” of conflict management theory and practice through a friend who trained as a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) hostage negotiator. Like many, my view of hostage negotiation was influenced by television dramas and sensational news coverage. I envisioned helmets, shields, bullet-proof vests, smoke bombs, guns, and a lot of authoritarian commands. I was surprised to learn that, in fact, special weapons and tactics (SWAT) interventions were used less than 1% of the time (D. Misino, personal communication. March 7, 2010). Instead, I was told that negotiators use words to de-escalate hostage situations.

Negotiators rely on listening, relationship building, empathy, and open-ended questions and are successful in resolving more than 90% of these incidents without loss of life (Kohlrieser, 2006).

I wondered how negotiators managed to accomplish so much in these worst-of-the-worst situations. What exactly did they do? How did they manage to create bonds with individuals with whom most of us would have difficulty engaging? Further, I wondered if what negotiators knew, believed, and did would have utility for educators working with disruptive students. This project was conceived as an attempt to answer these questions and to introduce the philosophy and practical strategies used by hostage negotiators in their sensitive and difficult work to the equally sensitive and difficult work of education.

In order to accomplish this goal, I began by contrasting existing literature and practitioner experience within two disparate fields—namely, hostage negotiation and classroom management. I then conducted individual interviews with both negotiators and school administrators. This was followed by a training session and a brief implementation of selected negotiation strategies with the educator group. Based on what was discovered during this process, I re-interviewed the administrators to determine whether insights and approaches used by hostage negotiators were useful and whether these strategies might have broader application and utility. I concluded by facilitating a focus group of students to ensure inclusion of their voices.

Central Research Question and Sub-Questions

This study responded to the research question: Will training educators in the use of relational, communication-based hostage (crisis) negotiation approaches help them to defuse disruptive incidents? The sub-questions were:

1. What structures, skills, and training do hostage negotiators and educators rely on to de-escalate hostage takers and students, and what is the difference in their approaches?
2 What are the underlying beliefs and attitudes that shape the responses to each group?
3. Do educators feel that learning the skills used by hostage negotiators would be useful, and if so, how are these skills best taught and learned?

The Need for Research

Recently, hostage negotiation has taken its place within the larger field of conflict analysis and management (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2006). Mitchell Hammer (2007), Professor Emeritus with American University's school for International Peace and Conflict Resolution, stated, "Hostage taking and barricade events can be profitably viewed within the broad, interdisciplinary field of conflict communication" (p. 29). In contrast, educators seldom articulate student disruption as conflict. More typically, these students are labelled through a process of deficit analysis as behavioural problems, and their actions described as a result of poor choices. The location of the problem is seen to sit squarely within the student.

Cornell and Mayer (2010) have pointed to a pressing need for greater inter- and intra-disciplinary approaches. In this context, some scholars examining school discipline processes have recommended taking a view that more closely resembles conflict analysis (Cothran, Hodges Kulinna, & Garrahy, 2003; Freiberg & Lapointe, 2006; Greene, 2008; Kohn, 1996). However, despite the stated need for greater interaction between various disciplines such as psychology, education, law enforcement, and public health, Mayer and Furlong (2010) observed that communication remains inadequate and went on to speculate that "this theoretical fragmentation may contribute to the so-called research-to-practice gap" (p. 19).

Reframing student disruption as conflict may be an important first step in bridging this gap. This change in narrative implies that the student may have legitimate concerns or underlying issues that cannot be addressed by simply invoking the school code of conduct or through the application of rewards or punishments. Reframing student disruption as conflict further suggests the need for an analysis of the nature of the relationship and interactions between the student, the learning environment, and the teacher. In this view, challenging behaviour does not occur in a vacuum, nor does it belong solely to the student; rather it is a function of the interchange between student, environment, and educator (Jull, 2000; Van Acker, Grant, & Henry, 1996).

Many educators acknowledge the need to develop skills in conflict resolution for use with colleagues and other adults and similarly acknowledge the value of peer-mediation programs designed to teach students communication skills to use with each other (Cohen, 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 1996, 2006). However, there are few studies that suggest that conflict management and communication-based strategies might have direct and specific utility between teachers and students during confrontational incidents. Through my review of the literature, and through personal inquiry, I was unable to locate any comprehensive pre-service or in-service programs that offer educators a framework to address conflicts with students utilizing conflict management skills.

In this study, I have attempted to create linkages between conflict theory and educational practice. This study was designed, in part, to address the issue of incomplete communication between the fields of negotiation and education. In addition, this study was designed to examine the potential for a change in focus in education from a remedial, behaviourist approach to one in which student disruption is viewed as conflict.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study examined whether ideas and strategies found in the field of hostage negotiation can help educators find useful ways to manage student misbehaviour. In this review, I begin by examining literature that described and evaluated models and strategies used by practitioners in each domain to de-escalate individuals during disruptive or crisis events and the attitudes and beliefs that underlie these strategies.

The chapter is divided into two sections and a summary. The first section, Educator Responses to Classroom Disruption, identifies a gap in training opportunities, provides a brief examination of influential systemic concerns such as zero-tolerance policies, briefly outlines an ideological divide within the field of education, and offers an overview of some existing models of classroom management and the theories that inform them. The remaining sub-sections describe the role of educator beliefs and behaviours upon practise, and student perceptions of school discipline.

The second section, Hostage (Crisis) Negotiation, begins by providing a short historical account of the field, followed by an examination of the communication-based strategies currently used by negotiators worldwide. I conclude this section with a brief overview of recommended training methods. Finally, the two sections are connected in a summary.

Terminology

Throughout the body of this paper I use the word *narrative* in the context of a social constructivist definition. Winslade and Monk (2008) referred to narratives as the series of complex, socially constructed cultural and personal stories that human beings use to organize and bring coherence to lived experience. As Winslade and Monk noted, these stories do more than describe. The stories actively construct perceptions of what is observed. Within these stories are

a series of unquestioned norms that “shape . . . choices, values, feelings and actions” (p. 30) and, perhaps most salient to this discussion, shape “what we expect of ourselves and others around us” (p. 30).

I have used the terms hostage negotiation and crisis negotiation interchangeably. This reflects a current, but incomplete shift in terminology present in the literature I reviewed. Practitioners argued that crisis negotiation is the more accurate term because most issues negotiators are called upon to resolve do not involve hostages (Hammer, 2007). More than 80% are incidents involving barricaded, suicidal individuals, or both (D. Misino, March 7, 2010, personal communication). However, most literature still uses the term hostage negotiation.

The term classroom management can encompass everything from how a classroom is physically arranged to how transitions between activities will take place. For the purposes of this paper, I use this term to describe the disciplinary actions educators utilize to maintain order in the classroom.

As Kohn (1990) pointed out, “Affective perspective taking . . . is not the same thing as empathy” (p. 99). Kohn defined empathy as the ability “to share in the affective life of another” (p. 99), while perspective taking was defined as “the capacity to imagine the way the world looks from a vantage point other than one’s own” (p. 99). Much of what is referred to in hostage negotiation literature as empathy is perhaps better described as perspective taking. However, for the purpose of clarity within this paper, I have continued to follow the literature, and throughout this paper I refer to the process of imagining the world from another’s perspective as empathy.

Educator Responses to Classroom Disruption: Structures, Models, Policies, Attitudes, Beliefs and Skills

Contemporary schools are faced with demands for greater academic and social accountability within a context of fiscal constraint. This inevitably translates into doing more with less. Many educators believe that student disruption seriously hinders the ability to meet these competing demands (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Cothran et al., 2003; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). In an effort to manage student behaviour many schools rely on a process of triage, where difficult students are sent to detention or time out, relegated to remedial or segregated programs, suspended, or even expelled. While not viewed as optimal, these approaches do promise short-term efficacy and are often accepted within a wider political context of zero tolerance. However, when success is based on removal of the student, the problem has simply been relocated (Mayer, 1995). In addition, the climate of fear and punishment created in the process may actually cause an increase in the very behaviours schools are seeking to eradicate (Horner & Sugai, 2004; Mayer, 1995; Skiba & Peterson, 1999; Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997).

Kunc (1992) further noted that a sense of belonging was a necessary prerequisite for the development of self-esteem, pro-social behaviour, and even learning. Kunc contended that schools making belonging contingent upon good behaviour and achievement causes a problematic catch-22 situation for some students. In this paradigm, students must master certain skills before they are allowed to belong, but the isolation and lack of belonging they experience in segregated settings and through exclusionary practices makes it impossible for them to learn the pro-social skills needed. This lack of learning is then used as further justification for exclusion.

In the following sub-sections, I examine some of the issues that contribute to the training, systemic, ideological, and attitudinal barriers educators experience when confronted by students who present difficult behaviour.

Lack of Training

Despite the fact that classroom management and issues related to student aggression and disruption rank prominently in stated practitioner concern, comparatively little attention is paid to them in either teacher preparation programs (Bergin, 1999; Spaulding, 2005) or in educational research conferences (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). Reasons for this are unclear. According to Evertson and Weinstein, this may be in part "because classroom management is neither content knowledge, nor psychological foundations, nor pedagogy, nor pedagogical content knowledge" (p. 4), therefore, "it seems to slip through the cracks" (p. 4). Brophy (2006) concurred, referring to classroom management as, "Not an end in itself, but a means . . . [or] a support for learning" (p. 18).

In a study of 156 public secondary teachers, Spaulding (2005) found that only 16.5% had received pre-service education in crisis management and only 12% felt that what they had received was helpful. Although 72.5% of the respondents had received a minimal amount of training in more standard non-crisis classroom management strategies, "very few of the respondents reported a positive and worthwhile classroom management course" (p. 7), stating that it bore "absolutely no relationship to real life in the classroom" (p. 7). Spaulding reported that 89% of the respondents agreed that pre-service courses should be provided to help teachers learn to work effectively with disruptive and aggressive students. However, there is little agreement regarding what the content of such training should be.

Systemic Issues – Zero Tolerance

Educators work within a system that is subject to both overt and tacit constraints. Pianta (2006) pointed out several important structural and external constraints that combine to influence how educators will respond to difficult students. In the widest sense, Pianta noted the cultural and political expectations placed on schools that dictate not only how education will take place, but also seek to define the purpose of education itself. These expectations translate into the mandates and regulations that schools and individual educators must abide by and include not only student–teacher ratios, what will be taught, and how it will be taught, but also what disciplinary practices will be followed. Pianta emphasized that each of these, combined with considerations of school climate and culture, have important implications for the relationship between teachers and students. Although Pianta placed significant emphasis on the importance of these relationships, he acknowledged that such a focus would be insufficient without addressing the role of systemic pressure.

Widespread adoption of zero-tolerance policies in schools immediately following the 1999 shootings at Columbine is an example of one such complicating systemic pressure (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). The policy mandated unilateral punitive responses to misbehaviour, regardless of mitigating circumstances or the severity of an infraction (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Proponents of zero-tolerance policies in schools suggested that it would give educators the tools they needed to discipline effectively and would, therefore, result in safer schools (Skiba et al., 2006). Implementation of zero-tolerance policies was based on the assumption that punishing or removing difficult students would serve as a deterrent to all students, classroom and school climate would improve accordingly, and academic performance would rise. It was assumed that

these policies would definitively address public concerns about what was widely believed to be a dramatic rise in adolescent violence.

Recently, these assumptions have been disproved (Daniel & Bondy, 2008; Day, Golench, MacDougall & Beals-Gonzales, 1995; Pollack, Modzeleski & Rooney, 2008). The incidence of school violence has remained stable and perhaps even declined in recent decades (Astor, Guerra, & Van Acker, 2010). The use of harsh punishment and the application of metal detectors, guards, and locked schools have actually been shown to erode school climate (Mayer & Leone, 1999). The promise of improved academic achievement and student behaviour has not been found (Skiba et al., 2006). In addition, families and the general public are increasingly critical of what is seen as arbitrary rule enforcement. Recently, Henry Giroux (2009) of McMaster University argued that zero-tolerance policies have created "disciplinary practices that closely resemble the culture of prisons" (p. 2); Giroux is worried that schools have become increasingly "militarized" and described this as the "prison pipeline" (p. 2), referring to the practice of sending violators past the principal's office straight into the juvenile justice system (Skiba et al., 2006).

In the United States, Florida and Texas are among the states that are currently suggesting amendments to existing legislation to allow for more in-school discretion and the use of alternatives to suspension and expulsion (Wise, 2009). However, this does not mean that the pendulum has swung toward less punitive approaches. Many educators and members of the public still believe that the only effective response to misbehaviour is punishment and that softer responses are tantamount to letting students get away with bad behaviour. Kohn (1996) noted that much of the controversy between so-called soft and hard approaches has been based on the notion that punishing or doing nothing are the only options. Kohn stated, "Until this false

dichotomy is identified and eradicated, we cannot hope to make any progress in moving beyond punitive tactics" (p. 31).

A Lack of Congruence in Ideology

Although the term classroom management is uncomfortably fraught with suggestions of control and enforced compliance, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) chose to define it more neutrally as, "The actions teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social-emotional learning" (p. 4). However, even this definition raises complexity. As Martin (2004) pointed out, "The concept of a 'positive learning environment' is both broad and vague" (p. 1) and is subject to interpretations as variable as the individuals who hold them. At the custodial end of the ideological continuum, some believe that classrooms should be quiet, teacher-led environments with compliant students who raise their hands to speak and stay in their seats. At the humanistic end, others believe that classrooms should be self-directed, democratic places full of activity, discussion, and debate. Whatever ideology is paramount for educators will determine, at least in part, which student behaviours are labelled difficult.

Some research has suggested that gaining compliance from students through the application of positive reinforcement coupled with negative consequences provides the most effective means of managing disruptive student behaviour (Canter, 1988; Dreikurs & Grey, 1993; Lewis, Newcomer, Trussell, & Richter, 2006; McDaniel, 1982; Nelson, 1987; Skinner, 1972, 1974, 1983; Sugai & Horner, 2006). However, there is a competing body of research suggesting that educators can circumvent the need for either punishment or reward systems by creating more dynamic learning environments, focusing on relationship development, and stressing student involvement in all aspects of education (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Glasser,

1969, 1986, 1992; Greene, 2008; Kohn, 1996; Lovett, 1996; Olson, 2009; Padilla & Krank, 1989; Page, 2006; Render, Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 1998; Schwartz & Kluth, 2007; Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2010). These distinct ideologies do not coexist peacefully within the educational research.

Educators are caught in the crossfire of this debate. Proponents on both sides have made impassioned arguments that centre the discussion on divergent theories of child development (Emmer & Gerwels, 2006; Erickson, 1963; Nucci, 2006; Piaget, 1973; Vigotsky, 1962), educational philosophy (Fang, 1996; Glickman & Tamashiro, 1980; Johnson, Whittington, & Oswald, 1994; Kagan, 1992; Kohn, 1993; Martin, 2004; Pajares, 1992; Woolfolk Hoy & Weinstein, 2006), and issues of pragmatics and efficacy (Canter, 1988; Curwin, 1988; Dewey, 1913; Harris, 1928; Kohn, 1996; Skinner, 1971; Wong & Wong, 2009). Bookshelves are filled with advice for teachers, but until recently there has been comparatively little serious research to assist them to make sense of this debate (Bergin & Bergin, 1999; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Freiberg & Lapointe, 2006).

In an effort to bring some coherence to the discussion, Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) set out to identify and evaluate classroom management programs currently available to educators. Out of 800 management programs, only a small number could be described as evidence-based. Freiberg and Lapointe settled on 40 using the following criteria: only school-based programs serving a population of students aged 3 to 18 and selected by at least 1 of 14 relevant organizations were eligible. All programs needed to demonstrate a focus on prevention and intervention, evidence of support, training and resources, and, finally, discipline management processes must have been integrated in both classroom and school (p. 739).

Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) identified three major themes: (a) moving beyond discipline, with an emphasis on learning and self-control; (b) school connectedness or the need for involvement of all players in the school community; and (c) social and emotional development, with an emphasis on concerns that included school and classroom climate. In addition, two sub-themes emerged: (a) caring and trust, with a strong focus on relationship, attachment, and trust building; and (b) positive school and classroom climate, stressing the influence of the learning environment on student behaviour.

Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) concluded that previous paradigms, which were largely based on a control and compliance orientation, must be replaced by others based on teacher facilitation and student self-direction. Freiberg and Lapointe suggested it makes little sense that "in a technological world that expects flexibility, independence, and self-discipline, many schools of the 21st century continue to follow management paradigms of the 19th and 20th century that valued compliance and obedience over innovation, creativity and self direction" (p. 773); these authors stressed the need for the development of "student centered learning environments" (p. 774). This was underscored by Pianta (2006), who further suggested the need for "a focus on relationships rather than discrete behaviors" (p. 704). However, the ongoing popularity of programs based on behaviourist approaches that favour the analysis of discrete behaviours and the application of teacher-led interventions suggest that these recommendations have been less realized than proponents of self-directed learning had hoped for.

Lee Canter's (1988) assertive discipline is an older example of a behaviourist approach to classroom management that was widely used in North American schools for several decades. Canter claimed that teachers could not afford long-term strategies based on relationship building and democratic problem solving, such as those described by Freiberg and Lapointe (2006).

According to Canter, when it came to discipline matters, “teachers . . . need answers, and they need them now” (p. 73). Canter’s suggested remedies were simple and swift—reward compliance and punish infractions. This approach is based on the behaviourist assumption that human behaviour will only change in order to gain a desirable reward or to avoid an undesirable consequence (Landrum & Kauffman, 2006; Skinner, 1974). Practitioners like Canter continue to claim statistical success in suppressing or diminishing difficult behaviours in this way (Skinner, 1974; Canter, 1988), which gives their programs significant appeal for those looking for a fast and scripted answer to the pragmatic problem of “what to do on Monday.”

Many educators are currently questioning both the efficacy and ethics of punishment and are in the process of shifting to programs that emphasize the positive (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). Positive behavioural support (PBS) is one such program that has found widespread popularity in recent years (Lewis et al., 2006). Like Canter’s (1988) assertive discipline, PBS is firmly located in a tradition of behaviourism, deriving directly from the related field of applied behaviour analysis (Horner, 2000; Gresham, 2004). Users of the PBS program stress strategies like verbal praise, token systems, prizes, activity rewards, and public recognition (Sprague & Horner, 2000).

PBS appears to offer a new and promising take on the issue of discipline. Although proponents profess a positive orientation, others have suggested that the claim is misleading (Chiu & Tulley, 1997; Mulick & Butter, 2005). Rule infractions are still punished, and the list of interventions remains startlingly similar to the old approaches: time-out, withdrawal of privileges, detention, segregation, suspension, and expulsion. This argument is countered with a claim that punishment is typically mild and occurs less frequently (Horner, 2000; Lewis et al., 2006). Although support for the PBS program is enthusiastic and widespread, many of the

studies cited to support the success of PBS have been criticized as self-generated (Chiu & Tulley, 1997; Mulick & Butter, 2005) and largely reliant on case studies without control groups (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010).

Like other behaviourist approaches, PBS is based on the notion that all behaviour is functional and is used by the child to either gain something he or she wants or to avoid something undesirable (Gresham et al., 2004). Greene (2008) worried that these assumptions were simplistic and, further, might "lead many adults to the conclusion that those behaviors are purposeful" (p. 36). Greene suggested that for many disruptive students, the issue is not about the need to manipulate, get attention, or avoid work; instead, many of these students lack the skills necessary to manage classroom dynamics. Instead of applying rewards and consequences in an effort to shape behaviour, Greene recommended asking, "*What lagging skills help us understand why the kid is getting, avoiding, and escaping in such a maladaptive fashion*" (p. 36)? Greene further noted that behaviourist programs—positive or negative—remain ineffective for some members of the school population, stating, "The school discipline plan *isn't working for the kids who aren't doing well*, and *isn't needed for the kids who are*" (p. 8).

The Influence of Educator Beliefs and Attitudes

What teachers believe about the nature of education will have a strong influence on what they choose to define as disruptive behaviour and how they decide to respond to it. However, what teachers believe about children and even human nature itself will be equally, if not more, influential (Kohn, 1990, 1996). As Greene (2008) stated, "It's your philosophy of kids that's going to guide your beliefs and your actions in your interactions . . . especially when the going gets tough" (p. 10). If, for example, you believe that children are inherently destructive,

disrespectful, and troublesome, your responses to their behaviour will be quite different than if you believe that children are inherently cooperative, constructive, and kind (Kohn, 1996).

Johnson et al. (1994) conducted a study with a group of South Australian educators to determine how they viewed desired student behaviour, why they thought students should behave that way, what assumptions they held about the innate nature of children, what teacher and parent roles should be; and the location of power. Johnson et al.'s findings synthesized into the following four orientations to school discipline: (a) Traditional or "teacher-in-charge [with] a number of clear rules and escalating punishments" (Lewis, 2006, p. 1201); (b) Liberal Progressive, with an emphasis on "shared responsibility, cooperation, and self-discipline" (p. 1201); (c) Socially Critical, which posited "student disruption as reasonable resistance to oppression" (pp. 1201–1202); and (d) Laissez-Faire, "which derived from the free choice movement within schooling" (p. 1202). Most teachers interviewed fell into the categories of Traditional or Liberal Progressive, which Johnson et al. suggested reflect the status quo. Very few fell into the category of Laissez-Faire, an approach considered by most to be too soft and largely ineffective. However, what is perhaps most interesting is that virtually no teachers self-identified as Socially Critical. Johnson et al. concluded that there was greater need for educators to interrogate the assumptions and values inherent in education and to recognize the "ideological and political nature of discipline policies and practices" (p. 274). In addition, these researchers found that teacher beliefs about school discipline went "beyond psychological and even classroom related considerations" (p. 261). Responses were highly value-laden, critical of parenting styles and existing societal mores, and often reflecting negative over-arching theories of human nature. This suggests that when it comes to discipline, belief systems are even more

complex and influenced by previous experience and outside forces than those held about other classroom issues.

Pajares (1992) maintained that beliefs continue to be the strongest predictors of behaviour, since they are less dynamic and more rigidly held than more recently acquired academic knowledge. In this context, it is important to note that before educators ever reach pre-service training at university, they have likely spent almost two decades in classrooms as students, watching and learning about the practice of teaching from their teachers. By the time they enter teacher preparation, much of what they have observed has been internalized. Fang (1996) reviewed relevant research and found that despite training which contradicted what they had experienced as students, educators were still most inclined to teach the way they were taught. Fang's research suggests that the narratives of education and, more specifically, the narratives of expected student behaviour are not easily changed. Reconciling more recent educational developments like cooperative learning and self-directed schools with expectations for quiet and compliant student behaviour is, therefore, likely to remain a daunting enterprise.

To further exacerbate this problem, Pajares (1992) pointed to a problematic self-sustaining cycle: "beliefs influence perceptions that influence behaviors that are consistent with, and that reinforce the original beliefs" (p. 317). Kennedy (1999) likewise noted a double bind faced by educators: "most teachers necessarily hold multiple and conflicting ideals. All of us do. We want teachers who are strict and do not tolerate inappropriate behavior, yet we also want teachers who are sympathetic and sensitive to students' needs" (p. 70).

Finally, Hyman et al. (2006) reported that one third of teachers in the United States considered bullying a normal childhood experience. Seen together with another study showing that 50–60% of students report being bullied by teachers, a troubling connection between teacher

beliefs and teacher actions may be drawn (Hyman et al., 2006). Earlier, Hyman and Perone (1998) worried that "victimization of students by school staff, most often in the name of discipline, is seldom recognized as a problem that may contribute to student alienation and aggression" (p. 7). This implies that without confronting the role of beliefs upon practice, it is unlikely that change will take place. If educators believe that difficult behaviour is simply the result of students making poor choices or having poor impulse control, or that it arises from a perverse desire to manipulate, garner attention, or resist adult control, there will be little room for responses that go beyond the remedial.

While much has been written regarding the influence of teacher behaviour on student learning, there is significantly less research available that attempts to analyze the influence of specific teacher behaviour on disruptive student behaviour (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). However, there is a small but promising body of research that begins to re-conceptualize behaviour as the result of interaction and relationship and, consequently, moves us closer to defining the issue as conflict. I have summarized this research in the following two sections that deal respectively with teacher behaviour and student perception of teacher behaviour.

The Influence of Teacher Behaviours on Student Behaviours

Spaulding (2005) was asked by a group of administrators in Texas to conduct research on specific behaviours employed by teachers that either escalated or de-escalated students' aggressive behaviour. She found that "by far, the most common answer to what teachers do that may increase the chances of a violent situation was backing students into a corner" (p. 10). Those interviewed noted that the need for respect was paramount for both teachers and students, but observed that although teachers expected and demanded respect from students, this was not always reciprocated.

Spaulding (2005) found that helpful teacher behaviours included giving students a voice, being proactive, good self-management, getting to know students and working to build relationships, showing respect, having a positive attitude, and being alert for abnormal student behaviour and body language. Finally, instructional, listening, and conflict-management skills were identified as critical. The need for these skills, with an emphasis on self-management, was confirmed in Martin's (2004) study of three novice teachers.

In contrast, behaviours that were seen as triggers for disruption included over-control; a lack of clarity and consistency; humiliation, confrontation, and disrespect—especially in front of other students; not listening; negative attitudes; lack of rapport; taking things personally; unfairness; and having unreasonable expectations. Interestingly, passivity or being "too nice" (Spaulding, 2005, p. 10) and teacher isolation were also seen as contributing factors. Although one third of Spaulding's study participants did not believe that teachers engaged in bullying behaviour toward students, this finding was countered by Hyman et al. (2006), who found that at least half of the students polled described being bullied by teachers. A majority of Spaulding's respondents identified three specific teacher behaviours that were known to escalate disruption: "social isolation, derogatory comments, and gossip" (p. 13).

Participants in Spaulding's (2005) study recommended "showing respect toward students as a way to de-escalate potential violent behavior" (p. 14) and increasing "teachers' awareness of their own behavior and . . . being willing to admit their mistakes and apologize to students" (p. 14). Although this group was dubious about the value of including students in determining how discipline should take place, others believe that student involvement in planning all aspects of the educational experience—including behaviour management—is critical (Cothran et al.,

2003; Greene, 2008; Keefe, Moore, & Duff, 2006; Kohn, 1996; Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2010).

Student Perceptions of Classroom Management

Little attention has been paid to the perception that students hold regarding the discipline and classroom management structures present in schools (Chiu & Tulley, 1997; Cothran et al., 2003; Ellis, 1997; Gassaway, 2006; Habel, Bloom, Ray, & Bacon, 1999; Supaporn, 2000; Thorson, 1996; Woolfolk Hoy & Weinstein, 2006). Woolfolk Hoy and Weinstein found that students identified personal caring, listening, being there for the student, fairness, humour, and the exercise of authority without resorting to humiliation or punitive means, as critical. Interestingly, although the threat of punishment was relatively inconsequential to many, students considered the use of insults, public reprimands, and shaming severe enough to be held on par with expulsion. In addition, students reported that such tactics are often more upsetting to the bystanders than those to whom they are directed.

Students interviewed by Cothran et al. (2003) identified teacher consistency, confidence, fun, empathy, self-disclosure, good communication and listening skills, caring relationships, respectful tone and manner (i.e., talking with students not at them), role modeling, and firm but not mean standards, as essential for educators. Students suggested that student respect was lost when teachers resorted to threats or aggression, raised their voices, or lost control. Despite a wide demographic and school context, student responses were strongly consistent. Cothran et al. noted, “The interpersonal and communication skills described by the students are largely missing components of teacher education programs. Effective communication training might be expanded to include active listening, questioning, enthusiasm, and conflict resolution skills” (p. 440).

Crowley (1993) found that personal relationships, humour, asking for student opinion, answering questions, clear expectations (both academic and behavioural), were important to a group of adolescents labelled behaviourally disordered. Conversely, she found that teacher rigidity, overuse of discipline, rule enforcement, negative regard, and use of punishments eroded relationships and resulted in pervasive student anger and acting out. These findings were confirmed by Pomeroy (1999) in a study based on interviews with 33 students who were excluded from school. Crowley concluded,

> Positive attitudes toward teachers may lead to positive attitudes toward the subject matter and toward school in general. These attitudes may lead to a greater probability that a student with a behavioral disorder may graduate from high school and become a productive member of society. (p. 147)

Chiu and Tulley (1997) found that the majority of 712 students preferred a confronting–contracting approach by their teachers. This is an interactive approach that encourages negotiation and student input. The authors found the low number of students who preferred "rules–reward–punishment" (¶ 5) an unexpected development. According to Chiu and Tulley's research, the rules–reward–punishment approach is utilized by most schools. The third approach, "relationship-listening" (¶ 5) also had puzzlingly low scores. Chiu and Tulley speculated that perhaps students perceived it as too tolerant or that it lacked comfortable boundaries. However, it is interesting to note that other researchers have indicated that students considered most at risk tend to respond best to this approach (Greene, 2008; Thorson, 1996). Paradoxically, Greene noted that these are the students who are most likely to experience interventions based on rules and punishment.

It is clear that there are common themes that students share with respect to what they believe is effective classroom management. Students want engaged, caring teachers who both

listen and provide clear expectations. Students would like to be included in decision making, asked for their opinions, and, above all, to be respected. Finally, students want to have fun.

Hostage (Crisis) Negotiation: Structures, Models, Policies, Attitudes, Beliefs, and Skills

History and Context

Until 1973, interactions between law enforcement and hostage takers or barricaded individuals were conducted in two ways: the demand for surrender or a tactical intervention—sometimes known as a contain, chemicals, or SWAT approach (Strentz, 2006). The 1971 hostage taking in Attica prison that resulted in the deaths of 39 people and the deaths of 11 Israeli hostages and 4 Arab terrorists that took place in Munich during the 1972 Olympic Games led to questions regarding the efficacy of such approaches (Bolz & Hershey, 1979; Hammer, 2007; Ireland & Vecchi, 2009; Rogan & Hammer, 2006; Rogan, Hammer, & Van Zandt, 1997; Schlossberg, 1975, 1979, 1980; Schlossberg & Freeman, 1974).

Dr. Harvey Schlossberg, a psychologist and police officer with the New York City Police Department (NYPD) was asked to review past incidents and make recommendations for engagement that would minimize the possibility of violence and loss of life. With Frank Bolz, also of the NYPD, Dr. Schlossberg formulated a radical new strategy, which would later be called the “New York Plan” (Hammer, 2007, p. 21). The suggested model was based on communication strategies commonly used in psychotherapy (Charles, 2007; Schlossberg, 1979). The New York Plan was first implemented in 1973, during a hostage incident in a sporting goods store in New York City. The incident was resolved without tactical intervention, and although one police officer lost his life, the approach was considered successful (Schlossberg & Freeman, 1974). Since that time, countless law enforcement practitioners worldwide have been trained in communication-based negotiation (Rogan & Hammer, 2006). Although most theories, principles,

and guidelines utilized by negotiators worldwide were developed by the FBI through its Crisis Negotiation Unit, a part of the Critical Incident Response Group in Quantico, VA (Goergen, 2006), their origins are credited to Schlossberg and Bolz (Rogan et al., 1997). The following sub-categories outline definitions, considerations, and skills currently taught internationally.

Crisis Negotiation

Hammer (2007) suggested that hostage negotiation is more accurately defined as crisis management. Slatkin (2006) defined a crisis as, "A personal difficulty that overwhelms, or threatens to overwhelm, a person's resources and coping ability or capacity" (p. 5). Crisis (or hostage) negotiation is the process whereby an outside intervener attempts to de-escalate or disarm an individual and bring closure to a hostage or barricade event through verbal means (McMains & Lancely, 2003). Goergen (2006) outlined the philosophy of crisis negotiation he believed necessary for interveners to adopt as: (a) self-control: the negotiator must control his or her emotions; (b) approach: de-escalate to lower tension; (c) empathy: see through the eyes of the subject; (c) process: listen; and (e) basic human need: security, recognition, control, dignity, and accomplishment (p. 18). In addition, Goergen noted that the objectives of negotiation must include attention to the development of a climate conducive to anxiety reduction, good rapport, meaningful dialogue, helpful problem solving, and verbal containment.

Dynamic Inactivity

One of the key components of Schlossberg's plan stood in counter-intuitive opposition to the action imperative of law enforcement (McMains & Lancely, 2003). In an address given to a group of police negotiators in Calgary, Alberta, Schlossberg (1975) stated, "There is always that constant pressure—I must do something, I must take action . . . sometimes doing nothing is better than doing something . . . we call it dynamic inactivity" (p. 9). Dynamic inactivity,

according to Schlossberg, places the onus for activity on the subject. In other words, the negotiator takes his or her cues from the subject. Schlossberg (1979) noted, “You deal only with what is happening in front of you, nothing more. You don’t read into it, and you don’t add to it” (p. 210). Dynamic inactivity allows the negotiator to slow the process down, or go slow to go fast (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2003, see also McMains & Lancely, 2003), avoid becoming reactive, and engage the hostage taker in effective communication (Rogan and Hammer, 2006; McMains & Mullins, 2006; Schlossberg, 1975).

Thought Interruption

Folger et al. (2005) noted that there are times when interveners in a conflict situation should consider doing “the opposite of what’s expected” . . . [since] doing the unexpected can produce surprising results” (p. 289). Doing the unexpected is a strategy referred to by negotiators as thought interruption. In the book *Verbal Judo*, Thompson and Jenkins (2004) provided an example of innovative intervention in a domestic dispute: Unable to interrupt the couple’s argument, the negotiator sat down, picked up a newspaper and began using the couple’s telephone to follow up on want ads. Shocked and puzzled by the tactical non-sequitur, the couple ceased fighting. Bolz and Hershey (1979) recounted a similar instance in which a suicidal subject with a small child in his arms was diverted from jumping off the edge of a rooftop. Although the day was sweltering, the negotiator asked if the subject expected snow. The use of an unrelated question interrupted his train of thought, allowing for a safe resolution of the incident. The efficacy of this redirective technique is formally supported by brain research and is discussed in more detail later in this chapter (Goleman, 1995; Goulston, 2010; Lynch, 1985).

Communication-Based Strategies

In order to successfully resolve crisis incidents, contemporary hostage negotiators rely on a series of communication-based strategies. The *Hostage Negotiation Study Guide*, compiled by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (2010), listed the following communication skills as essential for crisis negotiators: active listening, normalizing, using "likeability" as influence, mirroring, validation, probing, and finding common ground. Rather than removing options—something commonly done in school discipline programs—the authors asked, "*Is this a negotiable incident, or can it be made into it*" (p. 4)?

Scholars and practitioners have identified relational attunement (empathy), rapport-building, active listening, and attention to face issues as central aspects of successful negotiation (Burgoon & Hale, 2009; Donohue, Ranesh, & Borchgrevink, 1991; Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2005; Froman & Glorioso, 1984; Goergen, 2006; Greenstone, 2005; Hammer, 2007; Hammer & Rogan, 2006; Ireland & Vecchi, 2009; Kohlrieser, 2006; Madrigal, Bowman, & McClain, 2009; McMains & Mullins, 2006; Rogan & Hammer, 1995; Rogan et al., 1997; Slatkin, 2005; Taylor & Donald, 2003; Thompson, 2001; Van Hasselt, 2006). Communication-based strategies, as they are used in hostage negotiation, are based on a larger understanding of the dynamics of both escalation and de-escalation. These strategies have their roots in the fields of psychology, communications, and conflict analysis (Charles, 2007; Hammer, 2007).

Active Listening

International mediator Bernard Mayer (2004) provided a good working definition of active listening: "Communication needs to be interactive to be effective . . . this means we have

to listen as we deliver a message, and deliver feedback as we listen" (p. 123). Purdy and Borisoff (1997) defined listening more broadly as, "The active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering and responding to the expressed (verbal and nonverbal) needs, concerns and other information offered by other human beings" (p. 8). According to Purdy (1997), an understanding of the nature of listening must include five basic premises. First, that listening is a learned and teachable skill; second, that it is a dynamic process; third, it is an active process; fourth, it must involve body and mind working together through both verbal and nonverbal processes; and fifth, that listening facilitates receptivity to "the needs, concerns and information of others, as well as the environment around us" (p. 7).

Although comparatively little research on the precise nature of listening exists (Stevens, 2009), what we do know is that it is both a cognitive and a physical process. James Lynch (1985), a co-director of the Psychophysiological Clinic and Laboratories at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, drew "a connection between human communication and the cardiovascular system" (p. 5). Through the use of sophisticated computer technology, Lynch noted that when human beings speak, blood pressure increases, heart rate speeds up, and blood vessels are altered. "Conversely, when one listens to others speak or truly attends to the external environment in a relaxed manner, then blood pressure usually falls and heart rate slows, frequently below its normal resting levels" (p. 5). This research has important implications for those who seek to understand the process of de-escalation. For example, Kohlrieser (2006), noting Lynch's research, extrapolated what Lynch had found into his own work as a trainer of hostage negotiators:

> So when a hostage negotiator asks a question requiring the hostage taker to listen, if the hostage taker does listen, he begins to lower his blood pressure and heart rate . . . the hostage negotiator uses questions to focus . . . and to lower the states of arousal, blood pressure, and heart rate by helping to regulate listening. (Kohlrieser, 2006, p. 145)

Kohlrieser went on to note that although a subject may be speaking, “answering a question is a form of listening” (p. 145) and is, therefore, a useful de-escalation technique. Others have suggested that causing a person to listen by asking them a question causes a shift from sub-cortical to cortical (or more rational) thinking (Goleman, 1995; Goulston, 2010).

Greenstone (2005) considered listening “basic to successful communication” (p. 131), but noted that learning to listen well requires practise and is not necessarily a simple process. However, Thomlison (1991) cited a study that found that teaching active listening skills to a group of nurses for “as little as six hours . . . resulted in significant increases in skill levels” (p. 3), suggesting that the process is not as arduous as some suggest. Skilful listening, Greenstone (2005) added, allows the negotiator to learn more about the subject, build relational trust, and avoid making dangerous assumptions.

The term active listening typically describes a series of skills contained within the broader lexicon of listening and consists of a combination of “listening . . . sharing . . . [and] action” (Slatkin, 2005, p. 24). The specific skills that comprise active listening were initially identified by Carl Rogers (as cited in Thomlison, 1991; see also Phillips, 1999), and include paraphrasing, reflecting, summarizing, probing, confronting, information-giving, self-disclosure, minimal encouragers, and immediacy (Slatkin, 2005). Each of these can help foster mutual understanding, the development of empathy, the creation of rapport, and can lay the groundwork for mutual problem solving. These skills are a central component of crisis negotiation training (Burgoon & Hale, 2009; Charles, 2007; FBI, 2003; Goergen, 2006; Hammer, 2007; McMains, 2002; McMains & Lancely, 2003; Noesner & Webster, 1997; Nugent & Halvorson, 1995; Rogan & Hammer, 2006; Slatkin, 2005; Strentz, 2005; Thomlison, 1991; Van Hasselt, 2006; Wiseman, 1996).

Webster (2000) elaborated the skills most necessary in active listening: minimal encouragers (I see, hmm), paraphrasing (restating what someone has said in our own words), emotion labelling (tentatively identifying the emotion displayed), mirroring (restating the last words of what the individual has said), summarizing (periodically encapsulating the speakers main points and the emotional content), effective pauses (using silence to elicit more disclosure), open-ended questions (questions that encourage the exchange of more information), "I" messages (avoiding blame and helping to personalize the negotiator through self-disclosure), confrontation (pointing to discrepancies between behaviour and words), and reframing (restating negative communication in positive terms).

Noesner and Webster (1997) stated, "Active listening represents a powerful tool to stimulate positive change in others" (p. 3) and further noted that active listening was a tool of influence, paradoxically allowing negotiators to "talk an expressive subject into surrendering largely by listening" (p. 6). Hammer (2007) was concerned that this assertion did not actually describe how influence took place and that it might in fact imply that "active listening skills can act as 'magic bullets'" (p. 103). Hammer preferred the more encompassing term "supportive communication" (p. 104), which was first suggested by Burleson and Goldsmith (as cited in Hammer, 2007). Burleson and Goldsmith (as cited in Hammer, 2007) suggested that it was not active listening per se that de-escalated a subject, but the subject's subsequent reappraisal of the incident (p. 103).

Through extensive analysis of negotiation transcripts, Hammer (2007) observed that, when under duress, subjects typically presented in one of four ways: with (a) substantive, or concrete, tangible demands; (b) attunement, or relational concerns; (c) face needs, or the desire to be perceived in positive ways; and (d) emotional distress, or the level of emotional arousal

during the incident (p. 225). Hammer identified these as “frames” (p. 224), which he then defined as, “The lenses or interpretive sets through which people perceive and respond to a particular situation, issue or problem” (p. 224). This term corresponds to Winslade and Monk’s (2008) notion of “narrative” (p. 1). Earlier, Noesner and Webster (1997) identified two frames, which they referred to as substantive and expressive. These frames have been extensively referenced in the negotiation literature and are widely taught in training programs. While Noesner and Webster’s definition of the substantive frame paralleled Hammer’s definitions of the substantive frame, the notion of the expressive frame is more finely and specifically realized in the three categories of Hammer’s rendition.

With these four frames in mind, Hammer (2007) identified three crucial first steps of supportive communication. First, he stressed the importance of the negotiator accurately identifying the subject’s presenting frame. Second, the subject should be encouraged to tell their story while the negotiator listens non-judgmentally. Finally, the negotiator must “respond to the subject’s subjective emotional experience” (p. 104) by matching the identified frame with appropriate responses, thereby facilitating development of an empathetic bond and reducing emotional distress. Again, Hammer noted that active listening was not always the preferred method of interacting with the subject and under some circumstances could actually be counterproductive. For example, Hammer noted that a subject presenting with substantive demands might actually escalate when asked a question about his or her emotional state. This caution was echoed by several researchers (Madrigal et al., 2009; McMains & Mullins, 2005; Misino, 2006). Madrigal, et al. (2007) noted, “Immediate application of active listening techniques may not be appropriate or may elicit a mistrustful or angry response from the hostage taker” (p. 129). They note that it may be more effective to attempt to establish rapport through

exploration of more neutral topics first. Nugent and Halvorson (1995) further suggested that if a practitioner paraphrases a “distorted or inaccurate” (p. 153) interpretation of the situation, he or she risks validating “that interpretation and facilitate[ing] the development of maladaptive affective states” (p. 153). Le Baron (2002) also warned against a globalized use of active listening; however, her concern was that negotiators could become reliant on a set of pat skills rather than a genuine desire to connect with the individual. Mayer (2004) agreed, “good communication stems from intention, not technique” (p. 120).

Although the research to date has clearly identified the essential nature of listening in the negotiation process, and further supports the skilful use of active listening, the above-cited work suggests the need to carefully consider issues of timing, intent, authenticity, and context. Active listening, when misapplied, can be experienced as manipulative and may even impede the ability of the negotiator to respond effectively. As Hammer (2007) noted, it must not be seen as a magic bullet.

Relationship and Rapport

Relationship, rapport, and empathy are the lynchpins upon which contemporary crisis management rests. In the absence of an authentic relational bond, successful resolution is considered unlikely (Donohue et al., 1991; Donohue & Roberto, 1993; FBI, 2003; Folger et al., 2005; Goergen, 2006; Hammer, 2007; Kohlrieser, 2009; McMains & Mullins, 2006; Rogan & Hammer, 2006; Rogan et al., 1997; Slatkin, 2005; Strentz, 2006; Van Hasselt, 2006). Donohue and Roberto emphasized the importance of rapport and relationship development and claimed, “Creating a relationship during negotiation is actually an implicit negotiation itself” (p. 176).

Not much research is available regarding exactly how relationships are built during negotiation, but the key appears to be listening (Bohl, 1997; Goulston, 2010; Womack & Walsh,

1997). More is known about how relationships are damaged. Womack and Walsh, for example, cautioned negotiators to avoid the use of threats or coercion. Weaver (1997) pointed out, "The threat of punishment often causes the same psychological reactions as actual punishment . . . our perception of reality, not reality itself, determines behavior" (p. 123). In addition, negotiators observed that relationships could be damaged by inappropriately offering advice, judging, patronizing, arguing, interrupting, lecturing, demeaning, criticizing, making assumptions, becoming authoritarian, providing ultimatums, directives or deadlines, making false promises, lying, saying no, challenging and confronting, using loaded words, being defensive, and attempting to solve problems prematurely (Greenstone, 2005; McMains & Mullins, 2006; Noesner & Webster, 1997; Schlossberg, 1979; Strentz, 2006; Thompson, 2001).

Thompson, a trainer of law enforcement professionals and hostage negotiators internationally, developed a comprehensive communications training program he called *Verbal Judo* (Thompson & Jenkins, 2004). In the book of the same name, Thompson and Jenkins cautioned against using the following common phrases under any circumstances: "come here . . . you wouldn't understand . . . because those are the rules . . . it's none of your business . . . calm down . . . what's your problem . . . you never, or you always . . . I'm not going to say this again . . . I'm doing this for your own good . . . why don't you be reasonable" (pp. 47–54)? Thompson and Jenkins noted that these phrases almost always result in an escalation of conflict.

Empathy, Authenticity, and Self-Management

The word empathy has roots in Latin and Greek and means "to see through the eye of the other" (p. 63) or, alternatively, to feel into (Thompson & Jenkins, 2004; see also Goleman, 1995). Le Baron (2002) posited empathy as "essentially relational" (p. 226) and noted that "empathy is the capacity to think, imagine, and feel with another" (p. 227). Thompson and

Jenkins stated that to see a person as they see themselves is the "true essence of empathy" (p. 22).

According to Frans de Waal (2009), a primatologist, human beings are hard-wired for empathy. He believed that empathy operates viscerally, emotionally, and intellectually, allowing us insight into not only what a person does, but also why a person would take that action. Empathy gains us entry into an individual's view of him or herself. Pragmatically put, "empathy is the process by which we gather information about someone else" (p. 88). This information, it is suggested, provides negotiators with the necessary means to first join with, and then to help de-escalate a distraught individual.

How is genuine empathy created during crisis events? How is it that negotiators are able to forge authentic bonds with individuals they may not necessarily like or approve of? Most of us believe that empathy under these circumstances is impossible. Kohlrieser (2009) disagreed:

> It is a myth that bonding occurs only with people we like. In fact, it is crucial that we learn to form and maintain bonds in ways that allow a relationship to exist even in the face of profound differences or serious conflict. Hostage negotiators are able to negotiate with desperate people because they are able to form bonds with them, irrespective of the acts that such individuals may have committed. (pp. 43–44)

Le Baron (2002) concurred and further suggested that it is often through listening to each other's stories that empathy is built. She herself relied upon a story to illustrate the power of this idea. Le Baron recounted the experience of a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. While interviewing a white leader of the apartheid movement in jail about the murders of three men, this black anti-apartheid activist shocked herself by instinctively responding to his emotional story by reaching out to touch his right hand. "In the moment they touched," wrote Le Baron, "her heart acknowledged his humanity, despite the blood of others on his hands" (p. 226). Empathy, it seems, may be invoked involuntarily as

people enter into each other's stories. However, for negotiators, empathy is also something they must create consciously.

Intellectually understanding the importance of empathy is one thing; remaining empathetic under threat is another. Authentic perspective taking in the face of difficult behaviour can be challenging. Thompson and Jenkins (1993) noted, "Deflecting verbal abuse and offering empathy in the face of antagonism" (p. 67) represented the ultimate communication challenge. However, these authors went on to state, "If you cannot empathize with people, you don't stand a chance of getting them to listen to you, much less accepting your attempts to help—sincere as you may be" (p. 67).

Cloke (2001) observed, "The purpose of empathy is not to excuse destructive behavior, but to separate the person from the problem, disarm judgments, and consider what might lead them to do the same" (p. 26). In order to reduce defensiveness and facilitate de-escalation, Goulston (2010) suggested that it was far more helpful to move into and empathetically explore the negative mindset of an individual rather than attempt to argue them out of it.

The literature that links empathy and crisis negotiation suggests that the ability to self-manage is a critical precursor to both. Bohl (1997) stated,

> To succeed as a negotiator, the individual needs to maintain a balance between two opposing forces inherent in crisis situations. On the one hand, it is important to be able to establish some emotional distance from the situation, to exist in a state of "detached concern." Otherwise, the negotiator can lose control of the situation. On the other hand, the individual needs to be psychologically open and personally involved to establish a trusting relationship with a hostage taker who may be upset and irrational. (p. 45)

Slatkin (2005) stressed the importance of setting aside personal opinions and "seeing the individual for what he/she is, a hapless person with a painful dilemma, who has, however misguidedly, attempted to solve it by creating a public crisis" (p. 56). Schlossberg (1979) added that "if you accept what he's doing as understandable—crazy in your terms, but understandable

to him—then you can learn with him, because what he is doing is purposeful, understandable and goal directed" (p. 17).

Self-management is usually thought of as the process of controlling or suppressing negative reactions towards events or persons. While there may be times when negotiators must do this, this literature implies that a deeper process is necessary. By suspending judgment and listening carefully to the subject's story, the negotiator effectively changes his or her perception of the individual and begins to see the coherence and understand the rationale for their behaviour. This allows genuine empathy to be built. Mayer (2000) noted that, although sometimes difficult, "maintaining the essential humanity of the person with whom one is in deep conflict . . . is one of the keys to productive communication in disputes" (p. 131).

Face

Much research has been conducted regarding the importance of face considerations for negotiators. Folger et al. (2005) succinctly described face as "*the communicator's claim to be seen as a certain kind of person"* (p. 145). "Positive" (Folger et al., 2005, p. 146) face was defined further as arising from the need for belonging, respect, and approval; "negative" (p. 147) face was defined as the need for autonomy and freedom from the interference of others. Face, as Rogan and Hammer (1994) pointed out, is "a socially created affect; one that is wholly dependent on interaction with others" (p. 39). As such, saving face can be described as the effort to maintain social esteem and standing, while loss of face comes about as a result of public embarrassment or humiliation. Ting-Toomey and Takai (2006) proposed that, especially during times of conflict,

> *face* is tied to the emotional significance and estimated calculations that we attach to our own social self-worth and that of the others' social self-worth. It is therefore a precious resource in communication because it can be threatened, enhanced, undermined, and bargained over—on both emotional reactive level and cognitive appraisal level. (p. 701)

Ting-Toomey and Takai stressed that face issues are present in all communications and, consequently, cannot be ignored. In addition, interveners must recognize that the notion of face goes beyond what is happening during the presenting conflict and can include less obvious, but equally important, cultural and familial roles and considerations (Hammer, 1997, 2004; Le Baron, 2002; Ting-Toomey & Takai, 2006).

In a comprehensive study of face-work issues as they relate to hostage negotiation, Rogan and Hammer (1994) found that most negotiators spent the majority of their time assisting subjects to restore, or save, face. In contrast, most subjects were primarily concerned with saving face for themselves (Rogan & Hammer, 1994). Folger et al. (2005) suggested that negotiators could assist subjects to save face by offering explanations for the incident, apologizing, suspending judgment, or correcting misperceptions and miscommunications in ways that allowed subjects to retain dignity. Subjects attempted to save face for themselves primarily by telling their stories.

The importance of dealing with face concerns is prevalent in crisis negotiation literature. It is stressed that negotiators who ignore the face needs of distraught individuals risk derailing negotiations (Folger et al., 2005; Hammer, 2007). The results can be tragic. For example, Hammer (2007) analyzed the transcript of an actual negotiation involving a subject who made repeated attempts to engage the negotiator in face-restoration; because the negotiator did not adequately acknowledge the need, the subject continued in a downward spiral and ultimately committed suicide.

Adopting an Alternative Narrative: Problem Solving

McMains and Mullins (2006) cautioned that premature “problem solving is a trap that a communicator should avoid” (p. 253). However, in critical incidents, it is given that, whether

temporary or permanent, some solution to the situation must ultimately be found. In this context, Webster (2008) made the distinction between "solution *focused* and solution *forced"* (p. 31) problem solving. Webster noted that the first required that the negotiator listen and work within the subject's frame of reference, while the latter was the result of negotiator imposition and should be avoided.

Webster (as cited in "Trouble in Paradox," 2008) studied 30 audiotapes of real crisis negotiations in Canada, looking for evidence of active listening techniques. Although he expected a 25% usage rate, through detailed content analysis Webster determined that negotiators used active listening only 13% of the time. This surprising discovery raised an interesting question: what enabled negotiators to remain successful despite a paucity of active listening? Webster concluded that it was the problem-solving skills of the negotiator that made this possible.

This, in turn, led Webster (as cited in "Trouble in Paradox," 2008) to consider the role of problem solving in more depth. Attempting to determine exactly what kind of problem solving was most effective led Webster (2008) to the field of brief solution-focused therapy. Solution-focused problem solving relies on the use of specific questions to assist individuals in reinterpreting their problems. These individuals are asked to recall times when they were able to handle circumstances more effectively and consider what allowed them to do this. Webster (2008) noted, "Problems are not static, they change over time" (p. 31). With this in mind, the negotiator assists the subject in reframing the issue by asking "exception" questions, such as:

> What did you do then [when you weren't in this crisis] and how can we bring some of that out now? . . . Was there ever a time in the past when this wasn't so bad? Let's look at what you were doing then. . . . If there was a miracle last night and you got what you wanted, what would it be like? (Webster, as cited in "Trouble in Paradox," 2008, p. 7)

In light of work cited earlier in this review (Goleman, 1995; Goulston, 2010; Kohlrieser, 2009; Lynch, 1985), it is important to note that this form of problem solving relies on the use of questions rather than suggestions or declaratives. McMains and Lancely (2003) confirmed the usefulness of this strategy in high stakes negotiation.

Webster (2008) noted that although specific and identifiable active listening skills were less apparent in the negotiations he analyzed, he stressed that this should not be taken to mean that listening was not occurring or that it was unimportant. Webster maintained that listening continues to be "the key element in forming the working alliance" (p. 7). It is interesting to juxtapose Webster's findings with those mentioned by Burleson and Goldsmith (as cited in Hammer, 2007), and Hammer (2007) earlier in this review. These authors also observed that de-escalation and resolution could only come about as a result of a subject's re-interpretation of his or her situation. These authors agreed that deep listening was critical to the process. However, they stressed that listening and problem solving must be anchored in a context of supportive communication. The negotiator must begin by assessing the emotional state of the individual and carefully select interventions accordingly. For example, Hammer noted that a subject experiencing sadness would most often de-escalate when the negotiator offers help. A subject exhibiting fear will respond best to reassurance and evidence of threat reduction. In the case of anger, the negotiator can assist the subject to redirect his or her attention away from the target, and in the case of shame, de-escalation can come about through acknowledgement and support. Hammer agreed that the negotiator's task was to help the subject to solve the problem. However, this was only possible after trust was established through supportive communication.

Hammer (2007) reminded us that modern crisis negotiation as a whole is firmly rooted in a social constructivist paradigm. Hammer stated, "The underlying perspective of this paradigm is

that people actively construe their social reality and this construal process is interactively situated" (p. 222). According to Winslade and Monk (2008), the active construction of social reality is accomplished through the development of narratives, which are then defined as the stories people use to make sense of their experiences. In a crisis situation, these narratives, or stories, are further seen as the explanations that are used by an individual in an effort to bring coherence to chaos. The prevailing narrative for a subject in crisis will almost certainly be one rooted in powerlessness, desperation, and hopelessness.

In order to resolve a crisis successfully, Hammer, (2007) and Winslade and Monk (2008) make clear that it is the role of the negotiator or mediator to assist the subject in changing their narrative. However, what the research also makes clear is that it is necessary for the negotiator to likewise change his or her own narrative in order to be effective. It is not enough to simply apply theories and strategies in an effort to change the other, the negotiator must intentionally challenge and replace his or her own judgments with empathy, listening, and genuine concern (McMains & Lancely, 2003). If this crucial step does not take place, negative perceptions may leak into the interchange and be communicated to the subject, often resulting in failed negotiations (D. Misino, personal communication, March 7, 2010).

Training

Currently, approximately 90% of hostage negotiators, both domestically and abroad, receive an average of 5 days of training, typically delivered by the FBI (Hammer, 2007). Since its initial development in 1973, both training content and delivery have remained remarkably consistent.

Slatkin (2006) considered crisis negotiation both a science and an art, and stated that both could be taught and learned. Role-playing is identified as the training method of choice by many

researchers (Hare, 1997; McMains & Mullins, 2006; Slatkin, 2006; Strentz, 2006; Van Hasselt, 2006; Van Hasselt, Romano, & Vecchi, 2008; Weaver, 1997). Schlossberg (1975) noted the value of staging a variety of scenarios and added that "the feelings you experience in role playing are exactly the same [as in real life], but the time frame isn't" (p. 64).

Leviton and Greenstone (2002) were concerned that role-play alone might not be enough. They suggested a broader range of teaching opportunities, including dialogue, practise, simulations, communication exercises, negotiation techniques, crisis intervention practise, diagnostic skill training, and interpersonal relationship training (p. 23). Rogan and Hammer, (1994) identified communication skills training, assessment of emotional state, and resolution strategies to be most important to negotiation teams. Hare (1997) recommended flexible strategies beyond a simple list of "do's and don'ts" (p. 152); including analysis of recorded footage coupled with extensive debriefing sessions. Weaver (1997) stated that training "should occur in interactive formats, permitting and encouraging constant dialogue with students regarding actual cases and should include spontaneous demonstrations to illustrate techniques" (p. 159). Madrigal et al. (2009) recommended training in "lesser known influencing techniques as well as often over-looked methods of establishing initial dialogue and the surrender process" (p. 131). McMains and Lancely (2003) emphasized the need for negotiators to continually practise communication skills during periods of non-crisis.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the field of crisis negotiation has steadily moved away from diagnostic profiling of personality types. For many years, profilers with a mental health background were used to assess the communication of crisis subjects and recommend strategies based on those assessments (Hammer, 2007; McMains & Mullins, 2006; Slatkin, 2006). Negotiators were trained to respond accordingly. Hammer suggested that such profiling

may be inaccurate, since it is often difficult to distinguish between a distraught and a mentally disordered individual, and it may lead the negotiator to act upon faulty assumptions based on generalizations about the subject's pathology. While some profiling persists in current training programs, the emphasis today is on helping negotiators learn to assess what is occurring in the moment and to respond accordingly.

Summary of the Literature Review

There continues to be considerable disagreement within the educational sector regarding exactly what is required to address the difficult concerns arising from student disruption. This literature review showed that many schools support programs based on pragmatic, management premises favouring the application of rewards and punishment. Unfortunately, although many claim to be positive, most continue to operate from a deficit perspective, with an assumption that while interventions should be made supportively, it is ultimately the student who must change to fit the school. Others suggest that antidotes to disruption will not be found within the code of conduct, but instead through the creation of more interesting, relevant, and self-directed curricula. In this instance, it is the school that must change to fit the student. However, neither of these approaches is likely to eliminate disruption entirely, since interactive conflict is unavoidable.

It is clear that new ideas are necessary to assist educators to effectively engage with students during conflict. Recognizing and normalizing the idea that issues will always arise between students and educators may be an important first step in reframing the matter. Understanding difficult interactions as legitimate conflict suggests first that conflict may actually be constructive and not necessarily something to be avoided, and second that both parties share responsibility for change. This understanding may help to situate students and educators as allies

rather than adversaries. However, there are virtually no models in either pre-service or in-service training programs that currently frame student–teacher issues in this way, and little is available to help educators to learn and practise the interpersonal skills that appear most needed.

Perhaps assistance can come from unexpected places. In examining the educational policies and practices most likely to contribute to disruptive student behaviour, Hyman and Perone (1998) warned that a move towards a law-enforcement orientation by schools was a move in the wrong direction. Ironically, it is law enforcement to which I have turned for solutions. However, hostage negotiators comprise a segment of law enforcement with a different focus. Instead of applying a series of cascading punitive strategies, hostage negotiators rely on words to de-escalate disruptive individuals. Instead of applying an action imperative, negotiators use dynamic inactivity and respond to the situation rather than react to it. Hostage negotiation tactics are non-coercive and non-avoidant, and they rely on communication and relationship-building to create change. The hallmarks of modern crisis negotiation include active listening techniques, self-management strategies, and the development of authentic rapport and empathy. Negotiators insist that although these are skills that must be learned and practised, the process is deceptively simple, and that it works (D. Misino, personal communication, March 5, 2010).

At worst, the use of empathic approaches in education has been criticized as placation, with the underlying assumption that empathy and accountability cannot coexist. At best, these approaches have been considered time-consuming and inefficient (Canter, 1988). These claims are countered by hostage negotiators, who insist that this approach is not only practical, but also essential, and that accountability need not be sacrificed with its use. As for the claim that such methods take too much time, negotiators must build relationships with unknown subjects within the first 15 to 45 minutes of an incident (Dolan & Fusilier, 1989). The results speak for

themselves. It is estimated that as many as 90% of hostage negotiations are successfully resolved (Kohlrieser, 2006).

Ron Garrison (personal communication, October 20, 2009), an international consultant on issues of school safety, stated, “Educators routinely do things to confront students that hostage negotiators would not dream of doing.” Garrison believes that solutions will not be found through the application of stricter policies and more technology, but through the development of positive and caring relationships. This study attempts to forge a link between the methods and philosophies used in hostage negotiation and those used in the educational sector. It is hoped that what is learned here can provide both the skills and justification needed for the use of non-coercive and non-avoidant alternatives in classroom management.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research project synthesized the experiences and perspectives of educators and hostage negotiators combined with the additional perspective of high school students. In this study, I utilized a qualitative, action research approach with an emphasis on phenomenology. It is anchored in a social constructivist paradigm.

Theoretical Framework and Researcher Bias

Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) defined a theoretical framework as, "The set of beliefs about psychological and social processes with which you approach your research study" (p. 46). Auerbach and Silverstein further stated, "Theoretical frameworks determine . . . bias" (p. 46). By acknowledging theoretical orientations at the outset, the researcher is forced to confront and then mitigate a lack of objectivity throughout the research process.

Social constructivism has a long history of application in educational research (Kim, 2001). There are several assumptions inherent in this framework. The first suggests that reality is a "social invention" (Kim, 2001, p. 2) created in concert with others, "constituted . . . through language; and . . . organized and maintained through narrative" (Matthews, 2003, What is Constructivism section, ¶ 2). Second, that knowledge and meaning are likewise constructed with and by human beings, and third, that learning is a social process that takes place in an interactive context.

With the social constructivists, I believe that behaviour, like learning, takes place relationally. This suggests that attempts by one person to change the behaviour of another without examining the nature of the interaction will be ineffective. Second, any analysis of student behaviour within an educational context that does not acknowledge the role of power in adult–child relationships will be incomplete. Foucault (1980) asserted that the people who hold

power in a society are tacitly given the right to define what is true for all its citizens. Educators hold both referential and authoritative power in schools (Mayer, 2004). Therefore, when disagreements between teachers and students take place, teachers retain the authority to define the nature of the disagreement. The ability to frame what might be a relational conflict as a behaviour problem locates that problem within the student and further implies that the onus for change is on the student.

In this study, I have challenged beliefs about behaviour held among some in the educational sector that suggest that the most effective way to manage disruptive students is through the use of rewards and punishment. However, such a challenge could itself be challenged if the design of this study does not contain elements that work to mitigate bias. These design elements are further explicated in the description of the methodological approach that follows.

Research Ethics

Approval was received from the Royal Roads University Research Office and the School of Peace and Conflict Studies prior to any research being conducted. The required Royal Roads University ethics documents were prepared and submitted following approval of the first proposal. In April 2010, an amendment was made to the ethics document to approve inclusion of minor student interviews.

Methodology

Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) defined qualitative research as, “Research that involves analyzing and interpreting texts and interviews in order to discover meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon” (p. 3). This study was well suited to use a qualitative

approach, as it was an attempt to understand and then compare the experiences and approaches of groups that do not normally come into contact with one another.

A simple definition of action research is “learning by doing” (O’Brien, 2001, Definition section, ¶ 1). Action research is often conceptualized as an iterative spiral that includes the identification of an initial idea or problem, fact finding related to that problem, a planning process based on facts found, an exploratory action and, finally, a process of evaluation. Smith (2007) summarized the approach as looking, thinking, and acting. It should be noted that I was not a direct protagonist in either the negotiation or the educational settings I chose to look at. My role was to facilitate the transmission of information from one field to another while documenting the process for academic research purposes.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) stated, “A phenomenological study is a study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation” (p. 139). In this study, I attempted to gain such understanding through in-depth conversations with practitioners in both negotiation and education. To further round out the study, I interviewed a mixed gender group of five high school students to determine their perspectives.

Participant Selection

Research Team

After ethical approval was received, a group consisting of two experienced mediators (the President and Past President of Family Mediation Canada) and an educator with research experience were invited to become part of the research team. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) recommended using “an outside consultant who is a member of the subculture” (p. 45) that is being studied. Both mediators met this standard, as each has extensive familiarity with

negotiation strategies. In addition, one of the mediators was formerly an assistant principal of an urban high school. Details of their invitation are included in Appendix A.

Mediator research team members assisted me by providing advice and feedback, analyzing data in a parallel process during the first round of coding and theming, and engaging in a final consensus process. An experienced researcher and instructor provided advice regarding research design and reviewed the project as a whole. A variety of individuals with research experience read and reviewed various drafts of the project.

Study Participants

Participants in this study fell into three distinct groups: negotiators, educators, and students. Methods of recruitment and selection differed accordingly.

A purposive sample of five hostage negotiators and four educators were selected for interviews. As the study progressed, an additional two educators were selected for one interview each. A sample of five students was also selected at that time.

Negotiators were selected on the basis of their experience and training in communication-based approaches. The group consisted of two women and three men. A negotiator's invitation, including details of the selection criteria, can be found in Appendix B. A telephone script for negotiators can be found in Appendix C.

Educators selected for interviews, training, and implementation were asked to participate via existing gatekeeper contacts, and were secondary assistant principals in regular urban mixed-demographic public school settings. The group was gender-balanced. An educator's invitation, including details of the selection criteria, can be found in Appendix D. A researcher's letter to the educators can be found in Appendix E.

Two American educators, both male, were selected. The first is a high school teacher, a trained hostage negotiator and former federal agent, and is an international expert on school violence and safety. I contacted him personally. The second is an author and principal of a high school, and was contacted via the Internet through a reference found in Olson (2009). Their voices were included in this project for reasons noted in the limitations section of this document. Their invitation can be viewed in Appendix D.

Five high school students (three girls and two boys) were self-selected by invitation through existing contacts. More details regarding the inclusion of this group may be found in the limitations section of this document. Consent regarding minors under 19 was provided by their parents in conformity to the standards of Royal Roads University. The invitation and letter of consent can be viewed in Appendix F.

Methodological Design

This project included interviews, training, and a focus group. Hostage negotiators participated in one interview each, while educators participated in two interviews separated by a training session and a short implementation exercise. The two American educators took part in one interview each. Students took part in a single focus group. Questions for all interviews can be found in Appendices G, H, I, and J.

Negotiators

Hostage negotiators participated in individual interviews of approximately 1 hour in length. Interviews were conducted over the telephone for practical reasons, since each participant was located in a different part of North America. At the conclusion of the interviews the results were coded, themed, and collated. These results were combined with elements of the literature

review into a PowerPoint presentation. This presentation outlined approaches, strategies, and techniques commonly used by negotiators to de-escalate hostage takers or barricaded individuals.

Educators

Educators were interviewed twice. I first met with them individually at their respective schools. These preliminary interviews were designed to elicit base-line information about current formal and informal de-escalation practices utilized by these individuals within their schools and to uncover their perceptions of the efficacy of such approaches.

Several weeks after the conclusion of the first round of interviews, we convened as a group at the school of one of the participants. I presented the overview of the preliminary findings from the negotiator interviews and the review of the literature in a 2-hour PowerPoint presentation. At the conclusion of the session, I asked the educators to choose any of the approaches covered during the training session and utilize them with students, colleagues, and parents during the regular course of their work over a 2-week period.

A second cycle of educator interviews took place approximately one week after the end of the implementation period. This interview was designed to uncover educator perceptions of the efficacy of the strategies and to elicit suggestions for future use. These interviews were conducted over the telephone.

The two American educators participated in one telephone interview each. These interviews were designed to provide added international and personal perspective. These individuals did not participate in the training or implementation exercise and were, therefore, not re-interviewed.

Students

Students met with me over breakfast in a single 1-hour focus group session. The interview was loosely structured around two questions and designed to elicit their perceptions of educator approaches to disruption (see Appendix J).

Interview Preparation and Process

Before conducting any interviews or beginning the focus group, I ensured that consent forms were signed (see Appendices F, K, and L), participants were comfortable, and that everyone had enough time to proceed. I thanked them for their participation, and informed them that the interviews would be taped and transcribed, that I would be taking notes, and how the material would subsequently be handled. I assured them that confidentiality would be maintained. I reminded them of the voluntary nature of the project, and promised to send copies of the transcripts for veracity checking. Although the wording of questions was standard, the level of language was adjusted according to the circumstance. I asked all participants if they had questions for me, and answered as appropriate. I worked actively to build trust in order to minimize suspicion and social desirability responses, and strove to ensure that all data were accurately represented (Seidman, 2006).

Data Collection

I used eight interview questions for each of the negotiators and the educators (see Appendices G, H, and I). Two general questions were used for the student group (see Appendix J). In each case, questions were followed with related sub-questions in order to clarify issues that emerged during discussion. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. I took notes during all interviews.

Negotiators and Educators

I began by framing the interview in terms of objectives, namely the matter under research. The interview questions were designed to correspond to the research questions. The process was not overly structured, allowing room for discussion and any other form of contribution the participants wished to make. Although the wording was more or less standard, I made use of exploratory questions to gain understanding of issues when they did not seem clear. As Seidman (2006) argued, it is crucial to look for subjective experience and to encourage participants to tell their stories and fill out the questions with real-life examples. Seidman stressed that it is important to ask for reconstruction, not memory, by directly asking what it was like to have the experience under discussion.

I was careful to avoid leading questions and inserting myself into the conversation. Transcripts of the first two rounds of interviews with negotiators and educators showed that most of my responses could be characterized as minimal encouragers. However, during the second round with the educators, interviews took on a more conversational and speculative tone as we considered the results of the implementation together.

Students

Student questions were designed to elicit general conversation about the nature and effect of school discipline policies and teacher–student interactions. In particular, I was interested in hearing a student perspective about exactly what adult behaviour is helpful when students become upset, and what is counterproductive.

Data Analysis

Negotiator, educator, and student responses are presented separately in chapter 4. Educator responses are separated into two units of analysis—one for the initial interview and

another for the concluding interview. This was necessary due to the distinct nature and purpose of each interview cycle. All data were then synthesized in order to address the research questions.

All interviews and the focus groups were recorded. I took notes. Recordings were transcribed verbatim, coded, themed, and analyzed. I was looking for attitudinal markers and specific skill use. With students I was looking for subjective experience and attitudinal markers. I analyzed all data by initially coding into "thinking units" (Ely, 1991, p. 146) suggested by the data themselves.

I participated in a research analysis team with two experienced mediators in a parallel coding process. We met several times throughout the process to compare categories and search for emergent themes and patterns, connections, and relationships. Specifically, we handled the material in a three-step method recommended by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) by identifying relevant text, searching for repeating ideas, and finally joining them together thematically. We revisited the material until saturated (Ely, 1991, p. 178). Coding took place manually and with ATLAS.ti (Muhr & Freise, 2004) software. While software analysis does not do the work for the researcher, it is a useful aid in category creation. It "removes the drudgery" (Ely, 1991, p. 90) and provides a more systematic approach to analyzing and managing large data sets.

Reliability

Subjects were asked to review transcripts to confirm veracity, as known as member checking (Guba & Lincoln, as cited in Ely, 1991, p. 165). Through member checking, the liberal use of participant quotes, and by tying the analysis to the relevant literature, I have ensured that the study was of sufficient substance to make it relevant and understandable to an educator from another district. While perhaps not possible to transfer or generalize directly, my goal was that

the findings be useful. I compared and contrasted findings to see if the data supported my emerging hypotheses, and I stayed alert for disconfirming evidence, researcher preconceptions, and alternative explanations through thick description. Data were further triangulated by eliciting feedback and divergent perspectives from multiple sources. Researcher bias was addressed and trustworthiness sought by involving participants in the analysis and regularly seeking outside guidance and advice. Ely (1991) described triangulation as "different reports about the same event by two or more researchers" (p. 97). The event in this instance was the transcript of each interview.

Limitations of the Study

Recruiting educators through a known gatekeeper (the Superintendent of the school district) initially appeared advantageous; an informal process that allowed me to circumvent the need for a second ethics review. Working through a contact that could vouch for me facilitated quick access and allowed me to use borrowed credibility with potential participants. However, as a result, participants represented only one school district, and because they self-selected, only those with a particular interest in the topic were included.

Although five individuals expressed their commitment to participate, only four proved available. Of the four remaining participants, one became ill on the day of the training event, and was unable take part in the implementation phase. Seidman (2006) noted that there are two criteria for "enough" when it comes determining sample size. The first is sufficiency, or enough to reflect a diversity of experience. The second is saturation, or hearing the same information repeatedly. Although the interviews reached saturation, it was difficult to determine whether the group adequately represented their peers from other schools or districts. In order to mitigate this limitation, I interviewed two American educators. The first was a high school principal working

in a difficult urban New York City school, and the other a high school teacher working in an equally difficult district in California. I recognize that despite the addition of these interviews, it cannot be assumed that the perspectives raised through this study are fully representative.

Initially, I planned for an implementation period of one month. However, at the last minute, the school district voted to change dates for spring break, leaving a gap of 10 days when schools were closed. Consequently, the implementation period lasted 2 weeks, and it took a further week before we were able to make contact to debrief the exercise. Therefore, events were not entirely fresh in the minds of the participants. In response, I relied on a phenomenological analysis more than initially intended.

Finally, students self-selected through a network of friends, were all members of the same high school, and were generally “good” students. Again, this raises concerns regarding representativeness and generalizability.

CHAPTER FOUR: STUDY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings below were synthesized from over 300 pages of raw data, which I coded and themed. A total of 5 negotiators, 6 educators, 5 student participants, and 3 research team participants took part in this research project. In the case of negotiators and educators, interview data were identified by the interviewee number and the number of the interview (i.e., N-1-1, E-1-2, with N standing for negotiator and E standing for educator). The two American negotiators are identified as A and B. The students in the focus group are identified through chosen pseudonyms: Charlie, Clara, Delia, Mollie, and Murphy.

Results shown below are categorized separately. Negotiator interview results are shown first, followed by results of the two separate educator interviews (shown as Interviews 1 and 2). Data from A and B are included within the body of the first educator interview. The last section contains results found from the student focus group.

Five themes summarized what negotiators believe and practice with respect to the de-escalation of distraught individuals and the kind of training and support they have found most useful in learning these skills. These five themes emerged from the first round of educator interviews, providing an overview of current formal and informal approaches to behavioural issues in schools, an examination of current training methods, and a critique of their perceived efficacy. Two themes arose from the second round of educator interviews, summarizing experiences gained by experimenting with selected approaches recommended by negotiators. Data from the student focus group synthesized into two themes that explicated their perceptions of educator effectiveness with respect to student behaviour.

Negotiator Interviews

Theme One: Personal Qualities of a Good Negotiator

Negotiators were specific in describing desirable qualities of people who take on this work. Honesty, the ability to withstand stress, and the ability to "think on your feet"(N-2) were juxtaposed with qualities like sensitivity, empathy, flexibility, patience, caring, and sincerity. Good communication skills, intuition, and the ability to read people were identified as important. In addition, as 4-N pointed out, "Be genuine. That's important, or they'll know it when you are negotiating." 3-N stressed the importance of tempering support with strength. "You can't appear weak-willed, you can't let a person push you all over the place." Respect for the person in crisis was raised repeatedly during the interviews. "Again I keep going back to it—having the respect for the individual that you're communicating with, that's by far the most important" (5-N). The following quotes create a composite picture of the ideal negotiator:

> You want to be a sensitive person. You can't have, for lack of a better term, a hard-ass guy being a negotiator. [If] you're going to start talking like a bully, that's not going to work for you. (1-N)

> Nice voice is really important and you've got to be calm and you can't be argumentative and you've really got to listen. (5-N)

> Kind of trite, you know, "people person," "good listener," but all those things are true. I think the overriding quality is empathy. I think overall obviously you've got to be goal oriented, you have to be stubborn, and I really believe empathy is huge. (3-N)

> You want someone that is that is sincere, too. You don't want to be talking to someone and thinking, "They're just doing their job and they can't wait to go home." (5-N)

Interviewees were unanimously modest, claiming that no special skills were needed to do the work of negotiation. "So what it is that we do is not very complicated. It's really very simple strategies. This isn't tough" (4-N). However, this was contradicted by a parallel recognition that not everyone was suitable for the job. "What I find, generally speaking, [is that] the best

negotiators are not necessarily people that are considered the best interrogators. Because they're used to . . . doing most of the talking" (3-N).

> You either have it or you don't. I interviewed people who were interested in coming on, I used to ask them—it's a standard interview thing—"I want you to think of a time when you [were under] what you may consider to be extreme stress, job related or even family, but identify your situation and tell me what got you through it." This is no job for a person who shows that they've behaved badly under a stressful situation. (3-N)

The negotiators agreed that one of the prerequisites for the job was the ability to deal well with stress. All participants claimed to have a high personal-stress tolerance: "[I'm] a melodrama junkie. I love the calls with lights and sirens. I love that stuff" (5-N)!

> Generally, I would like to think that I thrive in stressful situations. I may not always necessarily be thinking at that very moment that I'm having the time of my life, but when I hear something is going on, I want to be in the middle of it. (3-N)

Theme Two: Approach

Interviewees underscored the importance of building a trusting relationship by honouring basic human needs such as dignity, respect, autonomy, security, and hope. "The most important thing is—and I repeat it all the time—is the respect issue. You have to develop some kind of relationship with your subject" (5-N). 1-N was unequivocal: "You want to build that trust [and] if you break that trust then it is all over" (1-N).

> Rapport is a huge part of what we do . . . when I teach, I tell people I don't think there's many rules. In fact there's next to no behaviour rules that are 100%. But the only one that I believe strongly is 100% is that if a person does not like or respect you on some level they won't act productively or cooperatively with you, because they won't give you the satisfaction. I really can't think of an exception to it. (3-N)

A number of important considerations emerged as participants discussed exactly how they went about developing those relationship bonds in difficult circumstances. Creating a feeling of safety was identified as the first step of negotiation. "It's got nothing to do with anything verbal, it's just showing that we're not there to attack you" (3-N).

> Traditionally, they're going to be yelling, it's going to be short sentences, but we're just going to keep working that. We're going to say, "Look, I want to help you in there but I'm not going to be able to do that unless I can get a handle on what's happened. I promise you, nobody's coming in to get you; we're here to make sure no one's hurt, and that means you, too. Why don't you tell me what's going on? I'm here to listen, and then we're going to figure out a way that we can get you out of this with no one being hurt." (3-N)

Negotiators acknowledged the need to work intentionally to create a non-adversarial atmosphere of mutual cooperation. "What we want to do is, ultimately, on a good day (which happens most of the times), we want to get this feeling going that you and I are working together to solve this whole thing non-violently" (3-N). In addition, 1-N repeatedly stressed the need to foster hope and build perspective. "Hostage takers or people who barricade themselves, I have discovered, are people that have just run out of hope completely" (1-N).

> There are different reasons why people get negative perspectives on things, and when you try to get to the core of what that is, what you try to do is point them in the direction of something that will give them hope or help. I think hope is the big thing. (1-N)

Sub-Theme 1: Communication Skills

Active listening. 3-N stated emphatically, "Active listening is absolutely huge!" "Being a hostage negotiator," stated 1-N, "is 95% about listening, 'cause most people just want to tell you what's going on in their lives." 2-N added, "You have to be able to hear the unspoken message as well as the spoken message." Although each clearly articulated the need for specific skill development and practise, several cautioned against the use of "rote skills" (N-5) and emphasized the need for a natural approach: "[You can't be] condescending. Pretend you're talking to a friend. You're going to talk . . . like a normal human being" (5-N). Another notable point concerned the use of silence: "The biggest thing they teach you in negotiation is silence. [It's] really hard for someone not to fill in the silence" (N-2).

Adjust approach and language. Although all interviewees enthusiastically endorsed active listening, there was recognition that different situations called for different approaches.

"You've got to adjust, depending on what the situation is. You've got to be able to change your methods. And it depends on . . . the people you're dealing with" (1-N). "There's no template to what we do . . . we modify . . . adapt" (3-N).

> There were times [during the prison riot] when there was very little active listening, because he was speaking on behalf of the gangsters, I was speaking on behalf of the police. These aren't warm, fuzzy guys. I knew I wasn't going to get anywhere by saying, "Tell me about yourself, tell me this, tell me that." I thought very early on, "I'm going to probably do a lot of talking," and I did. Active listening is not going to work if you've got an antisocial person who's out to rule . . . you're going to have to stand up to him, hopefully without polarizing or arguing a lot. (3-N)

De-escalate. Although negotiators described the process of de-escalation as something accomplished primarily through active listening, many of the ideas that emerged fell into categories that, while clearly identified in the hostage negotiation literature, are not generally considered components of mainstream active listening techniques. An example is thought interruption. This concept is understood in hostage negotiation literature as akin to distraction and redirection, but with an added element of counter-intuitive surprise. Negotiators provided examples.

> I was on a domestic dispute one night, and this man and woman were . . . screaming at each other . . . and anything I'm saying is just not working. So I went over to the refrigerator and began to make myself a [peanut butter] sandwich . . . and all of a sudden they don't even remember what they were fighting about! It was something they weren't expecting to see. (1-N)

> There's this guy and he's got his girlfriend on his lap [with] a big knife to her throat. We've got snipers, and they're set to take him out, but he's not stupid. He's got in behind her. So we're stuck, we can't do nothing. Then one of the snipers says, "Hey, there's blood running down her throat." And the carotid artery isn't far underneath the skin, so it's life and death. So I say—cause I know this guy has a 13 year old daughter—I say, "Look, you need to let your wife go. I know you don't like her much cause she left you, but if you kill her and then we kill you, your daughter won't have anyone, and she'll go into foster care, and you don't want that. If you let her go, I promise we'll take you to the hospital, you can get a shower"—the guy had been telling me about his life, he hadn't showered in days, he'd been sleeping in the park, and I'm thinking, "Wow, this guy's life really sucks." So I say, "We'll get you some food and get you cleaned up, and then tomorrow if you still want to, you can kill yourself." Now I don't know why I said that, but . . . the guy lets her go! And Hugh, my supervisor, he's standing there, just shaking

> his head, cause we don't do that! I guess I got him [the subject] to step back from the edge by being rational. He took a look at it. I knew he loved his daughter, and he stepped back from the edge. (4-N)

Interviewees identified a list of de-escalation "dos" and "don'ts." "One thing you don't ever want to do is lie" (1-N). 3-N stressed, "We never say no, even if a demand is unrealistic or unreasonable. We'll dangle it, but we're not going to say no" (3-N). Most importantly, according to 3-N, "You can't argue! The minute you start arguing your bubble's burst or your ship's gone down. You cannot argue!" 2-N cautioned against the use of ultimatums or deadlines through a sobering story.

> This is a case that a man had taken children hostage. He and his wife were having issues, and they got in a fight; and he is in there with those kids. And, it's time to get him out of there, tell him he's got 30 minutes or whatever it was. And so the negotiator did, and in 30 minutes, "boom" right on deadline, he killed his kids. The big lesson from that is you don't do deadlines. The lessons you learn are always from horrible tragedies. (2-N)

5-N neatly summarized a list of communication errors:

> I'm not going to be nasty, I'm not going to be condescending, I'm not going to be bossy. I'm going to be real careful with my voice. I don't want to be a nag. I don't want to [act] quickly, miss rungs in the ladder, jump to the next phase, ask the person to do something when I don't have any bond developed. And not be like the authoritarian cop. You don't do that as a negotiator. We're used to giving orders all the time on the road. "Go over there, do that." You can't do that when you're . . . with a person in crisis.

Each negotiator identified the importance of assisting a subject to regain or save face. The following vignette is an illustrative example:

> There's this guy and we went into a section of the city to violate him—that's what they call arresting someone who's violated parole—and there were about 400 people on the streets, it's the Bronx, it's midnight, this is the most exciting thing they've seen in ages. He's inside and he's barricaded, he's got a gun. We're talking and he says, "Look, I want to come out, but I can't just do that with all those guys watching, they're going to think I'm weak." So basically, he's just told me how to get him out. So I tell him, "Here's what we can do. You let my guys come in there and cuff you, and then I'll come forward and we'll walk out together. As soon as your head hits the air, I want you to come out screaming." So we get to the door, and I raise his cuffed hands up behind his back a little too high, and he yells, and I say oh sorry, man I didn't mean to hurt you, and he says no that's okay, it's got to look real. So we walk out, and he starts yelling and cursing, and that whole crowd starts up a chant, they go, "Jose, man we're with you, Jose we're with

> you." And as soon as we get in the car, he ducks down, we drive a couple blocks and I say, "You can sit up now." And he says, "Hey, thanks man." He had to get out with dignity. Saving face. (4-N)

The words hook and trigger appear often in the vernacular of the hostage negotiator. These negotiators emphasized the importance of finding conversational and relational hooks in order to build relationship. "A hook is basically something that you can relate to that the hostage taker's going through" (1-N).

> If you can find some connection, no matter how small, how tenuous, if you can grab onto that and hold onto it, maybe even keep coming back to that. Find out what he likes, what he doesn't like. If we can find out some of the things ahead of time, what are his triggers, and avoid those, if he loves his children, and maybe he's pissed off because his wife who he's holding hostage just got custody of the kids. . . . And that time that he took a trip fishing, you know, "I love fishing, there's nothing like standing on the edge of that river watching the water ripple, it's just so calming. . . ." (2-N)

The interviewees recommended avoiding or minimizing triggers that might further escalate a subject. In order to do this successfully, the negotiator must be on the alert for both verbal and non-verbal clues. "Somebody can die over this, so you have to really, really pay attention! You've got to pick up verbal cues, and see the visual cues" (2-N).

Participants pointed to the importance of keeping the subject talking as a potent way to de-escalate. "As long as they're talking, then there is a glimmer that this is going to work out" (1-N). Participants discussed the need to encourage subjects to vent, particularly in the early stages of the negotiation:

> When people act out violently, they're like a pot of water on the stove. Sooner or later it boils, but take it off the heat and you restore a state of balance, equilibrium. Whether it's a developmental crisis or an acute crisis, when they act out in this manner, by the time we get to them, they are all overflowing, or overboiling. But we're prepared, and as long as they're venting, we don't care if they're cursing or if they're yelling, if they're screaming. The question we'll ask is, "What happened today?" with "today" being a key word. Once we've let them bleed off all that emotion or despair or whatever, now hopefully we're going to start doing a bit more. We may self-disclose a bit about ourselves, we're generally going to communicate. At that point that we're going to begin to offer up alternatives to the course of action they've embarked on. (3-N)

Negotiators noted the importance of apology. “I’m going to use his language, I’m going to shoot from the hip. If I say something that offends him I’ll just backtrack and apologize for it” (3-N).

> I train people not to be afraid of conflict. I teach them to expect conflict, and learn how to get out of it. If you hit a land mine, apologize! What you’re saying is, “I respect you. And I won’t do it again.” That builds trust. (4-N)

Although negotiators did not agree on how much self-disclosure was either appropriate or advisable, they agreed that it could act as a powerful normalizing and legitimizing tool and that it was helpful in building relationships:

> Sometimes I’ve brought up personal experiences to help them relate to me. Because maybe I’ve been through the same thing they’re going through. When someone decides that they’re going to take a hostage or barricade themselves, they’ve pretty much come to the end of their rope. A lot of times you can see similarities in things that have happened in your life, whether it’s financial problems or domestic problems. (1-N)

Sub-Theme 2: Problem Solving

In a variety of ways, and through a variety of examples, negotiators continued to emphasize the need for caution in moving to problem solving. There was general recognition of the tendency among law enforcement to jump to action and the danger in doing so. Although not described or named specifically, Webster’s (2000) notion of problem solving through refocusing and the use of questions appeared well integrated into the repertoire of these individuals. For example, one negotiator told stories about two separate suicide negotiations, one involving a young mother, and the other an elderly grandfather. In both instances, he was able to save their lives by refocusing them on their children and other family members. “[I tried to] divert their attention away . . . by not being so negative; by trying to get them refocused on something else” (1-N).

Although some were unfamiliar with the term “dynamic inactivity” (Schlossberg, 1979, p. 211), all could articulate it. “Dynamic inactivity means that you are aware of what’s going on.

However, as much as you want to be doing something, you really need to just wait" (1-N). 4-N noted, "We want to get it solved fast. Sometimes that's not how it works. You got to go slow to go fast, you know" (1-N)? Another negotiator worried that the tendency to leap to solution finding could leave important issues unaddressed.

> A lot of conflict management is putting a band-aid over what the real issues are. It may be that people are afraid to pull that band-aid off for what they are going to find underneath, [so] if they can just settle this quickly, then it's no longer our problem. They only have time to put the band-aids back on, by jumping ahead to "let's solve this problem, get it out of the way." (2-N)

Sub-Theme 3: Structures

Every negotiation includes a larger team composed of command, tactical, and negotiation. Hostage negotiations are generally structured through a process referred to as contain and negotiate (Slatkin, 2005). Through command coordination, the tactical unit secures the perimeter of the site, while first responders and others on the team collect available intelligence that may assist the negotiator during conversation with the hostage taker. As most negotiations are conducted over the phone, the negotiator will have a team with him or her, providing background information and on-the-spot advice. Most central to the negotiator is the coach, or the secondary negotiator.

Each participant stressed the importance of teamwork. "The coach may hear something that the primary does not hear, and he'll write down on a piece of paper and pass it to you and say, 'Try to go this direction.' They never talk, but they always listen" (1-N). 3-N described another role for the coach: "You can't necessarily evaluate yourself in prolonged stressful situations."

Each identified the need for preparation. Prior to arriving at a callout, participants suggested that the negotiator should take steps to mentally prepare. As 5-N reported:

> The first part of the call is always the hardest: what're you going to say? I prepare myself by getting information and by breathing. You train yourself not to react to certain things. (5-N)

However, the need for preparation went beyond the moments just prior to a specific call. It was clearly a larger, ongoing process for all, involving both formalized and informal practise: "It's a tool that you got to practise all the time when you're dealing with people. You've got to hone your skills" (5-N).

> To me it's always preparing for that call that you think is looming in the horizon. When you hear about them in the news, you think, "What would I have said? What were the keys, what were the hooks, what were the triggers, where would you have been able to communicate with a guy from this background, this life?" And maybe being honest with yourself, too, saying . . . "Is [this a] situation that you just don't think you can face up to" . . . you'd have to say, "Look, I can't do this." Know yourself that way. (3-N)

Theme Three: Perspective

All negotiators saw the ability to self-manage as a crucial pre-requisite for successful negotiation. In a broad sense, each noted that the ability to maintain a state of mental and emotional equilibrium during difficult exchanges could be partially achieved by remembering the overall goal: saving lives.

> You have to realize what your goal is as a hostage negotiator. It's resolution through negotiation, that's the motto we use. You may not like that person, the person may be a criminal or whatever, but you have to realize what your goal and what your job is. (1-N)

Several spoke of the need to maintain a professional approach; however, there were some striking differences between their definitions and those commonly associated with the idea of professionalism. While all agreed that it was important to avoid taking issues personally, to "get tweaked" (4-N) or allow "buttons to get pushed" (4-N), and all noted the need to suspend judgment, they did not suggest that this should be accomplished through a distancing approach. "You have to care. No matter what these people have done, they are still a human being" (1-N). Again, the need for empathy was underscored. 3-N noted, "The key to establishing empathy is

we won't react to these guys whether they're yelling or insulting, or nasty, we're just going to let that roll off." Several participants mentioned that the ability reframe the situation as just a person in a bad place helped the negotiator to see the situation through the eyes of the subject.

> You've always got to remember that anybody can find themselves in a bad place in their lives. Whoever you're communicating with, you've got to look at it like, "There but for the grace of God." That's somebody's father, mother, brother, uncle. They have to be treated with compassion. The thing I usually close out with [in my training sessions] is I throw one slide up and that's the golden rule. I tell people, "If I had 4 to 5 minutes, this is the only slide I'd show you. If you can keep this central in your thoughts, you're going to be operating ethically and probably well in accordance with the law or policy." I really believe it's just a matter of trying to put yourself in that person's position. (3-N)

Theme Four: Training

The training described by participants was similar in both content and delivery. Role-plays, case studies, classroom work, and scenarios were cited as the primary delivery mechanisms. All had taken part in initial training programs offered by the FBI, and all participated in ongoing refresher courses throughout their careers. All of the negotiators emphasized the importance of role-play. In fact, as participant 3-N pointed out, candidates who refuse to participate cannot become negotiators.

> We get people that say, "I can't do that type of training." If people tell me that coming in at entry level, I wouldn't select them. I would say, "There's no place for you here, because we need to be able to simulate what you might be called upon to do. If we don't do it through role-play, I can't think of any other way we can do it. If you're not into rehearsing we can't plug you into the real deal." It's huge. And again you have to be careful when you draw up your scenarios that you don't put unrealistic hurdles and traps. They have to be reality based, and very carefully and closely monitored. They're very beneficial. (3-N)

However, as 3-N added, "Not everything has to be a complete role-play either. You can do communication exercises, or a scenario, we can do active listening drills." He went on to recommend volunteer training on crisis lines as the best way to hone and practise the necessary skills.

Theme Five: Advice For Teachers

At the conclusion of each interview, I asked participants to comment on whether the strategies they employed in hostage negotiations would be applicable in the education sector. The response was resounding. "I think every teacher should be trained in this" (2-N)! I have included their thoughts and advice below.

> Oh, and I think the skills, just the basic skills would help so much! Cause, really, what you've got to do . . . just bring them down a bit, get them back, a little more rational. And you've got to appreciate that it might be because his pencil's broken but he's still freaked out because all this other shit's going on. To get the situation under control doesn't always take that much, just that sincerity—hey this person is interested in me and concerned about me. I think it would be great for educators! (5-N)

> There's a fine line between police officers and teachers. It's all about dealing with people, and kids are people too. My advice would be to be a good listener, to find out what's going on. Because if there's a disruptive kid or there's something going on in class, there is usually something at the root of that. Maybe there is something going on in his life. Being an educator, there's times there's got to be discipline, but it's all about talking to the kid and not being such a disciplinarian as someone who is listening. (1-N)

> If a student's upset, now's the time to get to know them. Like negotiators, you've got a controlled environment, and you have authority figures. But it can't be a dictatorship. If you've got a student who's upset, first you have to make sure you're not taking away their dignity. Whatever you do you can't do it in front of the class. You may win temporarily but you'll lose long term. (4-N)

> If you're an administrator who's saying, "well, the code of conduct says," you may be inadvertently, while you are trying to do your job, triggering this kid. So, learning how to phrase things so it doesn't set the child off is a big, big skill. (2-N)

> You do need to be decisive—but maybe not at that moment. Asking kids if you can help won't make you look weak to other students. You have to have empathy. Unfortunately, some educators are like some law enforcement—they want to just say, "Sit down and shut up." Those aren't good negotiators, there has to be a level of mediation. (4-N)

Participant 3-N spent significant time as a law enforcement officer and a negotiator working with schools. He contributed specific comments concerning the use of zero-tolerance policies that came directly from his experience:

> I don't like when I hear we have a zero-tolerance policy . . . I think it's lazy, it's ill advised, and it's ineffective. . . . Your front-line educators have to be skilled. They have

> to have some basic knowledge of non-violent crisis intervention, active listening, and keep an eye on their students. I don't think punishment generally deters people from acting out, at least in as far as violence goes. I don't like to hear where it's a quick fix in terms of, "Okay, from now on, you're out if you do this." I think a team has to convene . . . knowledgeable people take a team approach to most of this stuff . . . if you don't have the buy in from the kid or their family then you're in trouble but, it still doesn't mean we suspend or we put [them] out. It's fatal to under-react, but overreacting I don't think is a happy story either.

Summary

Perhaps the most surprising finding with respect to the negotiator interviews was the remarkable consistency of content. With virtually no prompting, negotiator comments fell into a series of coherent repeating themes. The need for relationship development, the creation of genuine rapport, the use of active listening, and the critical importance of respect were repeated over and over in every conversation. The participants even agreed about how and when to deviate from the approaches they recommended!

Interview content corresponded in specificity and detail to the literature reviewed above. Terminology and even turns of phrase were often an uncanny echo of what I had read previously. This was particularly surprising since the negotiators represented a geographic area spanning two countries and thousands of miles. Clearly, the training they received was consistent and well articulated. As participant 3-N pointed out, although there are periodic changes within the field,

> In the final analysis I can promise you right now, they're going to come back to the same things that I was taught from Schlossberg in '86. And I swear in another 10 years I'll be able to sit down here and another guy will do the same thing and that's because people are people and behaviour is behaviour. (3-N)

Educator Interviews 1

Theme One: Qualities of an Educator

The administrator participants identified a number of essential qualities for dealing well with disruption. These included self-awareness, a calm demeanour, and the ability to avoid engaging in power struggles. "Coolness, and by that I mean temperament. They can't be taking

things, particularly with disruptive and disrespectful behaviour, personally (E-1-1). “I think that being aware of ourselves is the most important” (E-3-1). Like negotiators, the administrators identified the need for empathy and good communication skills.

> Being empathic, that’s really important with difficult kids. An understanding of the unique needs of the student. Being a good communicator. I have had staff say to me that they find it refreshing that someone with a counselling background has come into this role. They see this background as very useful in this job. (E-3-1)

Other, more general qualities included the need for ethical integrity, a strong core, and the ability to articulate values: “And you have to like people. You have to really enjoy kids and be curious and passionate . . . and an interest that you want to share, there’s the academic part” (E-4-1). E-4-1 repeatedly stressed that educators must “recognize that we’re here to enhance, we are not the experience itself.” Participant A, a high school principal, stated, “I want the kids to know me. And I must know them. That’s not just saying, “Oh, Mr. G is nice.” I try to give them many opportunities to read me. He emphasized the importance of being visible and present. “I don’t schedule meetings until after 3:30” (Participant A).

Theme Two: Barriers

The process of thinking about essential qualities prompted participants to consider not only what was helpful, but also what hindered. Concerns were raised about the possibility that certain teaching methods, teacher expectations, and systemic factors might exacerbate behavioural issues: “Some real seasoned teachers, their method is ‘stand and deliver’ and the kids just sit there. And they feel it works for them, and in some cases it does, but not often” (E-4-1). He added, “Unfortunately we put kids in a square room to sit. What we make kids do, most kids can’t do, especially boys” (E-4-1).

> The big box theory, this is what I call public education. I think it does meet the need of about 80% of the students. It hasn’t really changed in 200 years, [and] that’s a little sad. I think we do work to meet the middle, and economically, financially, and efficiently that’s probably what public education is geared to do. Trying to do things different or unique is

> a huge challenge and often not met with public approval. [For some students], it's too big, there's too many gaps, there's too much freedom, there's too many different teacher expectations and relationship concerns to cope with, they're not inspired by the curriculum . . . so they are bored. Therefore, [the student] needs to do something different, and perhaps acting out will get [them] removed from this uncomfortable situation. (E-1-1)

Participant B agreed: "I think that's the biggest problem in schooling in America, and I'd suspect in countries like yours as well. It's still rooted in 19th century pedagogy." These words directly parallel comments made by Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) found in the reviewed literature.

Despite the administrators' empathic support for teachers and recognition of the difficulties they face when confronted by difficult students, concerns about the nature of student–teacher relationships surfaced repeatedly:

> Most of the issues I deal with are about power. The teacher isn't going to give; the student doesn't want to give. But we are the adults in the relationship, so [we need to figure out] how can we back off a bit. Some teachers are not at that point. (E-4-1)

> As much as things have changed, some things have remained the same . . . if you go in blazing guns with kids, they just don't buy it. The authoritarian approach doesn't cut it. In most cases you will find that there will be a lot of resistance. (E-3-1)

> I don't want to say it's necessarily an old-school approach, but I think that people . . . will do things to inflame the situation. It's not their intention, but they aggravate it with the way they approach [it]. Maybe they are stuck in their way of looking, or just don't examine their own practice. (E-3-1)

Participant B, an international expert in school violence and an experienced high school teacher, expressed concern about the effects of what he observed as a pervasive culture of gossip and negativity within many schools: "If you sit in any teacher's lunch room within any given lunch period, you will hear negative comments about kids. We have to completely turn that around." Interviewees also noted that teacher isolation was a problematic issue that contributed to classroom management issues.

> You walk by teacher's rooms and there's paper on the windows and the doors are locked. It's their sanctuary. What goes on in there . . . don't bother me! All the more reason to

> pull the keys out and go in. . . . You have people teaching side by side [but] unfortunately there's not a lot of chat . . . they could learn a lot from each other. (E-4-1)

This conforms to what Spaulding (2005) found; participants in her study cited isolation and gossip as two teacher behaviours most likely to fuel disruption (p. 13).

Theme Three: Approach

Sub-Theme 1: Formal Approaches to Misbehaviour

While each school is required to have a code of conduct on site, educators admitted that it was typically a cumbersome document that was reviewed perhaps once a year in September, and then most often "thrown away in a binder somewhere, and the kids and the teachers don't really know about it until they get into trouble. Then the kids start arguing, 'I didn't even know this rule was in effect" (E-1-1). However, this did not necessarily mean that more informal processes for transmitting the content to students and staff were not in effect. As participant E-3-1 pointed out:

> When I started this year . . . one of the things that [our principal] focused on was a reminder of the school philosophy, which reflects our code of conduct, which is: Respect for self, others, community, and environment. It's as simple as that. And I like that because I think you really need to start with respecting yourself and from there it hopefully flows out to others in the environment and the community.

Many schools within the district appear to be in the process of adopting a School-Wide Positive Behavioural Support approach. Although the program was not identified by name, it was recognizable by the processes and structures being adopted. Interviewees had mixed reactions. One participant enthusiastically embraced the program, claiming that it had given staff much needed inroads to addressing issues, and provided a way to develop "a common language that we can [use to] interact with students about appropriate behaviour" (E-1-1).

> This is our number one program goal. Students are rewarded for positive behaviour by receiving cards. Where staff were often hesitant to interact with students about either positive or negative behaviour, now we can just walk to a person and say, "That was really great what you just did there . . . good job, here's a card" or, on the negative side of

> things, walk up to a student and say, "Hey, the way you just spoke to that kid there wasn't very powerful; what could you have done differently so that that student isn't upset?"

Participant E-2-1expressed reservations about the approach:

> We're wrestling with the role of positive reinforcement. I don't like that you reward with stuff for what you should be doing anyway. If you are internally motivated to do something anyway, it devalues it to give coupons. It takes the locus of control from an internal one to an external one. And that means if the person doing the reinforcement isn't present you might not do that behaviour—[the student] doesn't necessarily own it. And that disturbs me. But I do like the idea of being clear about what's expected. I've seen too many [situations where] students don't know what's expected at school. (E-2-1).

E-1-1 commented further on the nature of reward–punishment programs with a different perspective:

> Many of our staff would like to think that eventually the kids will intrinsically do positive things without having to receive an exterior type of reward token to do it. I've got a more balanced approach; research certainly would suggest that if you're getting positive attention and rewarded for doing positive things, then the frequency of those behaviours will tend to increase.

The difference between these two views of reinforcement programs, and even the implied views of some teachers working in E-1-1's school, echoes the ideological split explicated through the reviewed literature.

Although none of the four schools promoted strict zero-tolerance policies like the ones found in some American schools, all adhered to a "no drugs, alcohol or weapons" policy. Non-negotiables within schools varied, and occasionally appeared arbitrary. For example, teachers in one school got together and formed a zero-tolerance policy for the unauthorized use of technology, bad language, and wearing hats (not a gang issue). Participant B suggested, "One of the biggest problems with educators is they have a 152 rules. Have five, and stick to them! Keep procedures simple and avoid vague rules."

All four schools use detention as punishment, even though several of the administrators expressed skepticism regarding efficacy. One flatly stated, “They don’t work” (E-4-1). However, E-2-1 noted that although unsure of their usefulness as a deterrent,

> Detentions do serve notice that something important happened. That’s their main purpose. [To indicate] that you crossed boundaries. They can also be used as a way to connect, to find out what’s going on. One of the things I ask teachers is, “What is the lesson you want kids to learn from this?” It’s not the consequence, it’s the lesson. What’s the goal here? It shouldn’t be about us. It should be about them.

All schools employed both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. E-2-1 mentioned that some staff considered in-school suspension to be “too soft,” but when challenged those staff members were unable to come up with suitable alternatives. As to their overall efficacy, “some kids just consider suspensions a holiday . . . I’m sort of sitting on the fence still in terms of whether or not those are effective. I don’t know” (E-3-1).

> With some of the more dramatic things that were happening with the school, there were out-of-school suspensions. The student needed to be removed for a while. But we also do use an in-school suspension system here. We use removal of social time. They might be able to go to all of their classes, but during break times, when they like to interact with their friends, in those more unstructured times is when they make some poor decisions, so often they serve an in-school suspension during their break times. (E-1-1)

Time out was cited as a frequently used strategy. However, it appeared that different teachers used time-out for different purposes in different situations. Some attempted to use time-out proactively to assist active students to manage themselves, while others used it as a punishment or as a way to side-step a difficult interaction.

> I think the teachers think they need some breathing space with the child, sometimes they see it as a justifiable consequence, and [sometimes] as an escalating punishment. I think the same action can have so many ways to be viewed. It’s all about how we frame it with the student. “You are bad . . . we don’t want you anymore”. . . or “we need to do this so we can get back on track.” (E-2-1)

> Survival time out? There may well be a time in the classroom where, for whatever reason, a student may be a detriment to everyone else, and the teacher just wants him or her out. So they’ll plunk them down here in the office—kids in this school are sent to the

> office. Sometimes time out is a walk. Some teachers suggest regular walks . . . they know the kids and that they always come back. (E-4-1)

Although not frequent, expulsions occurred in each of the schools:

> If they're not buying into the rules and regulations, if they're not cooperating with teachers and interfering with the learning of others, then it's time for a change. (E-1-1)

Sub-Theme 2: Informal Approaches to Misbehaviour – De-escalation

When it comes to dealing with day-to-day issues between students and staff, the four educators outlined a variety of de-escalating strategies they utilized regularly. E-1-1 noted, "Using techniques which allow the student an escape with some respect will help greatly in terms of de-escalating a certain situation." Several mentioned the use of humour to deflect confrontation: "Often you can switch off or change [the] direction of an interaction; let yourself and the student have a bit of a giggle about it" (E-1-1). Two of the participants have advanced training in counselling and conflict resolution, which they noted as helpful.

> My counselling background comes in handy, and has worked for me to date. I have found that [validation] is very effective. I think that often they [students] just want to be heard. "Nobody's listening to me," is usually what it comes down to. I am able to usually name the feeling. And usually right away there's a shift. It doesn't mean that it's necessarily solved everything, but it's the first way I approach it. It's basic empathy. (E-3-1)

> If the kid is escalated, I have to be able to help them manage their emotions and help them de-escalate and breathe. It's really important to understand anger management. Match body language, do breathing, match intensity level and tone, and that kind of stuff. Sometimes, especially with the boys, we'll just head out the back for a walk, and if they want to start talking they can while we are walking. Sometimes we'll just sit for a while, both just slumped in our chairs. And then take a deep breath and figure [it] out. (E-2-1)

Although all four regularly mediated between students, what was sometimes more difficult was managing conflicts between students and teachers.

> [The] teacher roars down and the teacher is yelling and the student is yelling . . . that's really tricky. Tough to manage the power balance. I have to talk to the teacher first, pull the teacher aside. . . . Sometimes the teacher wants to rush . . . it's not about mediation, it's about [the teacher wanting] me telling the student. And I do say, "You're not supposed to do that." But then I'll go back and ask what led up to this and ask about other

> ways it could be handled. I do mediation sometimes, but it really depends on the teacher and how receptive they are. No one does mediation well when they are upset. (E-2-1)

Participant A observed, “Conflict is like a spark, and there’s a number of sparks that eventually turn into a fire. So the job of a teacher is to recognize the sparks.” He went on to describe his approach with students after becoming principal of a particularly difficult high school in New York City. “It is about that personal conversation, that personal interaction” (Participant A). He described using memories of his own school experience to keep his practice grounded: “I did not function well in classes when I saw the teacher did not like me. Relationships are the key. I will say it three times. Relationship, relationship, relationship” (Participant A). Participant B is an expert in school safety, and also a high school teacher. He is located across the continent from participant A, in an equally difficult school district where violence among teens happens frequently. Like participant A, he stressed the need for relationships. “If there is a serious situation going on that is life threatening or has the potential for serious injury, relationships count for everything. It’s about relationship, relationship, relationship” (Participant B).

Theme Three: Perspective

Sub-Theme 1: Self-Management

Like the negotiators, educators noted the need to self-manage. E-4-1 stated, “I won’t engage. I don’t need to save face. A kid can swear at me all he wants but I’m not going to respond” and then emphasized that in order to avoid power struggles, “teachers need to depersonalize behaviour.” Self-talk was identified as a useful strategy: “I’m trying to create language in my own head. ‘Okay, I need to figure out what has been going on here’” (E-1-1). Several participants mentioned the importance of outside and collegial support systems: “One of the things I have learned [about] dealing with a situation that has a potential to escalate, is

maintaining a sense of calmness and knowing how to access support. The key is never to be in isolation" (E-3-1).

Sub-Theme 2: Beliefs about Behaviour, Students, and the Nature of Education

By asking questions about the genesis of difficult behaviour and requesting definitions of accountability and responsibility, assumptions and theories of student behaviour were uncovered. While some administrators acknowledged that some students have difficulty understanding what is expected and, consequently, have trouble abiding by the rules, others seemed more inclined to attribute the student's actions to deliberate intent: "Okay, you chose to do this. It's a result of your poor decision making" (E-1-1).

> The student knows certain triggers that get the biggest reactions. "So, let me say some type of racial slur or let me swear or let me do something 'cause that's going to get me my biggest bang for the buck. I just had to act out, and . . . yeah, look at the attention that I got." (E-1-1)

This comment appears to reflect a belief that the student is able to control his or her actions and may have ulterior motives for behaving badly. However, other participants were not as sure. For example, E-3-1 suggested the need to look at context: "There's the trees, and then there's the forest. Some students come with certain capacities and limits of what they are able to manage." Participant B noted that it was important to remember that even when students appear to lack the inter or intrapersonal skills to manage, "If your assumption is that kids don't want to do better, then you've lost the issue." He added a warning: "If you believe that every kid is negative and just out to get you, you're going to elicit a parallel response—that they're going to get you before you get them" (Participant B).

When I asked participants to speculate on the genesis of misbehaviour their responses were divergent. For example, E-1-1 speculated that parenting and low self-esteem were the primary causes, while E-4-1 raised the issue of maturity levels.

> I would have to say that the majority of times, it's a parental problem. I see direct links with the choices that a student makes or is allowed to make either being modelled or reinforced in the home situation. And then if the student's self-esteem is just so low that any type of attention is good attention, they will act out in ways to gain our attention, whether positive or negative. (E-1-1)

> We can't forget that we're dealing with a kid, so let's not impose adult versions of accountability onto kids. What does accountability mean to kids that are 14, 15, or 16? Not that the kid doesn't understand the concept . . . but I think there's a bit of a disconnect with our adult version of accountability. (E-4-1)

In this context, E-4-1 raised an issue found in the literature, namely the influence of early experience on teacher beliefs and actions (Fang, 1996; Pajares, 1992).

> This profession is unique because everyone entering it is an expert. We've all been in the process from a young age. Essentially, teachers do to the kids what was done unto them. And that perpetuates a lot of behaviours that are rooted more in familiarity than a useful teaching practice. I think most of the time, people [who become teachers] have had a pretty successful career as a student, so they are taking concepts of accountability, reliability, and integrity that they feel they understand . . . but it doesn't transfer over to every student they work with. If you have a student who has an issue [with] accountability, I guess I would back up and ask what's driving that situation? Is it the teacher saying, "You have to be accountable to me for actions," or is the accountability to yourself [the student] for completing coursework? Is this a power thing going on between the teacher and the student, and the teacher is demanding accountability because they want to see it? There are a lot of layers that need to be peeled back. (E-4-1)

E-4-1 continued in this vein, offering another interesting insight. For some teachers, remembering early experiences might actually be an advantage in creating empathy with disruptive students: "It is refreshing to hear from a teacher who says, 'I was a bad student, and because of that I can relate to these guys'" (E-4-1).

Theme Four: Training

The administrators agreed that pre-service training in classroom management and crisis prevention, at least in Canada and the United States, is generally inadequate. "I would say it was minimal. Absolutely minimal. I don't remember a course. There may have been one or two lectures, but it wasn't much at all" (E-2-1). "Often it's not touched on at all, and if it is, it's just one quick course" (E-1-1). "I don't honestly think that I had a course. . . . I think it was

something that would have been discussed at different points and times" (E-3-1). This is strongly reflective of the literature I reviewed.

All four were unanimous in recommending more comprehensive pre-service training and practicums, with specific focus on classroom management. In addition, the value of mentorship programs was emphasized: "I think that schools need to try and create in-school mentoring programs where the new teacher is immediately linked up with a more seasoned campaigner" (E-1-1). "Knowing which support levels to go to if you are having challenges in your classroom. It's not a weakness if you're asking for support" (E-1-1).

> I think what would help teachers is insight into what the students are bringing into the classroom. I think teachers, to defend them, are so under the gun—testing, too much stuff to do, so they go boom! Get it all done. I think if we can help them understand special needs, behavioural issues, why kids do what they do . . . teacher education is so heavily focused on curriculum. (E-4-1)

Participant B shared an interesting perspective:

> I think long-term, sustained effort is the solution to the problem. And that's what we don't do in schools. We need to identify a number of topics—of which conflict resolution would be one—we need to focus on. And [we need to] continue a long-term strategic effort in that direction. Because if we don't solve those problems, we're not going to be able to teach kids anything.

E-3-1 agreed, and recommended specific in-service around conflict management:

> I think some teachers here have been blessed with not having to deal with a lot of really hard core behavioural issues. So when it comes up, and there's some difficult behaviour, their way of dealing with that is . . . I don't want to say it's not very good, but they haven't thought it through. They get annoyed, and just want to send that problem away. So I think that ongoing in-service . . . how to manage conflict with students, and sometimes a conflict with other staff, too.

Summary

These educators agreed with the negotiator group that calmness, caring, compassion, strength, and professionalism were important attributes for good educators. Like negotiators, educators noted the need for good listening and communication skills and stressed the

importance of building relationships and fostering mutual respect. However, findings from the educator interviews stand in contrast to those from the negotiator group in several respects. For example, where negotiators receive consistent training in de-escalation strategies and approaches, educators receive virtually none. Where negotiators are unanimous in their conviction that the skills they use are effective, educators express ambivalence. This study supports claims made in the literature that the ideological differences that exist within the field of education, between educators within the same schools, and even within individuals themselves make it difficult to create a unified approach to discipline.

Educator Interviews 2

I met with 3 of the 4 educators to provide them with an overview of what I had learned from both the literature and the interviews with negotiators. Following this training session, participants in this group carried out a short implementation utilizing strategies I had presented. Educators reported their experiences with a number of the ideas, but most specifically the use of questions in the problem solving process. In addition, the educators commented on the perceived usefulness of negotiation strategies in the educational setting and made recommendations accordingly.

Theme One: Strategies

Sub-Theme 1: Questions as a Form of Problem Solving

E-2-1 experimented primarily with questioning techniques. The four questions, adapted from Webster (2000; see also Dolan, 2004; Winslade & Monk, 2008), appear as follows:

1. The exception question: What's going on when X isn't happening?
2. The outcome question: Pretend you've solved X. How would your life have changed?
3. The coping question: That sounds tough. How do you manage day-to-day?

4. The relationship question: What would so-and-so say is different when you aren't doing X?

E-2-1 noted that asking exception questions "worked better for the older kids" and that "using a short time frame worked best." E-2-1 also noted, "The coping question was good for face saving" because it provided an opportunity to focus on times when the student was able to manage the situation, and it also provided a way for the student to think about the future. The following story illustrates E-2-2's point:

> There was one boy . . . a young First Nations man who has been avoiding school. He'd show up for [physical education] and a computer class, and those were the only ones. He was not doing anything towards graduating. It's been a real tough haul trying to connect with him. He'd come from an alternate program. I just [asked him] the question, saying, "That's really tough, how do you manage that you even showed up here today?" He just sat for probably three minutes or so, and he turned to me and said, "You know, I just need to be responsible for myself." And he said some amazing things. It was like it almost gave him permission to step into his own power. The tone of voice wasn't like just reciting what the adults have said. "Now, here's Lecture 32A." It sounded authentic. I don't know what his follow-through will be like, but it put it onto a much more equal footing of us talking to each other. One of the important pieces of this is space, lag-time, or quiet time. And after the person says something, being silent and just doing the minimal encouragers, so that people have time to reflect. That silence that asks to be filled. Dig a little deeper. It's almost like pouring water on sand, you need time for the water to filter through. (E-2-2)

E-2-2 observed, "One of the things that surprises kids is that they're very personal questions. [So] I ask their permission to ask them tricky questions. It's unfair to pierce that deeply without some warning." E-2-2 also found that responses to the use of questions were variable: "Some were grateful, and in a way became more optimistic. Some actually got a bit irritated. They were a little suspicious, or maybe they doubted my sincerity, I'm not sure". She speculated on the reasons for this.

> I think it was contrary to their self-image: "I'm the kid who doesn't have a lot of control over their lives, and I'm someone who shows up late, I'm someone that people get mad at a lot at school, and I let myself and people down all the time." I just wonder [if] some of them were puzzled to have that pointed out to them, "Look, this day, this day, this day

> you were here on time." One said, "Maybe the teacher just didn't mark me as late." Some of them, I think, thought I was asking about criminal activity. (E-2-2)

Many of the issues that came up for E-2-2 during the implementation period concerned attendance. Some students were surprised to note the exceptions when their attendance was better: "'Yeah, yeah, there are days that I make it!' and that was kind of like a new thought. 'Oh isn't that weird, I guess I do'" (E-2-2). Despite the varied outcomes, overall, E-2-2 found the approach useful: "I want to include this in my ongoing practice on a regular basis."

E-1-2 described an incident, involving a Grade 9 student who was having a difficult time with a teacher, where the use of problem-solving questions was effective:

> So it was really interesting because it started off that all the teachers are picking on her, all the teachers don't give her a chance, all the teachers look at her as a troublemaker . . . well, [through the use of exception questions] by the end of the session, we were down to one teacher and only one class.

E-1-2 noted that even when feeling skeptical it was important to listen, because "that's the way they perceive it, so you have to work with them. Like the [hostage negotiation] research says, if you don't at least lend an ear and say, 'Okay, well that could be possible,'" you won't make any inroads." Once the source of the problem was more clearly identified, E-1-2 was able to move forward by asking, "How do things need to be in this particular class to be better?" He observed that the technique was effective in de-escalating the student's mother as well. By setting out specific times each week to meet and listen to her, "It's been pleasing to see that shift in mindset as well. You know, we have to work on this together" (E-1-2).

> [It's] getting them off the bench of blame, blame, blame. I'm angry, I'm venting, I'm going to keep yelling. It gets them to completely redirect their thinking onto, "Okay, when the problem's gone, things are going to look like this." (E-1-2)

E-1-2 also planned to utilize this approach in the future: "It gets the kids to actually think ahead, and it isolates them from the emotion of the actual incident or incidents. Okay when is the problem better? Let's start there."

The literature confirms this finding. Several authors identified questioning as useful in de-escalation by causing a shift to more rational thinking (Goleman, 1995; Goulston, 2010; Lynch, 1985).

E-4-2 did not make use of the questioning techniques as intentionally as the others. However, he stated that "having access to those questioning techniques . . . will be a help."

Sub-Theme 2: Saving Face

All three mentioned the importance of face saving. E-4-2 commented,

> Saving face is certainly something I think in working with teenagers is important. It removes the situation off their shoulders. They can deflect it [to] someone else. I think it works well with kids because you just say, "Look, I'm telling you you can't do something, but I know that your friends are going to make some difficulty for you. So you make me the bad guy." It's an opportunity for the kids to see that, "Okay, I have a way out." (E-4-2)

It is interesting to note that this is an approach that Participant A also indicated was useful in assisting students to separate from gang affiliations.

> You need to be able to communicate before you can shift behaviour, you need to connect. Then the face-saving, working with the person rather than trying to use power to shift them back into the shape that you think is the shape they should be. I think that's very powerful. I would love to have this as an orientation for people overall, as a way of approaching [conflict]. (E-2-2)

Sub-Theme 3: Communication Skills

"The whole emphasis on the listening aspects of [negotiation], and the open-ended questions . . . it's been a useful practice, because it did allow me to really tune into that aspect of dynamic inactivity you talked about" (E-1-2). E-1-2 went on to suggest,

> People don't want to be told either what they're not doing or what they need to start doing to fix the problem. . . . So that de-escalation piece is huge, because as soon as you have calm people in the room starting to actually have a conversation, a whole lot more good can come out of that than bad. Anger leaves. So it de-escalates the situation where you've got irate parents. Once you start working toward a solution through first listening and allowing them to get the initial angst off their chest, and to show that you're willing to hear them out.

> There is good stuff in this—about avoiding confrontation, and avoiding the negative responses. How important rapport is, and bonding . . . and as long as you apologize, you can pick it up again and it can all work. I don't necessarily think we do that enough. It makes a lot of sense, and what a wonderful way of showing vulnerability and that it's okay to make mistakes—what a gift it is to the other person. (E-2-2)

The participants stressed the importance of first internalizing the basic attitudinal underpinnings of these skills. "No matter what, you're worthy of respect. [Releasing judgment], that's really important" (E-4-2)! "We can say the words, but I think the words will be very different if we don't have the right tone and intent behind them" (E-2-2). The administrators agreed that these skills would be useful in supporting teachers and re-thinking discipline. The administrators outlined some of the issues they felt were necessary to address specifically.

> Certainly I think there needs to be clear boundaries and expectations. [However], that doesn't mean it has to be an authoritarian intimidation. (E-2-2)

> The simplistic behaviour patterns that most schools operate on, they're not very effective. It's true that they're not changing the really good kids, because they're going to be good anyway, and they certainly seem to be self-defeating for the student that is challenging. They're so used to being punished and ridiculed and told, "You have to do better," that they reach the frustration stage quicker—they're used to being told. "Oh, once again you screwed up, so spend a couple of days at home and let's be better on Monday." (E-1-2)

> We need people to back up, relax, and not personalize their relationships. I've watched teachers get into discussions or arguments or difficulty with kids, and they're coming to me steaming that this is the way the kid treated them, and it's like, "Oh, hold on. You treated him the same way!" (E-4-2)

Summary

Although the implementation period was short, and the administrators admitted to difficulty in managing the process due to the changed schedule and the pace of their work, the results of this phase of the study showed some promise that importing skills used by hostage negotiators into the field of education might prove to have utility. The usefulness of questions as a tool for problem solving, the significance of listening, relationship development and saving

face, and the importance of good self-management strategies were confirmed during the closing interviews.

Student Focus Group

I met with a focus group of 5 graduating Grade 12 students for a 1-hour conversation. The three girls and two boys assumed pseudonyms: Charlie, Clara, Delia, Mollie, and Murphy. These students were from a single school, but not from the same district as the educator group.

Theme 1: Structures

The students were aware of the existence of a code of conduct, but could not articulate its contents. As Charlie noted, “They don’t enforce it.” Delia added, “They, like, go over it once at the beginning [of the year].” In their high school, they saw no evidence of a positive behavioural support program, although one student recalled, “In our French program, you could get stamped on a card, when you are good, but it kind of dies out after a few years. It’s kind of like a bribe when you are in Grade 8 and 9” (Murphy). “But,” another student volunteered, “I don’t know if it works for behaviour” (Delia).

Although detentions were sometimes given in their school, the students were unanimous: “I don’t think they really work” (Mollie). “You can’t force them to come in, what are you going to do” (Clara)? Delia noted that attempts to enforce whole-class detentions resulted in a cascading problem of tardiness: “When you have to stay for an extra 7 minutes in class, they think they’re punishing you in their class, but they’re really punishing you in the next class!”

Theme 2: Personal Qualities of a Good Educator

Students were able to clearly articulate the qualities they appreciated in a good educator. In explicating this, opposite qualities were often used to bring home the point. For example,

> I think you have to have a passion for what you’re teaching to be able to relay it to someone else. Like, some teachers are just put into teaching positions that they don’t like,

> they don't enjoy the subject, and it shows when they teach. We have a biology teacher, who loves everything about biology, and it shows when she teaches you. She actually cares about what she's teaching. (Delia)

Clara stated, "I have had teachers before where I want to ask them, 'Do you like working with children?' They seem so grouchy all the time, and like they don't want to be there." The students became animated as they described a favourite teacher: "He emanates happiness all the time" (Charlie).

> One thing that amazes me about Mr. S's classes is that he would have the weirdest bunch of kids in there, kids . . . that really misbehave, but then everyone in that class is always so well behaved, and we would work so silently for him. I think it's because there was such a big respect for him. Like, he never got mad at kids cause it appeared no one ever did anything wrong in his class, which is weird, cause there would be those kids that are little brats in all the other classes, and for his class they would be so well behaved. I think it's just everyone had so much respect for him—"we don't want to disappoint Mr. S." (Clara)

When asked how Mr. S achieved that respect, Charlie said, "He actually had interesting things to say, like to tell stories about his life that are fun to listen to, and just make everyone laugh." Mollie agreed, "Yeah, I like it when teachers get personal, not overly personal, but when they give you little insights into their life." Clara continued:

> There's a lot of kids in that class who maybe haven't done well in classes before, but then once they get to his class, it's like he'll motivate them to work. At some point, these kids work for him, and it's amazing, kids that normally wouldn't work end up doing like a 10-page research paper on a classical artist . . . it's because kids know he really cares.

Charlie elaborated,

> He gives off a real aura. Always good vibes from him. You never feel like, "Oh, he's grouchy today." It's regular, constant, so you get into that rhythm. Some teachers, if you keep, like, not doing your work, they might just give up on you. They'll go, "You know what, I'm not going to try, I'm not going to try again for you," but he never gives up on students that won't work, he just keeps on pushing them to try.

The students were unanimous in stating that hard-line approaches were counter-productive: "One of the teachers, when people do something wrong, he doesn't talk to them, [he] gives you flak, he's just screaming, he just yells, he will not talk to you! He gets so

angry" (Murphy). When I asked what response students had to this, he replied, "Then the student gets angry!" Charlie added, "Haranguing is not helpful." Mollie agreed:

> Teachers need to be able to control their emotions. If they can have a calm head, and sort of see it from a different perspective . . . if the teacher's really involved in the conflict, and getting their emotions up, then it's going to get messy.

Delia noted that the opposite approach—passivity—was equally problematic:

> I think what makes it worse is when they just sit there and watch. And then the whole class gets crazy, and they [the teachers] don't do anything, they just sit there. They don't care at all, and that's the problem.

Mollie concurred, "Yeah, you can't be weak, have no backbone. Kids like structure, as much as they say they don't." The students wanted clarity, but "it shouldn't be mean, not abusing the control" (Delia). In this way, the students confirmed research by Spaulding (2005) cited in the literature review. She too found that students valued clarity and decisiveness from their teachers.

Respect emerged repeatedly as a critical component of good teacher–student relationships. When it was absent, the students noticed. Mollie worried that the classroom management tactics employed by one teacher, while not overtly hostile, undermined relationships anyway.

> Her version of disciplining them is pretty much talking down to them all the time, and I think if I was that kid I would come in expecting to behave poorly because that's what she expects. That kid will walk in and she'll look up, and like, she's a sweet lady, but it's not professional what she does. They'll walk in and she'll be like, "Oh, it's going to be a long day today, look who's here," and then like that kid is expecting another bad day. Her version of discipline is sarcastic comments towards them in front of the class, and that doesn't work. You're not gaining respect. Essentially, like, discipline comes down to they have abused your respect, and it's not respectful what she does to them, so obviously they're not respectful in turn.

It isn't only the difficult students who lose respect for teachers. Mollie went on,

> I'm just a little bystander, but when I hear them say certain things I'm like, why would you say that? And the whole class kind of goes on edge, and a lot of people don't like her not because of what she's done to them necessarily but what she's done to other kids, and

> then in the long run no one really respects her because she doesn't respect those two boys or whatever.

This interesting finding is consistent with research reviewed by Woolfolk Hoy and Weinstein (2006), who stated, "When teachers embarrass, insult or demean students publicly, they may actually engender sympathy for the misbehaving student" (p. 190). In addition, although the need for mutual respect was featured strongly in literature from the fields of negotiation and education, some research in education suggested that although respect is expected and demanded from students by their teachers, it is not always reciprocated (Spaulding, 2005.

Although the students appreciated direct, effective, and respectful correction, they also observed that many teachers needed to think before speaking: "It's called professionalism" (Mollie). "I think the worst thing is when anyone in a position of authority, when they discipline, is like actually angry. Then it isn't discipline, it's just venting" (Clara). Murphy observed, "Students fight back—'You know what? You can stop talking to me like that!'"

Good teachers, the students agreed, need to be perceptive and observant, or, as Delia put it, "Know [the students'] patterns." This was one way teachers conveyed caring to students. "When you've had a bad day, they'll take you aside, and like, 'Are you feeling okay . . . would you like to talk'" (Delia)? Charlie agreed, but added, "Part of the thing about that, though, if they show that kind of emotion to one student, they can't put disregard to the other students." Favouritism emerged as a persistent and much resented problem. Similarly, holding grudges was identified as difficult. Mollie said, "Teachers will hold grudges and then it's just a bad association and it lasts all year, and it just becomes such an ordeal."

Summary of Student Interviews

Students identified respect as the number one prerequisite for good relationships. Friendliness (but not being over-friendly), engagement, a passion for the work, caring, clear expectations, flexibility, calm demeanour, self-disclosure, and a sense of humour are traits these students highly value in their teachers. In addition, these students want to be acknowledged for their efforts, but maintained that such acknowledgment must be sincere, specific, and relevant. The preferences voiced by this group of students echoes those of other students as presented through several studies cited in the literature review (Chiu & Tulley, 1997; Cothran et al., 2003; Crowley, 1993; Ellis, 1997; Gassaway, 2006; Habel et al., 1997; Pomeroy, 1999; Supaporn, 2000; Thorson, 1996; Woolfolk Hoy & Weinstein, 2006).

Summary of the Findings

In the following tables and three sections, I have synthesized findings of this study with the relevant literature to correspond to the three research sub-questions. Tables 1 to 6 relate to research sub-question #1: What structures, skills, and training do hostage negotiators and educators rely on to de-escalate hostage takers and students, and what is the difference in their approaches? Tables 7 to 9 relate to research sub-question #2: What are the underlying beliefs and attitudes that shape the responses of each group?

It is important to note that some of the issues raised in the “Educator Key Points” columns of Tables 1 to 9 are not necessarily the opinions held by the respondents or the authors cited, but reflect their observations, experiences, and criticisms of events that sometimes take place in schools.

Findings Related to Research Sub-Question 1

Table 1. *Skill Acquisition, Development, and Maintenance Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Intensive in-service training (5 days to 2 weeks) Typically with FBI instructors—consistent content and delivery methods (e.g., Hammer, 2007) • In-service refresher courses—at least annually (e.g., N-1) • Practice—integrating skills in everyday work life (e.g., McMains & Lancely, 2003)	• Little or no pre-service training, no consistent content or delivery methods (e.g., Bergin, 1999; Brophy, 2006; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006) • Pro-D refresher courses, (classroom management and crisis content not always offered) one hour sessions or short workshops, optional attendance, no practice in specific skills, and contradictory content (e.g., Evertson & Weinstein, 2006) • Training related to specific programs (e.g., Sugai & Horner, 2006, Canter,1988)

Table 2. *Training Methods Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Role play (e.g., Slatkin, 2005) • Film clips and audio tapes (e.g., Hare, 1997) • Active Listening drills (e.g., Webster, 2000; "Trouble in Paradox," 2008) • Scenarios and simulations (e.g., Hare, 1997) • Case Studies (e.g., Weaver, 1997) • Demonstration (e.g., Hare, 1997) • Mentoring (N-2) • Videotaped self-practice skills with critique from instructor and peers (N-5) • Dialogue (e.g., Madrigal et al., 2009) • Communication exercises (e.g., Leviton & Greenstone, 2002) • Negotiation techniques (e.g., Leviton & Greenstone, 2002) • Crisis intervention practice (e.g., Goergen, 2006) • Diagnostic skill training (e.g., Leviton & Greenstone, 2002)	• Survey courses—"smorgasbord" approach with no training in specific skill use or: • "toolbox" or "bag of tricks" approach with various strategies confusingly linked to competing ideologies (e.g., Freiberg & Lapointe, 2006) • Osmosis—learned by watching practicum teachers or assumed from previous experiences as a student (e.g., Fang, 1996; Pajares, 1992) • Mentoring programs—inconsistently available and inconsistent quality (e.g., E-4-1) • Self-initiated professional development: conflict resolution, anger management,

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Interpersonal relationship training (e.g., Leviton & Greenstone, 2002) • Communication skills training (e.g., Rogan & Hammer, 1994) • Assessment of emotional state (e.g., Hammer, 2007) • Resolution strategies (e.g., Hare, 1997)	stress management, communication skills—only a few have this (e.g., E-2-1, E-3-1) • Training related to specific programs (e.g., Sugai & Horner, 2006,Canter, 1988)

Table 3. *Structures –Teamwork (and related issues) Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points

• On-site support and mentoring—coach or secondary (e.g., N-2)
• Information gathering about subject—hooks and triggers identified (e.g., Phillips, 1999; Slatkin, 2005; Thomlison, 1991)
• Support from Command, Tactical, and Mental Health staff (e.g., N-1; Slatkin, 2005)
• De-briefing (e.g., Phillips, 1999; Slatkin, 2005; Thomlison, 1991)
	• Co-teaching and mentoring (e.g., Villa et al., 2010)—not always utilized
	• Information gathering about student—profiles and dossiers (accompany student year to year; sometimes helpful, sometimes pejorative)
	• Support from Administration and Counselling Staff, or:
	  • Teacher isolation—may not ask for support—incidents may be seen as evidence of incompetence (e.g., Spaulding, 2005)
	  • Unhelpful staffroom de-briefing—gossip and "problem admiration" (e.g., Participant B; Spaulding, 2005)

Table 4. *Structures – Responses to a Crisis or Disruptive Incident Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Active Listening (e.g., Noesner & Webster, 1997) • Empathy (e.g., Burgoon & Hale, 2009; De Waal, 2009; Le Baron, 2002) • Rapport building (e.g., McMains & Mullins, 2006) • Face saving (e.g., Folger et al., 2005) • Self disclosure (e.g., N-1)	• Alternative responses—based on principles of conflict resolution, anger management, stress management, and communication skills—not all have skills (e.g., Greene, 2008) • Removal of privileges and social time (e.g., Canter, 1988; E-1-1) • Detention—may be used as an opportunity to connect (E-1-1; E-1-2; E-1-3; E-1-4) • Time-out—may be used pro-actively or

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Self-Management (e.g., Bohl, 1997) • Look for triggers and hooks (e.g., N-3) • Dynamic inactivity (e.g., McMains & Lancely, 2009; Schlossberg, 1975) • Thought interruption (e.g., Bolz & Hershey, 1979; Thompson & Jenkins, 2004) • Problem solving (e.g., Webster, 2000; "Trouble in Paradox," 2008) • Tailor approach to situation (e.g., Hammer, 2007) • Resolution through negotiation (e.g., N-1)	punitively (E-1-1; E-1-2; E-1-3; E-1-4) • Suspension (E-1-1; E-1-2; E-1-3; E-1-4; Skiba & Peterson, 1999) • Expulsion (E-1-1; E-1-2; E-1-3; E-1-4; Skiba & Peterson, 1999) • Pre-packaged programs (e.g., Freiberg & Lapointe, 2006) • Rewards and punishment (e.g., Canter, 1988; Gresham et al., 2004; Sugai & Horner, 2006) • Zero tolerance (e.g., Giroux, 2009; Skiba & Peterson, 1999) • Problem solving involving student (Villa et al., 2010) • Specific approaches or programs (e.g., Sugai & Horner, 2006), Canter, 1988)

Table 5. *Structures – Miscellaneous Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Public policy, opinion, and scrutiny • Life and death - high pressure • Time factors	• Public policy, opinion, and scrutiny • Stressful • Time factors

Table 6. *Outcomes Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Not needed for most of the population. • 90% success rate with a small proportion of the population considered most difficult—those typically alienated from the community (e.g., Kohlrieser, 2006)	• Discipline program not needed for most of the school population. • Discipline program does not work with those members of the school population considered most difficult—those typically alienated from the school community (e.g., Greene, 2008)

This study found a surprising difference between the nature and extent of training received by negotiators and educators. With respect to negotiators, it is clear that they receive consistent messages during training. The need for relationship development, the creation of genuine rapport, the use of active listening, the critical importance of empathy and respect and the need to resist the temptation to jump to solution-finding are repeating themes in the literature I reviewed, the training manuals and tapes I gained access to, and the interviews I conducted. Negotiators could articulate the essential skills, how they were best taught and learned, and what structural supports were needed to ensure optimal success. Participants stressed that use of these skills was non-negotiable—a mandatory and critical requirement of the job. Finally, negotiators were enthusiastically unequivocal about the efficacy of what they had learned.

In startling contrast, I found that educators receive little or no pre-service training in classroom or crisis management in either Canada or the United States. Although I was prepared for this finding by what I had discovered in the literature (Bergin, 1999; Brophy, 2006; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Spaulding, 2005), I was taken aback by the vehemence with which educators described the shock of discovering how unprepared they and their colleagues were for initial experiences in the classroom. Taking my inquiry further afield in both Canada and the United States by polling a number of university teacher-educators and additional classroom teachers, I was able to confirm that what this educator group told me reflected a wider experience (M. Doyle; L. Garrison; S. Goldie; P. Mirenda; A. Nevin; D. Sobsey, personal communications, January 26, 2010).

Respondents explained that there was an assumption during pre-service education that classroom management skills would be obtained on the job and through the mentorship of seasoned teachers during the practicum process. While this idea initially appeared sound, what

emerged from the interviews was that successful mentoring depended largely on the skill of the mentor. Educators described confusing and sometimes contradictory experiences with multiple mentor teachers. In addition, interviews and the literature confirmed that if training did take place, the material was most often presented in survey format, with little or no attention to skill development. It was implied that interested parties could compile these strategies into what is commonly referred to as a teacher's toolbox for later use as needed. While seemingly plausible, this approach was not seen to offer the support educators described as necessary.

Survey courses are designed to provide brief overviews, and as a result, theoretical underpinnings of the various strategies presented were generally not made adequately explicit. To exacerbate this, these strategies were often ideologically incompatible. Put together with contradictory advice and modeling from mentors, it is difficult to imagine how an educator could make sense of this.

Despite these difficulties, the results of this study at least in some respects appear to make the research question moot. I began by asking whether training educators in the skills used by hostage negotiators would help them to defuse difficult situations. What I found was that there are already teachers and administrators using these skills successfully. The educators I interviewed appeared to possess many of the relational, communication-based skills identified by negotiators and were able to provide clear examples of their usefulness in the de-escalation process.

However, it is important to note that it is likely that these findings reflect the self-selection process these educators made when agreeing to be part of the study. These administrators volunteered to participate because of a stated interest in the topic. In addition, these study participants are seasoned educators with graduate-level education and administrative

experience. Each has participated in ancillary training opportunities related to interpersonal dynamics and leadership. Two of the administrators have certification in counselling skills, and one possesses certification in third-party mediation. A third holds a master's degree in school safety and was trained as a hostage negotiator. Many of the skills taught in these programs parallel those taught to negotiators.

Through our conversations, I was able to surmise that the administrators I interviewed represent a minority within the field. While increasing numbers of teachers support changes from an authoritarian to a more collaborative approach, few have received significant training, support, or practise in the skills necessary to operationalize this change. Of those who have received some in-service training, few go on to use the skills in a consistent, intentional manner, but instead use them episodically. I speculated that the reason for their inconsistent use even among those who have received training is that (a) inadequate practise time is allotted to develop proficiency, (b) the skills themselves are not seen as essential, (c) these skills are not yet reflective of a consistent philosophy of education, (d) as such, these skills are not made mandatory, and e) educators do not receive adequate support in putting skills into practice. Instead, communication and de-escalation skills appear to be viewed as a series of add-on elements for possible inclusion in the teacher's toolbox. While the educators I interviewed agreed with hostage negotiators that good conflict management and communication skills are important in their work, there is little evidence that such a belief is supported by current educator training practices. For the most part, it seems that educators are left to develop these skills at their own behest and expense and to utilize them without specific support.

Findings Related to Research Sub-Question 2

The findings summarized in Tables 7 to 9 relate to the research sub-question #2: What are the underlying beliefs and attitudes that shape the responses of each group?

Table 7. *Attitudes and Beliefs – Narratives About the Person in Crisis Theme: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Labelling has limited usefulness (e.g., Hammer, 2007) • Just a person in a bad place (e.g., N-1; Schlossberg, 1975) • "There but for the grace of God" (N-2) • A person trying to solve a problem in the best way they know how (e.g., Slatkin, 2005) • Assume nothing—remain curious • Suspend judgment • Subjects need help to save face (e.g., Ting Toomey & Takai, 2006)	• Labelling takes place in many schools, for example: ADD, ADHD, OCD, ODD, EBD, and so on (e.g., Brendtro et al., 1998) • Some educators see students as manipulative and resistant, or believe that the student is misbehaving for attention or to avoid work (e.g., Greene, 2008) • Some educators believe that the problem located in the child as either the victim—"can't help it," or perpetrator—"does it intentionally" (e.g., Brendtro et al., 1998) • Some educators believe that behaviour is the result of making poor choices (e.g., Greene, 2008; E-1-1) • There are differing views on student accountability – some believe that helping a student to save face is the same as letting them get away with something, others believe it is critically important (e.g., Brendtro et al., 1998; E-1-1; E-1-2; E-1-3; E-1-4; Participant A; Participant B) • Some kids cannot manage due to maturity issues or lack necessary skills (Greene, 2008; E-2-1) • Low self-esteem is an important contributor to misbehaviour (E-1-1)

Note. ADD = attention deficit disorder; ADHD = attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; OCD = obsessive–compulsive disorder; ODD = Oppositional Defiant Disorder; EBD = emotional and behavioural disorder.

Table 8. *Attitudes and Beliefs – Narratives About the Job: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Saving lives is imperative (e.g., N-1) • Self-management is critical—do not take	• Saving lives is imperative—some kids commit "suicide by educator" (Participant A) by acting out and getting expelled • Self-management is critical—do not take things personally

things personally (e.g., N-2) • Critical to avoid stereotyping or negative attribution (e.g., Le Baron, 2002) • Blame is an irrelevant distraction to the job at hand (e.g., N-1) • Authenticity is critical (e.g., Goulston, 2010)	(e.g., E-2-1) • Stereotyping or negative attribution—"kids today are . . ." and so on (e.g., Brendtro et al., 1998; Participant B) • It is all about the kids—we are here to enhance the experience (e.g., E-4-1) • Dealing with disruption should not be part of the job—here to teach the curriculum (e.g., Evertson & Weinstein, 2006) • Reasons for difficulties: (a) parents: uninvolved or over-involved and bad role models; (b) society: media, drugs, alcohol, and sex; (c) peers: gangs, drugs, sex, and alcohol; (d) technology: cell phones, ipods, and youtube (e.g., Johnson et al., 1994) • Someone else should fix this—administration, counsellors, teacher assistants, alternative programs, health care professionals (e.g., Johnson et al., 1994) • Teacher over-burdened—excessive societal and administrative expectations (e.g., Kennedy, 1999) • Competing ideologies—teacher-led versus self-directed classrooms and a variety of conflicting or changing approaches supported by the school or district (e.g., Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Freiberg & Lapointe, 2006)

Table 9. *Attitudes and Beliefs as Identified by the Interviewees – Personal Qualities of an Effective Intervener: Negotiator and Educator Key Points*

Negotiator key points	Educator key points
• Self-management skills	• Self-management skills
• Empathy	• Empathy
• Communication skills	• Communication skills
• Conflict resolution skills	• Conflict resolution skills
• "People person"	• "People person"
• Assertive	• Assertive
• Flexible	• Flexible
• Sense of humour	• Sense of humour
• High ethics	• High ethics
• Predictable	• Consistent
• Level affect	• Level affect
• Good listener	• Good listener

• Good talker	• Good talker (education as the talking profession)

Although both negotiators and educators agreed regarding the necessary personal qualities of an effective intervener, some differences of narrative in other respects emerged. As noted in the literature, negotiators stressed the critical importance of suspending judgment and entering into the experience of the distraught subject with empathy and concern. Although the educators I interviewed most often resisted the temptation to place blame, they noted that negative attribution was not uncommon among members their profession, especially when frustrated by a difficult student. In particular, educators pointed to specific narratives about student intention as most problematic. Viewing students as manipulative, attention seeking, resistant, or reluctant to work made it more likely that their disruptive behaviours would be taken personally. The educators I spoke with readily agreed with negotiators that helping students to save face was important. However, educators further noted that a pervasive misunderstanding about the purpose of face-saving sometimes interfered with this approach. Specifically, the need to hold students accountable periodically resulted in instances of humiliation and public embarrassment.

Findings Related to Research Sub-Question 3

In this section I discuss findings relating to sub-question #3: do educators feel that learning the skills used by hostage negotiators would be useful, and if so, how are these skills best taught and learned? The administrators indicated that the skills found in hostage negotiation would be useful in schools: “I’ve come away with some really solid reminders and a few new facts, and a few new skills. The importance of that calm persona, and lots of questions, and the demonstration that I’m willing to listen” (E-1-2). Each of the educators enthusiastically endorsed training in this area for teachers, both in pre-service and ongoing in-service format.

> There's definitely a use if you're talking training; the mechanics of the conversation. Just to verbalize these concepts increases the level of conscious awareness of what and why, and I think [as] a result of that the effectiveness improves. It would [also] be interesting for people to be forced to look at who they are, how they relate to students. (E-4-2)

> I don't think that beginning teachers have a solid toolbox to fall back on when they start being challenged. So the more hands-on techniques that they are introduced to . . . providing a different tool and a mechanism for trying to work towards solutions in class instead of sending kids out and yelling at them. Often the beginner teacher will confront kids right in front of the rest of the class, which is problematic. (E-1-2)

The educator group agreed that finding opportunities to support teachers in learning and implementing these skills across the district would be useful. As E-2-2 pointed out, the result could be "a common language, and a common value;" this was something E-1-1 also noted as important in his school.

Educator participants in this study confirmed that the most helpful training they received in de-escalation techniques came from counselling, conflict resolution, and other leadership programs accessed outside traditional teacher education. Many of the skills the educators described, such as active listening, distraction, face-saving, and mutual problem solving, are similar in intent and delivery to those used by negotiators. Educators noted that in order for such training to be useful, participants must have opportunities for practice and in-depth immersion, something not typically offered in either pre-service or in-service training.

Some educational researchers also offered ideas about pre-service and in-service training that might assist educators to manage difficult interactions. For example, Pajares (1992) suggested the need for supported self-reflection, and believed that this could be facilitated during classroom training through the use of biography and narrative. Marzano et al. (2005) advocated the use of discussion questions, self-assessments, and case studies to promote increased self-awareness. Merseth (1996) also suggested the use of case studies.

Martin (2004) cautioned against simply teaching a set of mechanistic strategies and encouraged teacher educators to engage their students in questioning assumptions by exposing them to multiple perspectives. Johnson et al. (1994) likewise promoted a broader, socially-critical approach, encouraging deeper discussions about how prevailing school ideologies fit into larger social frameworks. Cothran et al. (2003) felt that instruction and practice in listening and communication skills, conflict resolution, and stress management would be profitable additions to teacher training and in-service. Participants in Spaulding's (2005) study agreed, and like the negotiator group, recommended role-playing as an important tool for teaching self-awareness. Spaulding cited it as, "One of our best teaching methods" (p. 15). Spaulding was unsurprised that training in listening skills was highly recommended because it was a recurring theme throughout her study.

Negotiators recommended use of scenarios, simulations, role-play, film clips, audio tapes, demonstrations, and case studies as components of intensive classroom training for both novice and seasoned practitioners (Hare, 1997; Slatkin, 2005; Weaver, 1997). Leviton and Greenstone (2002) recommended active listening drills, practise in negotiation techniques and crisis intervention, and diagnostic skill training. Webster (2000, see also "Trouble in Paradox," 2008) and Rogan and Hammer (1994) suggested extensive training in communication skills and resolution strategies.

E-2-2 noted that an optimal situation would involve the larger educational community. She recommended a district-wide approach that would begin with trustee education and move from there to the administrators, teachers, and support staff. E-4-2 suggested development of study groups on the topic that paralleled an approach already in existence within the district. E-2-2 noted some of the challenges involved:

> Specifically, in terms of a whole orientation, one of the things I'm curious about is how best to communicate that kind of mind set change, that narrative change? And I'm also trying to think, how do we work with our staff? Because they're wanting to move towards the positive behaviour support model. And that gives me the collywobbles! We talked about when things start fraying at the edges the tendency is to put in more rules. How that doesn't work. And I think that's absolutely true.

Participants worried about currently increasing budgetary cuts and their impact on school culture and climate:

> We're going to be running non-stop with very little reflection time. That compassion, that face-saving, empowering approach is going to be so important. This would be much more satisfying for the people working with students. I think it would feed their souls. (E-2-2)

"Now wouldn't it be wonderful," E-2-2 continued, "if school was one of the places where you can be heard?"

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I began this study by asking if the relational, communication-based approaches used by hostage negotiators would have utility for educators in de-escalating disruptive students. Throughout the process I received significant confirmation from participants in both fields and even indirectly from students that such a move would prove worthwhile. In fact, I found that some educators were already using some of these skills profitably. However, having come to the end of this inquiry, I am surprised that the answer to my research question is not entirely clear. Would whole-sale adoption of hostage negotiation training in education help educators? At this point, based on what I learned during this project, my best answer is a rousing "it depends."

My hesitation to fully endorse the importation of de-escalation strategies from the field of negotiation to education has little to do with the demonstrated effectiveness of such approaches. It is clear that negotiators are highly successful in connecting with distraught individuals and resolving highly charged situations. It is also clear that the skills they use are teachable and can be learned. However, during the course of my conversations with negotiators, educators and students, I began to identify a number of caveats that could not be ignored.

It is my contention that two distinct but related issues must be addressed before any attempt at comprehensive skill training within the educational sector will yield desired results. First, we must acknowledge and actively engage with the larger systemic factors that currently limit and even invalidate the use of these skills in education. For example, outdated authoritarian ideas about how misbehaviour should be addressed, and the use of reward and punishment programs are incompatible with these approaches. Second, I believe that the success of this enterprise hinges on a redefinition of disruption from a problem located within the student to a

conflict located within the interactive sphere of the student, the learning environment and the teacher.

Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) noted that in order for education to fully move into the 21st century, “a philosophical change in the way educators think about classroom management” (p. 774) must first take place. According to these authors, such a paradigm shift must be a move away from teacher-directed classrooms and schools to student–teacher partnership and collaboration. In this view, teachers become resources and facilitators of student learning. Villa et al. (2010) agreed, suggesting that such a change in perspective and practice has the potential to meet 21st century goals of democratic education and help increase student capacity in the areas of self-determination and social competence. Villa et al. further proposed that such collaboration should move beyond curricular concerns to include how interactions between teachers and students take place. It is my contention that such a paradigm shift would provide a philosophically consistent context compatible with the use of negotiation skills. However, without such a change, I am concerned that the approaches suggested by hostage negotiators may be potentially utilized as a quick fix, or a way to suppress conflict in service of preserving the status quo.

In advocating for this paradigm shift, Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) brought forward another relevant consideration. These authors noted that classroom management must move from an orientation of intervention to one of prevention, and that this would need to be “more than changing strategies” (p. 774) or simply adding more strategies to the teacher’s “bag of tricks” (p. 774). Metaphors like the “bag of tricks” or the “smorgasbord” are common in the vernacular of educators. In this study, participants often referred to the teacher’s “toolbox” (E-1-1, E- 4-1). These metaphors have a seductive and enduring appeal because they imply that an array of

eclectic behavioural technologies can be collected, stored, and then chosen by teachers for use on an ad hoc basis. Further, and appealing to both idealists and pragmatists, there is an implied promise of situational flexibility and teacher discretion. However, is this approach really as effective as the metaphor lulls us into believing? Based on what I have learned in this study, I would suggest that it is not.

This study found that many of the currently suggested skills, strategies, and programs for working with disruptive students arise from opposing ideologies. For example, the use of rewards and punishments to gain compliance from students stands in opposition to often-stated ideals of intrinsic, prosocial- emotional learning and the development of student responsibility (Kohn, 1993). In addition, exclusionary practices like detention, time-out, suspension, and expulsion undermine the goals of belonging and inclusion espoused by many schools (Kunc, 1992). The dialectical tension created by such contradictory practices cannot be underestimated. Until such contradictions are addressed, I question whether the addition of more strategies into this confusing context would help or hinder.

Freiberg and Lapointe (2006) suggested that what is required is a change in focus from behaviourism to more person-centred approaches (p. 773). If we are to believe these authors who have stated that education is experiencing an evolution from directiveness to collaboration, we must ask how it is such a change can best be facilitated. I believe that useful perspectives found in the field of conflict analysis and management may be profitably applied to these questions. Within the field of conflict analysis and management, it is generally accepted that conflict is an inevitable part of the interactive human experience. This view represents a shift of narrative away from the more commonly held view that conflict is something to be avoided or suppressed. Conflict practitioners – and indeed, the negotiators I interviewed - suggest that conflict need not

be considered negative and that it may in fact lead to greater clarity and improved relationships. When managed well, conflict can help disputants to find suitably complex answers to complex problems (Folger et al., 2005). Redefining behaviour problems as interactive conflict is a central precursor to any shift from directiveness to collaboration.

Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier in this study, student behaviour is seldom framed as conflict. Instead, it is more often viewed as an aberration, a deliberate mutiny on the part of the student, and something to be swiftly dealt with in order to return to the real work of education—teaching the curriculum. It is my contention that education is not simply about learning content. It is also about developing responsible, caring citizens who are able to deal well with each other. It is not hyperbole to suggest that the world depends on it. Educators have precious opportunities to model and support the development of such skills for students, but in order to do so, the prevailing culture of blame and attribution within education must first be confronted and challenged.

Educators experience significant pressure to “manage” behaviour quickly and efficiently. When difficulties persist, a culture of blame is often the result. Teachers are blamed for poor management skills; students are blamed for causing trouble. Teachers become frustrated and worry that their competence will be called into question and that the other students in the class will suffer as a result of one student’s behaviour. The student who is struggling often feels misunderstood and unheard. As students in this study stressed, even the bystanders are affected. This destructive cycle most often ends with one of the parties leaving the situation. In most instances, it will be the student who is forced to leave. However, it is clear that when students are systematically excluded, school problems are transformed into social problems.

Positing disruption as conflict requires a change of narrative. The implications of such a shift should not be underestimated. It requires a change in the discourse from blame to curiosity, from telling to listening, from judgment to empathy, and perhaps most revolutionary, it requires a shift in the power dynamic between educators and students. It is a commitment to partnership. At its heart, this approach asks us to move away from an attitude of "how can we fix you" or "where can we relocate you" to "how can we work together to solve this problem?" Without such a shift, it is unlikely that the superimposition of new and improved strategies onto old paradigms will be effective. It is the underlying philosophy that gives the skills their power.

It is obvious that effecting sweeping paradigmatic changes are far outside the scope of this project. However, with the caveats raised above, like the participants of this study, I remain cautiously optimistic that training and skill development in hostage negotiation strategies might prove useful for educators currently working to change the paradigms of education. As we grapple with the larger systems issues, perhaps disarmament can simultaneously be brokered between "difficult" students and their teachers in smaller, incremental, and more personal ways.

In conclusion, as outlined above, 21st century education presents educators with many complex problems. Disruptive student behaviour may well be a symptom of such larger complexity, and disruptive students may well be the "canaries in the coalmine" of education who show us what is not working in our current educational practices. There are opportunities for educators to utilize the perspectives of disruptive students to begin to positively reframe the way education takes place. Excluding and marginalizing such students will effectively silence their contributions to the debate. This would be a critical loss. In order to determine the direction we must move, all voices and perspectives must be represented and heard. In this respect, approaches like active listening should never become tools of manipulation, or used to suppress

uncomfortable truths. The approaches suggested by hostage negotiators in this paper are often used as ways to accomplish immediate and pragmatic de-escalation of specific incidents. Negotiators have only one opportunity to interact with an individual in crisis. On the other hand, teachers have ongoing relationships with their students. This offers more opportunities for them to develop and build positive, respectful and empathetic relationships and to provide powerful role-modeling to their students. In this view, the introduction of communication strategies would not only be useful in de-escalating classroom crises, it could be a catalyst for educational reform. It is my belief that when these skills are anchored in a philosophy of partnership, mutual respect and community, they can go beyond the immediate to become a powerful way of forging the ongoing alliances we need for the future.

Recommendation 1: Teacher Training

The research and participants cited in this study stressed the need for more comprehensive attention to pre-service and in-service training that directly addresses issues of classroom management and crisis intervention. Participants recommended that university programs incorporate intensive theoretical and practise-oriented courses that help pre-service teachers, working teachers, and administrators learn self-management skills, listening and communication skills, and conflict management approaches. These might profitably be framed as tools to assist in empathic interaction and relationship building, not just between students and teachers, but between all the constituents of a school. The context for such learning must be a philosophy of partnership.

I suggest a cross-disciplinary approach to training. Bringing together notable practitioners from a variety of backgrounds has the potential to provide invaluable insight and divergent perspectives, encouraging new ways of thinking about these issues. Including students who have

experienced or are currently experiencing difficulty in school would be an essential component of such a process. Finally, I recommend that in-service training include on-going support and practise of these skills.

Recommendation 2: Further Research

Further research that investigates whether intensive training and support in hostage negotiation skills would help educators deal with disruption is recommended. Specifically, a longer-term study is suggested. For example, an action research project combining intensive training and practise with an ongoing coach-and-mentor approach for the teaching and administrative staff of a single school or school district over a 1- or 2-year period might provide needed insight into the viability of these approaches and their application to education.

Recommendation 3: Ask an Important Question

Katherine Herr (2006) stated, “There is something about merely asking certain questions within the context of a school that sends a ripple through it and begins to interrupt the way everyday practices are viewed” (p. 187). I recommend that administrators and teachers take time to ask questions about disciplinary practices. One such question might be: How is a sense of belonging created and maintained in my school, and what are the practices, policies, and attitudes that support it? Conversely, another question might be: How is a sense of belonging undermined in my school, and what are the policies, practices, and attitudes that contribute to its erosion?

Disruptive students are often overlooked as sources of information about the questions raised above. I further suggest that students be actively involved in interrogating the practices they experience.

Recommendation 4: Never Give Swimming Lessons When Someone is Drowning

Supportive, relational approaches to disruption like the ones suggested by hostage negotiators are sometimes seen as placation. Using metaphors and humour can be a powerful way of changing perceptions and strongly held narratives. Sometimes attitudes will dislodge with the lightest and most playful touch. One such metaphor is offered below.

Bill Page, a 35-year veteran teacher and consultant to schools, offers educators another way to think about their roles with disruptive students. Page stated,

> As educators, we have two roles. We are swimming instructors and we are lifeguards. When things are going well, and students are learning what we're teaching them, we're swimming instructors. But when conflict breaks out, we need to put aside our lessons and be the lifeguards. (B. Page, personal communication, June 20, 2010)

Page believes that a disruptive student is metaphorically drowning:

> When someone is drowning, it makes little sense to stand at the edge of the pool and shout at them to kick their legs. When kids are upset, they can't hear us. And yet that's what we do in education. We keep on talking, telling them what's wrong with what they're doing and how we want them to change and what we're going to do to them if they don't. What we really need to do is get into the pool and help them back to shallow water. Later on, when they're back on solid ground, that's when we can jump back into our role as the swimming instructor! That's when we can work with them to figure out how to solve the problem. It's only when people are feeling safe that they can hear us. (B. Page, personal communication, June 20, 2010)

Summary

During the course of this project, I have sometimes felt that comparing hostage negotiators to educators was a bit like comparing parachutists to potters. However, perhaps the divide between the two professional fields is not really so great after all. To quote participant 2-N, ultimately we recognize that "people are people, and behaviour is behaviour." It is my hope that this study will contribute to the dialogue within education as it evolves and changes, and further, might be of assistance to educators in demystifying the process of de-escalation.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH TEAM MEMBER LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

Dear [Name],

This is to advise you that Emma Van der Klift (the researcher), in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership Degree at Royal Roads University, will be conducting a phenomenological action research study to determine whether communication-based approaches utilized by hostage negotiators to de-escalate hostage takers can be successfully applied to disruptive incidents in schools. The researcher's credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Masters of Conflict Analysis and Management program, Royal Roads University at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX or FAX XXX-XXX-XXXX or email to xxxx.xxxxx@xxxxxxxx.xx.

You are invited to participate in this study as a member of a Research Team. You have been selected because of your experience and expertise as a [mediator, negotiator or educator with research experience]. As a Research Team Member assisting the Researcher with this project, your role may include one or more of the following: provide advice on the relevance and wording of questions, advise the researcher regarding data-gathering methods, help to analyze data and provide overall feedback. In the course of this activity, you may be privy to confidential research data.

In compliance with the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Policy, under which this research project is being conducted, all personal identifiers and any other confidential information generated or accessed by the research team member will only be used in the performance of the functions of this project, and must not be disclosed to anyone other than persons authorized to receive it, both during the research period and beyond it. Recorded information in all formats is covered by this agreement. Personal identifiers include participant names, contact information, personally identifying turns of phrase or comments, and any other personally identifying information.

Research Team Members who are uncertain whether any information they may wish to share about the project they are working on is personal or confidential will verify this with Emma Van der Klift, the Researcher, at XXX-XXX-XXXX, XXXX XXXXX St. Nanaimo, British Columbia, XXX XXX or at xxxxxxx@xxxxx.xxx.

Statement of Informed Consent:

I have read and understand this agreement.

_____	_____	_____
Name (Please Print)	Signature	Date

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH – HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS

Dear [Name]:

This is to advise you that Emma Van der Klift (the researcher) is conducting a research project in connection with her Masters studies at Royal Roads University. Emma's credentials with Royal Roads University can be can be established by calling Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Master of Conflict Analysis and Management program, at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX. This research project is concerned with the exploration of critical knowledge that will help educators to manage disruption in the classroom. Emma will conduct the study in collaboration with a Research Team.

As a part of the study, Emma wishes to:

- Interview up to 6 hostage negotiators about the communication-based strategies they utilize to de-escalate hostage takers.
- Interview up to 8 experienced secondary educator/administrators currently working in regular or alternative settings who have experienced disruptive incidents within last two years.
- Conduct a short training session outlining some of the communication-based strategies utilized by hostage negotiators in de-escalating hostage takers in difficult and potentially life threatening situations.
- Ask educators to utilize one such strategy with a student of their choice for a period of 2-4 weeks
- Re-interview educator participants

You are invited to participate in this study as a hostage negotiator. This invitation is being sent to you because you have been identified as meeting the above criteria. Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary and will take the form of participation in one interview of approximately 1 hour's duration. This interview can be conducted by telephone or in person, if so desired.

Interview:

Interviews will take place in a private and confidential setting of your choice or by telephone. They will last approximately 1 hour, and will be audio-taped and transcribed. Notes will be taken by the interviewer/researcher. Participation is confidential and anonymous. A summary of your interview will be sent to you, allowing you to check for accuracy, and request additions, deletions or changes. The transcript will be done by a transcriptionist who will sign an oath of confidentiality. The transcript will be housed in a secure location at XXXXXX St., Nanaimo, British Columbia.

How to Express Interest:

Should you wish to participate, please confirm by replying to this email before 4:30 PM on [date]. Should you wish NOT to participate, please reply to this email at your earliest convenience so that we can approach other individuals if required in order to meet the study criteria.

If there are more volunteers than needed who meet the criteria, participants will be selected by random draw. The identity of those not selected will be held in confidence. Consequently, those who choose not to volunteer will be indistinguishable from those who volunteer but were not selected. Volunteers whose names are not drawn will be informed of that by way of an email from me. Those selected will be contacted by the researcher with further information concerning their involvement in the study. The data analysis will form part of a report submitted to the Sponsor and to RRU as part of the completion of a Masters degree.

Again, there is no need for you to participate should you decide not to do so. Should you choose to participate, I thank you in advance, and look forward to working with you.

Yours truly,

Emma Van der Klift

APPENDIX C: TELEPHONE SCRIPT FOR HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS

Hello, my name is Emma Van der Klift, and I am conducting a research project, which is part of the requirement for a Master of Arts degree in Conflict Analysis and Management at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by telephoning Fred Oster, Program Head, at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX.

The objective of my research project is to undertake an exploration of critical knowledge that will help educators to increase their capacity to deal with difficult and disruptive incidents in the classroom effectively and quickly. My experience providing supports to individuals with significant behavioural challenges, as a mediator/negotiator, as a trainer with 20 years of experience in the educational sector, and as a labour relations director has inspired me to investigate how the knowledge contained in the negotiation sector can 'cross-pollinate' across the seemingly disparate fields of hostage negotiation and education in order to provide insights useful to educators.

In addition to submitting my final report to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Masters degree in Conflict Analysis and Management, I will also be sharing my research findings with a research team. The findings and analyses will be used within my final report, and may be used in subsequent academic and professional discourse through presentations and publications. The report may be shared with other schools and organizations with a legitimate interest.

My research project will consist of a qualitative interview, and will be 1 hour in duration. The foreseen questions will include how you came to be a hostage negotiator, what skills you employ, how you work to deescalate a distraught and potentially violent hostage taker, and how you maintain calm constructiveness during negotiations with people you may not like or approve of.

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because of colleague referral. You are considered by your colleagues to have training, experience and expertise in the area of communication-based hostage negotiation strategies used to de-escalate hostage takers.

Information will be recorded in hand-written format and audio-taped, and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any participant unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential.

A copy of the final report will be published. A copy will be housed at Royal Roads University, available online through UMI/Proquest and the Theses Canada portal and will be publicly accessible. Access and distribution will be unrestricted.

You are not compelled to participate in this research project. If you choose not to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice. Similarly, if you choose not to participate in this research project, this information will also be maintained in confidence.

Would you be interested in participating in the project?

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH – EDUCATORS

Dear [Name]:

This is to advise you that Emma Van der Klift (the researcher) is conducting a research project in connection with her Masters studies at Royal Roads University. Emma's credentials with Royal Roads University can be can be established by calling Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Master of Conflict Analysis and Management program, at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX. This research project is concerned with the exploration of critical knowledge that will help educators to manage disruption in the classroom. Emma will conduct the research in collaboration with a Research Team.

As a part of the study, Emma wishes to:

- Interview up to 6 hostage negotiators about the communication-based strategies they utilize to de-escalate hostage takers.
- Interview up to 8 experienced secondary educators currently working in regular or alternative settings who have experienced disruptive incidents within the last two years.
- Conduct a short training session outlining some of the communication-based strategies utilized by hostage negotiators in de-escalating hostage takers in difficult and potentially life threatening situations.
- Ask educators to utilize one such strategy with a student of their choice for a period of 2-4 weeks
- Re-interview educator participants

You are invited to participate in this study as an educator/participant. This invitation is being sent to you because you have been identified as meeting the above criteria. Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary and will take the form of participation in two interviews, a short training session and an implementation consisting of a few minutes per day for a two to four week period.

Interviews:

Interviews will take place in a private and confidential setting of your choice. They will last approximately 1 hour each, and will be audio-taped and transcribed. In addition, notes will be taken by the interviewer/researcher. Participation is confidential. A summary of your interviews will be sent to you, allowing you to check for accuracy, and request additions, deletions or changes. The transcription will be conducted by a transcriptionist who will sign an oath of confidentiality. The transcript will be housed in a secure location at XXX XXXXXXX St. Nanaimo, British Columbia.

Training:

Location and timing of a 3-5 hour training session will be mutually decided in consultation with yourself and other participants, and the sponsor of the project. Training will consist of:

- a short lecture and power point presentation outlining findings to date and an overview of negotiation strategies
- a short practice session of communication-based strategies as suggested by hostage negotiators

It should be noted that the training session will bring together all educator participants, and that your participation cannot therefore be anonymous. However, the need for confidentiality will be raised with all participants in the process. It is not anticipated that participation will involve risk for you.

The training session will be followed by an implementation phase, which involves utilizing a specific skill(s) with a student of your selection for a few minutes per day for a 2-4 week period.

How to Express Interest:

Should you wish to participate, please confirm this by replying to this email before 4:30 PM on [date]. Should you wish NOT to participate, please reply to this email at your earliest convenience so that we can approach other individuals if required in order to meet the study criteria.

If there are more volunteers than needed who meet the criteria, participants will be selected by random draw. The identity of those not selected will be held in confidence. Consequently, those who choose not to volunteer will be indistinguishable from those who volunteer but were not selected. Volunteers whose names are not drawn will be informed of that by way of an email from me. Those selected will be contacted by the researcher with further information concerning their involvement in the study. The data analysis will form part of a report submitted to the Sponsor and to RRU as part of the completion of a Masters degree.

Again, there is no need for you to participate should you decide not to do so. Should you choose to participate, I thank you in advance, and look forward to working with you.

Yours truly,

Emma Van der Klift

APPENDIX E: RESEARCHER'S LETTER TO EDUCATOR RESPONDENTS

Re: MA Conflict Analysis and Management Major Project – Emma Van der Klift

Dear [Name]:

Thank you for volunteering to participate in my research project. This letter is to confirm the process and protocol surrounding your involvement. The project is part of a requirement for my Master's Degree in Conflict Analysis and Management at Royal Roads University (RRU). My project is sponsored by _____. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Master of Conflict Analysis and Management, Royal Roads University at xxxx.xxxx@xxxxxxx.xx XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX.

This research project is concerned with the exploration of critical knowledge that will help educators to increase their capacity to deal with difficult and disruptive incidents effectively and quickly. My experience providing supports to individuals with significant behavioural challenges, as a mediator/negotiator, as a trainer with 20 years of experience in the educational sector, and as a labour relations professional has inspired me to investigate how the knowledge contained in the negotiation sector can 'cross-pollinate' across seemingly disparate fields in order to provide insights useful to educators.

Secondary educators were invited to participate in this research. You have been selected. The method of selecting study participants was made in collaboration with the project sponsor. You are 1 of 6-8 participants selected who meet the criteria of being an educator currently working in either a regular or alternative secondary school who has experienced disruptive incidents during the last two years.

I will be asking questions that include your perception of the challenges inherent in classroom management and your philosophy and practices with respect to the same issue.

Both interviews are expected to last approximately 1 hour and will occur in a private and confidential setting mutually as arranged. One interview will take place at the commencement of the project, the other at its conclusion. Information provided by you will be audio recorded by a primary tape recorder as well as a backup recorder. You have the right to request that the tape recorder be turned off at any time during the interviews at your personal discretion. I will take notes during the interviews. Any person other than me, who is engaged in the transcription of the audio recording, will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement containing an undertaking to not reveal the identity of participants or otherwise divulge information provided by the participants. Generally, participants will be identified in transcriptions as "participant #1," etc. unless they specifically approve or wish to have identifying comments attributed to them. Participants may be given a pseudonym in reports that flow from the study, however, all details and identifiers which might reveal the participant's' identity will not be included. Data from all sources will be formatted, analyzed, and themed by me with the assistance of a research team. Information provided by you, absent identifiers, may be shared with other project participants.

The training component of the study will take place at a location disclosed at a later date. This session will be approximately 2-3 hours in length, and will consist of a short presentation outlining hostage negotiation strategies, followed by a practice session. Following this, you will be asked to implement the strategies you have learned during training for a 2-4 week period with a student of your selection.

The findings and analyses will be used within my final report, and may be used in subsequent academic and professional discourse through presentations and publications. The report may be shared with other schools and organizations with a legitimate interest.

I want to thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. I believe your contribution will be valuable to gaining a greater understanding of how we might improve our capacity to respond to difficult behaviour in the classroom. Once again, you are not compelled to take part in this study. If you choose to take part, you are free to withdraw at anytime and information provided by you will not be used further in the study, should you so decide. If you agree to participate further in this study I would ask you to complete the accompanying Participant Consent Form and return it to me by FAX (XXX-XXX-XXXX) no later than [date].

Should you have remaining questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone at: XXX-XXX-XXXX or by email at xxxxxx@xxxxxxxx.xx.

Yours truly,

Emma Van der Klift

Attachment: Consent Form

APPENDIX F: LETTER OF PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PARENTS OF MINOR STUDENTS

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Emma Van der Klift, and I am a graduate student at Royal Roads University. I am conducting research about school discipline processes. I am looking at whether communication-based negotiation strategies used by crisis negotiators would be useful for teachers.

As part of this study, I would like to interview a group of middle/high school students in order to elicit their perceptions of classroom management and discipline processes in school. Specifically, I'd like to ask them what approaches taken by teachers are helpful, and which make things worse. The purpose of this research is to gain understanding of the student's perspective about which interactions either de-fuse or escalate conflict. I also hope to uncover any recommendations that they may have to improve communication.

I am inviting your daughter/son to participate in this discussion group on a voluntary basis. To participate, I will need your signature and approval.

The research will involve a 1-2 hour focus group. The questions will be designed to elicit personal reflections and recommendations. The information collected from this session will be part of my Major Research Project, and the data I collect will be confidential, although students participating in the focus group will not be anonymous to one another. At no time will your child's name be disclosed. All participants will be referred to by pseudonym or by number. I will be audio-recording the session, and it will be transcribed by a transcriptionist who will sign a letter of confidentiality. I will also be taking notes.

All transcripts and recordings will be kept in a locked drawer and shredded once the project is completed. If you or your son or daughter decides that they no longer want to be involved in the project, they are free to withdraw at any point. All information will be destroyed following withdrawal.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, please include your printed name and signature below.

A copy of the final report will be housed at Royal Roads University, and will be publicly accessible.

My credentials with Royal Roads University can be can be established by calling Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Master of Conflict Analysis and Management program, at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX. This research project is concerned with the exploration of critical knowledge that will help educators to manage disruption in the classroom. This research will be conducted in collaboration with a Research Team.

I agree to allow my daughter/son to participate in this project.

Parent's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For further information regarding the purpose and methods for this project, please do not hesitate to contact:

Emma Van der Klift, Researcher
Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email: xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx

Alfie Kohn, Academic Project Supervisor
Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email: xxx@xxxx.xxxx

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS FOR HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS

Personal Interviews with 2 – 6 Hostage negotiators

Selection criteria confirmed:

- ☐ negotiator
- ☐ trained and experienced in communication-based negotiation strategies

Introduction:

Ensure consent form is signed and participant is fully informed and comfortable with proceeding.

Thank individual for their participation. Interview will be recorded and transcribed. Notes will be taken.

Explain that information will not be attributed to participants unless participant specifically approves or requests that their name be connected to the information. Generally, participant will be identified in transcriptions as "participant #1," etc. Names will not be used or otherwise appear in data collected. Explain again that participation is voluntary. Individual can withdraw from participation at any time and ask that contribution not be used in the study.

Frame the interview in terms of objectives, namely, the matter under research. Looking for opinions, discussion and any other form of contribution participants wish to make with respect to the research question.

- Less structured. Aimed at encouraging participants to tell their story.
- Wording of questions standard
- Level of language may be adjusted.
- Interviewer may answer questions (from participant) and make clarifications.
- Interviewer may add/ask probing questions during interview for clarification.

The interview is expected to take 1 hour.

Questions:

1. How did you come to be a hostage negotiator?

2. What kind of training did you receive?

    - What method of training did you find most helpful?

3. How do you work to establish rapport with a hostage taker?

- How are you able to do so in a short time frame, with someone you don't know, over the phone?
- What is most important about your conversations?

4. What are the most important skills/personal qualities of a hostage negotiator?

5. Negotiators in the literature I have reviewed claim that insincerity 'leaks' into the conversation, and can quickly derail a negotiation if the hostage-taker senses it. How do you maintain authenticity while negotiating with people you may not like or approve of?

6. Hostage situations require negotiators to remain calm under significant pressure. Can you tell me about a time you had to do this? How do you manage this?

7. Can you tell me about a situation you were involved in?

    - How did you respond?
    - What was most helpful?

8. What advice would you have for novice negotiators? Educators?

APPENDIX H: FIRST INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

First personal interviews with 6 – 8 Educators

Selection criteria confirmed:

- ☐ educator
- ☐ currently assigned to a regular or alternative program
- ☐ have experienced disruptive behaviour within the last two years.

Introduction:

Ensure consent form is signed and participant is fully informed and comfortable with proceeding.

Thank individual for their participation. Interview will be recorded and transcribed. Notes will be taken.

Explain that information will not be attributed to participants unless participant specifically approves or requests that their name be connected to the information. Generally, participant will be identified in transcriptions as "participant #1," etc. Names will not be used or otherwise appear in data collected. Explain again that participation is voluntary. Individual can withdraw from participation at any time and ask that contribution not be used in the study.

Frame the interview in terms of objectives, namely, the matter under research. Looking for opinions, discussion and any other form of contribution participant wishes to make in regard to the research question.

- Less structured. Aimed at encouraging participants to tell their story.
- Wording of questions standard
- Level of language may be adjusted.
- Interviewer may answer questions (from participant) and make clarifications.
- Interviewer may add/ask probing questions during interview for clarification.

The interview is expected to take 1 hour.

Questions:

1. What brought you to teaching?

    - Do you have a philosophy of education?

2. Have you received specific training in classroom management? If so, what kind of training did you take part in?

    - Was the training useful? Why or why not?
    - Do you have recommendations for further training?

3. Do you have a set of rules or procedures in your classroom/school?

    - If so, how are they generated?
    - Enforced?

4. Do you have a personal philosophy of classroom management?

    - How does your philosophy fit with the overall philosophy of your school/district?

5. Please comment on how you view the following concepts pertaining to classroom management:

    - Accountability
    - Consequences
    - Expectations
    - Discipline

6. Tell me about an incident that was particularly difficult to manage.

    - How did you respond?
    - What might have been helpful?

APPENDIX I: SECOND INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

2nd personal Interviews with 6 – 8 Educators

Selection criteria confirmed:

- ☐ educator
- ☐ currently assigned to a regular or alternative program
- ☐ has experienced disruptive classroom behaviour within the last two years

Introduction:

Ensure consent form is signed and participant is fully informed and comfortable with proceeding.

Thank individual for their participation. Interview will be recorded and transcribed. Notes will be taken.

Explain that information will not be attributed to participants unless participant specifically approves or requests that their name be connected to the information. Generally, participant will be identified in transcriptions as "participant #1," etc. Names will not be used or otherwise appear in data collected. Explain again that participation is voluntary. Individual can withdraw from participation at any time and ask that contribution not be used in the study.

Frame the interview in terms of objectives, namely, the matter under research. Looking for opinions, discussion and any other form of contribution participants wish to make with respect to their experiences with the training/implementation process.

- Less structured. Aimed at encouraging participants to tell their story.
- Wording of questions standard
- Level of language may be adjusted.
- Interviewer may answer questions (from participant) and make clarifications.
- Interviewer may add/ask probing questions during interview for clarification.

The interview is expected to take 1 hour.

Questions:

1. Tell me about your experiences with the student you selected for implementation?
    - What worked
    - What didn't
2. Were there any changes you observed?
    - In the student?
    - In yourself?
3. Were the strategies you used effective?
4. Do you have suggestions for further work in this area?

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Focus Group for 4 – 6 middle and/or high school students

Selection criteria confirmed:

- ☐ student
- ☐ currently attending a regular or alternative program

Introduction:

Ensure that parental consent form is signed and participant is fully informed and comfortable with proceeding.

Thank individuals for their participation. Inform them that the interview will be recorded and transcribed. Notes will be taken.

Explain that information will not be attributed to participants. Generally, participant will be identified in transcriptions as "participant #1," etc. Names will not be used or otherwise appear in data collected. Explain again that participation is voluntary. Individual can withdraw from participation at any time and ask that contribution not be used in the study.

Frame the interview in terms of objectives, namely, the matter under research. Looking for opinions, discussion and any other form of contribution participants wish to make with respect to their experiences at school.

- Less structured. Aimed at encouraging participants to tell their story.
- Wording of questions standard
- Level of language will be adjusted.
- Interviewer may answer questions (from participant) and make clarifications.
- Interviewer may add/ask probing questions during interview for clarification.

The focus group is expected to take 1 hour.

Questions:

1. Tell me about your favourite teacher.
    - What made the relationship work?
2. Tell me about the most difficult teacher you have had.
    - What made the relationship difficult?
3. Pretend you are an expert consultant to the school. What recommendations would you make to teachers to improve communication with students?
4. What works best when an adult tries to help you? Brainstorm a list of "dos and don'ts" for teachers working with kids on problems at school.

APPENDIX K: HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS – CONSENT

Royal Roads University, School of Peace and Justice,
Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Management

Research Project: Can Communication-Based Hostage Negotiation Strategies Solve Classroom Management Problems?

Researcher: Emma Van der Klift

I, _____ agree to participate in a research project concerning how or whether the application of communication-based hostage negotiation strategies may assist educators to manage disruptive behaviours successfully. This project is conducted by a graduate student as a requirement for a Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Management. Emma's credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by calling Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Master of Conflict Analysis and Management program, at XXX-XXX-XXXX ext. XXXX.

I agree to participate in one 1 hour interview with the researcher on the following conditions:

- I have the right to withdraw at any time for any reason from participation in the project and to have information I have provided removed from the study.
- I understand that audio recording of my participation will be made for subsequent transcription and analysis relating to this study. More specifically, I consent to:
    a) The recording of my interview participation by way of a primary and back up recorder;
    b) The making of a transcription of my interview by someone who has signed a confidentiality agreement;
    c) The sharing of information provided by me – absent identification unless specifically authorized by me – with a research team.

I understand that my identity will be kept confidential and that my identity will be removed from the study findings unless I specifically authorize my name to be used in connection with information provided by me. The Researcher will endeavour to ensure that no harm will come to me through my participation in this project. I understand that there are few if any potential liabilities in participating in this study, given the researcher's attention to making the specifics of my participation as anonymous as I choose.

I understand that the research findings, absent personal identifiers, may be used for purposes other than the specific research question where it may be of assistance in further presentations and reports relevant to the research question.

I agree to these conditions.

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For further information regarding the purpose and methods for this project, please do not hesitate to contact:

Emma Van der Klift, Researcher
Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email: xxxxxx@xxxxxxxxx.xx

Alfie Kohn, Academic Project Supervisor
Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email: xxxx@xxxxxxxxx.xxx

APPENDIX L: EDUCATORS – CONSENT

Royal Roads University, School of Peace and Justice,
Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Management

Research Project: Can Communication-Based Hostage Negotiation Strategies Solve Classroom Management Problems?

Researcher: Emma Van der Klift

I,_____ agree to participate in a research project concerning how or whether the application of communication-based hostage negotiation strategies may assist educators to manage disruptive behaviours successfully. This project is conducted by a graduate student as a requirement for a Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Management. Emma's credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by calling Dr. Fred Oster, Program Head, Master of Conflict Analysis and Management program, at XXX-XXX-XXXX x/ XXXX.

I agree to participate in two 1 hour interviews, a short (3-5 hr) training session and a small experiment (2-4 weeks in duration) with the researcher on the following conditions:

- I have the right to withdraw at any time for any reason from participation in the project and to have information I have provided removed from the study.
- I understand that audio recording of my participation will be made for subsequent transcription and analysis relating to this study. More specifically, I consent to:
    a) The recording of my interview participation by way of a primary and back up recorder;
    b) The making of a transcription of my participation by someone who has signed a confidentiality agreement;
    c) The sharing of information provided by me – absent identification unless specifically authorized by me – with a research team.

I understand that my identity will be kept confidential and that my identity will be removed from the study findings unless I specifically authorize my name to be used in connection with information provided by me. However, the researcher cannot guarantee that other participants maintain confidentiality. I recognize that in a small community such as a school district, anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed. In addition, I recognize that I will take part in a group training session with the other participants in the project. I am comfortable with this risk and believe that the benefits of my participation outweigh any risks. The Researcher will endeavour to ensure that no harm will come to me through my participation in this project. I understand that there are few if any potential liabilities in participating in this study, given the researcher's attention to making the specifics of my participation as anonymous as I choose.

I understand that the research findings, absent personal identifiers, may be used for purposes other than the specific research question where it may be of assistance in further presentations and reports relevant to the research question.

I agree to these conditions.

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For further information regarding the purpose and methods for this project, please do not hesitate to contact:

Emma Van der Klift, Researcher
Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxxx.xx

Alfie Kohn, Academic Project Supervisor
Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email: xxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx