

Glasser Information



Dr. Glasser is an internationally recognized psychiatrist who is best known as the author of Reality Therapy, a method of psychotherapy he created in 1965 and that is now taught all over the world.

Born in 1925 and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Glasser was initially a Chemical Engineer but went into psychiatry when it became apparent to him that this was his real interest in life. He attended medical school at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and took his psychiatric training at the Veterans Administration Hospital in West Los Angeles and UCLA (1954-57). He became Board Certified in 1961 and was in private practice from 1957 to 1986.

His influence on education began when he was the psychiatrist at the Ventura School for Girls (Jail). His role was to work with the girls' personal, educational and social issues. In 1969, Dr. Glasser published *Schools Without Failure*. The primary focus of Dr. Glasser's approach was that all students should meet academic standards before progressing to the next objective, unit, grade, etc. He added that a system that focused on grades and failure labels was detrimental and demoralizing. He advocated the mastery of learning objectives as the sole criteria of progress.

In the late 1980's, Dr. Glasser contacted W. Edwards Deming to discuss the link between Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and the Quality movement. He then wrote several books emphasizing the importance of responsibility, relationships and self-evaluation in the educational process. He once again advocated content mastery and learning *useful* information as the primary focus of education.

Choice Theory explains how and why people behave. Understanding student motivation is helpful in building a positive, supportive, trusting learning environment. Additionally, this knowledge will help teachers design, assess and analyze instructional effectiveness.

The Reality Therapy questioning process, adapted for education, helps students take more responsibility for their learning and behavior. Learning to ask the students questions to evaluate the effectiveness of their choices is critical in the learning process. The questions are used to assess learning, academic progress and behavioral choices.

No matter how much others tell us that what we are doing isn't working, *none of us will change our behavior until **we** decide that what we are doing isn't working!*

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The reality therapy questions are most often used with individuals in conferences, but are easily adaptable to whole class or school issues.

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