



Wholeistic Academy Handbook
*An Introduction to the
Adolescent Behavioral Health Program*



By Victoria Lee, LCMHC, MLADC
Principle Educator, Wholeistic Education® (WED®)
victoria@clearreflectionnh.com

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DEDICATION TO JOE WALSH, Founder of Wholeistic Education



Joseph R. Walsh, LCMHC founded Wholeistic Education (WED) in the early 1990s. He created WED as a program to help individuals and families reach optimal wellness in their lives. Joe worked as a family therapist at Nashua’s Children’s Home and was the co-founder and long-term Program Director at Direction Behavioral Health Associates, an IOP for teens. It was at these two programs that Joe’s life’s work of teaching and practicing WED refined itself and helped thousands of kids, families, and professionals live deeper, more balanced lives.

I met Joe while working as a Residential Counselor at Nashua Children’s Home. I quickly recognized the insights and opportunities that WED offered and was drawn to Joe’s fun-loving, “Keep it playful” yet fiercely serious and competitive personality. I joined the Direction team and dedicated the next 10 years of my life to studying WED and all the weird ways of Joe. It was an honor to be Joe’s Assistant Program Director and a certified WED Educator.

After a grueling, yet inspirational seven-year journey with MSA, Joe transcended this world on October 25th, 2020. He stayed dignified and practicing until the end.

Joe was insanely intelligent and even more loving. He was fanatically dedicated to his own practice and will forever be my mentor. I hope to do his life and love justice in the work I carry on. I look forward to passing along Joe’s wisdom to you and your family. May he help you as much as he has helped me.

*“We gotta get out while we’re young
‘Cause tramps like us, baby we were born to run!”*

WELCOME TO THE WED ACADEMY!

Program Overview

Hello and welcome to The Wholeistic Academy! Our program is designed specifically for adolescent ages 12-18 who find themselves in need of support. We help kids who's issues stem from mental health issues, family dynamic issues, peer or school related stress, developmental issues, or plain old life issues. We are not diagnosis specific because instead of focusing on the problem, we focus on the solution which we believe lies in healthy, balanced living. This focus also has the added benefit of kids not hyper-focusing on a label nor looking for the quick fixes our society often attaches to such labels.

Our program has two main parts. *First is the adolescent group therapy component.* This is the main component of our program. The groups include structured process groups, didactic skills groups, and unstructured community building time. Kids are immersed into group life for three hours three days per week for the duration of their time in the program. As needed, individual check-ins are also done during this time.

Second is the family component. The family component includes parenting groups, biweekly phone calls to parents from a clinician, self-paced educational modules online (coming out Summer 2023), and referral to long-term family therapy when needed. Family check-ins can be accommodated when necessary and per child and parent's agreement.

Success is linked to active participation in both components of our program and those who are willing and able to dedicate themselves to our simple (but not necessarily easy) approach often report drastic improvements in their lives.

Note: If medication management is something we believe your child may benefit from we will speak directly to both child and parents about our clinical thoughts. From there, we have

referrals to medication providers that we will provide. We are happy to collaborate with these providers but they are separate entities that you will also have your own relationship with.

Simple Introduction to Wholeistic Education

Wholeistic Education, or WED for short, is the name of the philosophy that guides our work in *both components of the program*. We practice WED together with the kids and teach both kids and parents alike the concepts and skills. At first WED may be a lot to process as it offers a new perspective and new way of relating to your child and to family life. It has proven helpful to thousands of families and individuals since its conception in the early 1990s. Although WED is a propriety approach to individual and family wellness, it's based on simple, age-old wisdom that when applied in our modern life can make a big impact.

Upon review, one will see there is nothing extraordinary here. It is actually quite simple once digested- but we acknowledge it takes a bit to digest. WED is a values-based approach to individual and family wellness. It helps families create a positive family culture that strives to balance out both individual and group level needs. In other words, it strives to dynamically balance both maximum individuality with prosocial pressure to build a healthy, strong group.

WED will help you:

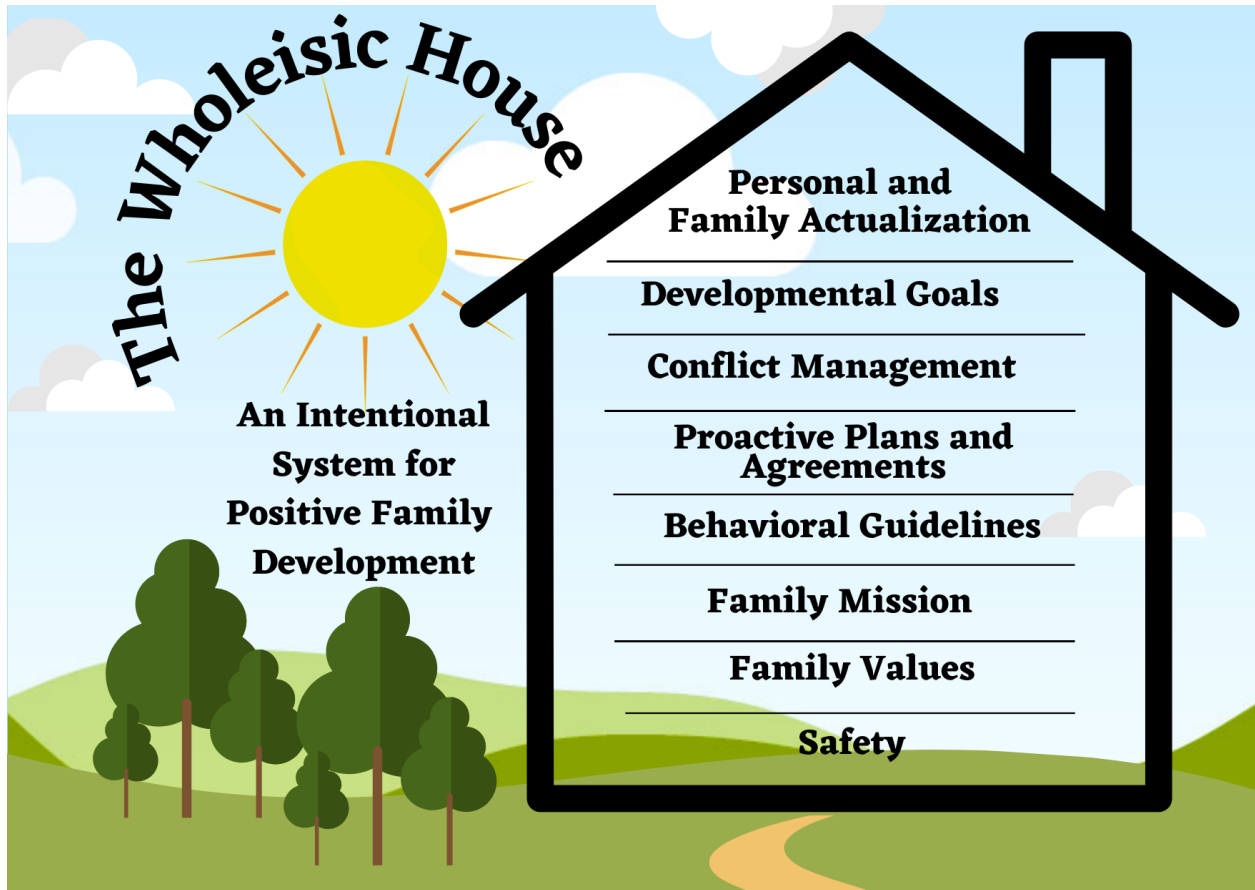
- explore your family values
- adopt intentional group norms
- build conflict management skills
- create proactive life plans
- become your healthiest self and family possible.

While writing this handbook I did my best at staying true to Joe's original core concepts while adding or simplifying aspects that, after years of teaching and practicing WED, I believe are needed to help others better integrate the material.

How to Use This Handbook

Respect Dignity Responsibility Compassion Perseverance

This handbook is meant to help parents implement and practice WED at home with their families. It is best used initially as a companion to our parenting groups and the WED Skills Workbook. It can serve as a great reference to pull out as one deepens their practice to remind self of some of the key aspects of WED.



SECTION I: SELF AND FAMILY ACTUALIZATION

Defining our Aim

Well, let's just say it outright. WED aims for the ideal! We believe in putting the ideal out there and marching towards it, well aware we may fall short. We also know if we don't set the intention, we are sure to fail and most likely end up somewhere we don't want to be. So, together, let's keep the bar high, aim for the ideal, and be content with landing at "good enough"

or maybe even excellent! So, what is the ideal I write of? WED aims *for self and family actualization*. Actualization means to make a reality of your best self, to become the embodied version of your highest self. It is the person or family that is living their fullest potential. Such humans and groups of humans function well and they look alive, creative, and fun. Think maturity, full human development, optimal well-being. Our intentional system for positive development helps both the individual and family create the skills, habits, and discipline to actually achieve optimization in our personal and relational life. Humans are highly gregarious animals (social animals who depend on the group to survive). Thus, we believe you cannot separate the individual from the group. With this understanding, WED thus focuses on first a cultural/group approach to wellness as the foundation most modern folks are missing in our highly individualized lives. WED strives to optimally balance individual and group needs so that the whole and the parts of the whole are equally strong. Just makes sense.

SECTION II: DEFINING YOUR FAMILY VALUES

Family Values

Now that you know our aim (top level of the Wholeistic House Model- see picture above), the next step is understanding the road we take to get there. As mentioned above, humans are highly social animals. We naturally create small human groups that help us survive. This is deeply embedded in our bodies and brains. Very rarely can a human survive long in solitary circumstances without long-term negative consequences, sometimes even death (i.e. Failure to Thrive syndrome in infants who die without physical touch). So natural, in fact, is this division into groups that humans often overlook the importance of this aspect of their life. The way our primary group functions and relates has a tremendous impact on our development and wellness. The way a group functions and relates tends to be based on their values, as values help us determine what behaviors we want to avoid and what behaviors we want to engage in. Often times, families operate with “implicit values”- values that have not been stated but assumed everyone understands and agrees with. One of the most challenging aspects of implicit values is that often times they do not get clearly defined and do not have shared meaning for the group members. The foundation of WED’s intentional system for development is explicating your

family values. We invite each family to spend time discussing their values with each other- explore what you think they are. Have you clearly defined them before? Which ones do you live by? Which ones are harder to put into action?

Our Suggestions

WED is based on *Four Core Values*. We provide them here for you to read and adopt as guiding principals in your own life, if you so agree.

Following

Simply put, we believe that life, nature, God/Spirit if you will, has set forth a healthiest path for each of us to follow. In a most simple example, a plate of broccoli and salmon is a healthier path than a Big Mac. We value following this clearly marked path because we believe it allows each person to live their most healthy, contented life possible. AA has a saying, “do the night right thing.” The bible wrote “Seek and thee shall find.” Taoism describes “The Way.” When one is in tune with The Way, Nature or Spirit, all other aspects of life become right sized and we are able to stay grounded and focused on what matters most. One must humble his or herself to the practice of following. When truly in tune with following, one gives up control. Control is antithetical to WED and its practice.

Non-Violence

“Non-Violence here is not meant as pacifism, conscientious objection, passive-resistance, asceticism, altruism, selflessness, or any other specifically defined rule-set other than this: *the action which contributes to the least amount of aggregate violence*. This definition demands personal responsibility in the mystery of every new moment – allowing for even the most paradoxically, apparently violent responses to specific circumstances. For example, it may be perfectly consistent with WED’s principle of Non-Violence to purposely injure (e.g., to prevent abuse of the innocent). But any harm, any offense, however relatively minor, when a less harmful alternative is available, is always inconsistent with the principle of Non-Violence.” (Joseph Walsh).

Dynamic Balance

Dynamic balance is all about maintaining homeostasis. WED understands the immense importance of finding equilibrium in all things. Balance allows for the stability from which all other things grow. Dynamic points to the important aspect of finding a living balance- more like

surfing than standing still. In life, we are constantly having to readjust as time and space move forward and thus our practice of balance must be dynamic. In our culture of excess, this value is often overlooked.

Faith

Faith, derived from Latin fides and Old French feid, is confidence or trust in a person, thing, or concept. In the context of religion, it means belief in God. Here, we mean faith in life, the way. This may mean God to some, but doesn't have to. Joe pointed out, "All rational thought leads to a conceptual terminus at which one must decide in the absence of further evidence." By adopting faith as a core value, we humbly embrace the mysterious aspects of life and turn to life as our guide. We commit to life. Note: Joe created WED to be compatible with all major world religions and believes there is nothing we teach in WED that does not align with the core of most religions.

There are many other values that are contained within or can be expand beyond the four listed below. What would you add?

A Word on Safety

In the work that we do with struggling adolescents and families, it is important to note that physical and emotional safety are two key values that should not be overlooked. If a person or group does not have safety, they cannot work on higher-level developmental goals. We must make sure, before moving forward, your family and home is a safe group and place to live in. There should be no physical or emotional abuse or neglect. If your family is struggling with this, please let us know. We are here to help.

Family Mission Statement

Once you have identified your family values, it is time to create a family mission statement. Just like most businesses take time to write down a statement that identifies their aim or purpose, we recommend you do as well. For example, "The Wright Family is dedicated to creating and maintaining a positive family culture that allows for the optimal care and education of each individual member." Keep it simple but focused on what's most important. Write it out and put it up somewhere you can see on a daily basis.

SECTION III: THE BEHAVORAL GUIDELINES

A Social Code

A group's social code, or group norms, are clearly stated desired ways of behaving. Simply put, guidelines for our behavior. However, just like with family values, groups often do not take the time to explicate their social code. We just assume everyone is on the same page and understands the expectations. WED finds it very helpful for families and individuals to explicate their social code because it allows for 1) everyone, including leaders to be held accountable, 2) it helps keep us on our healthiest life path, 3) it acts as a compass or map when we get lost, and 4) it creates a mutual rallying point for all group members. By having an agreed upon social code, we are able to triangulate discussions and avoid ego-conflicts from arising. Our life together becomes about our shared practice.

WED has put together a one-paged, comprehensive list of group norms called the Behavioral Guidelines (“The Guidelines”) that can be adopted by any family as their agreed upon social code. The Guidelines are designed to maximize individuality while balancing one's responsibility to the group. They have been carefully constructed and intentionally curated to establish this balance and thus we recommend you do not try to change or add to them.

We recommend making the practice of the Behavioral Guidelines non-negotiable within your family and have a process called the Five Rs to navigate non-practice and non-commitment. With that being said, though, practice is a living thing. We must view practice in non-rigid terms that allow for flexibility but not enabling. Practice does not mean perfect and we work with ourselves and our family members as they practice the Behavioral Guidelines. The standard for group inclusion is a member's genuine commitment to practicing within the group. See the appendix of this packet for your copy of the Guidelines.

THE BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES

1. MAINTAIN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT AND DIGNITY.

- a. Politely greet, welcome, and acknowledge efforts of all.
- b. Calmly request space if emotionally overwhelmed.
- c. Apologize for any possible offense, including accidents. *

2. USE LANGUAGE AND BODY RESPONSIBLY.

- a. Avoid offensive words, including those of a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual nature.
- b. Refrain from using language or body to intimidate or injure.
- c. Calmly ask for explanation of any confusion, disagreement, conflict or concern.

3. PROACTIVELY COOPERATE.

- a. Seek opportunities to assist others, and resist urges to embarrass or undermine.
- b. Gratefully acknowledge authority of leaders. **
- c. Treat all members as teammates, regardless of personal feelings.

4. CAREFULLY ATTEND TO HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- a. Alert an adult to any physical pain or danger.
- b. Control body movement such that self or others are not injured.
- c. Wear activity-appropriate clothing.
- d. Keep body properly groomed (e.g., daily bathing, teeth brushing, etc.).
- e. Take good care of all furniture, equipment, facilities, and environment.

5. HONESTLY GIVE BEST EFFORT.

- a. Calmly communicate all perceived offenses.
- b. Earnestly participate in just resolution of dispute.
- c. Put education and wellness of self, others and the group ahead of personal image and interests.

*See Apology Poster

**See Dynamic Leadership

Implementing WED at Home

If after reading the Guidelines you think they are a healthy way forward for you and your family, we recommend implementing them at home. Although we often say Implementing WED, we are talking specifically about implementing the Behavioral Guidelines as an agreed upon practice for the family. Implementing is a simple process. The most important aspect of Implementing WED is the spirit in which it is done. One's spirit must be aligned with the non-control, non-violent values of WED. Too many parents use the Guidelines as another weapon to control their children. This is not a weapon.

If your spirit is sincere, call everyone together, give each member a copy of the Guidelines and ask all to read them over. Discuss any questions and concerns openly and as in-depth as required. As a parent or group leader, we let the group know moving forward these are the explicated social code for our family. Let the group know how the practice of these Guidelines connect to family actualization and your family values. Let all know perfection is not required but a sincere effort is. If any objections remain, give this member time to process and think but ultimately let them know together this practice is non-negotiable. Lead by example- go forth and practice to the best of your ability today. Make mistakes, own up to them, do better next time. No experts needed. Just a sincere effort.

SECTION IV: PROACTIVE PLANS AND AGREEMENTS

What are proactive plans and agreement?

The Guidelines are our overarching group norms, our day-to-day way of relating to self, others, and life. Alongside the Guidelines, proactive plans and agreements can help people function well and reach their goals. This is where we make plans to practice the guidelines. Proactive means creating or influencing a situation by causing something to happen. When we are proactive we are being responsible for the direction we are heading, we are thinking ahead and caring for what happens next. A lot of time, it is easy in life to fall into reactive behavioral patterns. Instead of being reactive, WED encourages us to identify the things and areas in life that are important to us and make healthy plans regarding them. Proactive plans can be made on an individual or group level whereas agreements tend to be between individuals and the group.

Here are some common areas we recommend making proactive plans and agreements for:

- Chores- dishes, laundry, making beds, food shopping, lawn mowing, trash out, etc.
- Who's making the meals, how will meals be eaten?
- Weekly family meetings
- Nightly "curfew"
- Screen time
- Educational expectations
- Family time
- Exercise
- Distribution of family resources- money, time, items.

Making plans and agreements and sticking to them helps all group members become more disciplined. Being disciplined humans allow us to have more agency in life and thus create the life and relationships we want. It is important to acknowledge that being disciplined does require giving up certain things (i.e. the space to just do what we want or feel like in the moment) however by giving up certain things we make our life and relationships sacred because we are saying they are important enough to make sacrifices for. This has the potential to create positive feedback loops that energize and direct our lives.

After implementing the Guidelines, talk with your family members about what plans and agreements would be helpful to create. What wants and needs do individuals have? What about the family as a whole? The process should be cooperative and flexible. Remember to use the Guidelines and your family values as guides during this process. If conflict arises use the Five Rs. As a group leader, it is your responsibility to not agree to plans that are unhealthy but stay open in trying to work out the best compromise or solution possible. No need to rush or hurry towards a solution, let it be a process.

SECTION V: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The Five Rs

Respect Dignity Responsibility Compassion Perseverance

Conflict is a natural part of all relationships. In WED, we see conflict as an opportunity to practice teaming up and to learn about self, other, and the world. We recommend utilizing the Five Rs to keep conflict healthy and positive. A lot of families find themselves in negative escalation when it comes to conflict; conflict usually means arguing, fighting, adversarial dynamic. When followed, The Five Rs can help you change the way you relate during times of tension, disagreement, and confusion. Other families find themselves avoiding conflict- which can lead to resentment or distance. The Five Rs can help give you the courage to be more open, honest, and thus have more relationship and authenticity with those you love. Whether your family tends towards fighting or avoiding, The Five Rs will help your family stay cooperative and respectful while navigating differences.

The following outlines the process of the Five Rs. When there is a conflict stimuli- i.e. perceived wrongdoing, potential imbalanced or unhealthy behavior, confusion about something, etc.- start by Reflecting.

The Five Rs
Conflict Management Skills

Like the path up a mountain, growth is often "up and down, but always up." During conflict, The Five Rs serve as a guide to keep you on the path forward.

- 1: REFLECT**
Pause. Reflect on your state of mind and nature of conflict.
- 2: REMIND**
Use humble questions to understand conflict and team up.
- 3: REPAIR**
Attend to any ruptures in relationship- minor or major.
- 4: RESTRICT**
Acknowledge group member's non- commitment to group. Separate member.
- 5: REINTEGRATE**
Reaffirm member's commitment to practice. Welcome member back to group.

WED
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Reflect

When conflict arises, pause and reflect. Reflect on the Guidelines, your practice, and the situation at hand. Always start by checking in with yourself- are you practicing? Is your spirit aligned with the Guidelines? Or are you angry, hungry, etc. and need to take a moment to recenter? If you do need a moment, take it! Most of the time we feel we need to address something immediately as the parent but most situations can wait until we are in a better space to practice. If it is an emergency moment (think child on the train tracks) then obviously don't reflect just get the child off the tracks! But most times it's not a train track moment and we can take a moment and come back to the issue at hand when we are in a better space. In fact, it is best to wait and return when you are ready to be the leader your family needs in that moment. When in a better space, come back and reassess if the potential conflict is in fact not aligned with the Guidelines. Is there some imbalanced behavior that needs to be explored? If yes, move on to Remind.

Remind

This is where we explore the current conflict/concern/imbalanced behavior at hand. We use humble questions as much as possible. This means, instead of statements about the other's behaviors, ask them questions to explore the situation, learn about their perspective. Do not assume your perspective is the only correct one or that you know what is actually happening. Be humble. Be open. Be curious. As you ask questions, you are helping to bring the group's mind back to our healthy values and practice of the Guidelines. **Remember: resist any urge to control by criticizing, lecturing, or ordering.**

If the member's whose behavior is in question is not willing to team up and it has become clear they are not committed to practicing the Guidelines, we move on to Restrict. If the group member is willing to practice, once the current situation has been sufficiently explored, move on to repair. We assess one's commitment through verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Remember: we look for behaviors to align with the guidelines and nothing more. Beyond that is to seek excessive control.

Repair

If there has been any rupture or hurt that has arisen- whether minor or major- in the process so far, it is essential we take the time to repair that hurt together. It might be necessary for the person who initiated the process to apologize or smooth over any offense that occurred by questioning the member. This may be as simple as, “I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to me, and I’m sorry if my suspicion was hurtful.” Or “Wow, this was great checking in. Thank you.” The repair may include a direct apology or it may not need to. The member’s whose behavior is in question may need to repair with the group. This may look like, “I’m sorry, I think I was just tired and not thinking.” Or “I agree I need to be more careful next time. Can you help me with that?”

Be mindful of keeping repair right sized, both in your own repairing with others and in what you are looking for in other’s repairs. For example, if your child’s imbalanced behavior was minor don’t demand a prolonged apology, just guide him or her towards reaffirming your connection.

Restrict

If a group member is not willing to commit to practicing with the group, a temporary separation is needed. If a dissenting member will not separate voluntarily, or when required, or sufficiently proves his/her non-commitment to practicing The Guidelines, he/she must be Restricted. The consequences of this choice are that he/she loses access to the group and may not expect group privileges or resources (other than those necessary for safety and health). **Remember:**

Restriction is not punishment! It is a display of the group’s respect for the autonomy of the dissenting member to choose not to practice The Guidelines, and simultaneously, a display of the group’s non-negotiable commitment to practicing The Guidelines.

“As calmly and lovingly as possible, simply state that the dissenting member is “Restricted” and must go to a separate place from which he/she may not access the group or enjoy any group privileges. This is a place selected by and prepared by group leader(s). In a family, this generally looks like a child in an isolated space, without cell phone, computer, TV, music devices, or any other group resource aside from those necessary for safety and health. (Yes,

those things are virtually always group resources. Even if some of those items may have been gifted to, or bought with their own money, it is highly unusual for a child to have paid for the electricity needed to run them. Also, trust is a group privilege, and the use of these entertainment/escapist devices may, in some cases, be rightly considered of questionable influence, especially in light of the dissention). Remember, this is not a punishment, though it will likely feel punishing to the Restricted member. (This is primarily due to the intolerable nature of Restriction deeply encoded in the human brain from hundreds of thousands of years of evolution as a gregarious animal. That is, humans are naturally selected to feel intolerant of Restriction due to the fact that in the EEA, Restriction nearly always meant death. Secondly, Restriction feels punishing due to the unpleasant nature of being deprived the group's special, material provision). Restriction is a display of the group's respect for the autonomy of the Restricted member. Seeing how we are not seeking control, we must allow members to choose to reject The Behavioral Guidelines. However, The Guidelines have been adopted by the group as non-negotiable, so if one chooses not to practice with the group, the group has not only the right, but the duty to protect itself from the potentially negative influences of the Restricted member's behavioral practices. Also, in order to promote the greatest educational benefit, the Restricted member must be allowed to feel the full weight and consequences of his/her decision to leave the group." (Joe Walsh, Standard Talks)

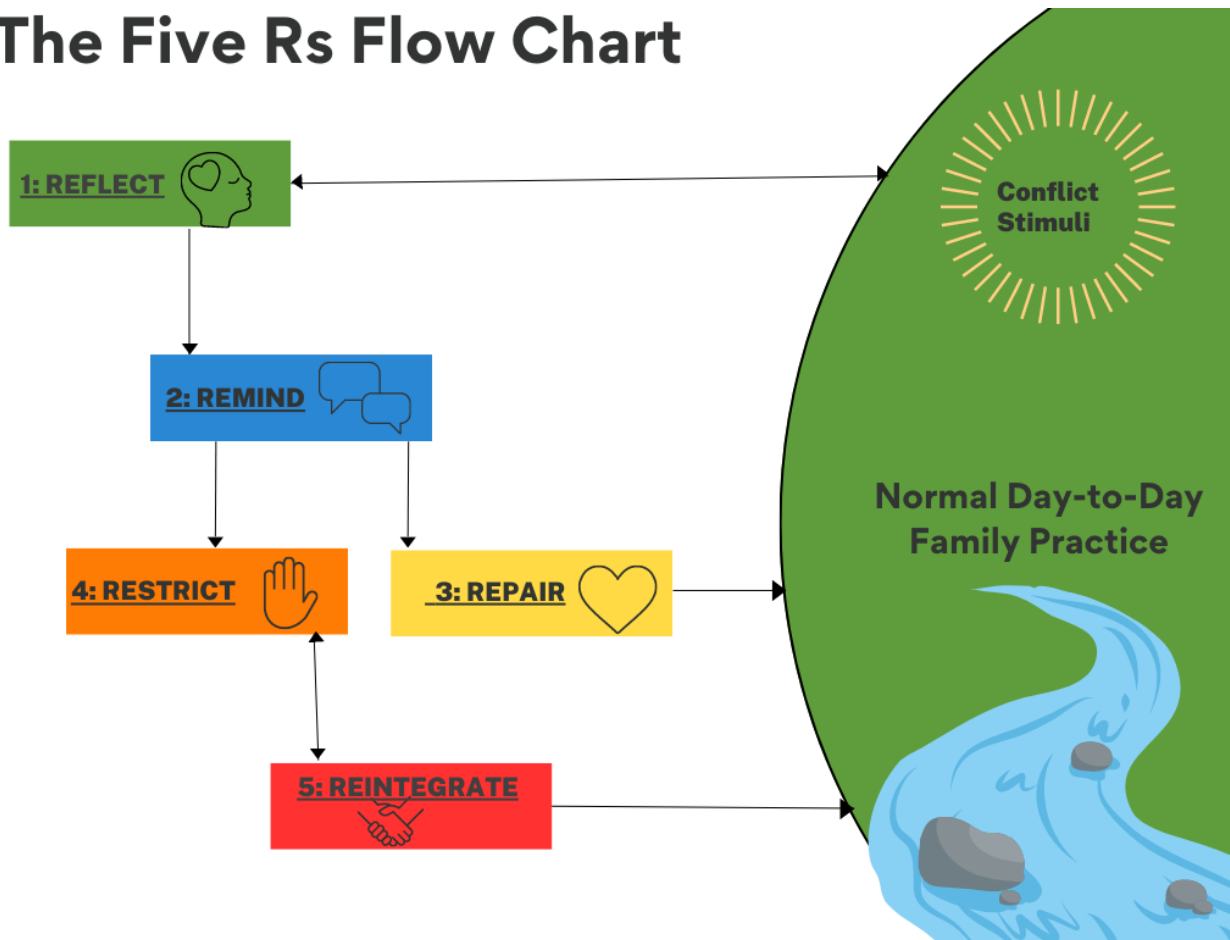
There is no time limit on Restriction. When the separated group member authentically wants to recommit to the group, he/she should voluntarily request a Reintegration Meeting. As soon as the group has sufficient resources to provide a meeting, the group should grant the member a Reintegration Meeting. Undue delay is another form of punishment, thus we avoid it.

Reintegration

1. **Reintegration is every member's right. Its function is only to confirm the Restricted member's genuine commitment to practicing The Guidelines.**
 - a. In preparation for the reintegration meeting, think about how you could have shown greater leadership. Begin all meetings with a genuine apology. After all, improved leadership may prevent any particular conflict.
 - b. Ask the Restricted member to review The Guidelines first to explore and indicate any ways leaders and others may have violated The Guidelines. Go slowly and carefully! Strong leaders invite criticism! Help with the exploration and stress how important it

- is for leaders to understand their potential mistakes so they can be better leaders. Take as much time as necessary to fully exhaust any and all of the Restricted members feelings of mistreatment. Make a full apology for any possible wrongdoing.
- Then in a way consistent with The Guidelines, ask the Restricted member to review The Guidelines to explore his/her own potential violations. Gently ask for specific examples of violations (who, what, where, when, how, etc.).
 - When the exploration is complete, gently inquire about what the Restricted member feels and thinks about these violations and what they may like to do about those thoughts and feelings. If necessary and appropriate, gently introduce the idea, and prompt toward apology.
 - Discuss and assist in the process of true apology (see Apology Poster). Focus especially on an effective plan of restitution.
 - Explore the possibility of better application of The Guidelines. Invite questions, comments, criticisms, and any other thoughts and feelings.
 - Finish by confirming mutual commitment to practicing The Guidelines, take any other appropriate course of action (e.g., assist with restitution), and welcome the member back into the group in the most appropriately complete, warm and loving way.

The Five Rs Flow Chart



Note: We will role play the Five Rs in our parenting groups to help you see this process in action. No need to be an expert to start. All that is needed to start is an authentic desire to practice, team up with your family, and a willingness to follow the outlined process above.

SECTION VI: DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS

“I Want to be Like That!”

Developmental goals are character traits that we identify as worth achieving. “Developmental” speaks to the process of maturing or developing as a human throughout our life. We work towards our identified developmental goals as we mature. Our values help inform what goals are worth achieving, our habits (practice) make them a reality, and our conflict management skills make sure we don’t blow it in the heat of a situation. When one makes the Guidelines their practice (committed habit), you will eventually embody the five Developmental Goals of WED- Respect, Dignity, Responsibility, Dignity, and Perseverance. Below is Joe’s write up on WED’s Developmental Goals.

Respect – To respect is to “re-see” or reconsider. Naturally, we recognize the differences in things as a way of making a manageable order out of our countless perceptions. However, the development of respect enables us to see beyond differences to connecting similarities. This is especially useful in human relations. On a spiritual level, we may even get to the point where it’s not necessary to see differences, and all may be seen as one.

Dignity – When we behave in a dignified manner, we earn respect from others and from ourselves. Hierarchical, domineering or elitist attitudes can be mistaken for dignity. WED encourages the development of a dignity that reflects healthy self-esteem, but at the expense of no one else.

Responsibility – When we learn to thoughtfully consider and respond to the needs and healthy wants of our environment, we are acting responsibly. It’s important to distinguish this from “reaction”, which, although sometimes necessary, is not thoughtful and in most cases is excessively impulsive.

Compassion – It is not enough to simply speak of our love and concern for others. We must develop our impulse to join with others in all of the good and bad aspects of life.

Perseverance – Sometimes, despite our best efforts and even without apparent reason, life is difficult. In those times, we simply need to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

WED's Respect affirmation: *“I stop to see the other as me”*. We write this affirmation in red, which is associated with “stopping”, and as a reminder that despite the most troubling, apparent differences, “We all bleed red”.

WED's Dignity affirmation: *“I reflect balance”*. We write this affirmation in blue, which is associated with the beautifully balanced, regal, and life-giving qualities of water: oceans, lakes, rivers, and other, awe-inspiring things, like the image of earth from space.

WED's Responsibility affirmation: *“I care for my influence on all things”*. We write this affirmation in green, which is associated with our historic interdependence on the fertile land, as well as the efforts of today's “green movement” of ecological responsibility.

WED's Compassion affirmation: *“I share joy and pain”*. We write this affirmation in orange, which is traditionally associated in some cultures with the vibrant, joyous, yet humble service of monastic life.

WED's Perseverance affirmation: *“I commit to life”*. We write this affirmation in yellow, which is associated with the all-embracing, seemingly infinite power of the sun.

Back to the Start: Actualization

When we become respectful, dignified, responsible, compassionate, and persevering, we represent some of the best aspects of what it means to be human. Our habits will help us maintain our healthiest life possible, open doors for us, and create optimal relationships and connections in the world. We will open the door to become our highest self and the groups/families we are a part of will be all the better for it. Welcome to WED!

Coming Soon...

SECTION VII: WED MAGIC

Embrace All Feelings, Guide All Behaviors

Give Up Control to Gain Authority

Avoid Adversarial Dynamic

Neither enable nor punish imbalanced behavior

Encourage True Focus

Provide Clear Reflection

Role Model Healthy Relationships

Wholeistic Leadership

Wholeistic Apology

THE BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES

1. MAINTAIN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT AND DIGNITY.

- a. Politely greet, welcome, and acknowledge efforts of all.
- b. Calmly request space if emotionally overwhelmed.
- c. Apologize for any possible offense, including accidents. *

2. USE LANGUAGE AND BODY RESPONSIBLY.

- a. Avoid offensive words, including those of a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual nature.
- b. Refrain from using language or body to intimidate or injure.
- c. Calmly ask for explanation of any confusion, disagreement, conflict or concern.

3. PROACTIVELY COOPERATE.

- a. Seek opportunities to assist others, and resist urges to embarrass or undermine.
- b. Gratefully acknowledge authority of leaders. **
- c. Treat all members as teammates, regardless of personal feelings.

4. CAREFULLY ATTEND TO HEALTH AND SAFETY.

- a. Alert an adult to any physical pain or danger.
- b. Control body movement such that self or others are not injured.
- c. Wear activity-appropriate clothing.
- d. Keep body properly groomed (e.g., daily bathing, teeth brushing, etc.).
- e. Take good care of all furniture, equipment, facilities, and environment.

5. HONESTLY GIVE BEST EFFORT.

- a. Calmly communicate all perceived offenses.
- b. Earnestly participate in just resolution of dispute.
- c. Put education and wellness of self, others and the group ahead of personal image and interests.

*See Apology Poster

**See Dynamic Leadership

APOLOGY

Apology is about caring for each other. It is about reminding each other that even though we did something wrong we want to have a good relationship. The closer we are, the more important it is for us to remind each other of that. If we live together, it is essential. Mistakes and wrongdoing are a natural part of being human. That makes apology something everyone must do.

To apologize, we need to do three things:

1. **Understand what we did wrong** – without believing it “was nothing” or it was “the worst thing in the world”
2. **Say “I am sorry”** – and really mean it!
3. **Make restitution** – which is how we attempt to “repay” whomever we hurt, and fix or replace whatever we damaged.

We can do the first two steps by ourselves, so we may find them easy. The third step is often very difficult because it forces us to try to satisfy whomever we may have hurt. So, in a way, they have some control over us. This can make us feel afraid, sad or angry.

But it's hard to really apologize when we feel afraid or angry. Because, when we feel that way, we think of ourselves first, and try to protect ourselves, and don't focus enough on others. Even if we try to apologize when we are feeling sorry for ourselves, we usually blame someone, or something else for what we did. But, if we blame anyone or anything else, even just a little, we are not really apologizing.

If we do something wrong, we can be strong, and really think of others, and really apologize, we can feel good about ourselves and know that we are irreplaceable part of our healthy positive community.

The Developmental Goals

Respect

I stop to see the other as me.

Dignity

I reflect balance.

Responsibility

I care for my influence on all things.

Compassion

I share joy and pain.

Perseverance

I commit to life.