



CONTINUING EDUCATION THAT MAKES A CHANGE

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When you are done with the course, take the posttest. When you pass the posttest (70% or higher) and pay the course fee (\$10 per unit), you will be issued a CEU Certificate of Completion.

Enjoy!

Course Name:	Life rewards calculated risk
Course Number:	LL6
CEU:	1.0
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. You will study Life's Law #6.
2. You will read real life examples of how to work with angry young adult patients.
3. You will study ways to keep defensive walls down.
4. You will experience story telling as a therapeutic tool.
5. You will see ways to open up a discussion with a teen or young adult patient.

SUGGESTED PREREQUISITE COURSES

None

Introduction

I have developed ten life laws that I teach to teens and young adults to help them navigate the rough waters of young adulthood. I have found, over the years, that these life laws give my patients directional posts that guide them outside of our therapy sessions. It is my intent for the young adult to have a framework to build their social skills on. I tend to “teach” one life law a week. (Based on the individual’s abilities.) I find that my patients quickly begin to implement change and self control into their lives. In this CEU course we will look at Life’s Law #6: Life rewards calculated risk.

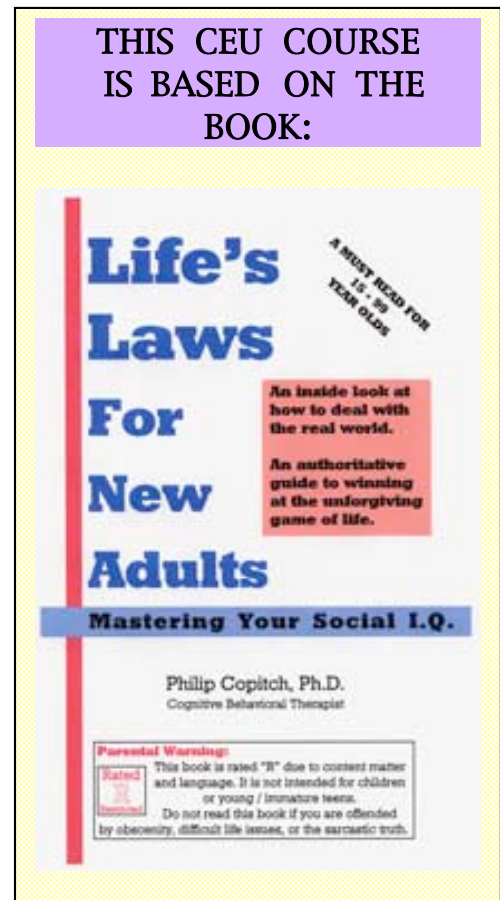
In my treatment of angry and “misunderstood” teens and young adults I take a cognitive behavioral approach and find that they appreciate my nonjudgmental frankness.

We are going to look at how to get teens and young adults to listen to you in an open-minded way. The goal is to talk with your patient, not at them. This sounds easy, but unfortunately it isn’t. Over the years I have found that if I explain a needed concept to someone in a relaxed story format, it keeps their defensive walls down and lets them emotionally participate in the learning process. By sprinkling my conversation with humor and a little “I think it’s like this, what do you think?” humility, I find that my teen and young adult clients readily play off my stories and seriously challenge their own ways of dealing with their world.

The following is the way I introduce patients to the fact that they must make choices in life. Many new adults do not understand that not making a choice, is most definitely a choice. I start with a story.

LIFE’S LAW #6: LIFE REWARDS CALCULATED RISK

Rebecca was a well-spoken, attractive, scared girl of sixteen. “I’m trying to get my shit done, but I’m not good at getting it done!” She ex-



claimed as she fought off tears. She wanted to storm out of my office, but she couldn't figure out a way for her hurt feelings to be all my fault.

Dr. Phil: Please try to pick up the tissue box.

Rebecca: What?

Dr. Phil: Please try to pick up the tissue box.

Rebecca: Sure, I guess...

She picked the box up and started to hand it to me.

Dr. Phil: No Rebecca, I asked you to try to pick up the tissue box, not to pick up the tissue box.

She placed it back down on the coffee table. She looked puzzled.

Rebecca: I can pick it up!

Once again she picked up the box.

Dr. Phil: I asked you to try to pick it up, not to pick it up.

Rebecca: Not to?

She pretended to pick up the box. She exaggerated its weight and acted as if she couldn't pick it up.

Dr. Phil: That's it Rebecca, you either do or you don't. There is no try.

Rebecca: But I'm trying to pick it up.

Dr. Phil: You either pick it up or you don't. Try is a word we use to give ourselves a way out when we fail.

Rebecca: Fail! I am trying to get more organized. I really am.

She busted into tears.

Dr. Phil: So—You are either getting more organized or you are staying the same. You have to do something for there to be a change.

Rebecca: It's too hard. There's too much to do.

Dr. Phil: That may be so, but even a little change means that you are doing something.

Your behavior is judged not by your intentions, but by your results.

I should be a multi-billionaire. That's right, billionaire — with a "B." The reason I should be a billionaire is because I invented the Frisbee when I was four or five years old and picnicking with my family at a park. I took a paper plate off the table and winged it with all my might. It was amazing. It flew! I had just invented the Frisbee. My mother was not impressed with my aeronautical skills and growled at me to stop making a mess. This scared me so much that I ran off whimpering. The newly invented Frisbee was lost in the confusion of my mind. So, if the truth be told, it is my mom's fault that I am not a multi-billionaire. Years later, some guy named, uh, Wham-o I guess, wasn't traumatized by his mother and went on to market a flying disc. He is probably a multi-billionaire.

I think it is a fair assumption that if I happened to meet Mr. Wham-o one day he would not recognize my accomplishments. I suppose he would not share his wealth with me, the true (kind of) inventor. He would probably point out that if I really was the inventor I should have patented my idea. Then I should have developed the plastic molds. I should have figured out the packaging, marketing, and the distribution of my product. I did none of that. I simply whimpered off into the poor house of obscurity.

I once heard an inventor talk about the difficulty of getting a product to market. He said, "The ideas are easy, I have them all the time. The hard part is getting others to back you with cold hard cash so you can bring the ideas to the marketplace."

The same is true in most parts of an individual's life. I have heard it a million times (at least). "I was going to..." You know what I'm talking about, the Indian tribes: the Shouldas, the Couldas, and the Wouldas. "I should have..." "I could have..." "I would have..." Probably the three leading openings of the excuse sentence.

"The road of life is paved with good intentions."

"I meant to..."

"I was going to..."

"I forgot..."

"I didn't know how to start..."

“I would have done it but...”

The list is huge. We love to let ourselves off the hook if we do not accomplish. Excuse making is an international pastime. I am very strict on this subject with myself. Either I did it, or I didn't do it. I am on time, or I am late. No excuses. If I am late, I messed up. It wasn't traffic or anything else. It was my lack of awareness or self-understanding. I am responsible for my life. I take this responsibility seriously.

Are you responsible for your life? Do you take your responsibilities seriously?

I am frequently told by parents, “My child doesn't act his age.” The key word in this sentence is the word act. The root of the word action. Life is action. We are judged by our completed actions. You either do or you don't. Do is an action, Didn't Do is an inaction. Inaction is a nothing. You are judged not by your intentions, but by your results. If someone runs into your car, do you care that he intended to stop? I doubt it. You judge the person by his action. (Using your car as a brake!) If your friend told you that she would pay back your loan by the end of the month so you could pay rent, does it help you pay rent if she meant to? We are all judged by our actions.

We are judged by the outcome more than by our behavior

“What have you done for me lately?” is the real world. If you come home on time sixty seven times in a row, great. When you're late, does anyone really care about your sixty-seven wins? Probably not. Would your landlord care that your friend really did mean to pay you back? Or, does the landlord judge you by your actions (You don't pay your rent on time and you loaned his money to some idiot who didn't pay you back).

If a condom works, do you really think about it much? Probably not. You just lie there thinking about how good you are in bed. But, if a condom breaks you are suddenly very attentive. Wow, you're a lot like your parents or your landlord, always focusing on the lack of appropriate action and bitching about it.

Calculated risk

The next section discusses the concept of chance. Many new adults get caught in circular thoughts concerning their luck. Luck versus calculated risk is an important topic. It is imperative that new adults understand that

luck is greatly improved by making good choices.

What is calculated risk?

A calculated risk is a risk that is well thought out and judged to be sound. It is a chance for you to totally screw up or to totally do well. It is not a fifty-fifty chance. That would be gambling. It is an 87.347% chance or a 92.125% chance. It is not a 100% certainty. Sometimes it is a gut feeling. Should you ask that person out? Should you apply for that new job? Should you do something that scares you?

Fear holds most people back from being amazing. Because there is a chance that they will not reach their goals, many people never attempt to reach their goals. And, of course, they never reach their goals.

Let's say you want to get to the top of a mountain to see what you can see. You can stay in your safe valley and talk about it, "I'm going to..." or you can start walking up the mountain. Let's say you only take one step. You fall and break your ass. Is it a loss? Definitely not. You are one step closer than you were before. You can only lose by not attempting the trek.

Let's say you work your ass off. Despite attempt after attempt you only get most of the way up the mountain. Did you lose? Definitely not. You see a lot from your new skill level. The only loss would have been not to attempt.

A problem is an opportunity in work clothes.

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr.

Life is full of examples of people that never started their lives. They never took any calculated risks. They were the same person at nineteen as they were at eighteen. No growth in a whole year. Now that is a loss!

I find that most people learn more from their losses than their victories. For years I have been asking amazing people how they got to where they are in their lives. Inevitably, they talk about learning from their mistakes, picking themselves up and making a better-calculated risk the next time. And the next time, and the next time, and the next time.

The loss could be love, money, work—whatever. The reality is that we learn as we go. If you stop learning I feel sorry for you. We learn from activity. We understand ourselves through activity. Without action we are not emotionally alive.

I often meet new adults who are sure that they don't have a chance. They are sure that they are doomed. With that self-talk they are doomed. We know that self-talk needs to be questioned and controlled.

Expanding thoughts deliver surprising results

Next we look at the power of forcing oneself to see their life options.

How can I do it differently?

When life sets up a roadblock and you fall flat on your face you have to pick yourself up and clean off your wounds (especially the wounds to your pride). Once you're standing again, you have to ask yourself this question, "How can I do it differently?" Your job is to figure out how to calculate the way it can be done. Lots of people try to tell you why they are sure that it can't be done, but only the Smart Stubborn focus on how to do it differently. Your power comes from looking at the problem from lots of different ways until you see a new way to get your needs met. Being a Smart Stubborn is a way to learn as you go. Gaining and reevaluating what you know and learning how to use your accumulated knowledge gives you power. Knowledge is maybe 10% of life. The vast majority of life is action.

The first 10%: Knowledge

You are or you will become what you think about the most.

The second 90%: Action

Without action you have nothing but inaction.

Inaction is nothing.

For example, many people talk about wanting to lose weight. "Come the first of the year, I'm going on a diet." "The day after my birthday, I'm going to eat better." This self-talk is usually all talk with no action. If you really listen to this type of self-talk you really hear, "Not today, it isn't really important to me today. I hope it will be important to me some other day." With positive self-talk you hear yourself saying, "I walk every day. I care about myself and walking is important to me. I am worth taking care of." When self-talk is positive, it builds upon itself.

Life Rewards Action

I have heard it put lots of different ways, but the most succinct statement on the subject is life rewards action. You have to choose the

best action to get to your goals. If you want a good grade in History, choose to put down the Game Jerk controller and throw yourself into studying history. If you want to stop smoking, do it. Stop smoking. Not at the end of this pack or on New Year's. Right now! Stop. Make the words an action. If you want to stop smoking and tell yourself, "On New Year's day I will quit," you are really saying, "I will smoke until New Year's day." Action is more powerful. You need to judge yourself through your actions. You are a smoker. If you want to stop smoking, take the pack of cigarettes and crush them under your foot. Jump up and down on them and then vacuum up the retched mess. Now you are a nonsmoker. Act like a nonsmoker. Don't buy cigarettes. Don't ask for a cigarette. You are your actions.

If you want to get a particular job, calculate what it will take and motivate yourself to get the damn job. If you want to get a particular honey or hunk to notice you for the wonderful individual that you are, figure out a way to get that information imparted to them. Talk is cheap. Responsible action counts!

You also need to measure others by their actions. Their actions are the scorecard of their life. If actions are long lived they become commitment. I have a dear friend who has taught Jujitsu for forty-five years. Forty-five years, wow, that's impressive. That's commitment. It tells you something about someone who has done something for forty-five years. Even if you don't like Jujitsu it is still impressive that anyone is committed to anything for such a long time. Commitment is the report card of your life. People believe action. I advise you to measure yourself and others by their actions. Are you willing to do what it takes to get the outcome you desire?

Your morals are your compass

I want to take a moment to talk about your morals. Morals are your sense of right and wrong. Above I asked, are you willing to do what it takes to get the outcome you desire? Some people read this as "anything" is OK as long as they win. I want to make this clear—I am not advocating anything goes. I am advocating pushing yourself.

John Hinkley wanted to tell Jodie Foster that he loved her, so he attempted to assassinate President Reagan. That is simply wrong. You can't do anything you want. You have to make your choices within the confines of moral behaviors.

Your morals need to be black and white. Right or wrong. I advise that you live your life 100% of the time according to your morals. When you get to that point you will be happy and proud of yourself.

Morals are not gradations. You cannot be 97% moral or 63% moral. You either are or you are not. When evaluating your own behavior, think about whether your actions are responsible and caring.

When I talk about “do what it takes” I am definitely talking about moral calculated risk. Most often it looks like more effort, more self-motivation, greater belief in yourself, and actual task completion. It never looks evil.

Morality is an absolute, not a gradation of right and wrong. Make yourself proud! (This is a new thought for many patients. Many times young adults need to argue with their therapist about this concept.)

In our next chapter we will look at how this measurement thing really works, but for now, it is important to focus on the outcome, not the hopeful words. Action is the outcome of thought (calculated risk).

People can learn and grow

It is important to leave the patient with the understanding that they personally can learn and grow. I advise patients to take notes between sessions of their observations concerning life laws. This gives the patient much more than my time with them.

POSTTEST

When you're ready, take the posttest to obtain your CEU certificate. Your test consists of 5 multiple choice or true/false questions per Continuing Education Unit (3 CEU course = 15 questions).

