



When Interventions Fail: Improving Outcomes with Resistant Clients

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Amazing things can happen when students are given some control over decision-making and initial goal-setting:

By turning some power over decision-making and initial goal setting to the student, here are some of the amazing things that will happen with that mindset.

- 1) They will begin to relax, be real, AND let go of defensive secretive behaviors.
- 2) They will work with high motivation, which means maximum effort and no resistance.
- 3) They will reveal the knowledge and compensatory techniques they have already stored.
- 4) They will provide us the best opportunity for observing the gaps in that knowledge and the gaps in their skills-- those "deficits" we spend so much time and money to determine in artificial testing situations.
- 5) They will form a trusting relationship with you, the professional-- as friend, confidant, and ally.
- 6) They will reveal the concepts and skills they wish to know--even daring to be stretched to a higher level of competency because of their intrinsic desire.
- 7) Most amazing, **they will move from what they wish to know to what they need to know**, seeking reasons why they need it and guidance about how to get it from you, their new partner. You, the skilled observer, can see what skills they lack just from observing their functioning on the tasks they want to perform.
- 8) They will now be able to learn contextually-- in the context of what they do – a multitude of integrated learnings that arise from their self-determined goals.
- 9) They will learn more efficiently—that is, in less time, because of this contextual integration of skills.
- 10) They will generalize their newly learned skills, knowledge, and cognitive strategies to the school curriculum and, most importantly, to life.
- 11) Finally, they will demonstrate a new positive self concept which comes as the powerlessness goes and the responsibility for their own problems and destiny begins.