

The RDI Program gets...

MESSTIER!

Dr. Steve Gutstein

When I created the Relationship Development Intervention® Program, I wanted to shift the perception of how we can and should operate in the Autism world as guides and facilitators. Above all, I wanted to show that it is possible, by constructing and re-tracing small, gradually more complex developmental steps, to provide opportunities for people with ASD to attain a quality of life as competent, independent and emotionally connected adults. I have learned that if we are thoughtful, careful, and patient, we can help people on the Autism Spectrum revisit and then follow the same developmental paths as everyone else.

For those unfamiliar with our approach, you will learn that the RDI® Program is anchored by a set of ideas, clear goals and frameworks for reaching those goals; finding a way for each child with ASD, despite age, ability or vulnerability, to have a second chance at mastering the foundational abilities and developmental building blocks of later competence. Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple demands, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters, they are the things that make us who we are today. I use the MESSIER acronym to remind us of the very different set of human abilities we require to navigate the real world in which we live.

Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because

we want the exact personal development, well as dynamic when written sym dynamic skill and adding in g novelty b ou've throu g the child pe where z e practiceo in do it," a intelligence and most as, matic encou re dynamic them to rep e had last ough they ements. Yo o do things nless you i nually tra ing new, te

they don't want to see the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't

exact personal development, well as dynamic when written sym dynamic skill and adding in g novelty b ou've throu g the child pe where z e practiceo in do it," a intelligence and most as, matic encou re dynamic them to rep e had last ough they ements. Yo o do things nless you i nually tra ing new, te

Multiple

WE ARE CONSTANTLY SHIFTING OUR ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS AND DO IT WITHOUT CONSCIOUS REFLECTION MOST OF THE TIME. FACED WITH MULTIPLE GOALS AND DAILY DEMANDS, WE EASILY FIND WAYS TO PRIORITIZE.

For families who practice RDI®, their lives and those of their children reflect this multiplicity of roles and shifting demands. Autism, although important, is not the central focus of RDI® parents, siblings or even the person who has autism. RDI® helps parents resume their natural roles as the primary guides to their child. In so doing, parents use their wisdom to guide both the child with autism and their other children, so they can experience the multiple demands of contemporary life and prioritize those demands in a healthy and efficient manner.

The RDI® Program is invested in:

- Building minds
- Developing dynamic abilities for real world success
- Applying best practices to learning
- Strengthening and empowering parents, brothers and sisters
- Tailoring intervention to build on each person's uniqueness



©Art Parts/Ron and Joe, Inc.

simultaneous

WE INTERPRET THE MEANING OF COMMUNICATION IN AN INTEGRATED, SIMULTANEOUS WAY: FACIAL EXPRESSION, GESTURE, POSTURE, PHYSICAL SPACE, CONTEXT, PROSODY AND WHAT WE KNOW FROM THE PREVIOUS ENCOUNTERS WITH THE PERSON. WHAT LIES BEHIND THE WORDS IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF COMMUNICATION.

Successful human communication requires processing along a “wide bandwidth,” the transmission capacity of a communication pathway. In RDI® we use the term bandwidth to refer to the ability of a person to integrate multiple channels of information into a single packet of meaning. From a neurological perspective, high bandwidth processing describes a collaborative ability to integrate many different brain processing centers into complex levels of meaning.

Because the human brain is an experience dependent organ, RDI® is ultimately trying to influence this integration. Parents have been given this awesome task by virtue of their primary relationship with their child; they are first in line to directly impact the child’s perceptions and thoughts about the world. Parent’s choice of daily activities with their child helps form the neural functioning and development of his brain. No different from the role parents play with their typically developing children, RDI® provides the structure to empower parents in the guidance of their child on the spectrum.

Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because

we want the same dialogu development, as well as dynamic times when written sym dynamic skill and adding in g novelty b ou've throu g the child pe where z e practiceo an do it," a intelligence and most as, matic encou re dynamic em to rep e had last ough they ements. Yo o do things nless you nually tra ing new, t

exact personal in static. Here are : meaning o t success mpetent in 'introduc- :cause now teach- a video "orking." I think you h. Dynamic marriages s during dy ing fully i ise we wan ne dialogue opment, eve as dynamic n you have ymbols, an skills are ng in some ' because

they don't want to be the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't

SURPRISING!

LIFE IS FULL OF SURPRISES. HUMAN BEINGS REQUIRE A CERTAIN LEVEL OF UNCERTAINTY TO THRIVE AND DEVELOP. MINIMIZING THIS UNCERTAINTY LEADS TO STAGNATION, MAXIMIZING IT LEADS TO RETREAT. THE MIDDLE GROUND OF UNCERTAINTY IS WHERE LEARNING, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OCCUR. VARIETY THEN, IS NOT THE SPICE OF LIFE BUT THE VERY STUFF OF IT.

Situations fashioned for any learner are those that create new challenges based on prior understanding. Parents do this intuitively but are faced with a tightrope experience for a child on the spectrum. Too much leads to anxiety, not enough to an over-reliance and desire for more repetition. The Guided Participation Relationship is elemental to the RDI® Program. It is tied into a hierarchy of objectives that are designed to progressively generalize into the larger world in which the person with autism must eventually become independent. Activities center around every day life experiences where the child or young adult actively borrows the guide's mental processes thus becoming ever more confident in his own perceptions and volition in the world around him. Activities are based on lessons that maintain an "edge" experience and spotlight success based on the mastery of ambiguity and safe uncertainty. Parents, the persons who care most about their child and his later independence, are the conduit of these cognitive discoveries. They learn to stay one step ahead and, as Vygotsky so aptly named it, maintain the "zone of proximal development."

Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because

we want the same dialogue, development, as well as dynamic skill and adding in novelty because you've thrown the child where they practice "can do it," a intelligence and most as, dynamic encounter to repeat had last enough they elements. You do things unless you continually training new, they don't want to see the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't

exact personal in static. There are meaning of it success competent in introduc- because now teach- a video "working." I think you h. Dynamic marriages s during dy ing fully i ise we wan ne dialogue opment, eve as dynamic n you have ymbols, an skills are ng in some because

*imperfect

THE WORLD IS IMPERFECT. RARELY IN OUR MODERN WORLD DO WE COMPLETE SOMETHING WITHOUT INTERRUPTION OR FINISH IT WITH 100% PERFECTION. MOST TIMES DECISIONS AND FOLLOW-THROUGH ARE BASED ON 'GOOD ENOUGH' CRITERIA.

Challenging a child on the spectrum to enjoy rather than retreat from new experiences can be tricky and demanding. Because children tend to embrace things they perceive as unchanging, parents can find it difficult to “rock the boat.” They worry about “getting it wrong.” As in all relationships, there are significant periods of getting it wrong. In fact, the importance of dealing with manageable failure is crucial to the development of personal competence. RDI® customizes the lifestyle of parents to reduce environmental and family stress, creating a workable reality where everyone survives and thrives in the imperfections of daily life. The emphasis on catching up by a certain age is not as important as the return to a normal process of development.

Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because we want the same dialogue development, as well as dynamic skills and adding in novelty to have through the child where the practice do it," a intelligence and most as, dynamic encounters to represent had last enough they elements. You do things unless you genuinely training new, they don't want to see the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't

Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because we want the exact personal meaning of it, we want the dynamic skill of adding in novelty because you've thrown the child into a dynamic encounter where they practice to do it, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't fail.

emotional

EMOTIONS ARE A CRITICAL COMPONENT TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AROUND US. THEY INFLUENCE HOW WE FEEL ABOUT OURSELVES, HOW WE FACE THE FUTURE AND THE ACTIONS WE TAKE.

For parents of children on the spectrum, many of their emotional experiences relate to encounters where they entertain their child or avoid meltdowns. Mission previews help parents regain their emotional footing and look into the future for the memories they will help their child create for himself. These mission previews don't describe a perfect, or even a cured child. Rather, they are a preview into the immediate and long term future, small vignettes that will benchmark success toward the greater goal of adult independence. These are not exercises, they are guideposts that restore parent empowerment. Most important, they renew dreams of which they have been robbed.

They don't want to see the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't fail.

Dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occurs during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because

we want the same dialogu development, as well as dynamic when written sym dynamic skill and adding in g novelty b ou've thro g the child pe where e practiceo in do it," a ntelligence d most as, mic enco re dynamic em to rep e had last ough they ements. Yo o do things nless you uininely tra ing new, te

Relative

IN THE REAL WORLD, INFORMATION HAS MEANING AND VALUE BASED ON ITS RELATIVE PERSPECTIVE TO THOSE THINGS WE HAVE ALREADY LEARNED OR COME TO UNDERSTAND. IT IS FROM THIS RELATIVE STANCE THAT WE SEE THE WORLD FRESH EACH DAY AND ALLOW OURSELVES THE NEW INFLUENCE AS WE MAKE DECISIONS AND CHOOSE THE PATH WE WILL TRAVEL.

The beginning of the RDI® Program establishes the consultant as the guide, the parents as the apprentice. This parallels the relationship that the parent will establish with the child; once the transference of information and knowledge have occurred, each will become independent. Thus, from the very beginning, the consultant engages the parent in this process. Typically, hours of face to face time decrease—just as when riding a bike, a good guide helps you take off the training wheels.

Consultants effectively evaluate their communication with the family. They customize both mode and frequency of communication—all in order to transfer concepts, skill and responsibility. Collaboration is built into the program early on, in ever increasing amounts.

They don't want to see the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't

exact personal in static. There are meaning of it success competent in introduc- cause now teach- a video "working." I think you h. Dynamic marriages s during dy ing fully in ise we wan ne dialogue opment, eve as dynamic n you have ymbols, an skills are ng in some ' because

New parent

NEW: 1. ALREADY EXISTING BUT SEEN, EXPERIENCED, OR ACQUIRED RECENTLY OR NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME [PREDIC.] UNFAMILIAR OR STRANGE TO (SOMEONE) : A WAY OF LIVING THAT WAS NEW TO ME. 2. JUST BEGINNING AND REGARDED AS BETTER THAN WHAT WENT BEFORE: STARTING A NEW LIFE.

Recent research indicates that RDI® has potential to exert a powerful impact on children's capacity and motivation for experience sharing, communication and social interaction. Data demonstrates that children in families participating in RDI® were rated by parents as able to adapt to unexpected change and transition as well as typically aged peers, over 70% of the time. Parents are taught to break down the process of learning to think and perceive dynamically in small, simple components. Adopting this style serves to slow down and amplify the information feedback system so that both parents and children are more readily able to respond to one another.

If you're new to the RDI® Program and would like to learn more: **Read** *The RDI® Book: Forging New Pathways for Autism, PDD and Asperger's with the RDI® Program* (In print. Look for it in 2009!), **Research** and contact a Certified Consultant by visiting the website, www.rdiconnect.com, and **Reserve** your space in one of the upcoming 4 day Parent Training Workshops by emailing parents@rdiconnect.com.

New Professionals

GUIDE: 1. A PERSON WHO ADVISES OR SHOWS THE WAY TO OTHERS 2. A PRINCIPLE OR STANDARD OF COMPARISON 3. SHOW OR INDICATE THE WAY 4. DIRECT OR HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON THE COURSE OR ACTION OF.

Why is this approach so powerful? The RDI® Program for professionals teaches clinicians how to mindfully guide parents through the thousands of missed moments that makeup the blueprint of development; giving professionals a panoramic view of intricacies of the Guided Participation relationship.

Both personal and universal, the RDI® Program for professionals is made up of consultants from all over the world with a variety of different backgrounds and experience levels. They spend an average of 18 months learning to function as “guides to the guides” helping caregivers learn to modify their communication, slow their pace and focus on the underlying opportunities available in their daily routines. During this time frame, consultants in training are closely supervised and mentored through two case studies. Following certification, consultants have rigorous ongoing continuing education and quality assurance requirements. For professionals who are interested in the schedule of Professional training courses and their pre-requisites, please visit www.rdicconnect.com.

connect

RDIconnect

4130 Bellaire Blvd., Suite 210

Houston, TX 77025 USA

Tel: 713.838.1362

Fax: 713.838.1447

Parents email: parents@RDIconnect.com

Professionals email: professionals@RDIconnect.com

www.RDIconnect.com

© 2008 Gutstein, Sheely & Associates, P.C. d/b/a The Connections Center. All Rights Reserved.

Recipients may copy, reprint or forward all or part of this document to friends, family, colleagues or professionals, as long as the following copyright notice and information is included intact: "Copyright 2008, Gutstein, Sheely & Associates, P.C. d/b/a The Connections Center. All rights reserved. www.RDIconnect.com"

exact
person
in static
Here are
: meaning o
it success
mpotent in
'introduc-
:cause now
teach-
a video
"working."
I think you
h. Dynamic
marriages
s during dy
ing fully i
ise we wan
ne dialogue
opment, eve
as dynamic
n you have
ymbols, an
skills are
ng in some
' because

dynamic Intelligence is what allows us to successfully solve complicated problems, prioritize multiple goals, carry on meaningful relationships and achieve long term goals. Jobs, friendships, marriages and most aspects of daily life are primarily 'dynamic' in nature, although each has static elements that must also be mastered. Almost all human communication and interaction occur during dynamic encounters. Dynamic abilities are often taken for granted. But once we stop and really reflect on these abilities, we realize they are the things that make us who we are today. Living fully in the dynamic world provides an enormous payoff. The dynamic parts of our world provide opportunities for growth, discovery and connection. We go to hear someone lecture, not because we want the same dialogue, development, as well as dynamic elements when written symbols and adding in novelty through the child's experience where the practice of "I can do it," a intelligence and most as, dynamic encounter them to represent the had last enough they elements. You do things unless you continually training new, they don't want to see the reaction. You don't take a child who is struggling with change and play a game with him and suddenly reverse all the rules in the game. Because now you've thrown the child into chaos. Parents strive toward three things: always keeping the child at the edge of competence, maintaining a level of tension where the child can learn and teaching the child to fail and still know he can be successful. One of my favorite examples of this is of a parent who had been working on his child feeling competent. He sent me a video tape where the child wanted to be able to jump off the diving board, but he had to pass the test at the pool. He didn't pass it the first time and he said to his Dad, "I have to keep working." He practiced and went back and didn't