

The Importance of Resisting Control

Informed Choice – John Breeding, Ph.D.
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Talking Points

- Breeding once learned from a teacher that the unfair use of rank creates revenge. How does societies failure to understand this lead to difficult times between adults and children?
- Our society uses drugs as a way to manage children’s behavior. “The word *manager* comes from the Italian *maneggio* and the French *manège*; they mean the training, riding and handling of a horse.” (69) Poet David Whyte expands Breeding’s point about managing children:
“It is strange to think that the whole spirit of management is derived from the image of getting on the back of a beast, digging your knees in and heading it in a certain direction. The word manager conjures images of domination, command, and ultimate control, and the taming of a potentially wild energy. It also implies a basic unwillingness on the part of people to be managed, a force to be corralled and reined in. All appropriate things if you wish to ride a horse, but most people don’t respond very passionately or very creatively to being ridden, and the words “giddy up, there” only go so far in creating the kind of responsive participation we now look for.” (69)

When viewing the word *manager* this way what thoughts come to mind?

- Wildness is all around us in every aspect of life. Children are wild. They are “self-willed, autonomous, self-organized” beings. When adults aren’t able to see children this way how does it says more about the adults than it does the children?
- A large number of the children leaving home and going to college are on psychiatric drugs or begin taking them while they are there. “Psychologist Leighton Whitaker takes a look at the numbers. Whitaker points out that by 1992 it was already common for college students to present on psychiatric drugs. By 2003, forty percent of those seeking help were already taking one or more psychotropic drugs. In 2005, they were often prescribing for themselves and each other. (69) This is terrifying. We get caught up in the challenge of raising kids. We forget that children are “self-willed, autonomous, and self-organized” beings. There needs to be support and the encouragement of these traits not the suppression of them.