Ron Rubio: Mind/Body Techniques for Asperger's Syndrome

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This book describes the use of the concept called “Pathfinder” to bring into an effective mentoring technique. Such concept aims to train children in developing all-round behaviors including trust, respect, responsibility, leadership and reliability, which we would expect children to grow into. The book offers practical guidelines and photos that help children to build from the “Breath Foundation” to the power of “Movement”, bringing into ‘how you think (mind) into how you look (body: presentation and movement)’. From what we can do to alter our presentation and movement, a child might learn to be a confident self taking responsibilities and leadership qualities.

With the concepts in simple terms and the photos and description, a child can learn into this mind/body technique through training and coaching from parents, teachers, therapists or an adult. This book is targeted for people with Asperger's syndrome. In fact, the targeted behaviors that the technique intends to train would be required by all children in general who might be facing the challenge of building up trust to people around, paying respect to peers and others, taking responsibility at home and in school, taking up leadership qualities and being a reliable person. With the expectation of these all-round qualities, it would be why specialist coaching such as martial arts, Tai Chi, Judo, Taekwondo, and any form of sports is so popular among children and their parents. Pathfinder mentoring training described in the book provides training for building up these all-round qualities. Unlike the above mentioned forms of specialist coaching that require specialist

input, I found that the Pathfinder mentoring training offers step-by-step and detailed description that is found to be easy to follow. With a laymen adult's guidance, children can easily adjust their pace of learning by going back and forth of the techniques described.

Apart from the similarity with specialist coaching, the goal of Pathfinder mentoring training also shares some features in other learning and rehabilitation treatment strategies for children. For example, the “Clearing the mind space” visualization described in Chapter 3 helps children to self-reflect on their own. The reflection can be regarded as a form of metacognitive strategy. One would self-regulate own learning using own self-generated solution to rectify one's own behavior. Another strategy is mental imagery, using the first person perspective to ‘look into’ own self or using a third person perspective to ‘visualize’ own behavior. This could help the children to further understand self. Another example goes into building up the “movement” power. On page 124–125, the weight shifting pattern for walking forward with the upper trunk initiated the movement would share the same features as in the Neurodevelopmental Treatment approach for children with movement disorders such as cerebral palsy. Whilst this shares with the movement science study, the movement itself also reflects on how a person ‘thinks’ and how he/she ‘feels’. This would then reach to the building up of ‘mind to body’ and ‘body to mind’ technique of developing trust, respect, responsibility, leadership and reliability that children who are challenged would need.

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