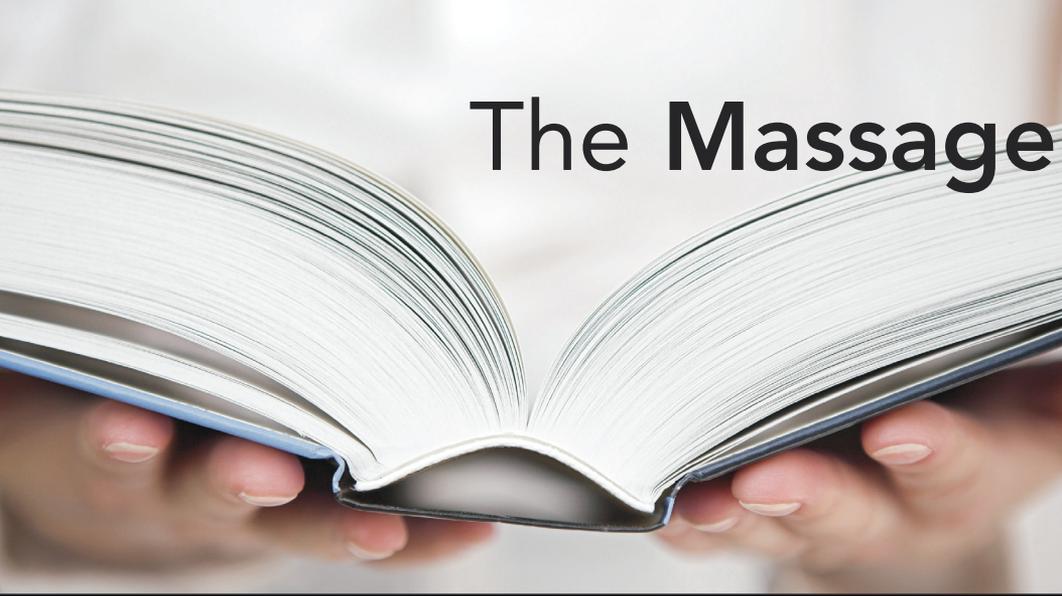


# The Massage Educator

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**66%** of the 4,160 two- and four-year Title IV degree-granting postsecondary institutions offered college level-distance education in the 2006-2007 academic year, per the U.S. Department of Education.

Created by Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals • philosophy for instructors



## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

MEANINGFUL MOTIVATION

“This textbook is dull!”  
“This lecture is boring!”  
“When am I ever going to use this stuff?”  
“Why should I care?”

For massage program teachers who are passionate about the practice of massage, comments like these are disheartening at best. They also indicate that student behavioral challenges loom on the horizon. Researchers note a direct correlation between low student motivation and disruptive student behaviors. Students who are hard to motivate also tend to be hard to discipline.<sup>1</sup> What can teachers do



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when students are not prepared, do not do the work, don't care, and create disturbances for the students who do care?

Dr. Allen Mendler presents some simple but meaningful solutions in *Motivating Students Who Don't Care: Successful Techniques for Educators*.<sup>2</sup> He feels that students often demonstrate behavioral issues or that they give up to conceal their anxiety about being viewed as ignorant. Mendler recommends five key processes educators can use to motivate students and improve learning environments. These processes are briefly outlined here, but it is recommended that educators read *Motivating Students Who Don't Care* for valuable details.

### 1. EMPHASIZE EFFORT

It is easy to fall into the habit of rewarding the best answer or performance. If we can emphasize effort in our grading systems, project outlines, and conversations with students, we can help them learn from mistakes in a safe environment.

Mendler suggests two separate grades be given for assignments. The “achievement grade” allows educators to acknowledge the degree of subject mastery demonstrated by the student (it assesses what the student learns),



## homework reminder

A fun way to remind students of an important date is a short multiple-choice exercise. While

humorous, it emphasizes that students control their successes or failures. It might look like this:

Please check all that apply about this assignment:

- I am certain I will turn it in on time.
- Unless I win the lottery, I will turn it in on time.
- I may turn it in on time or I may go to a movie with a friend.
- I'll blow it off and spend my time creating an excuse.
- There isn't a chance it will be done, but I'll accept the consequences and the poor grade.

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## Social Cognition Theory

### WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

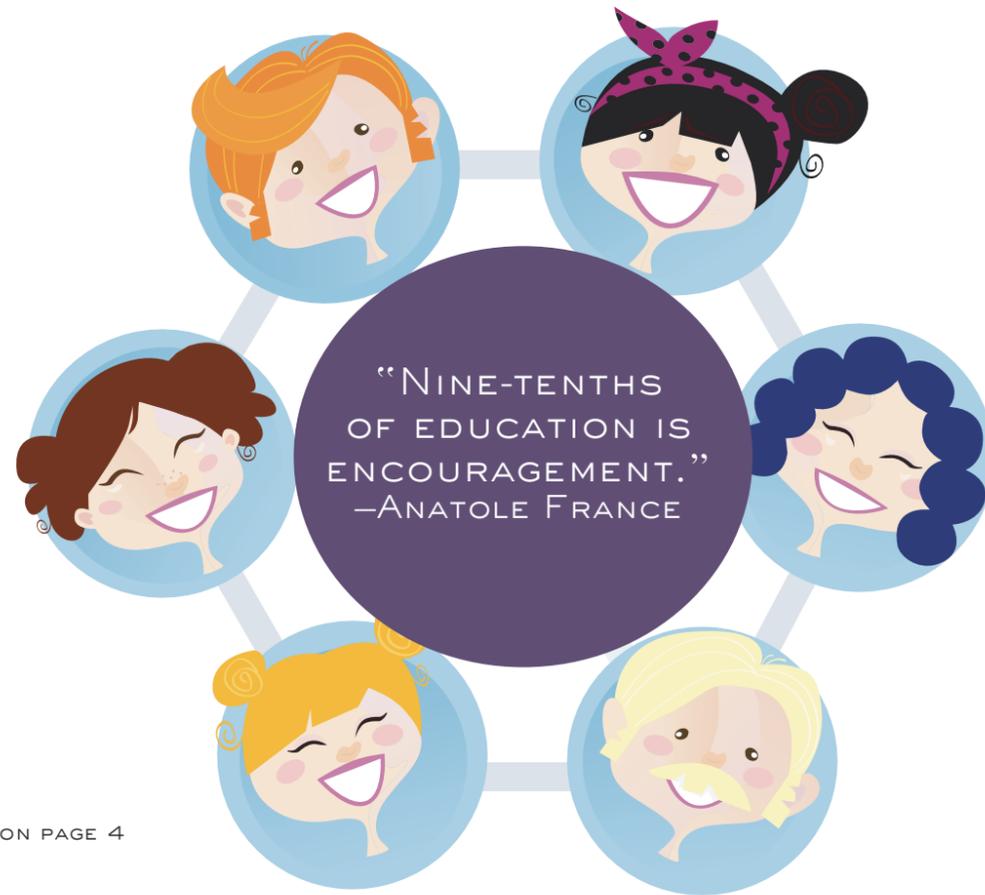
Social cognition is a learning model based on the idea that social interaction plays a primary role in the development of cognition. Cognitive skills are influenced heavily by the relationships and environment of the learner.

Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) introduced a number of educational strategies that utilized social interaction for learning; he is viewed as the founder of social cognition theory. Other educators building on his work have introduced additional theories and teaching strategies. Vygotsky is most noted for the concepts of the more knowledgeable other, the zone of proximal development, and scaffolding. These strategies might be applied effectively in a massage therapy classroom.

### THE MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE OTHER

The more knowledgeable other is a person who supports the student in her learning and helps her overcome learning obstacles. The instructor, teaching assistant, tutors, and other students can serve as the more knowledgeable other, depending on the learning task. Vygotsky believed that advanced students paired with less advanced students are effective learning pairs. The less advanced student learns new skills in a safe environment while the more advanced student is able to better integrate information through teaching it to another.

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## MASSAGEPROFESSIONALS.COM BRINGING INSTRUCTORS TOGETHER

Since its launch in July 2009, nearly 5,000 members from 44 countries and territories have created accounts on [Massageprofessionals.com](http://Massageprofessionals.com), a virtual community for all massage practitioners, instructors, and students. The site's members have dozens of communities within the network. By January 2010, 236 groups had been created and 407 forum discussions were taking place. Have *you* visited yet?

[Massageprofessionals.com](http://Massageprofessionals.com) offers a place to talk shop and bounce ideas off colleagues. Participants have given this community its depth, starting groups focused on the needs of the educational community, business concerns, events (such as ABMP's School Issues Forum), and much more. Contributors post questions to the forum and get thoughtful feedback from colleagues. Or individuals contribute blog posts on pertinent topics.

### Join the Conversation

If you haven't yet joined the community, create your own account by visiting [Massageprofessionals.com](http://Massageprofessionals.com). This site is open to everyone in the field (not just to ABMP members).

If you can't find a group or forum discussion about a particular topic, create your own or create a blog posting about it. Please just check to be sure that you aren't creating a duplicate of something already out there.

To see if a topic is already being discussed, perform a keyword search, using the search box at the upper right of the page. You can also browse through discussions; the most recently active topics will appear first. 🍏



# massageprofessionals.com



while the “effort grade” measures participation, promptness, and homework (it assesses how the student performed while learning).

### 2. CREATE HOPE

While Mendler describes a number of strategies for creating hope, one story of a teacher stands out. The teacher expressed excitement when students made mistakes. He would say things like, “That is one of the best mistakes I have seen today and this is what it tells us ...” The idea is to preface a suggestion for improvement with notice of something worthy.

### 3. RESPECT POWER

Disruptive behaviors, refusal to work, or challenges to the teacher's authority can be direct expressions of a student's need to take control of his life. In a teachers' forum, one teacher suggested the use of Stuff Happens cards.<sup>3</sup> Each student gets a card at the beginning of the term, which can be used to extend the date of an assignment. (Cards are not transferable.) The teacher accepts the card without question. Those students who don't use their cards can turn them in at the end of the term for bonus points. This is a fun and easy way to provide students with some personal power as it relates to their school tasks.

### 4. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Mendler suggests that teachers strive to build good relationships with students by emphasizing and affirming students, asking for student feedback on lessons, sending notes to students that address concerns, and hosting short motivational student focus groups. Research in the

*International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* notes that disruptive behaviors related to “whether faculty expressed care toward students, communicated respect, behaved sensitively, and remained warm and engaged.”<sup>4</sup>

### 5. EXPRESS ENTHUSIASM

Teachers who are feeling depleted from the daily grind may need to find a way to reengage with the course materials to generate greater enthusiasm. Mendler believes that teachers who let their students know that they love being their teacher, who demonstrate the passion of life-long learners, and who openly share their love of the subject see higher levels of student motivation and less classroom conflict.

### SHARE IDEAS WITH COLLEAGUES

What has helped you motivate your students—or yourself? Send ideas and suggestions to [education@abmp.com](mailto:education@abmp.com). 🍏

### NOTES

1. Faculty Focus special report: “10 Effective Classroom Management Techniques Every Faculty Member Should Know.” (Available at [www.facultyfocus.com/free-report/10-effective-classroom-management-techniques-every-faculty-member-should-know](http://www.facultyfocus.com/free-report/10-effective-classroom-management-techniques-every-faculty-member-should-know). Accessed January 29, 2010.)

2. A.N. Mendler, *Motivating Students Who Don't Care: Successful Techniques for Educators*. (Bloomington, Indiana: Solution Tree, 2000). Available through [www.solution-tree.com](http://www.solution-tree.com).

3. Faculty Focus special report: “10 Effective Classroom Management Techniques Every Faculty Member Should Know.”

4. S.A. Meyers, J. Bender, E.K. Hill, and S.Y. Thomas, “How do faculty experience and respond to classroom conflict?,” *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 18, no. 3 (2006): 180-187.

# ANNOUNCING ABMP'S ONLINE EDUCATION CENTER

ABMP is pleased to bring you high-quality online continuing education approved by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) and state boards (where appropriate). ABMP partnered with Human Kinetics, a leader in online education, to develop interactive, engaging courses, many of which include audio, video, and dynamic features that bring the materials to life.

ABMP members can log in to [www.abmp.com](http://www.abmp.com) and use their member ID to take a complimentary sample course titled "Experience ABMP's E-Learning While Discovering Myofascial Massage" for one continuing education (CE) hour approved by NCBTMB. Other course titles include "Conduct High-Impact Client Interviews," "Enrich Your Client's Relaxation Experience," "Establish and Maintain Client-Therapist Boundaries," and "Learn and Market Safe Stone Massage." Our intention is to continue to build upon the library of courses. Check out our new

course additions regularly and send feedback to us (at [education@abmp.com](mailto:education@abmp.com)) with your ideas for courses you want to see in the future. ABMP members receive substantial discounts on these already well-priced courses. 🍏



SOCIAL COGNITION THEORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

## THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

The zone of proximal development is the foundation principle of Vygotsky's theory. This term defines a student's range of ability both with and without guidance from a knowledgeable other. It could be described as the distance between what a learner can do by himself and the next level of learning that could be accomplished with support. When students are outside the range of their zone, learning is stalled. An advanced student who is not challenged becomes bored and unmotivated. A less advanced student who lacks the foundation to grasp the next-level concept becomes disheartened. This can be a challenge for many teachers in massage who instruct students with a broad range of ability levels. Vygotsky suggests that teachers break students into groups based on their ranges. More advanced students move on to the next skill, while less advanced students review the foundation materials they need to be ready to move forward. In some cases, students are paired so that advanced students serve as the knowledgeable other for less advanced students.

## SCAFFOLDING

*Scaffolding* is the term Vygotsky used to suggest that early lessons be highly structured and designed so that students receive substantial support from instructors, teaching assistants, and tutors. As the course progresses and students are better able to work independently, the scaffolding is removed in stages. Toward the end

of courses, students are given more freedom and more choices related to their learning and development.

## APPLYING RUBRICS

In massage therapy classrooms, rubrics are a useful tool to provide support for students while they acquire practical skills. Rubrics are an assessment tool used to measure the degree to which a student meets the criteria for the demonstration of a particular skill. They give students direction before an assignment or skill check is due, provide a form of student self-evaluation during preparation, ensure that scoring and grading use standardized criteria, and allow students to see why they received a particular grade. For more information on creating and using rubrics, see issue 4, 2009, of *The Massage Educator* on [www.abmp.com](http://www.abmp.com).

*This article is based on information in ABMP's textbook, Teaching Massage: Fundamental Principles in Adult Education for Massage Program Instructors and was highlighted in the recent ABMP webinar titled "Approaches to Learning for Adult Students." To find out more about Teaching Massage, visit [www.abmp.com](http://www.abmp.com) or purchase copies from Lippincott Williams & Wilkins (LWW) at [www.lww.com](http://www.lww.com) or by calling LWW customer service at 800-638-3030. You can access and view the archived webinar at [www.abmp.com](http://www.abmp.com) in the "Resources for Massage Schools and Instructors" section. 🍏*