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Appendix A

Kindness. Learning and the Emotional of the Student

The theme of kindness has recently made its way into Higher Education. A newly published work by Catherine Denial, *A Pedagogy of Kindness*, is one among several recent works that offer a critique of the university system and the isolation it fosters for students as well as for faculty. These works address issues of syllabi, grading, teacher-student interaction, curriculum design, and lesson delivery as part of a new and “aggressive kindness” (Denial) paradigm at the university level. Along with a recent three-semester Queens College Discussion Series also titled *The Pedagogy of Kindness: Building a Community of Inquiry*, this literature represents a significant and growing awareness of the relationship between learning and the emotional life of the student (Clark, 2020; Gallo, 2023; Roberts-Grmela, 2023). “Team As Support” shares this awareness broadly but focuses specifically on the internal dynamics created within small student-led teams. Based on a principle of “psychological safety”, TAS is a structured, powerful and replicable vision of “kindness in action” inside but also outside the classroom.

Appendix B

Historical Evolution of TAS and Comparison to TBL and TMLP

TAS incorporates features from both TBL and TMLP while redirecting the focus of student teams to principles of support and psychological safety. For all their differences, all three approaches to teamwork - and thus TAS - grow out of a well-recognized body of learning theory including constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky and Piaget), active social learning and social interdependence theory (Morton Deutsch; the brother scholars David and Roger Johnson) and experiential learning theory (David Allan Kolb).

Table 1 below highlights key features of all three approaches to teamwork: TBL, Landmark’s TMLP, and the Kingsborough-inspired approach, “Team As Support (TAS).

Table 1
Team Approaches Compared - TBL, TMLP and TAS

	Team-Based Learning (TBL)	Team Management and Leadership Program (TMLP)	Team As Support (TAS)
Creation of teams	✓	✓	✓
Permanent teams			✓
Rotating team leader			✓

Used in Higher Ed	✓		✓
Focus on Support			✓
Focus on Accountability	✓	✓	
Focus on Psychological Safety			✓
Concept of Breakdown as the path to Breakthrough		✓	✓

“Possibility” and “Outgoing Team Leader Report”¹			✓
Backward Design²	✓		

Source: authors' own work.

In 2008 Kingsborough faculty adapted a combination of TBL and Landmark’s TMLP teamwork approaches to the classroom. Although TBL was specifically created for the university classroom, we regularly found that one team out of four in our classes would lack the interpersonal skills to work successfully together. Too often, one student

¹ The “Possibility” and “Outgoing Team Leader Report” are features of TAS explained in section three below of this paper. They are also important metacognitive tools that require both analysis and action on the part of the Team Leader.

² “Backward Design” is a key feature of TBL in which the content of a course is designed according to the outcome desired.

would ‘take over,’ leaving the others feeling frustrated, left out and unhappy with their team - and their instructor, also, at a loss. Faculty from the Institute of Urban Diversity Education at the University College of Teacher Education in Vienna cited a student who wrote of her prior experiences of group work: “Most of the time there is only one person working, most members hardly communicate and procrastinate, so everyone works under pressure, etc.” Studies of group work at the university level echo this student’s complaint.

In 2016 Charles Duhigg, in *Smarter, Faster, Better: The Transformative Power of Real Productivity*, tells the tantalizing story the experimental and archival research into teamwork undertaken by Google in 2012 at a cost of “untold millions.” How could Google - known around the world for its innovative edge - better ‘engineer’ high performance and innovation? Consistently, mathematically, tested against outcomes and contrary to all expectations at Google, the strongest predictor of innovation and performance was not the organizing of teams around friendships, diversity, shared interests, IQ or any one of hundreds of other hypotheses, but around the creation of psychological safety. In the book, Duhigg brought together scattered but abundant research from the worlds of business, management, leadership, social psychology, psychology and medicine on motivation, productivity, and teamwork supporting this conclusion and introduces his readers to the work of Amy C Edmundson who can be thought of as the “guru” of the concept of “psychological safety.” Also in 2016, Duhigg - a 2013 Pulitzer Prize winner in *Explanatory Journalism* - adapted the story of Google’s research into the dynamics of teamwork in his New York Times Magazine article that same year, “What Google Learned from it’s Quest to Build the Perfect Team.”

It was with our reading of Edmundson and Duhigg in mind, that our key instruction to students shifted from a focus on the self and accountability to others on

the team to the support of teammates and to bonding within the team. Results were dramatic.

The issue of one student taking over the group melted away. On the contrary, students took pride in the achievements of their teammates. A student who owed her instructor one paragraph to describe her creative contributions for the week of her leadership wrote a nine-page discussion about her team's interventions on behalf of a very shy and withdrawn immigrant student. In another case, a student confided that she would have dropped the course if it were not for her team. Team support helped her complete the semester when other parts of her life had spun out of control. In yet another case, a student whose home was destroyed in a fire passed her English course because of the initiatives and support of a teammate.

Once teamwork was framed as *support* and a vocabulary emphasizing generosity, compassion, sensitivity, kindness and safety was adopted, the 'psychic infrastructure' of our student teams shifted. One byproduct was that the problem of outsized personalities taking over a team was no longer an issue; it was "making a difference" rather than "performing" that now counted. This was noted also by our two European colleagues teaching in Education programs at the undergraduate and graduate Masters levels in Austria. For both in This was noted also by our two European colleagues teaching in Education programs at the undergraduate and graduate Masters levels in Austria. For both instructors, initial resistance to the program (based on prior group work experiences) ended as an experience of "great enrichment" and "fun," in the words of their students.

Appendix C

Student Surveys and Discussion

For the academic year 2022-2023 (including the summer semester) and continuing this academic year of 2023-2024, our team has been collecting data from student surveys using Qualtrics. The research project was approved as exempt by the City University of New York Institutional Review Boards (IRB). Two anonymous surveys, at the beginning and at the end of each semester, were distributed to students enrolled in TAS classes as well as in similar courses that served as our controls. Data from our first Fall 2022 semester was shared at a Kingsborough Center for Teaching and Learning mid-year Symposium devoted to TAS and again at our Kingsborough Spring Faculty Forum in May 2023. We note that instructors of TAS classes are a multidisciplinary group stretching across departments of Art, English, Biological Sciences, Business, Nursing and Allied Health / Mental Health departments. In other words, this pedagogy is being used across the curriculum in humanities, STEM and vocational classes.

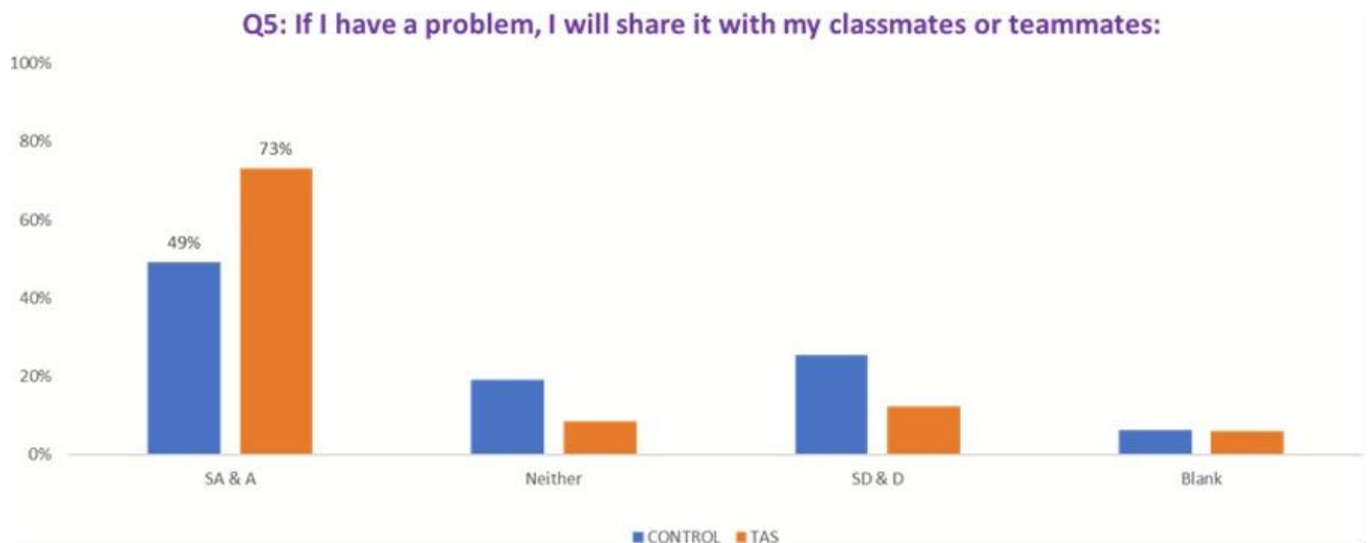
In all classes, students had completed a similar number of credits toward graduation, had similar Grade Point Averages and were devoting a similar number of hours to family and/or work. Surveys were anonymous and voluntary to encourage honest responses. Some TAS and control classes were taught by the same instructor, adding consistency to the data collection.

One hundred twenty-five students participated in the opening Fall '22 survey. The final survey that semester included a total of 143 students (80 from TAS classes and 63 controls). Although the study indicated no significant difference between our TAS classes and the non-TAS control classes in terms of academic workload, credits completed and responsibilities at home and at work, we found that students in our TAS classes were far more likely to share problems that came up with their classmates than

were students in similar control classes. See Figure 1, below, which shows that 73% of the students enrolled in TAS courses report that they agree or strongly agree that they share problems with teammates, compared to 49% of the respective students enrolled in non-TAS courses, which are referred to as controls.

Figure 1

Students' Reports on Problem Sharing. (SA & A- Strongly Agree & Agree; SD & D – Strongly Disagree & Disagree)



Source: authors' own work.

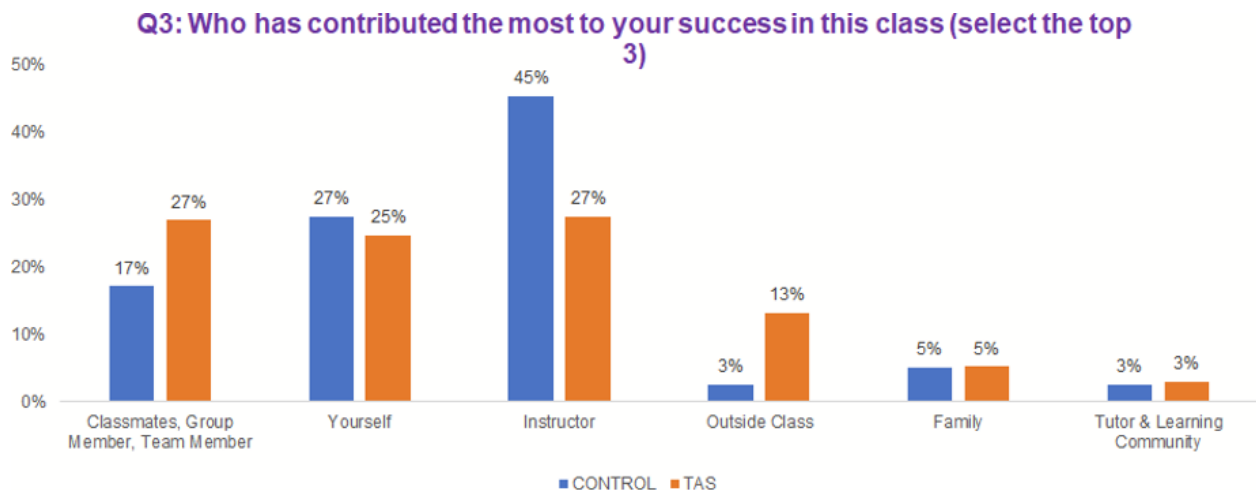
In other words, there were indeed higher levels of trust, sharing and community created in the TAS classes.

Furthermore, the data suggests that TAS might be shifting course structure and learning experience from an instructor to a student-centered teaching modality. Based on the end-of-the-semester survey, 45% of students enrolled in the control courses

reported the instructor as the main contributor to their success in their course, compared to only 27% of the students enrolled in the TAS-adopting courses. A majority of students enrolled in TAS courses identified “classmates, teammates, and persons outside class” as contributing the most to their learning experience. Figure 2 illustrates the shift to a student-centered pedagogy rather than an instructor-centered pedagogy.

Figure 2

Students’ Reports on Factors Contributing to Course Success



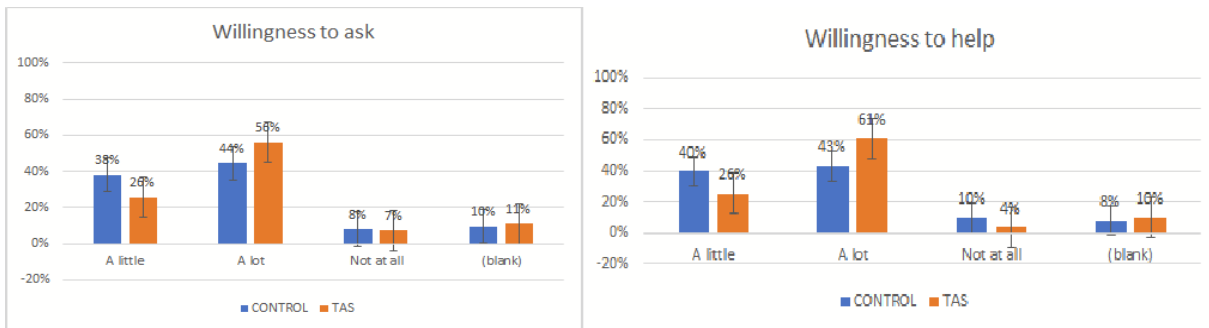
Source: authors' own work.

Thus, much of the “locus of control” for learning and helping others to learn had shifted from the instructor to the student teams. In *Smarter, Faster, Better*, Charles Duhigg cites research that concludes: “Internal locus of control has been linked with academic success, higher self-motivation and social maturity, lower incidences of stress and depression, and longer life span.” He cites additional research linking “internal locus of control” to higher life-time earnings, longer marriages and a wider circle of friends.

Students in the TAS classes had assumed agency and responsibility for themselves and for the other members of their teams. Not unexpectedly, then, a substantially higher rate of students enrolled in TAS courses reported a willingness to ask for help and to help others, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Students' Reports on Helping and Asking for Help



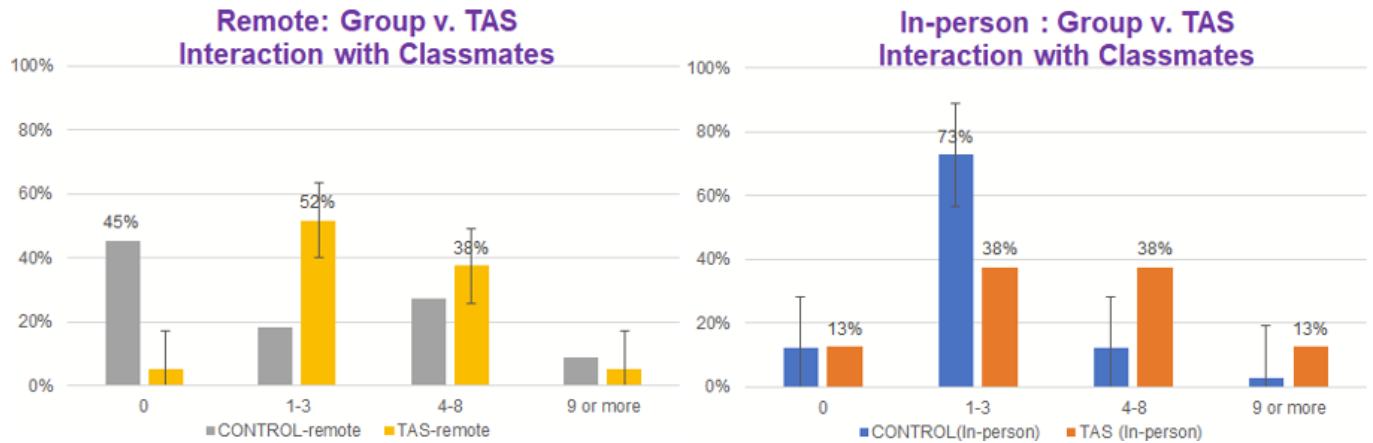
Source: authors' own work.

Additional data would need to be collected to be able to analyze whether the reported difference would be statistically significant.

Importantly, TAS seems to improve students' interactions with classmates, particularly in remote learning. Disaggregating the data by in-person (fully in person or hybrid) and remote (synchronous and asynchronous) modalities, 87% of respondents report interaction (more than zero); but the greatest number of interactions is reported by TAS students, as shown in Figure 4. Revealingly, 45% of students enrolled in non-TAS remote and non-TAS control courses *reported zero interactions with classmates*, compared to less than 5% in remote TAS courses.

Figure 4

TAS Impact on Remote Learning



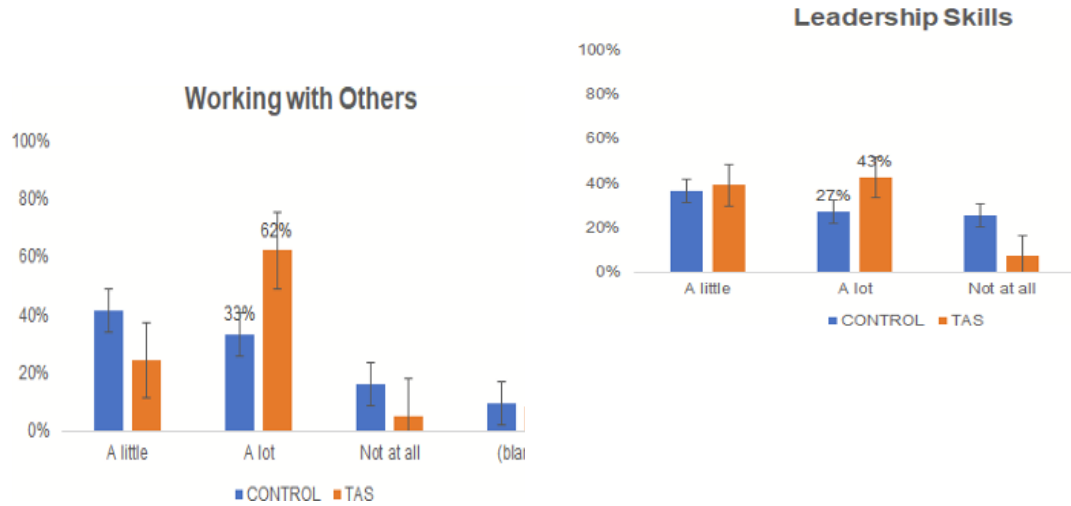
Source: authors' own work.

The ability of TAS to help the online student break through the isolation of online learning (especially in asynchronous courses) was striking and significant in the light of the current crisis in post-covid student mental health and of the present-day explosion of and interest in online programs.

Although further data collection and analysis is underway, TAS students also reported greater improvement in communication and writing skills (both essential to the development of critical thinking), in leadership skills, and in their ability to work with others than the non- TAS controls (see Figure 5 below). They perceived more improvement in self-confidence, in their ability to set and meet goals and in their sense of belonging. We expect future surveys to clarify the statistical significance of these outcomes.

Figure 5

Working with Others and Leadership Skills



Source: authors' own work.

Our preliminary data from multiple classes in two European universities emphasized the effectiveness of ‘Team As Support’ across cultures and income groups as well as for our very specific and diverse Kingsborough / CUNY demographic. Our team includes two instructors from Austria who teach at universities of education (and whose data we are, for IRB purposes, tracking separately) at the undergraduate and Master's levels. Both adopted TAS with trepidation. Their students, too, shared concerns in “Learning Diaries” about the time commitment that TAS would involve and how it might impinge on their other responsibilities. The same students finished their semesters with positive and grateful feedback.

Appendix D

Teaching Materials

1. Getting Started with “Team As Support” (TAS) (for the Instructor)

What makes this design of Teamwork novel but also powerful is the emphasis on the psychic/ interpersonal infrastructure of your permanent semester-long teams. Extensive research correlates higher performance outcomes with the level of trust and psychological safety created within a team. The more trust a student has in their teammates, the more likely they are to reach out for help as needed but also to be there and provide help for their classmates. This level of trust takes time to build. Hence the designing of permanent, semester-long teams.

YOUR FIRST DAY!

We suggest organizing teams – permanent, semester long teams - of 6 or 7 students. Students can be organized alphabetically by last name (easier for grading purposes) or based on their schedules (practical because it privileges “availability” and can ease communication within the team). Importantly, these teams are *permanent* (semester long) which is indeed the point of this program: the nurturing of deep trust within a team over the course of a full semester. This creates deep support in the cracks where support would normally go missing. Teams include a rotating Team Leader and a Chief Technology Officer.

a. Syllabus:

It is critical to include language about teamwork as course requirement in your syllabus. Feel free to lift any such language from our teaching materials. Indicate the percentage of your grade that toward which teamwork will count.

b. Chats / Social Media / Zoom:

Let students get together on the first or second day of class to create their communication vehicles: chats, social media, zoom, or other social media video meeting platform. They are free to select platform of their choice. It is through their chats and zooms that they share ideas, ask one another questions, work on assignments, prepare for exams, and, importantly, bond. They can get together In person (if this is an in-person class) or in breakout rooms (if the class is synchronous and online) or on their own self-created zooms or similar social media video platforms if the class is completely online.

c. Sitting in Teams!

In the classroom, teams sit in small circles with their teammates. *They do not face the teacher – they face one another.* On zoom, one can use breakout rooms where students work as a team on a question, assignment, or project. *Classwork done within teams powerfully reinforces the “team” structure of the class and thus energizes the level of support that will happen within a team.* It allows for more freedom among students in their sharing of ideas and thus, their metacognitive development over the semester.

d. Team Name:

This is a wonderful ice breaker the first days of class. Teams are asked to create a team name just like any professional baseball, soccer or football team has a team name. Our students have created names like: The Giraffes, Black Jesus, Elite Team, A Team, Crown Jewels.

e. Team Leaders:

Team Leaders rotate weekly and usually it is easiest if they just rotate alphabetically within their teams. The Team Leader submits their "Possibility" to you on the Monday or first day of the week of their leadership. The idea here is that they create - in a few sentences – two intentions for their week of leadership, one academic and one for the purpose of team bonding:

1. The” possibility” for academic support could be: “we will ask one another questions about something we don’t understand for a homework assignment” or, “we will create a zoom to prepare for an exam together.”
2. The second “possibility” for deepening team bonding could mean sharing about holiday plans, or about hobbies and interests, hopes and desires – anything that brings in a personal dimension allowing team members to get to know one another separately from their academic shared work.

At the close of the week of leadership, the Team Leader submits their "Outgoing Team Leader Report" in which they write about two things: (1) they assess the strengths and weaknesses of their team and (2) they write about their own creative contributions to their team. The report need only be a couple of paragraphs. At the same time, it is an invaluable and eye-opening back door view into what is really going on in the class that is not visible to teachers is the usual design of the classroom.

d. Chief Technology Officer:

Teams will negotiate, nominate or volunteer one person to be the “Chief Technology Officer” for the semester and, of course, that person should be adept with tech. The Chief Technology Officer is the go-to person who is there for team members who may struggle to submit something online or have another tech issue. This will save the instructor and the struggling student much angina. We found that students took pride in the title. If the idea does not go over that well, the position could be given extra credit.

e. Grading: how to acknowledge effort and consistency in teamwork:

Included in your syllabus is your decision about how to factor teamwork into your grading system. Teamwork is often weighted as 30% of a final grade. Grades can include consistency of team effort (Leader possibilities and outgoing Team Leader reports that demonstrate thoughtfulness; team quizzes, exams and/or projects graded separately from individual tests and presentations.)

f. Introducing TAS to your students:

It is important to educate students into the “why” of this form of teamwork. Ask students to read either Have them read either Charles Duhigg’s “What Google Learned From its Quest to Build the Perfect Team” (<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html>) or Amy Gallo’s online piece, “What is Psychological Safety” (<https://hbr.org/2023/02/what-is-psychological-safety>). One student commented after reading the Duhigg article, “Oh, now I understand why you put us in teams!” Below are some useful questions that will open student up to the ideas behind TAS and to their experiences of “psychological safety.” The question below will be enlightening to your students and can be used for class discussion, team discussions or for reflective writing that is shared with the team or with the class. Here goes!

Class (or Team) Discussion Questions:

1. How does fear interfere with your participation, attention and willingness to share your ideas?
2. Have you ever not shared an idea in class because you feared being wrong or how you might sound to others?
3. Are you more comfortable sharing your thoughts in some classes more than others? Why?”
4. How does your sense of ‘safety’ affect your participation, attention and willingness to share your ideas?

2. Student Instructions for Teamwork

*Teamwork as support and contribution to others:
the quality of relationship predicts academic outcomes.*

Teams save lives and hearts!

Choose generosity! Create trust! Take initiative!

Support of your team is a course requirement. It is also your secret power!!!

Implementation: It's Simple!

This method uses Permanent Teams, a rotating Team Leader, social media and group chats to facilitate teams as support. Teams also have a Chief Technology Officer to support team members with tech issues. You may be Team Leader once or even a few times a semester.

Your job as Team Leader is to support and model the values of support, generosity, and making a difference. As Team Leader, you are the energetic center of your team for the week of your leadership. Some students may not be used to the role of leader and it is the job of team members to support the greatness and risk taking of their Team Leader! Every Monday the new Team Leader will hand the “Possibility” (an intention) they will create over the week of their leadership. The following Monday, the Team Leader will submit their “Outgoing Team Leader Report.” See below for details.

The stronger the team and the stronger the relationships within the team (generosity, sensitivity, safety, having each other's back), the stronger *your* academic performance. That's what the research says. And it's a lot more fun.

Key Ideas of This Approach to Teamwork

1. Support:

This approach to teamwork is built around and focused on support. It is your job, as a member of your team, to find ways to support and help your teammates. It is their job – all the members of your team – to support you! You need to let your teammates know *how they can best support you*. And you need to find ways to offer your listening and support to your team members.

2. Possibility:

Once upon a time the electric light was not possible. After two thousand wrong turns and mistakes, Tom Edison hit the jackpot and the electric light became a possibility. What was not possible in your life that is possible today? What is the possibility for yourself that you would like to create? For your team? For this class? For your life?

3. Breakdowns create the possibility for breakthroughs:

A “breakdown” is when something does not work out. In class, this can mean a disappointing grade on a quiz. At home, it can mean the breakdown of the washing machine or a fight with your brother. In world affairs, it can mean the breakdown of an important treaty. Whenever there is a breakdown, ask yourself what opportunity has been created by the breakdown.

Each breakdown has the power to create a *breakthrough*. What actions do you need to take to create a breakthrough? You may finally learn how to study more effectively after the poor grade on your quiz. You may learn a great deal about yourself when you listen to your brother and understand the issues underlying your fight. A broken treaty makes possible the writing of a new and better treaty.

Learn to see breakdowns as opportunities. Learn to create *breakthroughs* with the actions you take on.

Classroom Design: The “How To”

1. Permanent semester-long teams: You will sit in a circle with your team for most classes. You will have team discussions (and breakout rooms on Zoom) on issues we are studying, team quizzes, graded team presentations and more.

2. Team Name: Like sports teams, teams will create a team name. All written work will include your team’s name.

3. Team chats: Teams communicate over chats on their platform of their choice and on their team video platforms, also of their choice.

4. Rotating Team Leader; Chief Technology Officer: The Team Leader position rotates alphabetically by last name so you will always know when it will be your turn to be team leader. The Chief Technology Officer is someone on the team who is savvy with tech and whose role it is to support the members of their team when they have a tech issue.

5. The Team Leader Possibility: When you are Team Leader, you will hand in your “Possibility” on the first day of the week of your leadership (usually on a Monday). What can you do in the course of the week of your leadership to make your team stronger, to help out a member who may be struggling, to foster relationship within the team, to support better attendance and timeliness of assignment preparation? The “Possibility” is only three or four sentences, but it is really about your vision for your team. *It is ambitious!*

Importantly, the Team Leader Possibility has two parts:

1. A focus that is academic (on an upcoming assignment, reading, etc).
2. A focus that is social and deepens the bonding within the team (sharing about holiday plans, challenges with work and school, etc.).

6. Outgoing Team Leader Report: You will hand in your “Outgoing Team Leader Report” on the first day of class that follows that week of your leadership. The report will provide two paragraphs:

1. The first will assess what you see as the strengths and weaknesses of your team.
2. The second will describe the creative interventions (actions taken) you have made to make the “Possibility” you created at the beginning of the week of your leadership really happen.

What Does Support Look Like?

1. Contact Information, Group Chat and Zoom: You will share contact information with the members of your team. This will allow the team to set up a group chat on a platform of their choice. Students will also organize their own video meetings on zoom or any video platform of their choice.

2. Relatedness: What do you have to do to get related to others on your team? Relatedness to others on your team will eventually benefit and empower you. Avoid judgement. Text and ask a teammate, are you OK , before jumping to a conclusion about someone who does not get back to you or who disappoints you in some way. *Choose generosity! Create trust! Take initiative!*

3. Team Chat and Zoom: These are important tools of teamwork. We use social media to create communication among team members, to create a 24/7 support system, to allow teams to prepare group assignments together and so much more. If you are absent or will be late, let your team know on the chat so they can tell me! If someone is absent, the Team Leader will send them the assignment on the chat. The “Chat” allows you to get clarification of an assignment that is not clear to you, to discuss class materials and to create friendships along the way. It allows you to share things happening in your lives

and to share humor (laughter heals)! One instructor learned toward the end of the semester that one team in her class had used their chat to set up regular lunch meetings to prepare for class. This also happened to be the team that had gotten the highest grades all semester. No matter what may be going on in your life, you will always have support and assignments at your fingertips.

4. Absence, lateness, incomplete work: These issues can be very destructive to the achievement of the student during the semester. We have seen teams made a critical difference in all three of these issues. The job of a team is to be sensitive to where team member is struggling and find ways to support them. If you are struggling, *learn how to request help*. Sometimes, this can be hard. But it can also make all the difference. Team leaders, stay true to your mission. Keep all members of your team up to date. Avoid judgment and choose to be generous in your thoughts about others as well as in action.

3. The “Possibility” form

YOUR NAME

WEEK OF

TEAM NAME

“The possibility I am creating for my week of leadership is”

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Use the above heading and complete the above sentence. Then add another couple sentences.
2. Your “Possibility” is due the first day of each week.
3. Include something specific that, in your view, will make a difference for your teammates academically: with readings, assignments, class and exam preparation, etc.
4. Then add in something that will deepen the bonds that are the real strength of your team and help you get to know one another better.
5. Two to three sentences is sufficient.

EXAMPLES

1.

Academic: The possibility that I am creating in the week of my leadership is for all of the members of my team to be up to date on our readings.

Bonding: I will also create a zoom meeting for us to see one another and get to know one another as a team.

2.

Academic: The possibility that I am creating in the week of my leadership is that we have a high pass on our upcoming quiz. We will use our “chat” to review the reading and prepare.

Bonding: I will ask teammates to share any special challenges that they may be facing in their lives.

3.

Academic: The possibility that I am creating in the week of my leadership is that we all hand in our papers on time! I will remind my teammates to edit their essays before handing them in.

Bonding: I will reach out to certain teammates who work long hours to find out how they are doing and what support they might need.

4. Outgoing Team Leader Report form

YOUR NAME

WEEK OF:

TEAM NAME

Form:

1. Use the heading above.
2. Please type.
3. Submit on the Monday following the week of your leadership.
4. A couple of paragraphs with real detail is enough.

Paragraph one:

How do you assess your team? What do you see as the strengths and where are the weaknesses of your team? Were there breakdowns and perhaps breakthroughs that your team has experienced over the last week?

Paragraph two:

What creative interventions (contributions) did you make to create a real difference for your team and its members? To what extent did you move your team in the direction of the “possibility” that you created for yourself at the outset of the week of your leadership? Be detailed!

5. Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is this class organized this way (“Team As Support”):

Research has shown that the teams that create real trust have higher levels of performance and innovation. This system is very close to the teamwork design that Google uses to support amazing innovation and performance. “Team As Support” will help your grades and also make class a lot more fun. It will teach you how to be an effective leader and how to support others in meaningful ways. It will teach generosity, kindness, and the skills of collaboration. It is also *great* training for teamwork in the workforce after graduation. In the world of medicine, it can save lives.

2. What is different about this form of teamwork and all the groupwork that I have done in other classes?

Groupwork is typically focused on accomplishing a project which is time limited. “Team As Support is about building a powerful support system for every single student *throughout the entire semester*.

3. Why are we sitting in small circles or going into breakout rooms?

Sitting in teams supports the bonding within the team. You are not receptacles for the wisdom of this instructor; you are active, powerful teams focused on learning, performing, sharing, and support.

4. How can this form of teamwork benefit me?

Teamwork will benefit your grades and your ability to keep up with your assignments. It will support you through emergencies so that you will not have to drop out of class or miss an exam, etc. It will train you for the workforce when you graduate and teach you how to think and act like a leader.

5. What is my job as a team member?

Your job is to support the other guy; to help them get an “A” in the class; to notice, to respond to requests on the chat for an assignment or for help and even reach out if you think someone may need that extra bit of support. And your job is also to make requests for help yourself when you need that help. The idea is *to make a difference!*

6. What is my job as a Team Leader?

As Team Leader, you are the model of support. You will text assignments to students who are out and reach out to anyone who may seem to be stumbling with empathy, with listening and an offer of help. At the beginning of the week of your leadership, you will create a specific “Possibility” in a couple of sentences (to be handed in) in which you will create an academic goal (a team zoom to prepare for an exam; a chat discussion about a reading; whatever you feel is most needed) and a team bonding goal (sharing about life outside the classroom, hopes and dreams, family, travels, holiday plans, etc.). And you will write an “Outgoing Team Leader Report” at the end of the week of your leadership in which you assess the strengths and weaknesses of your team (paragraph one) and write about your own creative contributions to your team as Team Leader (paragraph two).

7. What is my job as Chief Technology Officer?

Simple! You are the go-to person on your team for anyone who has a tech issue.

8. What if I prefer to work alone?

Teamwork is indicated on our syllabus. It is part of what we are learning in this course. Not negotiable. Be open to the possibility that this may indeed be an

opportunity to experience a new way of working, one that will be important when you enter the workforce and that your feelings may indeed shift.

9. What is a “Possibility”?

As an idea in this course, “possibility” means moving beyond familiar limits in your ideas about yourself, your hopes and your sense of what is *truly possible* for you in this life you have been given!

As a feature of this course, it is a few sentences that you submit at the beginning of your week as Team Leader in which you create 2 intentions or goals: one is academic (you will create a zoom on which your team will prepare together for an exam; or, you will make sure everyone is up to date with assignments).

The second “possibility” is about the bonding, connection, and communication within your team. Research has shown that the deeper the level of trust in a team, the higher the level of performance. In the world of medicine, the deeper the trust, the less judgmental the team, the more willing members are to report error and thus, the more correction of error takes place, and the more lives are saved. That is what the research has told us. So, this “possibility” will invite team members to share something about who they are, what they love to do, a place they visited, the challenges they face at this moment in their lives. This is what we call, building the psychic infrastructure of the team, and it creates more fun as well as more learning!

10. What is an “Outgoing Team Leader Report”?

Simple! This is a closing report that you submit at the end of the week of your week as Team Leader in which you write about 1. the strengths and weaknesses of your team and 2. your creative contributions to your team in that time. It only need be two paragraphs. Details, though, help.

11. What is a “breakdown?”

Breakdowns are things that happen in life all the time: you screw up an exam; you go to bed too late and are exhausted the next day; you have the wrong friends; your time management skills are a mess. You rack up too many purchases on your credit card and must pay interest. You are breaking up with a partner. Or, you are trying to discover a new vaccine and so far every attempt has failed! *But a breakdown is also, potentially, a learning opportunity!*

12. What is a “breakthrough?”

A “breakthrough” is making lemonade out of a lemon! In other words, it is looking carefully at that breakdown – how did it happen, how can I make sure this does not happen again – and figuring out what you need to do to make sure that the “breakdown” does not repeat itself. The point of a “breakthrough” is that the breakdown occurred once, but in creating a “breakthrough” you have created a whole new level of behavior and action for yourself. You learned to move on after a failed relationship; you got your act together with respect to time management; you are now in a better position to put together the right chemical combination for that vaccine. *The payoff from a breakdown is huge. We call it a “breakthrough.”*

13. What if a team member is absent a lot and even “disappears” from class and from our team?

This can be a serious and painful breakdown for an entire team. First: withhold judgment. If someone is not showing up, you know that something is going on. Reach out and ask if everything is OK? Offer support or even just a listening ear. If you get no response to your attempts to contact this team member, the next step is to create a conversation among the remaining members of the team to discuss this “breakdown.” Does one person pulling out have to affect your team

and how the team functions? Can you remain true to one another, supportive of one another at the same time that there is disappointment around the loss of one of your members? Moving forward despite this breakdown is an essential life skill. And when you and your team can reconstitute your power despite this loss, you will have created an important “breakthrough” for yourselves and for your team.

14. What if our Team Leader is not showing up?

This is a hard one. Yes, it is rare, but it can happen. Yes, it is a serious “breakdown.” Again, the first step is to avoid judgment. Something is going on for this person. What? Can you reach out and make a difference? Offer support? And in the unlikely event that your Team Leader “disappears,” can you just show up as Team Leader instead? At least for the couple of days until it is the turn of someone else on your team to be Team Leader? Can you take initiative, model support to your team so that they see that even though someone dropped out, the team remains strong, united, and powerful? Perhaps more powerful than ever before? That is your “breakthrough”!

15. What if I have an emergency in my life and cannot come to class or complete an assignment? Or even must withdraw from class? What should I do?

Wow! That is a serious “breakdown.” Recognize that your breakdown affects others and communicate with your professor and with your team. Thank them for the support they have given. In being up front, in acknowledging the impact of your breakdown on others, you ease the loss that they will feel and you will be a model of grace. To remain generous under circumstances of breakdown is an amazing breakthrough. If possible, stay in touch with your team, even if you have dropped the class. They care about you.

16. What do I do in case I have a tech issue and I cannot submit an assignment?

Text your Chief Technology Officer to get help asap. You can text others if that person is not available. If the assignment will not be submitted in a timely manner, always inform your professor *before* rather than *after* the date of submission.

17. What does “support” really look like?

On one level support means responding on the chat, being part of your team, reaching out when you think someone is faltering or needs help, learning to ask for help yourself when you need help with an assignment or another issue. It means social sensitivity and being there for your teammates. On a deeper level, it means service, kindness, generosity, making a difference, taking initiative. In one class, a team member woke up from surgery, looked at her phone and saw messages from her teammates. “It made me happy,” she said. In another, students on one team spent a semester nudging a super shy immigrant student to participate in all their activities. When his performance in a team play blew away the entire class, the other teammates were singing with joy at the difference they had made in the life of that student. Support of your team is a course requirement. It is also your secret power!!!