

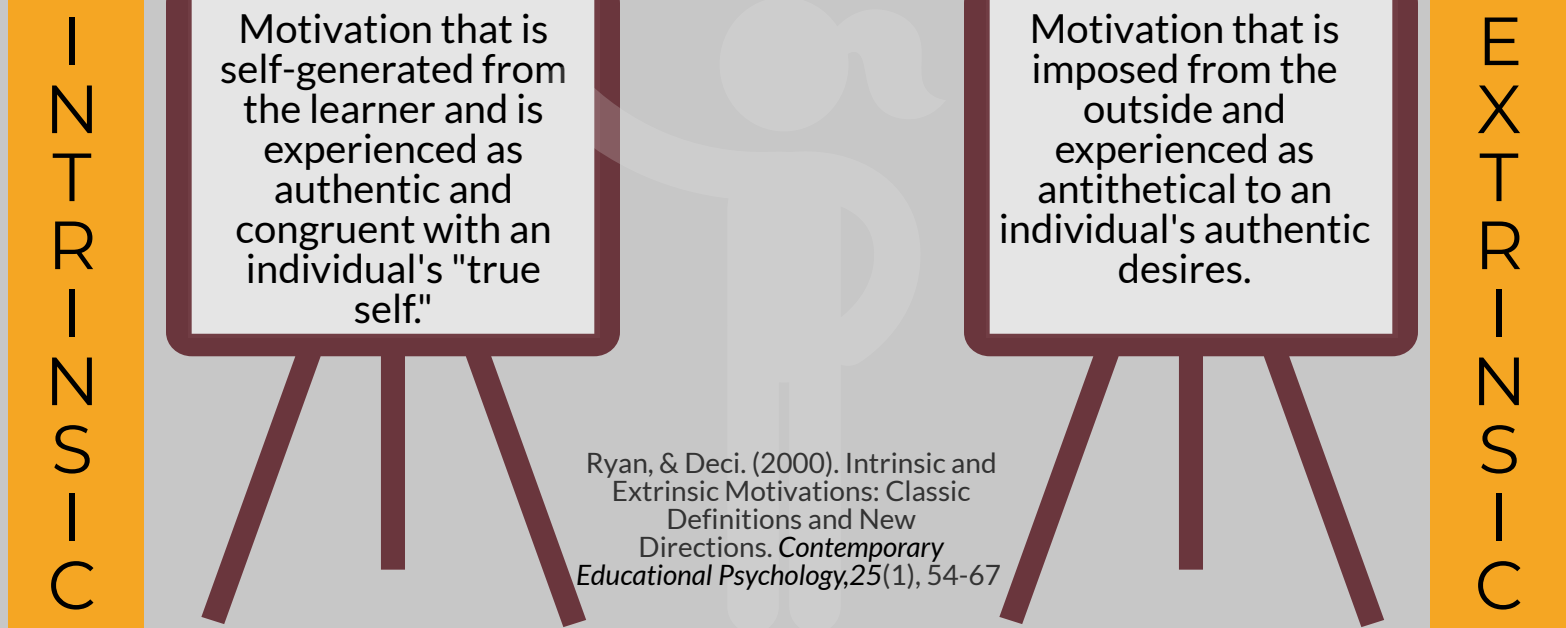


Autonomy

"To feel controlled is to lose interest." - Alfie Kohn

Overview Research indicates that the extent to which students are motivated to perform a particular task impacts their learning. One empirically proven way to increase student motivation and facilitate gains in learning is to provide a classroom environment where students' true selves and authentic interests are free to emerge in a non-controlling environment.

Two Kinds of Motivation



AUTONOMY & MOTIVATION

"[W]here the actions of students emanate from their **true sense of self**, so they are being **authentic**"—we should expect students to "embrace the activity with a sense of **interest** and commitment." - Edward Deci



Interest

When the "true self" is given free expression, interest in a particular activity increases.



Motivation

When authentic interest is heightened, a corresponding increase in intrinsic motivation can be expected.



Learning

Motivation has been systematically correlated with increased learning.

Deci, E. L., & Flaste, R. (1996). *Why we do what we do: Understanding Self-Motivation*. New York: Penguin Books.

THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING: AUTONOMY VS. CONTROL

Autonomy-Supportive Motivation Style

"Three conditions make any approach to motivating students an autonomy-supportive one: (a) adopt the students' perspective; (b) welcome students' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; and (c) support students' motivational development and capacity for autonomous self-regulation."

Controlling Motivation Style

"Three conditions make any approach to motivating students a controlling one: (a) adopt only the teacher's perspective; (b) intrude into students' thoughts, feelings, or actions; and (c) pressure students to think, feel, or behave in particular ways."

"A review of the published empirical literature reveals 44 data-based investigations of the relationship between students' school functioning and teachers' motivating styles (autonomy-supportive vs. controlling) [...] The findings from virtually every one of these empirical studies point to the same conclusion—namely, that

students relatively benefit from autonomy support and relatively suffer from being controlled."

Reeve, Johnmarshall. (2009). Why Teachers Adopt a Controlling Motivating Style toward Students and How They Can Become More Autonomy Supportive. *Educational Psychologist*, 44(3), 159-175.

The Importance of AUTONOMY SUPPORT IN EDUCATION

"The **primary task of the teacher** is to try to understand their students' authentic interests and goals, and then **help students to understand the connection between their personal goals and interests and schoolwork**. In addition, teachers may also find or develop tasks that fit their students' interests. When students do not have clear personal interests and goals, teachers may assist them in developing such interests and goals."

Assor, A., Kaplan, H., & Roth, G. (2002). Choice is good, but relevance is excellent: Autonomy-enhancing and suppressing teacher behaviours predicting students' engagement in schoolwork. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 72(2), 261-278.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Five Classroom Strategies for the Autonomy Supportive Educator

1 Nurture Students' Inner Motivational Resources

How can we help facilitate a learning experience where students can express their authentic selves in their schoolwork?

2 Provide Explanatory Rationales

Why are we doing what we are doing and how can we express its relevance and value for the student both in and out of the classroom?

3 Embrace Learners' Negative Affect

How can I learn what might frustrate students about the research process, acknowledge these struggles, and offer helpful solutions to them (rather than think students should always feel good about their learning)?

4 Use Informal, Non-Controlling Language

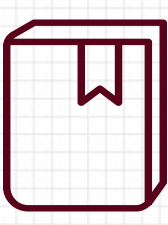
How can I deliver this content as a helpful suggestion rather than as an authoritative "should" or command from an all knowing expert?

5 Provide Space for Self-Paced Learning

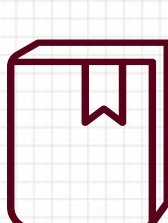
How can I design my instruction to give students adequate practice time? How can I make myself available to students beyond the one-shot to allow for questions as they arise?

Reeve, Johnmarshall. (2009). Why Teachers Adopt a Controlling Motivating Style toward Students and How They Can Become More Autonomy Supportive. *Educational Psychologist*, 44(3), 159-175.

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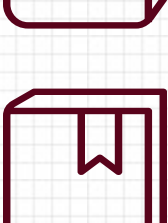
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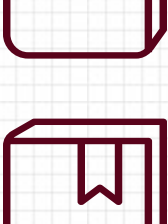
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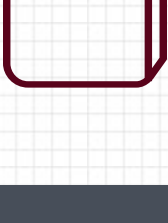


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