

CPI *Unrestrained* Transcription

Episode 49: Pattie Steele

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Host: Terry Vittone

Terry: Hello and welcome to *Unrestrained*, a CPI podcast series. This is your host, Terry Vittone, and today I'm joined by Pattie Steele. She is an educator with the South Coast Educational Collaborative in Massachusetts. Hello and welcome, Pattie.

Pattie: Good morning.

Terry: Good morning. Before we begin, let me tell you a little bit about our guest. Pattie has worked with the South Coast Educational Collaborative for over 38 years. The South Coast Educational Collaborative, SCEC, conducts educational programs and services that complement and strengthen school programs of member districts, and increased educational opportunities for all children.

Pattie does amazing work with very special student populations, and she holds a bachelor's degree in health and physical education from Bridgewater State University, a master's degree in special education, and a degree in school administration from Simmons College. She is a Meritorious Instructor for the Crisis Prevention Institute, and one of Pattie's favorite quotes is, "Children may not always remember what you teach them, but they will always remember how you treated them."

Okay, Pattie. Let's begin, our first question, tell our listeners a little bit about the history and mission of the South Coast Educational Collaborative, and how it partners with districts and schools to help students realize their full potential.

Pattie: Okay. Well, first of all, thank you for that introduction.

Terry: You're welcome.

Pattie: I really appreciate all those compliments. I appreciate it well. So, back in 1980 is when I started my career with the South Coast Educational Collaborative. And that's when all our communities were dabbling with the whole thought of reverse inclusion, and deinstitutionalization, and taking kids out of all these state hospitals, and bringing them back into the school systems, especially youngsters under the age of 22. In Massachusetts, we provide services up until that age.

So, we have this program that was called a public day program where youngsters were bussed from the hospitals, and we basically needed to provide educational services for these youngsters. As the years went on, this expanded, and we ended up splitting. Originally, we were called cooperative production, and we had youngsters from kindergarten all the way up to young adults. We had group homes and everything, but in around the mid '80s, we split.

South Coast became primarily just servicing the population of 3 to 22. And then instead of having just a standalone building, we were governed by four school districts back then. Now, we're governed over eight, and we actually now have programs housed in public school settings, where we actually provide services on a daily basis, or just provide related services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, adapted PE. We do a lot of clinical services, where we test children. And then, of course, as the years went on, we see more and more kids with behavioral and emotional concerns.

So, more and more the whole clinical and the whole medical piece has just expanded and grown over the past three decades that I've been around. And we now have over 40 school districts that are part of the Collaborative, always trying to reintroduce the kids back into the public school setting versus back when I first started teaching in the early '80s, everyone was taken out of the public school setting, and put into these public day programs.

Now, with the increase of autism and all those diagnoses, schools have to bring the children back into the districts because they can't afford to transfer the kids out of districts to a substantially separate program. So, now, we are back in the school districts servicing all the children.

So, that's the history of South Coast. It originally started as a public day program, but now, we are helping our communities bring children back in because of all the fiscal responsibilities that districts have.

Terry: I see. That sounds like you're doing very good work, and it's a really kind of progressive approach that the state has taken. Could you talk about your role in detail with the Collaborative, and some of the greatest rewards and challenges of the job you do?

Pattie: Well, I first started out, as you had said in my introduction, as a health and PE teacher, and that was a real eye opener because here I am thinking, "Okay, I'm gonna have a bunch of kids, teach them soccer, teach them basketball, teach them field hockey, you name it." And that's not what it was all about. It was a collective group of youngsters with cognitive challenges and physical challenges.

And back in the early '80s, we didn't have the blend of occupational therapists, physical therapists. It was, basically, your classroom teacher and someone like myself who make all these modifications in their educational approach, and that's what I used to do. And I'll never forget, when IDEA came in to place ed reform, a physical therapist walked in and said to me, "Okay, I'm ready to service a kid." And I'm like, "What are you doing?" And she said, "Well, I work with gross motor skills and all that." I thought, "Well then, what do I do as a health and PE teacher?" And it just made me realize that so many services that were in the hospitals are now in the educational settings with the whole IDEA reform and everything.

So then I decided that I wasn't gonna be satisfied just working one-on-one with youngsters. I felt that I could do more, and that's when I went back to school and got my master's degree, and then my degree in school administration. And I now—I mean, I was back in the, you know, the '90s and the early turn of the century—responsible for developing all the therapeutic services, bringing in OT, PT, speech, kids with visual impairments, bringing that into all the school districts. We started out with just a handful of kids in 1990. By 2010 we were servicing over 3,000 kids a week in the public school settings, and had 54 therapists working for us.

But most recently, I am responsible for all the PQA [Program Quality Assurance Services] with all the new regulations, especially in January 2016, with all the federal regulations on restraint, and the state regulations. Each day, I basically review every single report of every single child who may have had to be involved in intervention, be it physical or verbal. I make sure that all the reports are written appropriately, all the I's are dotted, the T's are crossed, all the mandates are met, all the reports are sent in a timely fashion to the appropriate people, and I provide CPI training and PBIS to all our member districts.

So, yeah, I'm not a PE teacher anymore, although I still have that license. But I dabble in PBIS program quality assurance, and I train teachers in how to teach kids with behavioral concerns.

Terry: I see. So, you've—I mean, it sounds like you had a very visionary approach to expanding the program, and that you do get to track every day these interventions that go on. I mean, you can kind of tell which way the wind is blowing, I would imagine, just by your immersion in all these reports about exactly what's going on behaviorally with the student population.

Pattie: It's like I get giddy about all this data [laughs] which, I guess, sounds silly. But I'll be putting the reports in, and I'm like, "Aha!" I have an "aha" moment. Like, I can't wait to call up one of the program directors, and I'll call up one of our level leaders and I'll say, "You know what? We need to get in there, and we need to do a training on just setting limits or just verbal interventions because after reading this report, it's really clear to me, had we had a more preventive approach, we wouldn't have reached that other

level." And if people could have identified that this kid is in stage one of anxiety, and then stage two of defensiveness, kids are losing rational thought. So, don't be asking a kid, you know, "What are you doing?" because the kid just lost their rational thought. You can't ask a child, "What are you doing?" and "What are you gonna do?" You have to say, "This is what I see you doing, and this is what we need to change."

And so, I'll call up the program directors right away and say, "Time to get a review on setting limits. Time to get a review on how to intervene when you're all alone. Time to get a review on this, and this, and this," because I'm a big, big, big advocate of the *Crisis Development Model*SM, and making sure you break it down and intervene at the appropriate steps.

Terry: I was going to say, since you brought in the *Crisis Development Model*SM and a CPI behavioral model, it's good transition to my question. You've earned the designation as a CPI Meritorious Instructor, and before our interview, you said that you feel CPI training is a philosophy and a systematic approach rather than just restraint training, and that's a perception we fight against. Could you talk about that for us a little bit, Pattie?

Pattie: Yes, I remember having one of those "aha" moments. I was asked to help consult and build an alternative middle school program. So, we went in and trained all the staff on the intervention approaches and stuff. And when I walked in, someone said to me, "Oh, you are that restraint trainer." And I'm like, "Oh, no, please, please, please," and I started to cringe, "Don't call me a restraint trainer. I'm not just a restraint trainer. I'm an intervention trainer." And if we can get all our preventions into place, and my latest thing, Postventions, then we probably don't have to end up in restraint. And it's important to me that people didn't refer to me as their restraint trainer, and that's when I really went forward and made sure that I took all the advanced trainings with CPI.

So, I went to the trauma-informed care, the advanced physical training, the ASD training. I was like a sponge absorbing every program that CPI was putting out there, the positive behavior support booklet. And I became a—I started going to different trainings on positive behavior support, and became a coach in the school districts on implementing those. I brought in the CPI book, and then we did our refresher training that year. I said, "Okay. This year we're using our CPI/PBIS books."

And then myself and another colleague even went to the dementia training and someone said to me, "Why in god's name are you going to the dementia training, Pattie?" And I said "Because, " I said, "I need to know why people are behaving the way that they're behaving. " Maybe if I could figure out how—as adults—we digress, and we don't know what we're doing to people with dementia. Each day it's changing and there's always a different response. Maybe I can figure out what to do for the kids as they're growing and learning. And it might be baby steps, but that's okay, like, one more

thing I can learn to figure out how to put the appropriate interventions into place, fine by me. Give me the class, I'll take it, and like a sponge, I'll absorb it, and I'll take it apart, put it all back together again.

Terry: That's wonderful.

Pattie: I'm really big on that whole crisis model [CPI's *Crisis Development Model*SM], and really, really trying to say to teachers, "Stop the negative approach. Stop the always ready to react. Let's sit down, let's make a plan, and let's respond." So, I think that's what got me the Meritorious [designation] because I was constantly calling central office, saying, "What else can I learn? What other program do you got going for me?"

Terry: How many people do you train in a year?

Pattie: Well, before we just added three more trainers to the Collaborative, I was training upwards of 1,000 people a year—

Terry: Oh, my, that's a huge amount.

Pattie: —in, like, eight different districts, and perhaps, like, around 40 different schools. But I do go to all those schools, and also implement positive behavior support. So, that's where a lot of people started saying to me, "Wow, Pattie, instead of you coming in and doing restraint training—" and I'm like, "Stop calling it that," "—for our behavioral program, you should be going into the public schools and training up the general ed teachers." And that's when I said, "Amen to that."

And we started sitting down with all the principals and said, "Will you please let us train up general ed staff instead of this always being a special ed focus? Because if we train up general ed staff, then we're responding and we're not reacting. We're putting prevention in place." And it has really, really started to take it and run with it. More and more school districts are allowing us to come in and train up everyone.

By last year, my big focus—I was thrilled to death—was school recess monitors and the cafeteria monitors. I'm like, "Thank you. What better place to train people." Here we have people who don't have a strong educational background as far as how to work with kids, and they allowed me the opportunity to go in there and train them up because instead of having 26 kids in your classroom with maybe one paraprofessional, you're talking about a collective group of individuals who have walkie-talkies, and have about 150 kids in a wide-open platform, and we expect them to keep control of all those kids' behaviors. But yet we have difficulty in our classroom with just 25 to 30 kids, and maybe one paraprofessional. So, that was my big accomplishment last year, and I was thrilled to death. And the Flex program [the former brand name of CPI's blended learning option] really helped us accomplish that goal.

Terry: That's great. That's our blended learning option, just for listeners, where people can do an online portion and a classroom portion. So, Pattie, how many people in the Collaborative are now training CPI? How many train the trainer?

Pattie: We have five trainers. So, we have 240 employees. All our employees are trained. It's one of the prerequisites to working here. Within 30 days, you have to receive the initial training, which our initial training is 16 hours. We incorporate everything. We don't just teach the basic CPI. We incorporate all the in-programs, the ASD, the trauma, PBIS, you name it. And then we also bring in the clinical components of it, because a lot of our youngsters do have the homicide, suicide tendencies, you know. Those things can happen. They're extreme. They've never happened. We've never had a homicide here, but there's always the opportunity or the chance that that might be presented in front of us because we do have a lot of youngsters who have behavioral concerns.

Terry: Could you talk very briefly about the student populations, the special populations that you serve? I mean, I know you serve a lot of children living with autism.

Pattie: Originally, back in the '80s, we had youngsters, and back then they gave them a label that I don't even care to say. And now, we call it "cognitively challenged." And then a lot of medically fragile youngsters were introduced into our programs. And then it was right around in the late '90s, where we just had a huge influx where more and more youngsters were being diagnosed with autism. And we do have such an array of children on the spectrum or comorbidity. A lot of our youngsters don't just have one diagnosis, they have multiple diagnoses.

So, we have youngsters who are cognitively intact, actually very, very, very bright, but their social skills are lacking. And that causes conflict in the public school settings because they don't know how to react. So, then people will tend to call them behavioral and emotional concerns. And it's like, "Yup, okay. You're right. It's a combination of both."

So, we have a bunch of youngsters ages 3 through 22 who [are] actually, in public school settings, on the spectrum, cognitive challenge, behavioral, emotional challenges, and then we have medically fragile programs that are also incorporated into the public school settings. But we also have two substantially standalone buildings, which have around 50 to 75 youngsters in them. One is a high school program, one is a blended kindergarten all the way up to high school program.

And we actually have youngsters who are going out to internships and working, and have job coaches. So, half the day, they'll go out and work. The other half, they're educated in our program. We even have some youngsters who are going to the local community college with a job coach or with an educational coach, and actually are graduating—exciting—with, actually, college credits. Well, that's really cool, too.

Terry: That's inspirational. Speaking of that, during our pre-interview, you shared a story with me about something called "Danny's Song," and I thought it was really fascinating. I would love you to share that with our listeners.

Pattie: Yeah, and I think I'm gonna send it to you, because I don't think my rapping does it justice. But I was asked in an inner city to pull together a program for our middle school youngsters. I probably wouldn't read the whole thing for you, but I'm gonna read for you the couple of lines that really struck me when I was working with these youngsters.

So, it was 50 middle school youngsters in a city, and when I tell you, Terry, they have beautiful brand new middle school buildings there. So, yeah, I've got to set the scene for you a little bit. It took these 50 youngsters, and basically, put them in a program in one of the oldest buildings in the city.

So, here are these youngsters who came from these nice buildings, now they're being placed in these really, like, not-so-attractive buildings. And part of me was like, "Okay, you want these kids to behave, but they already feel bad about themselves. That's why they behave the way they are. Now, let's make it even worse, and make it even more complicated, and put 'em in a setting that isn't really conducive to learning." But you work with the funds that you have.

But anyhow, I went in there, and one of the things that they did have, which I was excited about, is they had a lot of enhancement programs. So, they brought in somebody to do rap songwriting, boxing, weightlifting, culinary arts, photography, you name it. So, when I went in there and did the whole positive behavior support things, I asked the kids to help me develop the rules, develop the mascot, you name it, and everything else. And then I said to the youngsters, "Let's write a rap song to go along. Let that be, like, you know, our song like, you know, Notre Dame's fighting song. Let's make a song for our program."

Terry: What a great idea. Just right in where they—right where they live, right?

Pattie: Right. Let's rhyme, you know, we all learn through rhyme. We all know how to read through rhyme. Rhyming is very important. So, anyhow, I go in there and I'm like, "Okay, kids. Yo, yo, yo, let's stay in school. Following the rules is really cool," and me with my little Positive Pattie hat on. And they all just look at me and they're like, "Okay, yeah. Yeah, Miss Pattie."

And that's one of the things I love, too, about working with these youngsters. They may use a lot of unkind words, or superlatives, expletives, however you wanna say it. You know the colorful language that they use, but they always end it with "Miss Pattie." So, I know there's some respect there, and that starts with the day I walk in I say to them, "Listen. You get respect, you give respect. I don't like it when you use these kind of words, but I know it's not always easy for you. So, please know that these types of

words I'm sensitive to, these type of words I understand, but please always be respectful because I will also be respectful to you as well."

So, Danny comes up to me and says, "Miss Pattie, I'll write you a rap song." I'm like, "Okay. Cool beans. Let's write that rap song." So, he starts writing the rap song, and a couple of the lines just caught me where . . .

Terry: How old is Danny, by the way, at this point?

Pattie: Danny was only, at the time, 13.

Terry: Okay.

Pattie: 13 years old.

Terry: All right.

Pattie: 13 years old. And a couple of his lines that really struck me, and it just took me back were, "Who has the key to the door to life? Don't go to the path including a gun or a knife." And then the next line struck me because I feel like it describes me, "Through the dark and into the light, take my hand and I'll give you my sight. Don't go down the wrong path, you'll be left wet and drying, and telling yourself you'll get better and not even trying, doing drugs to get high and flying, but in the end you're by yourself in a dark room crying." And then, "Stop trying to blame your faults on other people just because you got offered something and it's lethal."

And when he started that song, and when started reading it, and the fact that he put it together in less than 30 minutes, I just said, "Oh, my god, Pattie, take your rose-colored glasses off." I was basically born and raised in a small community, predominantly white. And here I am in a city, and I'm thinking, "Okay, all I have to do is buy these kids a bunch of jeans, and you know, designer shirts and they'll be fine."

And I finally had to realize that, "They're still poor, Pattie, and they still maybe don't have anything to eat. And they maybe do have guns and drugs at home. And they maybe do have to take care of the younger brother and sister because their single mom is out working two or three jobs." And it was something that was really eye-opening for me. And I was like, "What? Guns, drugs, life, crying, darkness? No. Come on. You've got Positive Pattie here. I'll save you."

And then that's when I realized that I can't save the planet, as he had said, "I'm not here for Captain Planet." But I can make a difference. So, I sat down with the kids, and I started saying, "Tell more, tell me more, tell me more." And I could tell you. One of the things that upsets more than anything is these kids are so smart. They really, really are, but their anger and their emotions interfere with their learning, and then the whole

standardized testing. And I did say to somebody, when I was in a conference once, from the Department of Ed, "Please help me. These kids are bright, they're incredible, they're creative, but they can't take a test and pass a test. Please help me. One test doesn't measure success. Can I introduce you to Danny? And can you realize that Danny could be future Pharrell or 50 Cent? And he could be successful, but he's never gonna obtain that high school diploma, because he can't pass the test."

And that's where a lot of this lies with these kids. They behave the way that they do because everybody already has them earmarked as failures, because they can't pass that test, or they can't do this, or they can't do that. And so, what do they do?

Terry: They become what they are told that they're going to be. They fulfill the prophecy, basically.

Pattie: Exactly. So, when I come in the door and someone says, "Oh, that's the lady that teaches us restraint," and the kids are like, "Oh, so you're gonna be the one that wraps me up?" I'm like, "Oh, no, no. Please, I'm not the lady that wraps people up."

Terry: Wow. That says a lot right there. And Pattie, you mentioned . . .

Pattie: So I really—

Terry: Oh, sorry that's . . .

Pattie: —love that program, and I love those types of kids. And those types of kids are what actually keeps me motivated because, you know, I do have a lot of sad stories that go along with that, where kids didn't take the right path, and they were left crying. But then you have the kids, like, when I did my testimony for my Meritorious [CPI award], then you have the kids who come back, who became a police officer, or went on to be in the marines or whatever, and they come back and they hug you and they go, "Thank you, Miss Pattie. Couldn't have done it without you." And then, like, you say, "Thank you. I couldn't have done my job without you."

Terry: Nice. Well, it is inspirational to hear that, and I'm anxious to print that rap. And I thank you for sharing it with us. It's really, really—I think it will bring a smile to everyone's face who hears it. And also a lot of consideration for what that expression means, and how important it is, and how articulate it is about the situation as Danny saw it. You mentioned during our conversation that you're a believer [in PBIS], and I know this from our pre-interview, but you mentioned it a couple times in our interview today. You talked about PBIS or Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports. Could you talk about how that fits into the work that you do there at South Coast?

Pattie: Yes, and interestingly enough, I went into a small community, actually one of my own hometown, and implemented PBIS. And I had this one person who had been a teacher

for many years like myself, and she came in and she was listening. And she'd been a bit of a Debbie Downer, Negative Nelly, but that's okay. It takes a lot to bring me down. And she was challenging me and asking me all kinds of questions, and I said, "Okay." And she said, "Kids need to be accountable, though, Pattie. Here's the problem. People like you don't make these kids accountable, and that's why we have all these kids who are very young, doing this and doing that." And I'm like, "You're right." I said, "But can I just give you a little scenario?"

So a kid is walking down the corridor and I hear, "Stop running! Stop running! Stop running!" So, you have 25 kindergarten kids: one is running, and everybody else is watching you yell at the kid who's running. So, don't you think you're complementing negative behavior instead of showcasing positive behavior?

So, I said, "Let's give this a try," and I created all the little tickets and stuff like that. And I said, "In the morning, we're gonna remind the kids as they're walking down the corridor that following the rules is safe, respectful, and responsible. And walking feet are safe feet, so it's important to have walking feet." I said, "Now, I want you to take these tickets. If every single kid is doing it the right way, I want to give you a ticket to give to them. The kid who's running down the corridor, I don't want you to showcase him. I want you to keep showcasing the kids who are doing it right."

And it was funny because, like, I think about three months into the system, she pulled me aside and she said, "Pattie, okay, I want you to know it feels so good to give a kid a compliment, rather than constantly yelling at a kid to stop doing something wrong. Can I be on your PBIS team? I know the chairperson from last year is stepping down. Will you consider letting me be the co-chairperson?" I'm like, "Well, I'm only one member of the team." I said, "Absolutely."

She went on to help me write a video that we did on safe, respectful, and responsible, here are the rules. We ended up bringing in the high school kids to do a video with our kids. And this Negative Nelly, Debbie Downer, she wrote all the script out, practiced it with her kids and everything, and she continually says to me how much she can't get enough of it.

And then she said, "What's that CPI thing that you do? Can I go to that training or is that just a restraint training?" And I'm like, "No! It's not just restraint training. Yes, you can go." And then I talked to her principal and said to her principal, "Will you please let her go to the initial training when we do the initial training?" And she ended up coming to the training this year, and at the end of the training, she's like, "Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you." And I said, "Well, you're welcome, but thank you for letting me be a member of your team."

Terry: Well, what a great illustration how a positive support can start to change culture in a school. You wrote me back in August about this, and this relates, that many of the

communities you serve have what you call blinders on when it comes to extreme behavior. And I think, you know, someone who's just yelling at kids, that's maybe not such an extreme behavior, but it's certainly a blinder about not offering a positive support or an intervention. How do you think that these communities that have these blinders on could best rethink their attitude towards being more inclusive?

Pattie: Well, it's funny because, you know, we start the PBIS at the elementary schools, and so now, a lot of these kids are in the middle school, and then they end up in the high school. And we were talking about it one day with infractions, you know, and then pairing the interventions for the infractions. And I started laughing because I said, "You know, in elementary school, typically, we don't give detention. But why is it all of a sudden the kid who has been in the elementary school is now in the middle school, and he's still just running down the corridor? But now he gets detention."

So, I was talking to a couple of teachers and they said, "Oh, you're so right, Pattie. We have such repeat offenders." I said, "Well, do you do something with restorative practice?" They said, "Oh, they have to do that reflection sheet or whatever." I said, "Yeah, but do they just write down what you wanna hear to get out of the detention, and have the exit ticket?" "Well, yeah. You're right, and they're right back in detention the following week, the following week, the following week."

And that's what I mean by the blinders. It's like, okay, I get it, I get it. I work in special ed, so I have lots of low numbers. And a lot of these big public schools, you got 1,200 students, or you've got 800 kids in the middle school and everything, so you have to have some restrictions and some set rules because you just don't have enough staff to give all that individual attention. But I said to one of the principals, I said, "Would you please rethink them, your reflection sheets, your think sheets, your forced apologies? Why would you ever force somebody to make an apology? They're only gonna say what you want them to say to get out of a situation." And I said, "I would like to talk more about restorative practices and pre-correction for an opportunity to respond, then correction, then if needed, a restorative practice."

And I said, "That only comes through people having training, though. You can't just have—if you have a staff of 300 people, you can't just have five or six people doing it all. You have to have at least 80% buying it, but the biggest thing is, you have to have the buy-in from the administrators. And so if you, all you're gonna do is punish a behavior instead of correcting the behavior, then just go keep banging your head against the wall because each year is just gonna be another set of kids. You wanna make a change, then you gotta start at home, and you're gonna make a change with the way you work with these kids. And you gotta put in restorative practices, not punitive practices."

Terry: Excellent, excellent. Could we close today, Pattie, by you sharing your story about how you apologized to a kid who swore at you for getting into his space? And you told me that other staff told you, you were "crazy to apologize." I haven't heard this whole story

myself, so I'm anxious to hear it. You've kind of been holding it back. How does your response—and also then after you tell the story—[explain] how this response fits in with your idea of CPI philosophy.

Pattie: Yeah, when I was still the PE teacher at our alternative high school program, we had a very troubled youngster who started at our program. Cute kid. And he was dressed really nice, had this really nice choker on. And once again, Positive Pattie sometimes has to recognize that not everybody likes to be hugged; not everybody is as positive as I am, and some people just see life through the gloom and doom glasses.

So, I was trying to get him involved in the group and everything. And I went to him, and I was like, "Oh Mikey, I like that necklace." And I went to touch it. And he just, "Get your blanking hands off of me. Stay the blank away from me," and I'm like, "Okay, sorry about that, Mike." And I said, "So can we get back to class and let's get back to doing what we're doing?" So, my assistant wanted me to, like, send him into the building right away for him swearing at me and everything, but I just said, "Okay. Well, let's pick groups, and we'll talk about that later."

So, we had our groups and everything, and then later on, I pulled him to the side, and I said, "Michael, I'm very sorry." I said, "I know I have a problem. I'm just very, very positive; I'm a very touchy-feely person. I come from a huggy-kissy family. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to invade your personal space, especially on your first day here. You don't know me. I don't know you. That was wrong of me to do that. But let me ask you, please, if you have a problem with me, please don't use foul language in my class because you get respect, you give respect. And I agree. It was wrong of me. You probably felt disrespected by me invading your personal space, and I apologize for that, but I also need you to not use that kind of language with me in class. I need you to recognize that I'm the teacher here, and I need you to follow the rules as well, too. So, how can we come together to make this right?"

And he apologized to me for his actions. And later on, one of the assistants heard me talking to him, and that's when he said, "Why did you do that?" And I said, "Because," I said, "you're right, I'm the teacher, okay? But it doesn't mean that I always do things right. These kids are coming here with behavioral and emotional concerns." And I said, "I've got to learn to take my rose-colored glasses off sometimes because it clouds my ability to understand why they're behaving the way that they do."

And I turn to him, especially with the CPI training—and I say this a lot in the CPI trainings—kids don't sit at home and plot, "What can I do to aggravate Miss Pattie tomorrow?" They don't. They have plenty of other things that they need to be doing. They don't sit there and plot. I mean, maybe one or two do, but typically, kids don't sit at home and say, "How can I go into school tomorrow and really aggravate Miss Pattie during class?" They have other things to contend with.

So, I said to him, "I had to learn that I was wrong, but in my class here are the sets of rules. And I promise if you don't want me to be in your space, like, here's your space. Let's come up with a mutual arrangement: how you're gonna be respectful of your space, but also be respectful of actively engaging in the class."

Terry: Mm-hmm. So, a very compassionate and supportive approach. And truly, you saw it as an Integrated Experience, and that led to the apology.

Pattie: Yeah, and one of the things I learned more and more is that was my Postvention. And in my trainings lately, especially as a person who reviews all the records, more and more I'm recognizing that we, you know, Postvention is the last step. You know, when we get through everything else, everyone's like, "Oh, yeah. Now, we're getting to Postvention." But unfortunately, for many school systems, we don't have all the people who are involved in a situation in that building all day long. So, you can't wait till the end of the day sometimes to do that Postvention, and you can't wait till three days later when that therapist comes back or whatever because then that's too late.

So, more and more, I'm recognizing, after I have to do all these reports and review all these reports, the real importance of Postvention. And we have been really, really trying to revamp that. I did print out [something] one of my fellow trainers posted online, a nice *COPING ModelSM* that they pulled together as part of the CPI training. So, I printed that out. And by the way, I'm probably one of the ones that goes on the CPI resource website all the time. I'm always pulling things off there from fellow trainers and stuff. And we're really focusing on the *COPING ModelSM* and the whole Postvention. And when my colleague, Frank Galleshaw and myself went to the training this past summer, we really focused on how can we use the Matrix [CPI's Decision-Making Matrix], how can we use all this stuff to do more Postvention and—because to me, the best prevention is Postvention. Reviewing that Postvention will give you the best prevention for the next situation.

Terry: That's a very, very powerful point to close on. We continually stress—the experts in our organization—certainly stress the critical importance of Postvention and to have you sum it up, the best prevention is Postvention, is a great way to wrap our interview today. Thank you so much, Pattie. You've been fascinating and inspirational.

Pattie: Thank you.

Terry: Yeah, and I'm just . . .

Pattie: Not just my accent?

Terry: No, no. I mean, your enthusiasm, the positive vibe that you have that's just so dynamic and forward-thinking, really. I think you've had, it sounds like, a very transformational effect in your work. So, thank you very much for the interview.

My guest today has been Pattie Steele. She's an educator with the South Coast Educational Collaborative. So, thanks, Pattie.

Pattie: Well, you're entirely welcome. It is indeed my pleasure, and if I can just say, CPI, the Crisis Prevention Institute, has indeed become a family for me. It's not just an organization where I received a certificate. It's become a family, and the resources and the tools and the training and just the contacts and the networking that I have made over the past 15 years, has helped me be successful. And I'm not sure that I would be as successful as I am without my connection with the Crisis Prevention Institute.

So, for any new people out there, it is a great program. It is so worthy of the attention that it deserves, and so worthy of sharing it with all your colleagues and anybody that you come in contact with. That's my say.

Terry: Well, thank you very much, Pattie. And thank you, everyone, for listening.