

# “New Authority”

## Back to the basics when confronted with a difficult situation

16 June 2020

Webinar

*Report*

On 16 June 15 participants from 6 organizations joined the webinar on “New Authority” organized by EPR and held by **Kristof Das** - teacher trainer in an advanced bachelor degree in special needs education at UCLL (University college Leuven Limburg).

Professor Das opened the meeting by introducing the two basic foundations of the theoretical framework around new authority, designed by professor Haim Omer of the university of Tel Aviv:

- “You don’t need to win, you only need to persevere.”
- “Forge the iron when it is cold.”

Das then invited the participants to discuss the difference between POWER and AUTHORITY, converging on two apparently similar but actually quite distinct definitions. Power relies on the differences: the person who has less power is forced to follow (obey) the person who has more power. Authority, on the other hand, is based on the participation and will of the person with less power. The latter actively decides to follow the authority as there is a sharing of belief, ideas and values.



The discussion then moved on to the difference between the old model of authority and the new approach of Professor Omer.

While the old approach focused on distance, guilt, punishment and shame (in a relationship completely based on control), the new approach bases on different prerogatives.



- Self-control instead of control
- Presence
- Empowerment
- Net support

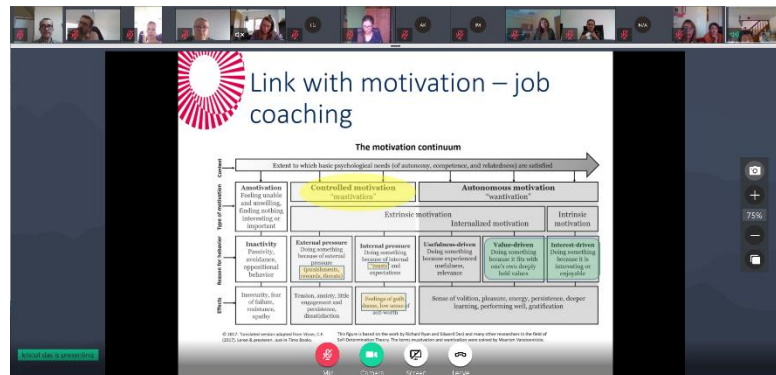
Presence, Empowerment and Net support are the pillars of the **P.E.N.program**.

Presence can be considered as the focus of the P.E.N. programme and can be defined as “the main source of the new authority approach. In this regard the program emphasizes the importance of mental and physical presence of adults in the youngsters’ life.

Empowerment of the new authority is the central message of the P.E.N. program. Authority needs to be reconstructed and reclaimed, in a step by step approach.

Net support: the best metaphor that describes the character of the new authority is that of authority as a net rather than authority as a pyramid. The power of the new authority figure is measured in the ability to create as many connections as possible which enable the weaving of a network that supports her actions.

The webinar continued with an analysis of the logical-methodological framework of the motivation continuum. Professor Das explained in detail the various activities and the various steps that can lead from lack of motivation, to forced motivation (mustivation) to autonomous motivation (wantivation). The autonomous motivation can be considered as the final result in the application of the New Authority. A sense of volition, pleasure, energy, persistence, deeper learning, performing well and gratification.



The meeting concluded with the sharing of some successful cases in which the New Authority was adopted. Here is the testimony of a school principal as an example:

*I've decided that in our school we'll act according to the principle "Strike the iron while it is cold!" Instead of immediate and impulsive reactions, we'll act with deliberation. The change starts in my office! I'll answer to every request or complaint by teachers, parents or pupils, but not immediately. My response will come within three days. I'll write down the details of the request and react after a thorough examination. I'll also support any teacher that adopts this principle!*

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Participants were asked to rate the overall event from 1 (poor quality) to 5 (excellent). The average rating of the event was **4.6 out of 5**.

