

“Would You Believe Me If I Said Morality And Counselling Are A Dangerous Combination?”

A Message For Family Services Staff

This doesn't get too complicated when translating my parenting message into some advice for Family Services staff. I pretty much want you to do the same thing the parents are doing.

Even more so your training and code of conduct in your agency probably already focuses on leaving morality out of it. Even so, it might be easy for you to tell a client that abandoning a baby is “wrong”. But that client might be terrified to the hilt about the responsibility of a child and it could be bringing up painful memories of her own childhood. So telling her she's wrong will probably still invoke these defensive emotions.

You could however lay out that the succeeding consequences of abandoning a child will only create expense, more pain and undesirably low self esteem later and explain that in the most chronologically logical way possible.

Here are some examples that I come across:

1. If you believe in taking a tough stance with clients and one of your counsellors or peers takes a marshmallow approach instead, you are not going to get far telling that counsellor they are wrong for their strategy.
 - a. Instead, point out how the client's attitude is deteriorating and they are breaking even more rules now due to the laxness. Then explain in chronological terms what you as a director are going to do about that to change that counsellors strategies for the sole purpose of meeting your agency's directive, not because you are right.
2. You are not going to get very far telling a young troubled woman her sexual behaviour is wrong even when it causes unwanted pregnancies and diseases.
 - a. Instead, you can point out in great detail how difficult pregnancy and disease is, and how much more likely it is to actually scare the guy away that she was trying to attract.

12 step anonymous groups are absolutely genius at this. They never let anyone feel judged, and make no one wrong. They just focus on what is working in a person's life, and what is not. For the record, the 12 steps have recovered millions of people worldwide and “preachy” people have gotten almost nowhere.

Call to Action:

1. Go back to the parenting newsletter and do the call to action. Write the steps on paper, it will take you 10 minutes.
2. Consider whether or not you have all your staff behaving the way you want to. This is a yes or no question.
3. Consider if you would like to know for sure you have done all you can to be clear and motivating to your clients to change their behaviour.
4. If you choose yes to #2 and #3 then I highly recommend you transform your office and counseling processes to ones that are based on “what works and what doesn’t” not on opinions.

If you can do this by yourself then more power to you. If you think having someone advise you on how to introduce this to your agency, staff, and clients then I recommend you to contact me for a [strategy session](#).

Contact Tom 403-391-4184 or
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To learn about Tom’s program and strategy for agency staff, their clients, parents and young people.

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<http://streetsmartcounselling.com/sp.asp?sptype=18>

U.S.A customers welcome.

Or you can make this happen in your agency by calling Tom at 403-391-4184

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