What are the Challenges in Engaging Systems, Agencies, and Families?

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In your heart of hearts...
Model Overview

- POST TREATMENT
- MOTIVATION
- RELATIONAL ASSESSMENT
- BEHAVIOR CHANGE
- GENERALIZATION

SESSION
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 +

PRE TREATMENT

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FFT Engagement

... In Change
Is This Engagement A Serious Commitment? Or Are We Just Checking You Out?

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Questions

- How do systems enhance or interfere with the engagement process?
- Whose side are you supposed to be on? Implications for engagement and motivation?
- Within the family whose side are you supposed to be on?
- How do you negotiate the process of building sequential relationships? Working from the contact person to get the right people in the room?
Core FFT Stance During Engagement

- We are here for YOU
- We listen
- We respond contingently
- We say things that give you hope for Positive Change
To Accomplish Engagement Successfully, FFT Follows Specific Principles

- Matching – Do what it takes to have them experience
  - Being Respected
  - Being Valued
- We accomplish this through
  - Being Contingent
  - Being Strength Based
  - Thinking and planning at multiple system levels
  - ... and integrating these levels
  - Trusting – the model, FFT Phases, the empirically based Process–Outcome links
  - Being Flexible – within the structure of the Model
  - Valuing the unique qualities of the family & members as well as the Therapist
Engaging Youth, Families, and Systems
Challenges of Engagement
Getting Youth and Family Members to the First Session
Engagement often starts before first contact with family...

- Timely Response to Referral
- Working Relationship with Referral
- Support “Common” Goals
Systems Involvement Over Time

- Data and sustainability
- Support of evidence-based practice
- Involvement in treatment process
  - Minimizing administrative or treatment failures
    - Probation Officer’s
    - Judges/Drug Court
  - Coordinating services
    - School suspension
    - Probation violation
    - Introducing services
Engagement Considerations and Strategies

- Speed and Availability
- Flexibility and persistence
Speed, Availability, Flexibility and Persistence

- Predicts length of service and completion rates
- Location or time should become an obstacle

- Adjusting time and methods?
- When is enough enough?
Engagement Considerations and Strategies

- Speed and Availability
- Flexibility and persistence
- Initial presentation matters
- Sequential Alliances
- Get the right people in the room
Managing Early Contacts

Core Philosophy
- Respectfulness
- Non-judgmental
- Strength-based

Family-Based
- Balanced Alliances
- Relational vs. Individual
- Matching to individuals, relationships, family, and environment

What to Avoid?
- Trying to change them or fix the problem
- Taking sides
- Defining structure

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Working Through Contacts to Engage All Family Members

- Take time to ask about who is in the family
- Explore potential barriers
  - Protection (“He is busy”)
  - Protection (“This is not her problem”)
- Explore potential barriers
  - Conflict (“He does not help at all”)
- Access family members directly
- Be aware of “types” that push your buttons

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Engagement Considerations and Strategies

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Getting the Right People in the Session

- Hidden fathers or sources of conflict
- Powerful “extended” family members

- Avoid sending the message that “You do not matter”
- Best laid plans can be undermined or blocked by non-engaged members
Conclusion