

Australian Counselling Association 2013 National Conference

The Shorts, T shirts and Thongs of Mental Health

Presentation:

90 minute workshop which includes demonstrations and audience active participation.

Title:

We Are All the Same In that We Are All Different!

The Importance of Meeting the Client for Who They Are Without Comparison or Judgement.



Ms Tanya Curtis, Fabic Director & Behaviour Specialist, Private Practice, Gold Coast, QLD, Aust. Assoc Dip Ed.(Child Care), BHlthSci.(BehMgt), MBehMgt, MCoun

Tanya Curtis founded Fabic (Functional Assessment and Behaviour Interventions Clinic) in 2006 with a vision to support people in understanding and changing unwanted behaviour, whilst simultaneously valuing each person's uniqueness and individual strengths. Tanya naturally expresses by supporting people to improve their own lives; she believes in understanding and connecting with people for who they are whilst supporting them to become who they want to become. Tanya has built a successful national clinical practice based on the Gold Coast, offering consulting, assessment and training services in behaviour management locally, nationally and internationally. She has extensive experience consulting with government departments, health & human services, schools, residential facilities, disability services, medical services, justice departments, childcare centres, corporate ... any organisation with individuals using "unwanted behaviours". Tanya is the author of and national presenter of three behaviour courses. In 2011 Tanya published a book Challenging Change, Behaviour Strategies for Life and is the author and developer of an online behaviour scale programme & DVD series on Behaviour Specialist Topics.

Tanya brings a fresh approach to changing difficult behaviour that has been based on solid practical, academic foundations along with extensive clinical experience.

Abstract:

Too frequently in our industry we as professionals can be identified as having a "better than" approach, thinking or feeling we have all the answers and therefore have the ability to instruct others on how to improve & better manage their own lives without ever really looking at what is going on for us. Does this allow for a client to really feel you are connecting with them for who they are ... without judgement, without comparison, just meeting them as an equal? Is it possible that along the way we have lost sight of what it really means to support our clients? As suggested to all carers with whom the author works with in her clinical practice: "we must prioritise our own well-being before we are able to truly support another". Is it possible, that we as professionals must also look at ourselves in continuing to identify and address our own challenges, issues, difficult situations, etcetera so as to "really live what we teach". However, with the "better than" or "I already know" approach is it possible that we are failing to even be honest in acknowledging that "we all have our issues" and at times whether formally or informally "we all require support". That is modelling and reflecting to our clients that: WE ARE ALL THE SAME in that we all have all situations in life that we find difficult to negotiate, however WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT in that our challenging situations are unique to each person. The introduction of the "Behaviour Scale" and the "I Choose Charts" will offer visual aides to show how we can apply this language and approach to life in a simple, supportive and non-judgmental manner; whether that be for ourselves or our clients; children, adolescents or adults; low-functioning or high-functioning: the information discussed in this forum will be beneficial to all.

The "Behaviour Scale" will introduce a visual means of communication that is likely to be interpreted the same way by ALL people, as a result increasing successful communication & reducing unnecessary conflict and/or unnecessary escalation of unwanted behaviours.

Behaviour is a skill that often requires "teaching" and it is unfair to expect that people automatically know what behaviours to use when their "challenging situations" are presented. The "I Choose Chart" introduces the concept that, if taught how, we are all able to respond using desired behaviours to the events we find challenging so that they are no longer challenging for us. Thus with the right tools, we are able to take full responsibility for our behaviours and our life outcomes.

The information within this presentation will support you to live and feel that we are in-fact all the same, it's just a different flavour ice-cream or different challenges being experienced by each and every person! By living this yourself, you will support a client to feel that they are "equal" to you, they are just experiencing challenges that you may have mastered, they are yet to master, but you also have different challenges you are yet to master! Imagine the connection you will have to the client if they feel this equal-ness!

We are all the same in that we are all different!

